

Sabbath Blessings Unfold

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Many people, even those who revere God's Ten Commandments, do not think that the Fourth Commandment is particularly important or playing a vital role in their spiritual journey. Shafaq Hiyat Masih is from Lahore, Pakistan; he used to be one of those who did not understand the significance and the impact of keeping Sabbath on his spiritual journey. He was working seven days a week as an electrician in a company. Moreover, he had very limited understanding of tithe and offering. Giving tithes and offerings used to be considered optional and individual's choice for him. Shafaz never thought of it as his spiritual discipline that could spur on his spiritual growth. Thus, his giving practice was an occasional, limited, and minimal giving.

A conversion of heart and mind, however, took place when Shafaq Hiyat Masih was attending a family ministry seminar in Naizbaig Seventh-day Adventist Church. He was invited by one of the pastors who knew him and his family. He later discovered not only the Sabbath keeping as one of the 10 Commandments of God, but he also found out the importance of being a faithful steward of God's providences and His blessings through giving tithes and offerings. He had become so interested at the first-hand message that he later decided to join care group meetings. Being in the regular care group meetings in the local church had helped him to learn more of the truth found in the Bible. Shafaq particularly took notice of Exodus 20:8 which says, "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." The word '*remember*' began to ring loudly in his ears that he could not contend with it anymore. He finally concluded that God was speaking to him and asking him to live a faithful life as His true child.

Shafaq Hiyat Masih went to his company the next day to ask that ever Saturday be his off duty. He was compelled by the Holy Spirit to do the right thing with his moral reasoning. He was determined to be faithful in his practice of keeping Sabbath holy because it is the special day that God has set aside for His children to worship Him, have fellowship with one another, and rest from physical labor that they need. Shafaq's supervisor, nonetheless, immediately refused his request and warned him of a possible dismissal if he insisted to have every Saturday day off. Without any hesitation, Shafaq presented his resignation and began working as a freelance electrician as to be able to take care of his family's need while keeping his faith on Sabbath alive.

Two months later, Shafaq Hiyat Masih went back to his former company to settle his provident fund and the final payment to him. To his great surprise, his supervisor told him that the company had never accepted his resignation; but instead, he asked him to continue his work in the company. He agreed after he had learned that the company also granted his request for his off-working day on Sabbaths . Soon, he also learned that the company had decided to make every Sunday as off-day as well. God has miraculously revealed Himself to be known, not only to Shafaq also to those who did not know Him. This change was indeed, the most unexpected and most unlikely change of working policy of the company as people are continually scampering for employment and nobody really should care for a worker's request.

Shafaq's desire to live in obedience by following God's command has miraculously brought a great blessing to himself and his co-workers in the same company. In our effort of maintaining faith, we can anticipate abundant blessings that God has stored for His faithful children. Shafaq's well-lived life continues to serve as a great inspiration, strong testimony, and a powerful witness to his associates until this day. His story has sealed us a great confidence, that if people remain faithful to God, regardless of circumstances, unlimited blessings will certainly be on their way. Shafaq Hiyat Masih is one among many Seventh-day Adventist Church members who have fully internalized the fact, that a genuine Christian life is the life that yields completely to God's commands!