

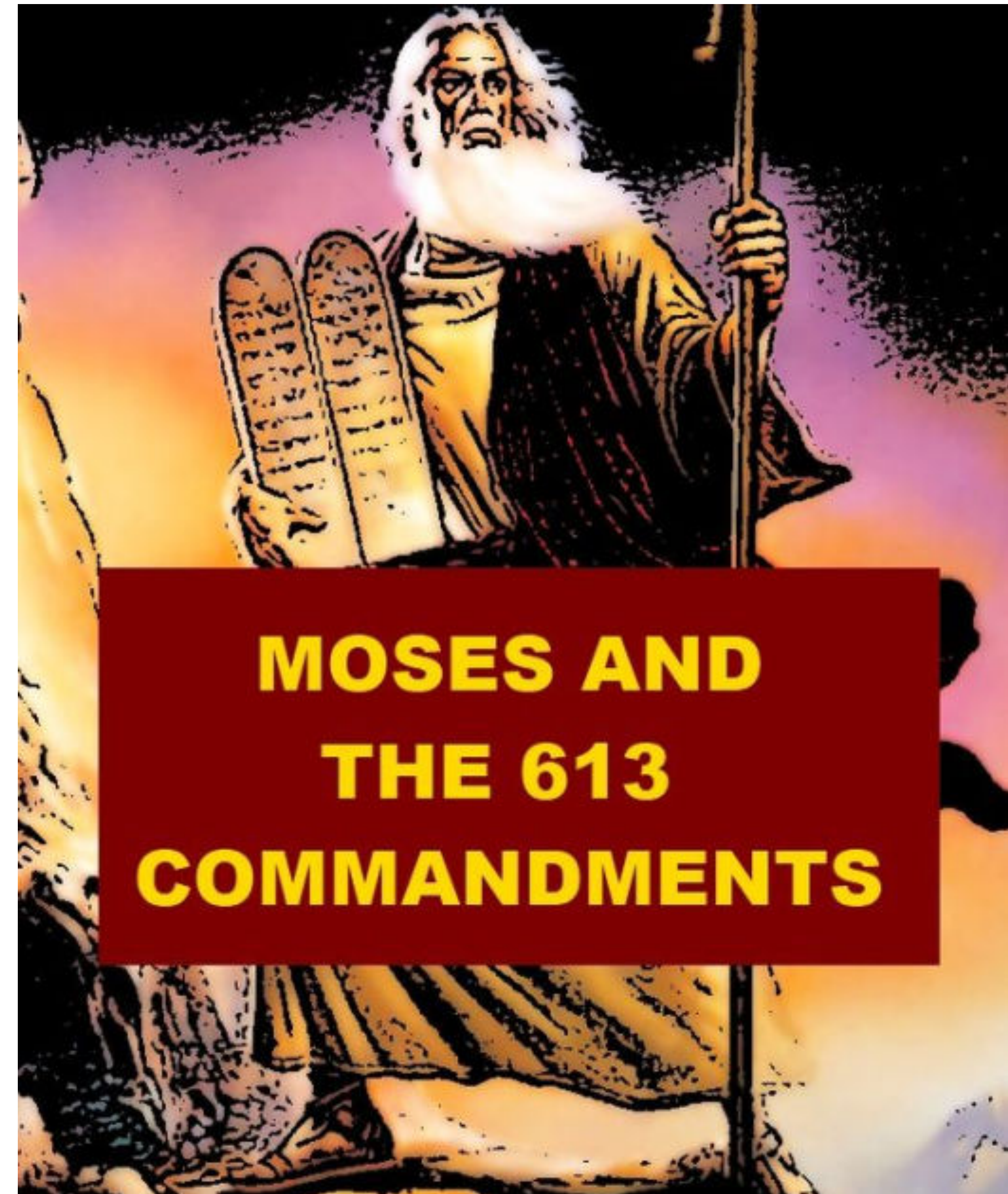
The Sabbatical

Binding Burden or Bountiful Blessing

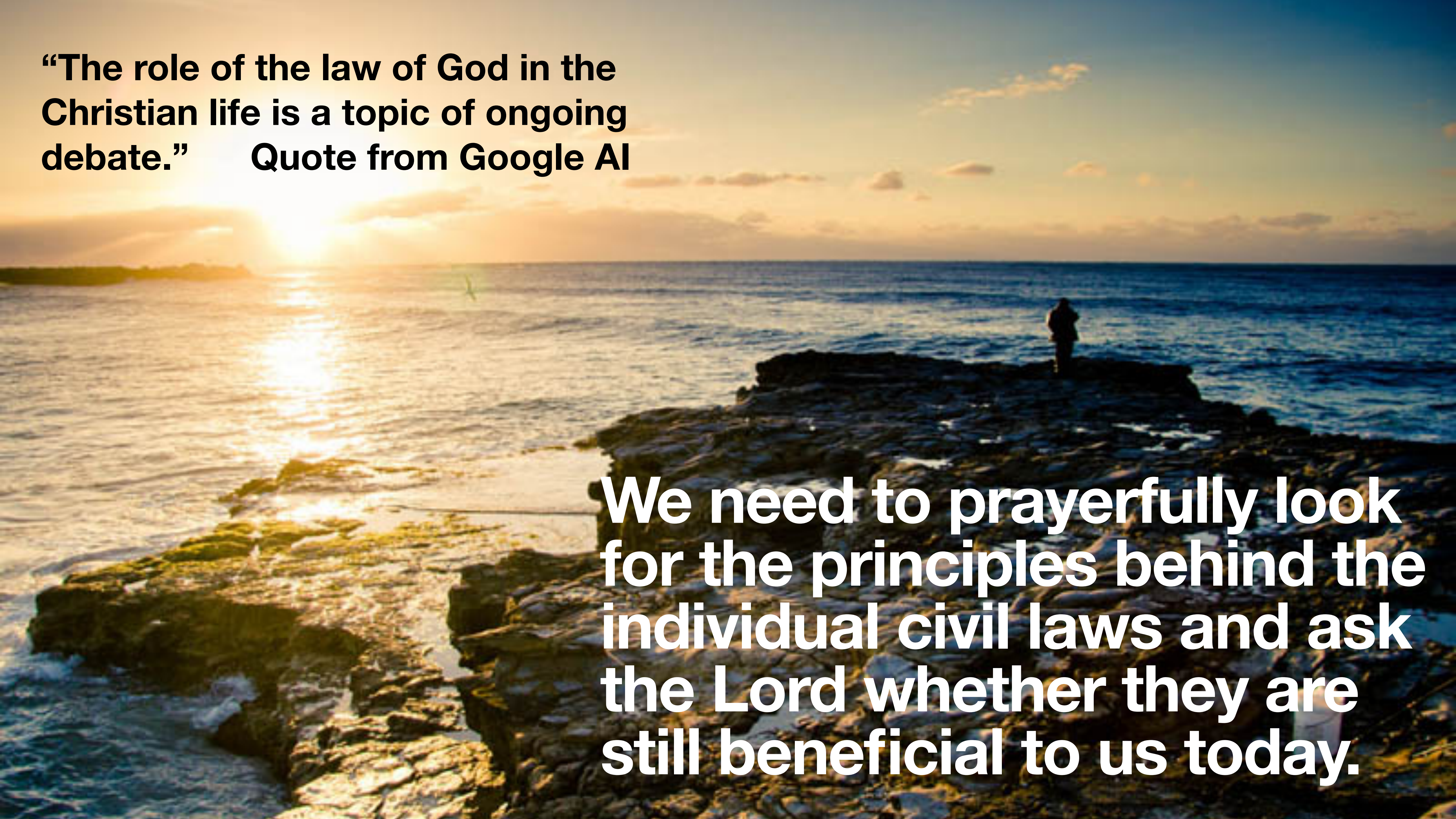
John Dysinger — AdAgrA 2025

How Do We Relate to the 613(?) Laws of the OT?

1. **10 Commandments** — Written in stone by the hand of God.
2. **Ceremonial Laws** — Pointing to Jesus as the “Lamb of God.”
3. **Civil (or Judicial) Laws** — For the smooth-running of the Theocracy.
 - A. Hygiene Laws — To keep millions healthy without running water.
 - B. Moral Laws — Many expanding on the 7th commandment.
 - C. Economic Laws — To guard against the extremes of wealth and poverty.
 - D. Many other misc. laws....



“The role of the law of God in the Christian life is a topic of ongoing debate.” Quote from Google AI

A person is silhouetted against a bright sunset over a vast ocean. The person stands on a dark, rocky outcrop in the foreground, looking out towards the horizon. The sun is low on the left, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water's surface. The sky transitions from a deep orange near the horizon to a clear blue at the top. The ocean is a deep blue with gentle waves. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

We need to prayerfully look for the principles behind the individual civil laws and ask the Lord whether they are still beneficial to us today.

“And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD. Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land. And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land—all its produce shall be for food.”

Leviticus 25:1-7 NKJV

“And if you say, ‘What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?’ Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. And you shall sow in the eighth year, and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat of the old harvest.”

Leviticus 25:20-22 NKJV

“Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove.”

Exodus 23:10,11 NKJV

**“I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it.
I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you;
your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.
Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies’ land....
As long as it lies desolate it shall rest—
for the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it.”**

Leviticus 26:32-35 NKJV

“There is much mourning over unproductive soil, when if men would read the Old Testament Scriptures **they would see that the Lord knew much better than they in regard to the proper treatment of land. After being cultivated for several years, and giving her treasure to the possession of man, **portions of the land should be allowed to rest,** and then the crops should be changed.”**

“Every seventh year special provision was made for the poor. The sabbatical year, as it was called, began at the end of the harvest. At the seedtime, which followed the ingathering, the people were not to sow; they should not dress the vineyard in the spring; and they must expect neither harvest nor vintage. Of that which the land produced spontaneously they might eat while fresh, but they were not to lay up any portion of it in their storehouses. The yield of this year was to be free for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and even for the creatures of the field. Exodus 23:10, 11; Leviticus 25:5...”

But if the land ordinarily produced only enough to supply the wants of the people, how were they to subsist during the year when no crops were gathered? For this the promise of God made ample provision. “I will command My blessing upon you in the sixth year,” He said, “and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store...” Leviticus 25:21, 22.

“The observance of the sabbatical year was to be a benefit to both the land and the people. The soil, lying untilled for one season, would afterward produce more plentifully....

The people were released from the pressing labors of the field; and while there were various branches of work that could be followed during this time, all enjoyed greater leisure, which afforded opportunity for the restoration of their physical powers for the exertions of the following years. They had more time for meditation and prayer, for acquainting themselves with the teachings and requirements of the Lord, and for the instruction of their households.”

“By the distribution of the land among the people, God provided for them, as for the dwellers in Eden, the occupation most favorable to development—the care of plants and animals. A further provision for education was the suspension of agricultural labor every seventh year, the land lying fallow, and its spontaneous products being left to the poor. Thus was given opportunity for more extended study, for social intercourse and worship, and for the exercise of benevolence, so often crowded out by life's cares and labors.”

“And this [the time of the Pentateuch] some call the Dark Ages. If so, it is not because they had no communication from heaven. [See] Leviticus 25. The Lord was over the whole earth. **Every seventh year was a sabbatical year. This would be a wonderful arrangement down in this age of great light. Not only the agricultural processes were to be intermitted, but the cultivation of the soil was not permitted. It lay in its spontaneous growth for the benefit of the poor. All had free access to it—the strangers and the flocks and the herds. This was to invigorate the productive, worn-out soil, and to teach the Hebrew nation that God was the Householder, and the people were His tenants.”**

Benefits for the Land:

- Invigorate the productive, worn-out soil.
- Renew the forces necessary for growth.
- “Through them [the Israelites], the Lord designed to teach all the nations of the world how to cultivate the soil so that it would yield healthy fruit, free from disease.” Ms121, 1899





Benefits for the People:

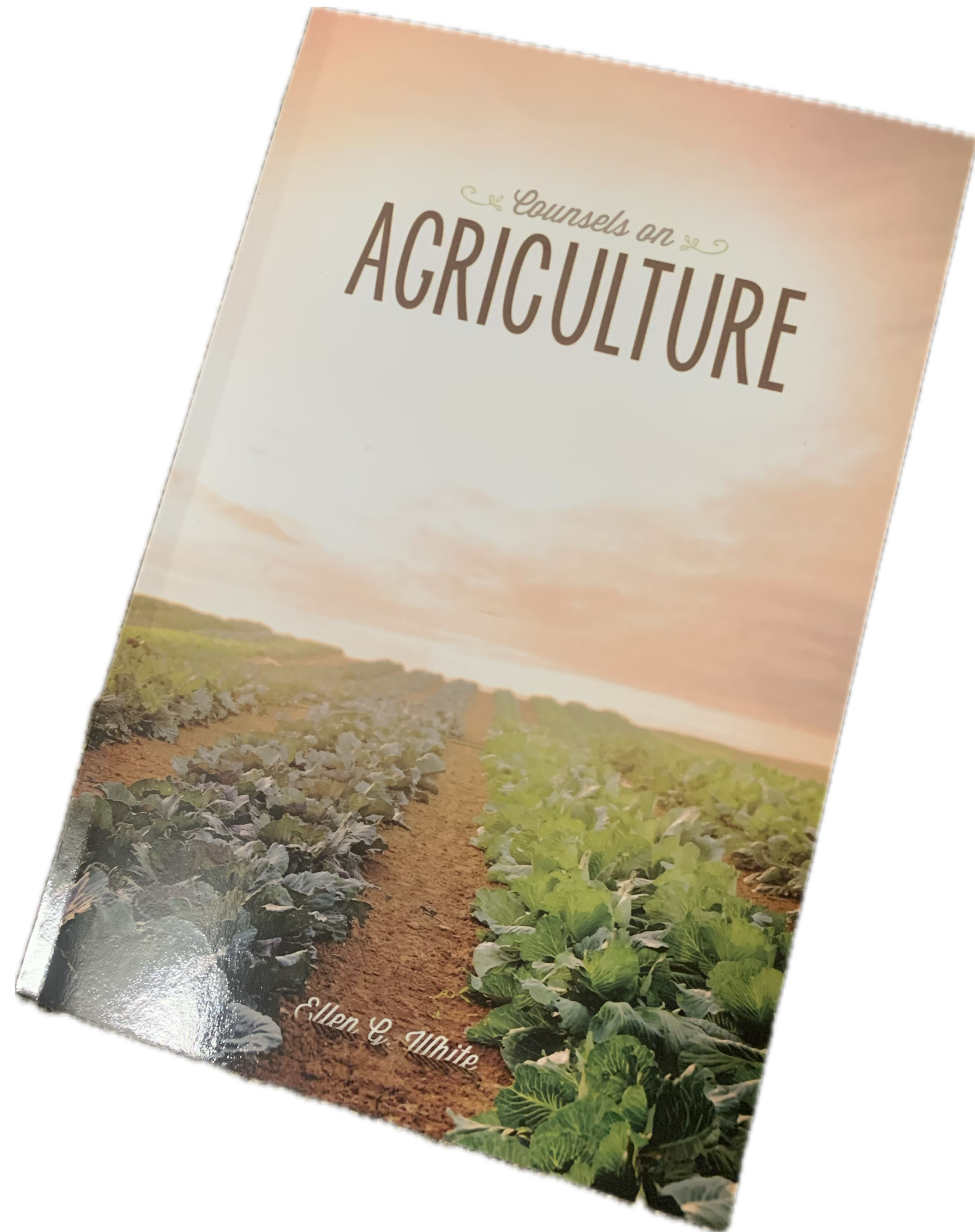
- Greater leisure for restoration of physical powers.
- More time for meditation and prayer.
- More time for Bible study.
- More time for the instruction of their households.
- More time for social intercourse and worship.
- More time for the exercise of benevolence.

**Doesn't that sound like a
“wonderful arrangement
down in this age of great
light”?**



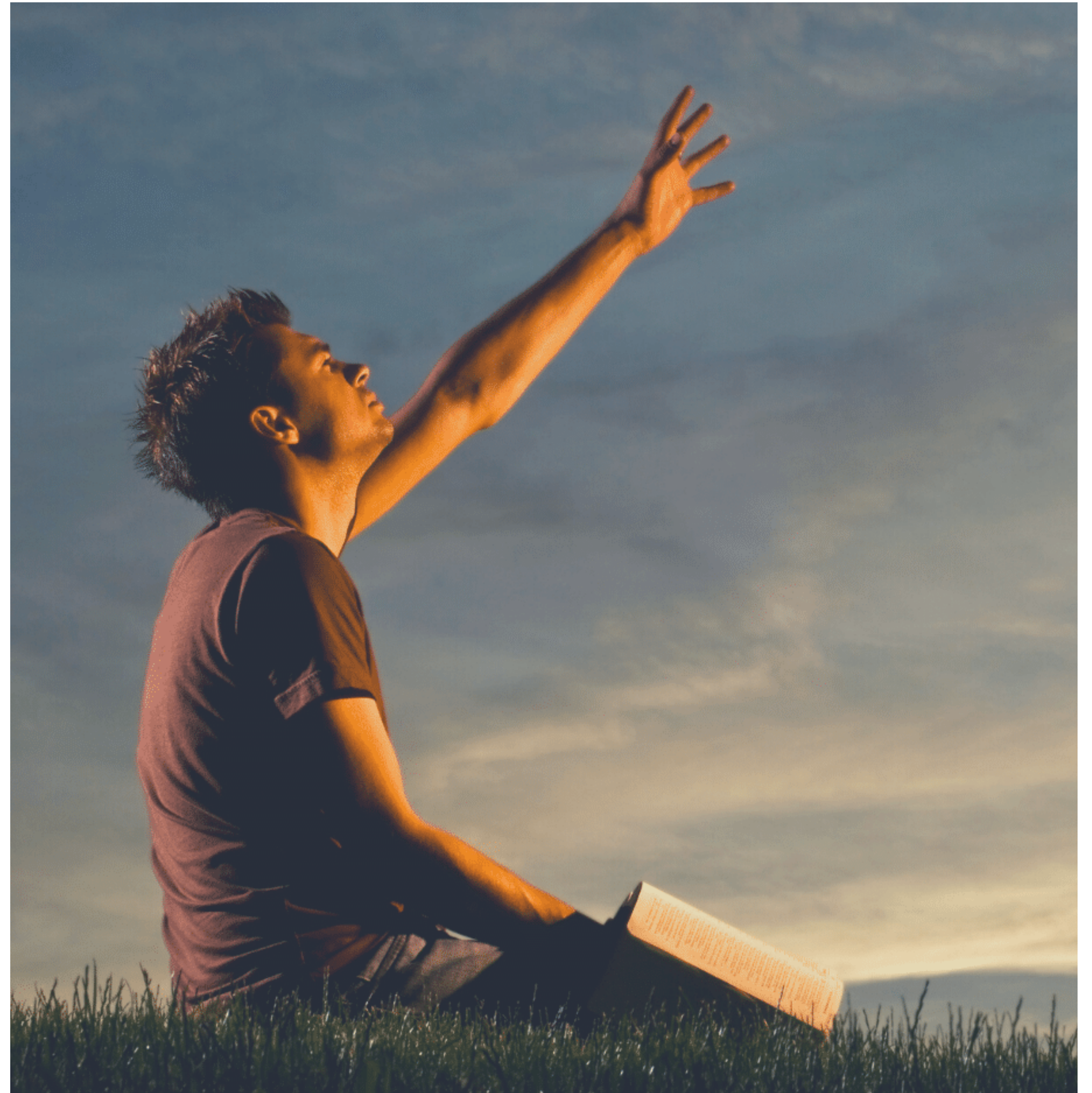
Counsels on Agriculture, pp. 121-124

- The most comprehensive and thought-provoking passage on the Sabbath (in my opinion).



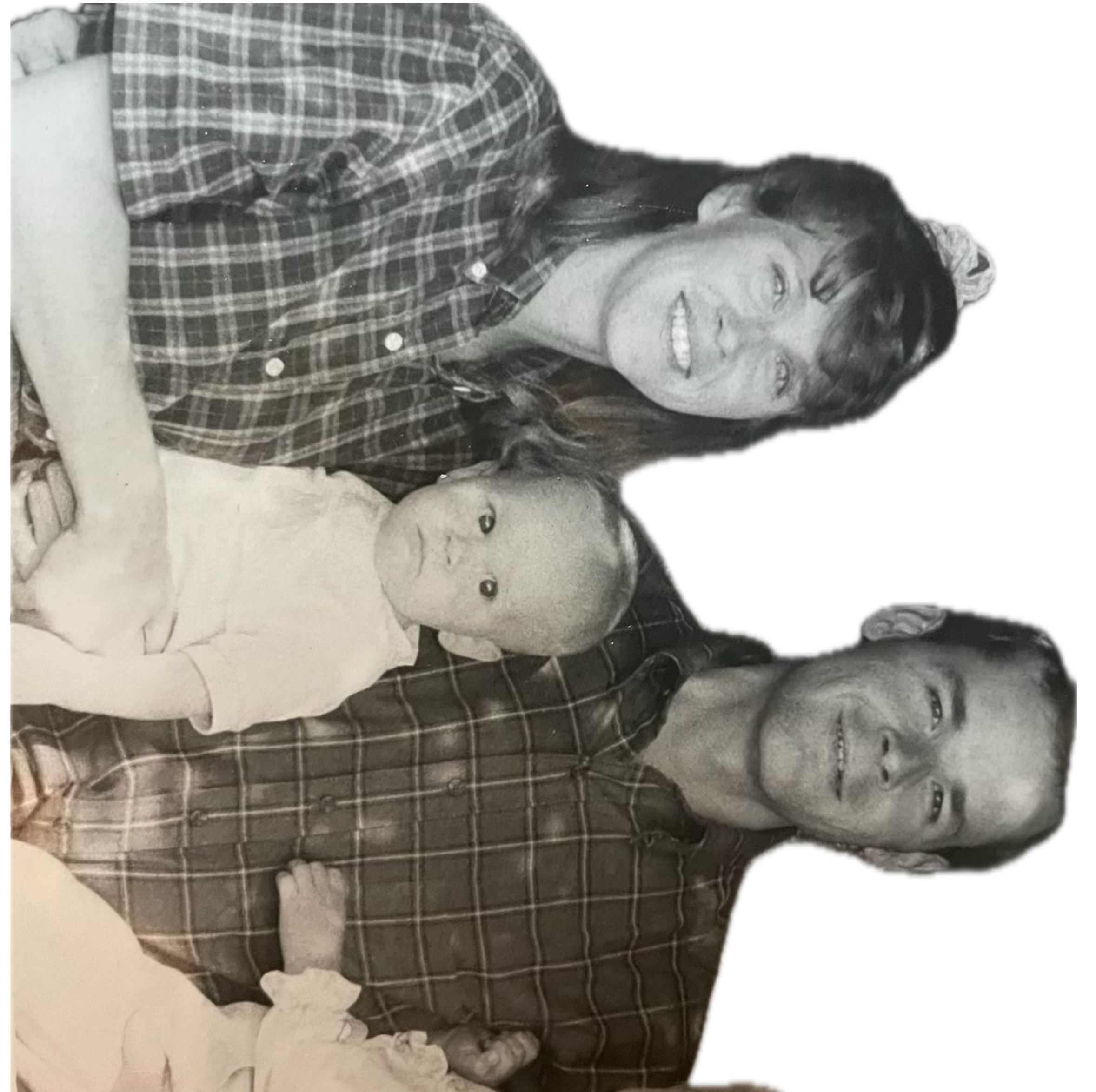
Spiritual Lessons from the Sabbath:

- “For one year the people were to depend wholly on the Lord, having faith in His arrangement as the Householder.”
- Nature is not God; God controls nature.
- “If God’s people obeyed His requirements and followed His directions in regard to tilling the soil, the land would be brought back to a prosperous and beautiful condition.”
- “In the laws which God gave for the cultivation of the soil, He was giving the people opportunity to overcome their selfishness and become heavenly-minded.” All quotes from Ms121, 1899



Our Sabbatical Testimony: 1994-95

- **FAMILY FOCUS** and **FREEDOM** from responsibility.
- Spent at Andrew's University (after teaching for six years in Kenya).
- Probably the most care-free time of our whole married life!



2011

3 months in Honduras

- The Lord provided for our airfares and a rent-free house in a little mountain village.
- Days were spent enjoying the simple pleasures of life and helping a local ministry.
- This is where the majority of work on our books was completed.





2018

A Year of TRAVEL and TRANSITION:

- 2 trips to Australia — plus NZ.
- First trip to Romania
- Road trip to Oregon
- 2 oldest boys getting married.
- 3rd son going away to school.

2025

A Year for REST and RENEWAL

- Not taking any speaking appointments (other than AdAgrA).
- No trainings.
- No plans for extensive travel.
- Focus is on mental, physical, spiritual and social R&R (along with caregiving).



Conclusion:

**No, the Sabbath is not a
binding burden;**

**For us it has been a
Bountiful Blessing!**

**We urge you to “taste and
see” for yourself!**

