

MAKING IT TO THE SEVENTH DAY

Genesis 2:2 *And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.*

Genesis 2:3 *And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*

There is something special about the seventh day. God made man on the sixth day, but this was not the day he rested and blessed – that honor was reserved for the seventh day alone. In this sermon, with the help of the Lord, I will attempt to show you that the creation week portrays the struggle of our lives. Due to sin, the creation itself is distorted and in turmoil. “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Romans 8:22). For the rest of the creation, the sixth day was the worst day – the day one creature, man, messed up the rest of creation. Isn’t it interesting that God did not bless the sixth, but the seventh day! In his omniscience, he knew that the man created on this day would unleash destruction upon the rest of creation. Yet, he is a merciful God!

However, there is a distinct promise to us going back to the creation week: we must patiently endure, fight and overcome the challenges life throws at us in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we persevere everyday – beyond the sixth day, which represents the creation of man, and hence the day man was introduced and sin subsequently – then we will also rest and enjoy the blessings of the Lord ordained on the seventh day, spiritually speaking. The Bible attests to this truth repeatedly.

Joshua 6:1 *Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.*

Joshua 6:2 *And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.*

Joshua 6:3 *And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.*

Joshua 6:4 *And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets.*

Our problems may look as impenetrable as the gates and walls of Jericho, but God commanded the priests with the Ark of the Covenant to march around Jericho for six days. We can only imagine the discomfort Joshua’s men endured. Did they quarrel at times as they woke up every day, did they question the wisdom of what they were commanded to do, did the enemy laugh at them every day? They had to concentrate and focus on the command of God; they had to be patient and endure many things. We, too, must have the Lord Jesus with

us, marching around our problems for six days. Is the enemy taunting you? Does he laugh, put doubt in your soul and ask you why you go to church, pray and do all the things you do? Keep marching! Six represents the number of man. As we arise everyday with the Lord Jesus in our midst, we slowly but surely begin to subdue and conquer the sins of man – rebellion, strife, hatred, jealousy, gossip and every other sin God hates. We also call this “carrying our Cross”. Carrying our Cross tells God that we acknowledge that humans messed up his creation. The way to victory for the Christian is to carry our crosses and persevere beyond the sixth day – the day of man’s sinful condition. Joshua and the children of Israel carried the Ark of the Covenant, we carry the invisible Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ and march around the challenges in our lives to victory in Jesus name. Soon the walls will fall down flat!

***Mark 10:21** Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.*

***Hebrews 12:2** Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Let us consider another biblical story which reinforces the message of persevering to the seventh day. “And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean” (2Kings 5:10). Naaman was a famous Captain of Syria. God was asking him to persevere over pride, hatred of Israel and impatience. How many of us are just like Naaman! We refuse to patiently carry our crosses and expect the Lord to fix our problems quickly. May the Lord Jesus give us the patience to dip seven times in the River of our Jordans! Seven times around Jericho and seven times dipping in the Jordan is symbolic once again of the creation week – we show God that we are guilty of pride, blasphemy and a lack of regard for the rest of creation. It is as if each of the six days we carry our crosses on a journey revisiting the holy days of God’s creation and apologizing for the great sin of the sixth day. Here is a list of what we damaged:

Day 1: Light

Day 2: Atmosphere / Firmament (consider

Day 3: Dry ground & plants

Day 4: Sun, moon & stars

Day 5: Birds & sea animals

Day 6: Land animals & humans

Scientists warns us every day about the damage we have done to earth. It is quite remarkable (and irresponsible) that some Christians deny human culpability in the deterioration of the ecosystem. We are the custodians and guardians of this planet, according

to the Bible. “And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it” (Genesis 2:15). The fact that Christians appear oblivious to many such scriptures about preserving nature is clearly a testament to our sinful condition that has left us blind to the immense destruction we are inflicting on God’s nature.

Deuteronomy 20:19 *When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege.*

It was only by persevering and pushing on to the seventh day that Joshua and Naaman saw their ambitions and dreams fulfilled. The greater the blessing we crave, the greater the need to persevere. In fact, one man in the Bible had to push to the seventh day twice – and became the father of 12 of the most famous names, not only in Old Testament history, but forever, because their names are permanently etched into the gates of the New Jerusalem. “And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel” (Revelation 21:12).

Genesis 29:20 *And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.*

Genesis 29:28 *And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.*

Jacob had to persevere more than most men to enjoy the privilege of being called the father of the twelve tribes. We should not be surprised! Was he not the man named Israel because he wrestled valiantly with the angel and refused to give up? “And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed” (Genesis 32:28). Saints of God, I don’t know what struggle you are engaged with right now; I don’t know what struggle you may find yourself locking horns with perhaps soon. But one thing is clear: persevere to the seventh day! Don’t give up and don’t give in! No surrender, like Jacob, our father! Wrestle until you pin down your weaknesses in Jesus name! Fight until you no longer feel the evil spirit of pride and arrogance! Hold out every day in Jesus name until you no longer feel the need to entertain sin – gossip, jealousy, bickering etc. Joshua, Jacob and Naaman did not do this alone; they had the word of God with them.

I could go on and on and show you the pattern in the Bible, but time will not permit. Let me just add the story of Joseph in Egypt and how the entire world was tested for seven

years. But now I would like to speak about the future – the Book of Revelation speaks about the most evil man ever to exist will soon be appearing on the world scene. Isn't it significant that his number is 666? "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six" (Revelation 13:18). Following the interpretation suggested in the beginning of this message, this means the Antichrist embodies the number of man, the day man was created, three times. Imagine that! Rather than repent seven times, human desire to be gods will be amplified three times. No wonder the creation is cursed and attacked by God during the Great Tribulation! Observing and emulating the example of humans will only lead to pride and rebellion against the Lord. However, if we spend time with the Lord – as the Apostles did six days with him – then we will see him high and lifted up the seventh day.

Matthew 17:1 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

Matthew 17:2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

Let us persevere in the company of those who love the Lord and we will the Lord for who he truly is – the one and only God and Savior! As the days go by, you may struggle with boredom, tiredness and even doubt. However, you must hang on in there as you have been doing. The sixth day of our earthly struggle against the forces of sin will soon give way to a crashing sound – the walls of Jericho of this life will soon fall down flat and we will see Jesus high and lifted up. In fact, I am convinced we are in the sixth day of perseverance, according to biblical prophecies. Let us go on to the seventh day of blessing!