

CHRIST AND CHRISTMAS
SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON PART 2

- Say - Welcome to Sabbath School class, let's bow our heads and ask God to be with us as we study together. In "Christ and Christmas Part 1" we discussed the origins of the celebration of Christmas and we traced the origins all the way back to Nimrod and ancient civilizations long before Christ was born as a human baby.
- Say - We studied how God forbids "Sun" worship and the worship of ANY false God. Finally we discussed how God's Holy Days reveal His plan of salvation for all mankind and the blessings one receives through observing them.
- Say - Today in "Part 2" of our continued study, we will focus on why God said pagan worship cannot be mixed with the worship of the true God. We will find the answers in the Bible.
- Say - Here is the most important instruction to remember. "THE LORD IS GREATER THAN ALL GODS...HE IS ABOVE ALL...", Exodus 18:11. God's people are instructed not to "...Mention (as in worship) the name of other gods..., or bow down to them and serve them..." "Thou shall have no other Gods before Me" Exodus 20:3, 23:13, 23:24.
- Say - Another instruction which God tells us is, "No man can serve two masters..." Matthew 6:24. In other words we either, "Serve God with (all) our heart, mind and soul" or we serve another spirit, Mark 20:30. God does not want His people to be double minded. Christ-mas is the superimposing (overlying) of supposedly the "Birth of Christ" over the celebration or worship of the Winter Solstice or "Birth of the Sun God".
- Say - Another reason God does not want His people to mix the worship of false Gods and the true God is because God wants His people to put their trust in Him ONLY. When we serve false Gods, we show a lack of faith. God says, "I WILL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEEDS". He says, "Blessed is the man that trusts in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is" Philippians 4:19; Jeremiah 17:7!
- Say - He wants us to walk in WISDOM not recklessly. He wants us to choose the "Strait ...and narrow ... way, which leads to LIFE, and FEW (not many) there be that find it", (YOU are part of the FEW, cherish your calling, protect it as the finest treasure!). What is wisdom? "...The fear (respect) of the LORD, is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" Job 28:28. "I have taught you

statutes and judgments ... that ye should keep and do them" (in those laws He taught us to flee from sun worship because God cannot be found there).

- Say - God wants His people to set the example of proper worship, honor and obedience to the true God. Not only will God's people benefit but "...That you may live by showing wisdom and understanding, so the surrounding people and nations would hear all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people". They will say, "For ... God is so near unto them, that the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for" Deuteronomy 4:5-7.
- Say - An excellent example of showing the power of the true God to a godless pagan nation was revealed in the Passover as God brought His people out of the land of sin. The Egyptians, not only worshipped imaginary Gods of the sun, moon and stars, but worshipped animal Gods of every kind! Here is how God showed them, "That there is none like the Lord our God" Exodus 8:10!
- Say - God took their abominable winged deities of worship and turned them into plagues as punishment on the disobedient Egyptians, Exodus 8:26. The Egyptians stood by helpless as they observed the power of God's might over their false gods right before their eyes!
- Say - In yet another plague, the Egyptians national symbol of superstition and worship was the frog head called, "The God of Ptha". God used the frog as one of the plagues to fall upon the land and it brought the Egyptians to confess, "This is the finger of God" Exodus 8:49. The Bible teaches us in the end time plagues will once again fall upon a disobedient, godless nation; a nation which has turned its back on worshipping the true God. But God has given His people comfort when He tells them, "...Come out of her (Babylon, religious confusion), my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" Revelation 18:4.
- Say - Why were God's people not to mix pagan worship with the true God? "Take heed, (as in urgent that we listen), lest you make a compact or agreement with the disobedient people and it be a snare (like a noose used for catching animals, a hook or a trap) in the midst of thee" Exodus 34:12, Deuteronomy 7:16. God wants our absolute loyalty to Him and His righteous ways because, "From God comes our salvation" Psalm 62:1.

Say - Is Christmas a “Snare” or a “Trapping”? Our Bible says in Psalms, “Rid me, (set me free) and deliver me (rescue me) from the hand (power) of strange (foreign gods) children, whose mouth speak vanity (falsehood, emptiness), and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood (deception)” Psalms 144:11.

Say - Many can relate how difficult it was and is to come out of the celebration of Christmas. Once out, it is equally difficult and painful to watch the struggle of another freeing from the “Noose or Trap” as they are sometimes laced with guilt and accusations of abandonment from their own families.

Say - Here is another reason God’s people are not to mix pagan worship with the true God, “For they will turn away My son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly” Deuteronomy 7:4. Now the world is deceptively tempted and attracted to serve another God; which, “...Is transformed (as if) an angel of light”. We must not follow the world, it is the “Broad way which leads to destruction” Matthew 7:13.

Say - Why do people worship false Gods or why do some fall away from the Truth of God and go back into false worship? The Bible says, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge (the truth of God’s laws): because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shall be no priest to me (remember we are in training to become a holy nation of kings and priests): seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God (and the law was that we were not to have ANY God before Him) I will also forget thy children” Hosea 4:6.

Say - An ancestor of Christ, King Jehoshaphat of Judah, realized that God’s people lacked the knowledge of God’s laws and they were falling back into pagan practices. Here is what he did.

Say - “King Jehoshaphat strengthened (became powerful, courageous) ...and the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim (the Sun God Nimrod worshipped); but sought the God of his father, and walked in his commandments.... And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places idols and groves (tree worship) out of Judah. Also...he sent his princes to teach in the cities of Judah”.

Say - The Bible continues, “...And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law (first five books of the Bible, the very same ones

Christ taught from, Acts 28:23) of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people. And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat” 2 Chronicles 17:1-10.

- Say - Jehosaphat realized knowing God’s word was the only way people would learn the way to eternal life and it is the same for all today. Just as Jehosaphat “possessed zeal and courage” to undertake reform and replace idol worship for the worship of the true God, we too must be diligent to study and know the Truth of God and hunger and thirst for understanding and help others study the laws of God. God wants us to, “Be ready to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you” I Peter 3:15.
- Say - Along with eternal life, what are the rewards of being obedient to God? Let’s read of our rewards in Psalms, “That our sons may be as plants (vibrant) grown up in their youth (begotten in their youth); that our daughters may be as corner stones (beautifully carved), polished after the similitude of a palace (solid in structure). That our garners (our storehouses) may be full, that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: That our oxen may be strong to labor; that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets. Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yes, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD” Psalms 144:12-15. Is that what everyone wants, happiness? God has given His people the the answer for happiness which we can share with a needful society around us.
- Say - Will God’s promises ever be broken for His people? He will deliver us from all evil we are exposed to and every promise He amply fulfills to His faithful. “...It shall come to pass, if ye listen to (My laws), and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant (agreement) and the mercy which he sware unto our fathers”.
- Say - "And he will love YOU....Thou shalt be blessed above all people, (ponder this promise and realize this, that He will always love us because we are His wife, His bride!). And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knows, upon you; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee (“for His namesake” Luke 21:17). ... You shall not be afraid of them (other nations): but shall well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt; The great

temptations which their eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched out arm (symbolizing God's power), whereby the LORD thy God brought them out of Egypt and slavery (and us out of slavery to sin). ... for the LORD thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible (powerful)". Deuteronomy 7:4-21.

Say - Here's why God gave us this important information. "For you are an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth" Deuteronomy 7:6. We should help one another to remember this promise from our Creator; could there be any better news!

Say - And finally here is more "Good news" God gave us which we would all do well to place on our hearts. "The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people! But because the LORD LOVED YOU, (remember you are His wife) and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, and the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand... Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keeps (His) covenant/agreement and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations"; Deuteronomy 7:7-9. Will we keep our part of the agreement?

Say - What else can we do? We must remove anything which is offensive to God in the way of sinful practices and in worshipping God in our daily lives. "Then the LORD (will) reward me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands will He (repay) me. For I have kept the ways of the LORD (not man-made doctrines), and have not wickedly departed from my God...and His statutes (Laws). I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from ... iniquity (lawlessness). For He will light my candle (fill us with His truth): the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness (keep us in the understanding of His Truth)..... As for God, His way is perfect: He is a buckler (a shield, a piece of the armor of God) to all those that trust in him" Psalm 18.

Say - As we discussed in Part 1, God has given us HIS Holy Days which reveal the only "Path of life"; may we ponder their meaning and NEVER depart from them. Our memory verse sums it up perfectly, "If they speak not according to the Law of God...there is no light (truth) in them", Isaiah 8:20.

MEMORY VERSE

IF THEY SPEAK NOT ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF GOD...
THERE IS NO LIGHT IN THEM.
ISAIAH 8:20

FOLLOWING IS THE SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON FOR TOTS

GOD'S SEASONS OF LIFE

In the Seasons of Life, God's greatness is found;
As the plan for mankind in His Holy Days abound.
A "Gift" from God is the weekly Sabbath Day;
"Keep it holy" our Heavenly Father did say.

Exodus 20:8

At Passover, for the Israelite the Red Sea He parted;
For us, He gave His life, and a new life we started.
Days of Unleavened Bread remind us of the sins He gladly removes;
Pentecost, we celebrate His power which in us is daily renewed.

Soon the trumpet will sound and the Heavens will open wide;
The "Firstfruits" up will rise, and stand at His side.
Awake, Awake, I am your strength; come up from your resting place;
The trumpet blast will fill the air as we meet our Maker face to face.

I Corinthians 15

Then the abyss will open and Satan bound will be thrown;
There'll be no more sin and the power of God shall be known!
For in that day on the Mt. of Olives He'll stand;
"Listen to Me", and at His command; His Law shall fill the land!

Revelation 20:7, Zechariah 14:4, Isaiah 51:4

The Garden of Eden will spring forth in the desert's dust;
As our Shepherd, our Savior brings comfort to us.
Kindness and mercy, joy and gladness, thanksgiving and song;
His love Eternal will surround us forever long.

Isaiah 41:17, 19

For in righteousness God has called YOU;
His Children, the Chosen, we are part of the few.
Soon a light unto all and with God as our King,
"Walk this way", we will finally proclaim!!

By B. R. B.

Isaiah 42:6, 43:10

IF THEY SPEAK NOT ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF GOD, THERE IS
NO LIGHT (truth) IN THEM.
ISAIAH 8:20