

SABBATH OBSERVANCE

AN ANSWER TO SEVENTH
DAY ADVENTISM



10,000 EDITION



*"There remaineth therefore a Rest to the people
of God."—Heb. 4 : 9.*



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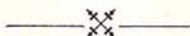
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SABBATH OBSERVANCE

An Answer to Seventh Day Adventism

A VERY MOOT question indeed among Christian people is that concerning the observance of a weekly day of rest. The principle that such a day should be recognized is quite generally acknowledged among Christians, and it is the subject of legislation in countries which profess to be "Christian"—or at least not heathen. But the reasons at the back of and prompting such observance are very various, and there is also a difference of opinion as to the day of the week that should be thus recognized as the Sabbath, or, as some call it, "the Lord's day." In legislative halls, the reasons that have the greatest weight in favor of the observance of a weekly rest day are usually secular, looking to the preservation of the physical fitness of the people. Among Christians, as such, the secular reasons are recognized and affirmed, but still weightier considerations are found in the opinion that the observance of such a day is divinely enjoined.

Some Christians think that if one day in seven be observed as a day of rest from ordinary labors, any day of the week will answer the purpose. Others claim that the first day of the week (commonly known as Sunday) is the one that should be so observed; while still others contend that the seventh day of the week (commonly known as Saturday) was divinely appointed as the rest day and that the appointment was never altered by the divine authority—the only

authority competent in the circumstances. The observers of the seventh day of the week are very severe in their criticisms of those who observe the first day, alleging that the observance of the seventh day is the seal of God with which all who are truly His are "sealed" (Rev. 7: 2-4), and that the observance of the first day is the "mark of the beast," marking out for wrath those who are only nominally God's people. (Rev. 14: 9-12.) These opinions and denunciations, it will be noticed, are based upon arbitrary interpretations of Apocalyptic visions. Some of those who observe the first day of the week as a day holy to the Lord are quite as strict in their observance as the adherents of seventh day observance are in theirs—perhaps more so. Both classes put themselves to much inconvenience, and often to trying self-sacrifice and pecuniary loss, for the sake of their opinions; and since their zeal is (as we believe) for God, we feel bound to acknowledge and honour it, without taking too much notice of the strictures sometimes laid by the one conscientious class upon the other, equally conscientious.

In view of the great differences of opinion above briefly referred to, it is manifest that not all can be correct. The various shades of Christian belief all claim Biblical support, but it is evident that at least some of them—perhaps all of them—have overlooked some things they should have considered. We are confident that this is the case, and that Scripture does not justify any of the positions above alluded to. There is in the Bible a well defined teaching concerning the Sabbath, and it shall now be our endeavour to unfold that teaching by reference to the Scriptures alone. No other authority is required or can be recognized. (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.) By the grace of God, the Holy Spirit guiding, as promised (John 14: 13), those who prayerfully search the Scriptures, seeking

not their own will or pleasure but God's, shall learn the truth and shall by it be freed from error and sin. (John 7: 17; 8: 31, 32.) We shall find, we believe, that the Scriptures will plainly show us—

1. When Sabbath observance began.
2. Why Sabbath observance was commanded.
3. Which day was to be observed, and why that day and not another.
4. Whether any alteration of the original command was made, and if so What and When.
5. The Present Status of Sabbath observance, and how related to Christian Liberty.

The History of Sabbath Observance

If it be asked—When did Sabbath observance begin? the observers of first and seventh days, respectively, will assert that the Sabbath began to be observed at least in Eden, and some will say in Heaven itself. To support this claim they refer to the following—

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 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. 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.”—Gen. 2: 1-3.

We have already seen* that the “days” of creation were not twentyfour-hour days, but epochs. In six of these epoch “days” the Lord God finished His creative work, and on the seventh day He rested therefrom—not, we may suppose, because He was weary, as men might be weary after six literal days of toil, but because the work was finished. The seventh “day,” the day of God's rest from creative exercise, was likewise an epoch. It began, as stated, after the creation of man had been accomplished, and

*“N.C. Advocate,” November, 1913.

it ended when God resumed His creative work by raising His Son from death on the third day after the crucifixion. The exercise of creative power thus resumed by the Almighty has since been continued in those who come unto God through Christ. The Apostle assures us that the power of God that raised up Jesus from the dead operates also at present in us, to quicken us from the death state of trespasses and sins, so that believers are *God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus*. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. (Eph. 1: 19 to 2: 10; 2 Cor. 5: 17.) The claim that Gen. 2: 1, 2 refers to a week of literal days is thus seen to be at least questionable.

But Gen. 2: 3 doubtless refers to the seventh day of a literal week. Yet it does not say that God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it to the dwellers in Eden, much less to the angels in heaven. On the contrary, an attentive reading of verse 3 shows that on a *subsequent* occasion, not here defined, God blessed and sanctified the seventh day, "because that in it He *had rested* [on the *previous* occasion] from all His work." The time and the occasion when God blessed and sanctified the seventh day were well known to the Jews, for whom the first five books of the Bible were written by Moses; therefore it was not necessary for specific reference to be made. It sufficed to intimate that the seventh day, and not some other, was sanctified on a certain occasion (that is, after Israel was delivered from Egypt), because God Himself on a previous occasion "*had rested*" on the seventh "day." It seems clear, therefore, that Gen. 2: 1-3 supports no inference that weekly Sabbath observance began either in Eden or previously in Heaven.

No Sabbath Commanded to the Ancients

The remainder of Genesis strengthens our conclusion in regard to Gen. 2: 1-3, for no other mention of

the Sabbath occurs in the book. Had Sabbath observance been commanded in Eden, those who called on the name of God in true piety after the Fall and before the Flood must have been told of it. But there is a complete *hiatus*, a profound silence, so that it does not appear that Abel, Enoch or Noah observed the Sabbath or knew anything about it.

After the Flood the same conditions continued for a long time. Abraham was called out of his heathen surroundings, and was promised a great blessing. He manifested his faith in many ways to God's pleasure, but nothing is said about him observing the seventh day of each week as a day holy to the Lord. Isaac and Jacob became heirs of the promise, and obtained a good report through their faith; but there is nothing to show that they observed the Sabbath or were expected to do so. And when the posterity of Jacob became slaves in Egypt, it was not stated that part of their distress was due to inability to observe the Sabbath. They knew nothing of it.

When Sabbath Observance Began

The first mention of a command to observe the Sabbath is found in Exodus. For about four thousand years man had been on the earth, but not until after the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt was the command given to observe the seventh day as a day of rest.

Having been led through the Red Sea, and having witnessed the Power of God manifested in the overthrow of Pharaoh's chariots and host, the Israelites journeyed three days into the wilderness and found no water. They came to Marah, and could not drink the water there, for it was bitter. The Lord showed Moses a tree, which on being cast into the waters made them drinkable. This occasion was used by the Lord to lay down the fundamental principle that it

was necessary that His laws and statutes be strictly kept. Moreover, He promised that obedience should be to their advantage, securing for them exemption from the diseases which God had brought upon the Egyptians. But as yet no statutes had been given them except that concerning the Passover.—Ex. 12: 14; 15: 22-26.

Pursuing their journey, the children of Israel came, on the fifteenth day of the second month after leaving Egypt, to the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai. The people murmured again against Moses and Aaron, lamenting the lack of flesh and bread. (Ex. 16: 1-3.) The Lord supplied quails and manna; and as the children of Israel were trying Him, proving Him, and seeing His works, He made this an occasion to prove them, whether they would walk in His law or no. He revealed to Moses that the manna would fall every day at a certain rate, but on the sixth day there would be a double supply. (Ex. 16: 4, 5.) Apparently Moses did not reveal the latter detail to the people, for on the sixth day the elders came to tell Moses about the double supply having been gathered, as though it were a new thing, requiring explanation. (V. 22.) This was promptly given—

This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord. . . . Six days shall ye gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.”—Ex. 16: 23-26.

Nevertheless some of the people did not believe, and they went out on the seventh day to gather the manna, but found none. The Lord was displeased by this disobedience; yet He was kind and lenient because this was the very first mention that the seventh day was to be a holy sabbath, different from other days. Had the people been accustomed to Sabbath observance, the Lord would doubtless have rebuked them very strongly, as He did on subsequent

occasions; but as the command was new to the people, the Lord rebuked their disobedience with words only—

“How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day.”—Ex. 16: 28-30.

We see, then, that sabbath observance was first commanded in the wilderness of Sin, and that it was a command to the children of Israel exclusively, for the Lord was not at that time promulgating commands to other peoples.

Date of the First Sabbath Observance

It is also possible to fix with some certainty the very date of the first sabbath that was observed. The arrival of the Israelites at the wilderness of Sin was on the fifteenth day of the second month, and there they murmured. (Ex. 16: 1.) On the evening of that day was the first flight of quails, and the first fall of manna occurred on the next morning, being the sixteenth day of the month, chosen by the Lord to be the first day of the week. The sixth day of the week was therefore on the twenty-first day of the second month, and the seventh day, marked by no fall of manna, was the twenty-second day of the second month after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. Year 22, in the year of the Exodus, would seem to have been the very beginning of the sabbaths commanded to the Jews to be regularly observed from that time out on each succeeding seventh day. Thus was Sabbath observance instituted, which later was formally commanded to the Jews as part of their written law.

The Law on the Tables and in the Books

In the third month after departure from Egypt, the children of Israel encamped before Mt. Sinai. Here the Lord proposed to them to enter into a covenant, and most willingly did the people agree to the proposal. (Ex. 19: 1-8.) On the appointed day the people approached the mount, and the Lord came down upon it in fire and smoke, with thunder and lightning and the sound of a trumpet, to deliver His commands to the people. With an audible voice, as recorded in Ex. 20: 1-17, the Lord gave the people that part of the law commonly called the ten commandments. By this time the people were so affrighted by the sights and sounds that they could bear them no longer; therefore they begged Moses to hear from the Lord the remainder of the law, and then communicate it to them: "but let not God speak with us, lest we die."—Ex. 20: 18-21.

The Deuteronomy version of this incident states that, after speaking the ten commandments with a great voice in the hearing of all the assembly of the people, "He added no more." (Deut. 5: 22.) Some of the present day advocates of seventh day observance refer to these four words as though they were intended to distinguish the ten commandments, audibly spoken to the people and subsequently written by the finger of God on two tables of stone, from the many other commandments of the law, given privately to Moses and by him written in a book, both the tables of stone and the book being afterwards placed in the ark of the covenant. (Deut. 31: 24-26; Heb. 9: 4.) But Deut. 5: 23-31 shows, in harmony with the account in Ex. 20, that the reason why the Lord "added no more" was because of the fright that overcame the people. Even Moses quaked with fear. (Heb. 12: 21.) The Israelites were not told to consider the ten commandments more important than the others, nor to think that the commandments

written on stone were eternal and those written in the books by Moses at God's command were only temporary. As a matter of fact, the chief of all the commandments, and the one next to it, the two on which hung all the law and the prophets, were not written on the tables of stone at all, but in the books; they were not spoken by the great voice in the hearing of all the assembly, but privately to Moses, by him to be communicated to the people. The Lord said to Moses, "Stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee *all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments*, which thou shalt teach them, *that they may do them* in the land which I give them to possess it"—thus emphasizing the importance of the commandments afterward written by Moses in the books.—Deut. 5: 31; Matt. 22: 34-40; Mark 12: 28-34; Luke 10: 25-28; Deut. 6: 4, 5; Lev. 19: 18.

Remember the Sabbath Day

The fourth of the ten commandments was the command to observe the seventh day as the sabbath of the Lord. (Ex. 20: 8-11.) It begins with the word, "Remember." This word is seized upon by those who think the seventh day was commanded in Eden, as though it should support their belief. Why, say they, should the Lord command the Israelites to *remember* the Sabbath day, if it were not already in existence and known to them? Our answer to this question is that the Sabbath was already in existence, and it had been observed before the command to "remember" it was given at Mt. Sinai; only it had not been in existence as long as the Seventh Day Adventists and some others suppose. Instead of being observed from time immemorial in heaven, and on earth from the days of Eden, the seventh day had been observed as a sabbath only a very few—possibly three or four—times before the command was given at the mount; that is, as already seen, from Yiar 22.

Why Command Sabbath Observance?

Two reasons are given for the institution of the sabbath. First, as a reminder that God was their Creator, and second, as a reminder that they were for a long period slaves in Egypt.

Why the Seventh Day?

Would not the observance of any other day of the seven have served God's purpose as well as the seventh day? Why should He have chosen that day and not another?

The children of Israel were commanded to observe the seventh day of the week as a sabbath because on that "day" the Lord rested from his creative work, having finished it all in the six "days." (Ex. 20: 11.) This passage is the complement of Gen. 2: 3. No other day would have suited the Lord's purpose as well as the seventh day. His intention, in part at least, was that the seventh day should bring before their minds thoughts of God as Creator. To have the Israelites continually kept in mind that they were working six days and resting the seventh, in imitation of God's work and rest, would doubtless have helped them much in their worship and meditation had they faithfully kept the commandment.

Slaves in Egypt

The Deuteronomy version of the ten commandments shows why the Lord enjoined rest from labor on the seventh day, and also why the children of Israel were commanded to give rest to their servants and slaves, and even their cattle—

"But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.

"And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of

Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: THEREFORE the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day."—Deut. 5: 14, 15.

This is illuminating. It states clearly that God commanded the seventh day to be observed as a day of rest by way of reminder of their previous experience in Egypt, and of God's goodness in bringing them out from the house of bondage. (Deut. 5: 6.) In Egypt they had been subject to constant toil and weariness, their taskmasters continually goading them on to harder work and longer hours. Each week the sabbath rest came round, they would be reminded also that their servants and employes should not be driven as they had been in Egypt. The servants, and even the animals, were to have their sabbath or rest by entire cessation of labor of all kinds.

The use of the word "therefore" in Deut. 5: 15 indicates that the action following this word was *consequent* upon the conditions preceding it. Now a consequent cannot, in the very nature of things, occur before its antecedents. Hence we conclude that the sabbath commandment *could not have been given before the Israelites were delivered from Egypt*. Those who think that Sabbath observance was in vogue from Edenic times are urged to ponder well the Lord's statement in Deut. 5: 14, 15. It shows why a sabbath was commanded to be observed by the Israelites, whereas no such command was given to their fathers. It should be conclusive.

The Sabbath a Sign, and part of a Perpetual Covenant

The wicked heathen neighbours of Israel kept no sabbath holy to Jehovah. Faithful observance of the Sabbath would therefore impress upon the minds of the people that they were God's holy people, separate

from the defilements surrounding them. Therefore the Lord imposed the death penalty upon every Israelite who defiled the Sabbath or did any work therein. They were not even to kindle a fire in their habitations on the Sabbath day; and the case is recorded of a man who was executed for gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. (Ex. 35: 1-3; Num. 15: 32-36.) By this means the Sabbath was made a perpetual sign and covenant.

“Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. . . . Whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever.”—Ex. 31: 12-17.

The rewards promised by the Lord to the Israelites who would faithfully observe this sign and covenant were very great. They might have to put their own will and pleasure aside; but the Lord would give them even greater joy instead.

“Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. . . . For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”—Isa. 56: 1-7.

“If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure [literally “clutching at business”], nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”—Isa. 58: 13, 14.

Such were some of the rewards for obedience and

penalties for disobedience of the law of Sabbath observance commanded to the children of Israel.

The "Olam" Covenant

Notwithstanding that the children of Israel were to "observe the sabbath throughout their generations for a *perpetual* covenant," the Lord told them, through His prophet Jeremiah, that He would some day make a New Covenant with them, "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt," when He gave them the holy sabbath of rest to keep. But by mentioning the New Covenant, God made the first or Law Covenant old; and, says the Apostle, stating a truism which all would recognize, "that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away."—Ex. 31: 16; Jer. 31: 31-34; Heb. 8: 13, R.V.

As it seems a contradiction of terms to say that a *perpetual* covenant would pass away, the point must be investigated, so that there remain no obstacle to faith in the integrity of God's Word.

The Hebrew word translated "perpetual" in Ex. 31: 16 and many other places is *olam*. This word has a great range, and is used to refer both to that which will end and that which will not end. Strictly speaking, *olam* is not equivalent to our word "endless," though it is translated "eternal" in Isa. 60: 15 and "everlasting" in a great number of instances. *Olam* is defined in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance as meaning "properly *concealed*, i.e., the *vanishing point*; generally *time out of mind* (past or future), i.e. (practically) *eternity*; frequently adverbially (especially with preposition prefixed) *always*."

It will thus be seen that when *olam* is used in the sense of "endless" or "eternal," it is by an extension of its proper meaning, *time out of mind*. Yet

a comparatively short period may by reason of unfavorable circumstances seem very long and tedious, and as though it would never end—"time out of mind." Such a period was the Babylonian captivity. It endured no more than seventy years, and it came to its end promptly at the time appointed; yet it is called *olam*, translated "perpetual," in Jer. 25: 9.

Olam is translated "old" in Micah 7: 14—"Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old." Manifestly a translation implying endlessness—in this case beginning-lessness—would have been altogether wrong.

Another occurrence of *olam*, bearing more particularly on our subject, is in Ex. 29: 9, where it was said of Aaron and his sons that "the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual (*olam*) statute." Yet where are the sons of Aaron to-day? They are certainly not filling the office of priest under the Law Covenant. Indeed, it is said that since Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed over 1800 years ago the genealogies of the Jews have become so mixed that it is impossible now to prove who is a son of Aaron. Evidently the "perpetual (*olam*) statute" of the priesthood of Aaron and his sons was not endless.

From the foregoing illustrations, which could be greatly multiplied, it can be seen that the use of the words "perpetual statute" to describe the law of Sabbath observance, which the Lord gave to Israel when He led them out of Egypt, is quite harmonious with the intimations given through Jeremiah and others that said covenant was already old and that it would some day vanish away in favor of the promised New Covenant.

The Law Changed

The Messiah was to be a priest as well as a king. Coming of the house of David of the tribe of Judah,

Christ could not be a priest of the Aaronic order, because Moses said nothing about the tribe of Judah supplying priests, only the tribe of Levi. Therefore in Psalm 110: 1-4 Messiah's priesthood is stated to be "after the order of Melchizedek." Whenever, therefore, the Priest after this new order would take His office, so that God should be worshipped through Him, the predicted change of covenant would have occurred. The Apostle mentions this as a strong argument, saying—

"For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."—Heb. 7: 12.

Has our Lord entered upon His priestly office? If so, we are bound to recognize that God's people are not now under the Mosaic law but under the law—whatever it is—that pertains to the New Covenant. That our Lord has entered upon His office as High Priest is abundantly shown by such statements as the following—

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession [or "confession"—R.V.]."—Heb. 4: 14.

"We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; . . . But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."—Heb. 8: 1-7.

Nailing the Law to Christ's Cross

The death of Christ is mentioned as the procuring cause of the "change of the law," which is shown to be not a change in the sense of revision of existing statutes, but something much more radical, even a "blotting out" and "taking away" of the Law with all its statutes and appurtenances. The temporary character of the Law covenant is also asserted, since it was but a "shadow," pointing forward to the substantial benefits to come through Christ, the new High Priest,

and His New Covenant. Righteousness could never have come by means of the Law; had it been possible for righteousness so to come, the death of Christ was in vain. (Gal. 2: 21; Rom. 8: 3, 4.) But it was necessary for Christ to die—even on the cruel cross—so that the Law covenant, which was a hindrance, an obstacle, and “contrary to us,” might be removed, and so that even those who were under the curse of the Law might be redeemed. (Gal. 3: 13.) Note well the Apostle’s striking language—

“And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; *blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS*; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”—Col. 2: 13-17; Eph. 2: 15.

Is it asked—How was the Law against and contrary to uncircumcised Gentiles, who were never under it? We reply that as long as the Law Covenant remained, and the worship of God was conducted by its high priest under its regulations, the only way for a Gentile to draw near to God would be by him becoming a proselyte under the Law, in which case he would be as fully subject to the Law and under its curse as a born Jew. So the Law was against both Jew and Gentile. But having been nailed to the cross of Christ, the Law is dead. Christ was raised from death by the power of God; not so the Law. It remains dead.

Moral and Ceremonial?

At this point the present day advocates of observance of the Jewish sabbath interpose an objection. They claim that the Mosaic Law was divided into

two parts, one being, according to their description, "moral," while the other was "ceremonial." And so they constantly use the phrases "moral law" and "ceremonial law," which suit their ideas very well, though they are not Scriptural expressions. Their claim further is that the "moral law" (as they call it) was written on the tables of stone, and the "ceremonial law" was written in the books. They tell us that in the Scriptures this distinction is recognized by calling the ten commandments the "law of the Lord," while the remainder of the Law is called the "law of Moses." And, finally, they claim that the ten commandments, written on the tables of stone, were not nailed to Christ's cross, were not taken out of the way, were not blotted out; but the other part of the law, written in the books, was the "ordinances" that were blotted out.

Undoubtedly some of the commandments given through Moses to the Israelites referred to morals, while others referred to ceremonials. But the division of the Law into two parts is an invention of the Sabbatarians, and cannot be justified by reference to Scripture. No such division was intimated when the Law was given. The reason why the Lord God ceased speaking to the people after giving out only ten commands was, as we have seen, because of their fright, not because He was finished with giving out commands concerning morals.

We have also seen that the very greatest of all the commandments concerning morals, the two on which depend all the Law and the prophets, were written in the books, and not on the tables of stone.

The Scriptures do indeed speak of "the law of the Lord," and "the law of Moses;" but they do not apply these terms respectively to the so-called "moral" and "ceremonial" laws. To the contrary, when Mary brought the infant Jesus to the temple in

compliance with certain ceremonial regulations, every thing done on that occasion was said to be "according to the law of the Lord," as well as of Moses.—Luke 2: 22-24, 39.

Our Savior regarded the Law as one, recognizing not the arbitrary, man-invented division claimed by the Sabbatarians. In His "Sermon on the Mount" the Lord referred to six commandments out of the Jewish Law. Every one of these had to do with morals; yet only two of them (Matt. 5: 21, 27) were written on the "stone tables," the other four (Matt. 5: 31, 33, 38, 43) being in the books. Our Lord made no difference, but set the two as well as the four aside by giving superior commands in their stead.

So we see the unscripturalness and the futility of this claim to divide the one Law. But the claim is as foolish as it is futile. It is contended by the Sabbatarians that the "ordinances" mentioned in Col. 2: 14 and Eph. 2: 15 were the Mosaic commands concerning meats, drinks, sacrifices, and all the various sabbath days and years *except* the weekly, seventh-day sabbath ("Special pleading" with a vengeance!). These, they say, were "against us," and were "blotted out." The folly of this claim lies in this, that ceremonial observances are at all times easier to keep than are commands to be moral. If therefore it were admitted for the moment that the Law could be divided as claimed, it would follow that the part of it "against us" would be the commandments concerning morals. We might readily enough conform to the prescribed mode of worship, and might faithfully pay our tithes and bring our sacrifices to the altar. These requirements would not be "against us." But could fallen, imperfect men conform to the command, "Thou shalt not covet?" Is it likely that imperfect beings such as ourselves could at all times observe the command, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor?" And to turn to one

of the commands written in the books—is it possible that any of us, being what we are, could at all times faithfully and truly love his neighbor as himself? No! Therefore we see that if any distinction were to be recognized between portions of the Law of Moses, ceremonies would be much less against us than moral commands. The latter would indeed at all times be “contrary to us,” and on the basis of Sabbatarians’ claims should be the part to be blotted out.

We conclude, then, that the claim to divide the Law into two parts, retaining one and abolishing the other, is inadmissible. The Law was given as one, and it was removed as one. It was not made in the Garden of Eden, nor with the fathers of Israel, but with those who were in the presence of God at Mt. Sinai. (Deut. 5: 1-5.) It was given to make sin appear more sinful (Rom. 7: 13), and was to remain only for a limited time, until the Seed, our Lord Jesus Christ, should come. (Gal. 3: 19.) When He was crucified, the Law was nailed to His cross, and so came to its everlasting end. (Col. 2: 14.) The Law began at Mt. Sinai; it expired on Mt. Calvary. “The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.”—John 1: 17; Rom. 6: 14.

Shall we Sin?

If we are not under the law, but under grace, what then? Shall we sin? (Rom. 6: 15.) By no means! If the Lord has made with us a New Covenant, whereby He can be merciful to our unrighteousness, we are not to presume on His mercy. He will be faithful and just to forgive our sins if we confess them, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, will cleanse us, taking away our sins as the blood of bulls and goats could never do; but pride and presumption would severely tax even divine mercy. We need to remember that God abhors the proud, and we need to pray

to be kept back from presumptuous sins, lest they have dominion over us.

Commands to Christians

Since the Mosaic law has been taken out of the way, have no commands been given to us who worship God through the "new way" opened up through the vail, that is to say, through the sacrifice of Christ? Have we no specific commands concerning details, or has the Lord merely given to us the new, general command to love one another as He loved us, which is something more than keeping an even balance between self-love and love of the neighbour?—John 13: 34; 15: 12, 13.

Undoubtedly we have definite commands, as all must see who read the New Testament. We are not to lie; we must not steal. We must not be angry, nor allow corrupt communications to proceed out of our mouths. We are to put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, and malice. We are to be kind, tenderhearted, and of a forgiving disposition towards each other, thereby imitating God, who for Christ's sake has forgiven us. (Eph. 4: 22-32; Col. 3: 5-17.) Besides, it would be easy to refer to many New Testament regulations concerning masters and servants, the home, and the church.

But, says some one, many of the things you now refer to are identical with the commands given by Moses. True, we reply; many of them are, but not all. The "new commandment" is not to be found in the Mosaic law, nor anything like it. And there are many commands in the Mosaic law that are not repeated in the New Covenant. Moreover, the New Covenant commands (such as prohibition of lying, stealing, etc.) that are identical with those of the Law Covenant are not observed by us because they were Law Covenant commands, nor is our observance of

these to be understood as an admission on our part that we are under the Law Covenant. If a subject of the Russian empire becomes a subject of the British Empire, he finds that a number of the laws of his adopted country are the same as those of his native land. But he now obeys these laws as British laws, not as Russian; and if he appeal to the British courts he cannot say, Such and such are the laws of Russia, and on them I base my appeal. Similarly, we refrain from stealing, lying, etc., not because Moses, *their* mediator, said so, but because Christ Jesus, *our* Mediator, so commands.

Christ Commanded No Day

This is an important point, affecting our attitude toward the observance of the seventh day as a Sabbath. Moses certainly commanded such observance. But that is not sufficient for us, because we are not under Moses. We are under the One whose coming Moses foretold, who was to be obeyed in all things.—Deut. 18: 15-19; Acts 3: 22-24.

The law of Moses having been taken away, we being under Christ, we therefore ask—Did *Christ* command to keep the seventh day as a sabbath? The answer is—No. Therefore the Apostle says—“Let no man therefore judge you in respect of the sabbaths.” (Col. 2: 16. The word “*days*” in this verse is not in the original, but “sabbaths” is in the plural, referring, as it is unqualified, to the entire system of sabbaths commanded by the Lord, comprising the seventh day of each week, certain special days in connection with the great annual feasts, the Day of Atonement, each seventh year, and the Jubilee year.—Lev. chapters 23, 25.)

We ask again—Did *Christ* command to keep the first day of the week, as a sabbath? Again the answer is—No.

Once more we ask—Did *Christ* command to keep

any day whatsoever as a sabbath? Once more—No. The words of our Lord and His inspired apostles contain no such command. Then where do we stand in regard to the observance of the seventh, the first, or any other day of the week as a day of rest?

Called unto Liberty

Says the Apostle, instructing the Galatian brethren, who were troubled over matters connected with the Law—

“Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty. With freedom did Christ make us free. Stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”—Gal. 5: 13, 1, according to ancient MSS.

Liberty is a much abused word, and the adversary has made use of it to deceive and mislead some of the unwary members of the Lord's flock. Even some that had clean escaped from error have afterwards been enticed with a bait cast to their natural desires by the false teachers who speak great swelling words of vanity. And the bait is nothing else than a promise of liberty. But liberty to the natural desires of the fallen flesh can mean only one thing, can attain but one end—death. (2 Pet. 2: 18-22.) It behoves us therefore to scan these specious promises of “liberty,” and not be deceived by them. True liberty is good, and life without it would be a misery. But liberty is not license; therefore, lest the brethren be misled, the Apostle said—

“Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”—Gal. 5: 13, 16, 18.

Have we, then, as far as Christ's commands to us are concerned, liberty in regard to the days of the week? Undoubtedly we have. The liberty referred to by the Apostle is freedom from the Law Covenant symbolized by Jerusalem. (Gal. 4: 24-31.) But we must never use our liberty for an occasion to the flesh. Liberty must always be

used in the sight of God to His glory, and in service of His people. And if the use of our liberty shall cause some weaker brother to offend his conscience, we are always at liberty to curtail our liberty in regard to meats, drinks, and days. (1 Cor. 8: 7-13.) The New Covenant—therefore Christian—position in regard to the observance of days is stated by the Apostle—

“One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord.”—Rom. 14: 5, 6.

We are all the Lord's servants, and He is our Master; therefore we must not condemn one another in regard to these things, but must leave the judging to the Lord. He that observes the day must not condemn him who observes it not; he who does not observe the day is not authorized to sit in condemnation on him who observes it. If one brother seem somewhat weak in his appreciation of the Christian's liberty in regard to these things, the others, stronger, are to receive him but not to doubtful disputations; they are not to despise the weaker brother. They may, and should, try to instruct him; but they should also remember that they are at liberty to restrict themselves in the interest of the weaker brother's spiritual wellbeing.—Rom. 14: 1-23.

Obey the Law of the Land

Since the Lord has not specified that His people since Pentecost must observe a certain day of the week as a sabbath to Himself, we are left free to follow the law of the land, which in most countries of Christendom orders cessation of ordinary work on the first day of the week. In fact, we are commanded to be subject to the powers that be in all these

things, so that as law abiding residents we are under obligation to obedience.—Rom. 13: 1-7.

We conform the more willingly to this law of the land, because it gives facilities for assembly, worship, and building up of each other on the most holy faith, opportunities which should be more sought after and more used as we see the great day drawing on. We thank God that in His providence such a day is made available to His people, and we consider that no Christian glorifies God or does himself credit who, for the sake of parading his "liberty," despises this very beneficial provision of the secular law. We could not have chosen a day of the week more appropriate than the first for general meeting together, and we are glad thus to be able to follow the example of the early church, in their assembling on the first day of the week. Therefore we exhort all to conform to the letter and spirit of this law of the land, which generally seeks to be fair to all, since it usually provides that those who work on Sundays shall have some other day for rest.

The Christian's Sabbath Rest

But it must always be remembered that this law of the land concerning rest from ordinary labors on the first day of the week does not make the day holy in God's sight. Neither does the law of Turkey make Friday (the Mohammedan rest day) a holy day in God's sight. Nor would the seventh day of the week be holy in God's sight if ordained by the law of the land as a rest day. The seventh day was holy to the Lord by His own command from about Yiar 22 in the year of the Exodus until that law was nailed to Christ's cross. Since then the seventh day has no sanctity more than any other.

Nevertheless, the Christian has a Sabbath rest, commanded by God, and to be as carefully observed as was the seventh day of the week, with rewards and

penalties appointed. The seventh day sabbath was a "shadow" of the Christian sabbath, which is the "body," or substance.

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."—Col. 2: 16, 17. See also 1 Cor. 10: 1-11.

Having seen that the New Covenant appoints no day of the week to be observed as a sabbath to the Lord, it must be quite clear to us that the "body" sabbath, which is of Christ, does not consist in the observance of a day, as the "shadow" sabbath of the Law did. If the Christian sabbath consisted in the observance of the first day instead of the seventh, it would merely be another "shadow."

The explanation of the Christian Sabbath is found in Heb. 4. In chapter 3, the Apostle deals with the apostasies of the Israelites in the wilderness, and shows that God swore that those sinners should not enter into his rest (meaning the promised land of Palestine) on account of their unbelief. Then he shows that although the seventh day was being kept more or less faithfully, and the children of Israel had been led into the promised land, the Psalmist long afterward spoke of *still another* rest—

"Again he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of *another* day."—Heb. 4: 7, 8, margin.

On this he bases his conclusion that there is still a sabbath rest for the people of God, but it is not that observance of the seventh day commanded in the Law, nor is it an entrance into Palestine, since our calling is heavenly (Heb. 3: 1), not earthly. He says—

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."—Heb. 4: 9.

Then he shows what our sabbath is: namely, an entry into a rest *like that of God*.

"And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. . . . If they shall enter into MY rest."—Heb. 4: 4, 5.

But how can we enter into such rest? Are we to cease our carpentering, baking, farming, etc., etc.? The Apostle cannot mean so, for he says in another place, if any will not work, he shall not eat. (2 Thess. 3: 10.) How then can we cease from our own works? for that is what we have to do—

"For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."—Heb. 4: 10.

The way to enter into the God-like rest is to have faith in Christ, to trust in His finished work on the cross to make us acceptable to God. God's work was finished from the foundation of the then world in Eden, and He rested. (Heb. 4: 3.) At the cross was laid the foundation of a new "world," and it is for us to rest in the work there finished. Having entered into this rest through belief (Heb. 4: 3), we recognize that salvation is through faith, and not of our own works, lest any man should boast. No flesh is to glory in God's presence, for Christ is made unto us every needful thing and qualification. We are God's workmanship in Christ.—1 Cor. 1: 29-31; Eph. 2: 8-10.

But our rest is not one of idleness; it is only a rest from *our own* works. Six days (as it were) we have labored, and have done our own works. Having now entered into the antitypical rest day, from the moment we became believers in Jesus, we are now and for evermore in the service of God, seeking not our own wills, but His; doing the works which He has appointed that we should walk in them (Eph. 2: 10); worshipping Him in every act of life—eating, drinking, buying, selling, everything. These works of

every day life are no longer secular; they have been made sacred; the common task has been glorified.

“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; *for ye serve the Lord Christ.*”—Col. 3: 22-24.

Our Sabbath in Christ is therefore not an occasional day but a long one, perpetual and uninterrupted, a perfect imitation of the rest into which God entered from the foundation of the old world. We enter upon our Sabbath by the exercise of faith, and we observe it unbroken by the maintenance of the same faith. We look forward with joyful anticipation to the entrance into the “high places,” not of the earth, as promised to those who observed the “shadow” sabbath (Isa. 58: 13, 14), but of heaven itself (Heb. 3: 1; 1 Peter 1: 4, 5), which will be the grand culmination of our Sabbath keeping—the rest that remains.

“Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”—Heb. 4: 11.

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