

Sunday, February 2, 2014

From the book **“The Ministry of Salvation” (5)**

The Lord Rests

What is the meaning of God resting on the seventh day?

After the story of the creation was concluded, Genesis mentions that **“Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”** (Genesis 2:1-3).

Some may wonder about the meaning of the phrase “God Rested”. In human terms, rest means that a person stops working after being exhausted so that he may be able to resume work later. However, this phrase has a totally different meaning to God since He doesn’t get exhausted or tired in a human sense, rather it represents **the mutual joy and pleasure between God and His creation**. Unfortunately, through sin, man ruined this joy and deprived himself from relishing this joy and the love of God, His creator. This is the very reason for which the Lord Jesus came to enter with man into a new covenant instead of the one which was ruined by man’s sin.

Notice that the day of rest, the “Day of the Lord” in the Old Testament was the seventh day of the week “Saturday”, the Sabbath. In the New Testament, the day of rest, the “Day of the Lord” is Sunday on which the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Therefore, the Church considers that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead on the “Eighth day” on which He made His new rest by completing the salvation of man. For this reason, the church chants “Alleluia Phai Pai pi...” on the Sunday liturgy and the feasts liturgies which means “This is the day that the Lord has made, so let us rejoice and be glad in it...”. The church emphasizes that this is the new day of rest which God has made anew so that man may enter in a fellowship with Him once more.

Here, we realize that the Jews misunderstood the commandment of rest on the Sabbath and sanctifying the day of the Lord. The goal of sanctifying the day of the Lord was to enter into fellowship of mutual love between God and man, and not just to rest from work. When the Lord Jesus healed the lame man of the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath saying **“Rise, take up your bed and walk.”** (John 5:8).

The Jews protested against Him because he made the sick person to take up his bed and walk on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, **“My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.”** (John 5:17). From what the Lord Jesus said we can see that the meaning of rest to God isn’t remotely related to stop working, but to offer love and acts of kindness to man who was created by Him, for God works continuously all the time.

Also, we should not neglect what Genesis said: **“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made”.** (Genesis 2:3).

Therefore, we can also see that rest means that the Creation process was concluded, and it was time to start looking after His creation as a Pantocrator and a Lover of mankind.

Summary of the topic of the Creation

1. God created man because of love.
2. God differentiated man from the rest of the creation by creating him in His image and after His likeness. He formed man from the dust of the earth, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; so Adam became a living being by the breath of God.
3. God created man in His image, and this gave him: Mind, eternity, the knowledge of God, freedom, authority on the rest of the creation.
4. God gave Eve to Adam in a special way, from one of his ribs, because of his love to man.
5. God’s rest is to enter into a mutual fellowship of love with mankind.

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