



The Sabbath Day

*Should Christians Keep the Seventh Day, or the First Day, or Both?
What is the Christian's True Sabbath-Keeping?*

SEVEN is a very prominent number in the Bible—in everything relating to the Divine program. In Gen. 1 the Sabbath Day is referred to in a figurative way in speaking of the seventh epoch of God's creation on our earth—bringing order out of chaos. Not until the Law was given to Israel was the day sabbath made obligatory on anyone. And since that Law Covenant was made with the one nation (Israel) and none other (Ex. 34: 27; Deut. 5: 2, 3), the Sabbath requirements of that Law apply to that nation only. This does not signify that the setting apart of a certain time for rest would be of advantage to the Jew only, nor that a special seventh day devoted to God would be disadvantageous to all people. It merely means that God entered into covenant relationship with the one nation only, and hence to them only He told His will, His Law—obedience to which He made the foundation of the blessing He promised to that people.

There is no room to question the import of the fourth commandment of the Jewish Law. It distinctly commanded that the seventh day of the week should be to the Jews a rest day, in which no work of any kind should be done, either by parent or child, employer or servant, male or female, ox or ass, or any other creature owned by a Jew (Ex. 20: 8-11). It was a *rest* day pure and simple. Divine worship was not commanded to be done on that day—not because God would be displeased to have Divine worship on that day or on any other day, but because there is a reason connected with the matter which related, not to *worship*, but to *rest*, as we shall see. The strictness of this Law upon Israel is fully attested by the fact that on one occasion, by Divine command, a man was stoned to death for merely picking up sticks on the Sabbath Day (Num. 15: 32-36). Therefore, it is plainly to be seen that the Law given to Israel on this subject meant what it said to the very letter.

JESUS NOT LAX IN SABBATH-KEEPING

In the New Testament Jesus is supposed by some to have taught a laxity in the matter of Sabbath observance, but this is quite a misunderstanding. Jesus, born a Jew, born "under the Law" (Gal. 4: 4), was as much obligated to keep that Law in its very letter as was any other Jew. And He did not, of course, violate the obligation in the slightest degree (Matt. 5: 17). The Scribes and Pharisees had strayed away from the real spirit of the Law in many particulars. Their tradition, represented at the present time by their Talmud, attempted to explain the Law, but really, as Jesus said, frequently made it void, meaningless, absurd. *E.g.*, according to the traditions of their Elders, it was breaking the Sabbath, if one were hungry, to rub the kernels of wheat in his hands and blow away the chaff and eat the grain, as the disciples did one Sabbath Day in passing through the wheat field. The Pharisees called attention to this and wanted Jesus to reprove the disciples, because, according to their thought, this simple process was labor—work—reaping and threshing and winnowing. Jesus resisted this absurd misinterpretation of the Law and by His arguments proved, to anyone willing to be taught, that the Scribes and Pharisees had mistaken

the Divine intention—had misconstrued the Law of the Sabbath (Matt. 12: 1-8; Mark 2: 23-28). On several occasions He healed the sick on the Sabbath Day. Indeed, the majority of His healings were done on that day, greatly to the disgust of the Pharisees, who claimed that He was a law breaker in so doing. We cannot suppose that Jesus performed these miracles to irritate the Pharisees; rather we are to understand that their Sabbath Day typified the great Sabbath, which is in the future—the period of the Messianic reign and the healing of all earth's sorrows.

Jesus clearly pointed out to the Scribes and Pharisees that they were misinterpreting the meaning of the Divine arrangement: that God did not make man merely to keep the Sabbath, but that He made the Sabbath for, in the interest of, mankind. Hence everything really needful for man's assistance would be lawful on the Sabbath Day, however laborious it might be. Indeed, Jesus carried the thought still farther and pointed out to His hearers the absurdity of their position—for, He said, if any of you should have an ox or an ass fall into the pit on a Sabbath Day, would you leave him to die and thus suffer loss, as well as allow the animal to be in pain? Assuredly they would not, and assuredly they would be justified in helping any creature out of trouble on that day. Then said Jesus, If so much might be done for a dumb creature, might not a good work of mercy and help for mankind be properly enough done on the Sabbath Day?

THE SEVENTH DAY STILL A SABBATH

A mistake made by many Christians is the supposition that the Law Covenant which God made with Israel ceased, passed away. On the contrary, as the Apostle declares, "The law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth" (Rom. 7: 1). The Jewish Law is as obligatory upon the Jew today as it was upon his fathers in the days of Moses. Only death (either actual death, or coming into Christ and thus becoming dead to the Law—v. 4; Rom. 10: 4) could set the Jew free from that Law Covenant until, in God's due time, it shall be enlarged and made what God, through the prophet (Jer. 31: 31-34), styles a New Covenant—a New Law Covenant. That will take place after the Mediator of the New Covenant shall have been raised up from among the people. That Prophet will be like unto Moses, but greater—the antitype. That Prophet will be the glorified Christ—Jesus the Head and the completed Church, who are frequently spoken of as members of His Body, and sometimes styled the Bride, the Lamb's Wife (Rev. 21: 9). This antitypical Mediator (Acts 3: 22, 23), under the New Law Covenant which He will then establish, will assist the Jews (and all who come into harmony with God through Him) back to that human perfection in which they will be able to keep the Divine Law perfectly in every particular. This great Mediator, Messiah, will for 1,000 years do this great work (Rev. 20: 4, 6).

As stated above, the Law Covenant is still in force upon every Jew; but it is not in force upon any but Jews, as it never has been in force upon any other people. During the Gospel Age, between the death of Christ and the inauguration of the New Covenant, Jesus, as the great High Priest, has been offering the "better sacrifices" mentioned by St. Paul (Heb. 9: 23) and described in the type in Lev. 16. The first part of the great High Priest's sacrifice was the offering of the human body which He took for that purpose when He "was made flesh"—"a body hast thou prepared me" "for the suffering of death" (John 1: 14; Heb. 10: 5; 2: 9). The second part of His

"better sacrifices," the offering of His Mystical Body—the Church, began at Pentecost. He became their Advocate. He accepted them as His members on the earth; and their sufferings thenceforth were His sufferings so fully that He could say of them to Saul of Tarsus, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts 9: 4, 5). These, accepted as His representatives in the flesh, their blemishes covered by their Advocate's merit, were begotten by the Heavenly Father of the Holy Spirit, to be members of the New Creation—the spiritual Body of Christ, of which He is the Head.

We remarked above that the Sabbath Day, still in full force and its observance obligatory upon the Jew, is not upon other nationalities. We should modify this statement by the remark that there are some who mistakenly endeavor to be Jews and try to get under the Law Covenant provisions as Sabbath-keepers, *etc.* St. Paul recognized this tendency in his day. Note his words to the Christians of Galatia, who were not by nature Jews but Gentiles. He says, "Ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" (Gal 4: 21; 3: 1.) He proceeds to show them that the Jews are in bondage to their Law and can never get eternal life under it. His argument then is that if the Jews cannot get life by keeping the Law, it would be foolish for Gentiles to think that they could secure Divine favor and everlasting life by keeping the Law. He declares, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his [God's] sight" (Rom. 3: 20). The only way to obtain justification in God's sight is by the acceptance of Christ; and the only way we can maintain that justification is by a full consecration to be His disciples and to be faithful unto death in following in the Master's footsteps—as it is written, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, ... present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12: 1).

CHRISTIANS AND THE LAW

St. Paul did not mean that Christians should not strive to keep the Divine Law, but that they should not put themselves *under* it as a *Covenant*, nor think that by striving to oppose the Law Covenant they would get or maintain harmony with God and gain the reward of everlasting life. On the contrary, he declares in so many words, "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after [according to] the flesh, but after [according to] the Spirit" (Rom. 8: 4). His meaning is clear. The Decalogue was never given to Christians, but it is quite appropriate that Christians should look back to that Decalogue and note the spirit of its teachings and strive to conform their lives thereto in every particular.

But what is the spirit of the Decalogue? Our Lord Jesus clearly set it forth to be—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul [being], and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," and ... "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12: 30, 31). Our Lord not only kept the Law, but He magnified it, or showed it to have greater proportions than the Jews ever supposed it had—length and breadth, height and depth, beyond the ability of fallen humanity to perform; and He made that Law honorable (Isa. 42: 21). The Jews, having tried to keep the Divine Law for more than sixteen centuries, had reason to doubt if anyone could keep it in a way satisfactory to God. But the fact that Jesus did keep the Law perfectly, and that God

was satisfied with His keeping of it, made the Law honorable—proved that it was not an unreasonable requirement—not beyond the ability of a perfect man.

In Matt. 5, Jesus showed the spirit or deeper meaning of several of the commandments; for instance, He indicated that the command, Thou shalt do no murder, would be violated by anyone becoming angry and manifesting in any degree an injurious or murderous spirit (comp. 1 John 3: 15). Our Lord declared that the commandment respecting adultery could be violated by the mind without any overt act—the simple desire to commit adultery if an opportunity offered would be a violation of the spirit of that command. It is this magnified conception of the Ten Commandments that the Apostle says Christians are better able to appreciate than did the Jews, because of having received the Holy Spirit. And it is this highest conception of the Divine Law which is fulfilled in us (Christians—footstep followers of Jesus) who are walking through life, not according to the flesh and its desires and promptings, but according to the Spirit—the spirit of the Divine Law, the spirit which the Father hath sent forth into our hearts—the desire to be like Him who is the Fountain of love and purity.

THE SPIRIT OF THE SABBATH

As there is another or deeper meaning to the other commandments than was understood by the Jews, so it is also with the fourth, which enjoins the keeping of the seventh day as a day of rest or Sabbath. The word *Sabbath* signifies *rest*, and its deeper or antitypical meaning to the Christian is the *rest of faith*. The Jew, unable to keep the Mosaic Law and unable, therefore, to get everlasting life under the Law Covenant, was exhorted to flee to Christ; and, by becoming dead to the Law Covenant, by utterly renouncing it, he was privileged to come into membership in Christ (Rom. 7: 4)—to become a sharer in the Covenant of Sacrifice. So doing, he was promised rest from the Law and its condemnation, because "to them that are in Christ there is no condemnation" (Rom. 8: 1)—the merit of Christ covers the shortcomings of all those who are striving to walk in His steps, and the Divine Spirit and Word give them the assurances of Divine favor, which ushers them into peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ—ushers them into *rest*. Thus the Apostle declares, "We which have believed do enter into [Sabbath] rest" (Heb. 4: 3). Moreover, the Apostle indicates that although we have entered into a rest of faith now, through faith and obedience to Christ, Christians have a still greater rest awaiting them beyond their resurrection, when they shall enter into the rest which is in reservation for those that love the Lord.

FIFTIETH DAY AND FIFTIETH YEAR

We are reminded that Israel had two systems of Sabbaths—one of Sabbath Days and the other of Sabbath Years. The Sabbath Days began to count in the Spring. It was a multiple of seven. Seven times seven days (forty-nine days) brought them to the Jubilee day, the fiftieth day, which was styled Pentecost. Pentecost never had its true meaning until the Lord, as "the firstfruits of them that slept," arose from the dead (1 Cor. 15: 20). Then immediately the seven times seven,

plus one, began to count, and on the fiftieth day the Holy Spirit was shed abroad upon all those "Israelites indeed" who, already consecrated, were waiting in the upper room for the antitypical High Priest to make satisfaction for their sins and to shed forth upon them the Holy Spirit, as the evidence of their restoration to Divine favor. Immediately they had peace with God. Immediately they *entered* into rest. Immediately they realized that they were children of God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, that they might in due time become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord. And is it not true that throughout this Gospel Age under the Gospel call, all who followed in the footsteps of Jesus and the disciples, all who renounced sin, trusted in Jesus and fully consecrated their lives to Him, became recipients of the Holy Spirit and similarly entered into *His* rest? Only those who have entered into this rest and joy of the Spirit can fully appreciate it.

Now let us glance at the Sabbath Year. Every seventh year the land had its rest. And seven times seven (forty-nine) brought them up to the fiftieth year, or the Year of Jubilee, in which year all debts were canceled and each Israelite returned to his own inheritance. It was a year of rest, peace, joy. That Jubilee pictures the glorious Restitution Times of Messiah's Kingdom, which, we believe, are nigh, even at the door. When these times will be ushered in, all faithful new creatures will have reached the heavenly condition, to be forever with the Lord. Their rest (Sabbath-keeping) will have reached its completion, its perfection, and throughout that antitypical Jubilee the blessings of Divine favor will be gradually extended to the whole world, that every creature desirous of coming into harmony with God may enter into the rest which God has provided for the poor, groaning creation through the great Redeemer.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SABBATH

From what we have already seen it is manifest that God has put no Sabbath obligations upon the Christian—neither for the seventh day nor for any other day of the week. He has, however, provided for him a rest in the Lord, which is typified by the Jewish Sabbath Day. Do we ask upon which day we should celebrate this rest? We answer that we should be in this heart attitude of joy, rest, peace in the Lord and in His finished work, every day. So, then, the Christian, instead of having a Sabbath rest day, as the Jew, has rest perpetual—every day. And instead of its being merely a rest for his body, it is better—a rest for his soul, a rest for his entire being. It can be enjoyed wherever he may be, for his is the constant rest of faith. This is the spiritual antitype to the spiritual Israelites, of the Law Sabbath given to the natural Israelites. Whoever quibbles for the Sabbath Day of the Jew shows clearly that he has not understood nor appreciated as yet, to the full at least, the antitypical Sabbath which God provided for spiritual Israel through Christ.

But is there not a compulsion to the Christian to observe one day in the week sacred to the Lord? Yes, we answer; there is an obligation upon him such as there is upon no one else in the world. He is obligated by his covenant to the Lord to keep every day sacred to the Lord. Every day he is to love the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his being, with all his strength; every day he is to love his neighbor as himself. And while striving to the best of his ability to conform to this spirit of the Divine Law, and while realizing that the blood of Jesus Christ our Redeemer cleanses us from all the imperfections contrary to our intentions—these may rest

in the peace and joy of the Lord continually. "We which have believed do enter into rest." There is no day of the week commanded to the spiritual Israelite as respects physical or mental rest—the latter they may have always, and the former may be ordered by human regulations for one day or for another. The Christian is commanded to be subject to the laws that be, in all non-essential matters—not matters of conscience.

THE RIGHT USE OF LIBERTY

Let us remember, however, that our liberty in Christ is the liberty from the weight and condemnation of sin and death. Let us not think specially of a liberty from the Jewish restraints of the Seventh Day nor think especially of the fact that no day above another has been commanded upon Christians in the Bible. Let us rather consider this liberty as of minor consequence and importance as compared with our liberation from the power of sin and death. If one day or another be set apart by human lawgivers, let us observe their commands. Let us be subject to every ordinance of men. In Christian lands the first day of the week is often set apart by law. Shall we ignore this law and claim that God has put no such law upon us and that we should have our liberty to do business, *etc.*? Nay, verily; rather, on the other hand, let us rejoice that there is a law which sets apart one day in seven for rest from business, *etc.* Let us use that day as wisely and as well as we are able for our spiritual upbuilding and for assistance to others. What a blessing we have in this provision! How convenient it makes it for us to assemble ourselves together for worship, praise and the study of the Divine Word, as well as to witness the Truth to others! And if earthly laws provided more than one Sabbath (rest) day in the week we might well rejoice in that also, for it would afford us that much more opportunity for spiritual things.

Nor should our knowledge of the liberty we enjoy in Christ ever be used in such a manner that it might stumble others. Our observance of the Sabbath enjoined by the law of the land should be most complete—to the very letter—that our good be not evil spoken of—that our liberty in Christ and freedom from the Mosaic Law be not misunderstood to be a business or pleasure license, but a privilege and opportunity for the worship and service of the Lord, and the building up of the brethren in the most holy faith.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS' OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

THE following claims regarding the Sabbath Day (enumerated below), made by Seventh Day Adventists, we consider worthy of reply here:

SABBATH GIVEN AFTER COVENANT BEGAN

(1) The Sabbath Day was observed before the Law was given at Sinai (Ex. 16: 23-30).

Answer: Yes; but the Law Covenant was really in force from the time Israel left Egypt. The Passover was a prominent feature of the Law, and it was instituted the night before their exodus began (Ex. 12: 41-43). Moses had already been appointed of God, and God's dealings were with him only, as the typical father or representative of that nation. In accepting and obeying Moses, Israel had already made the covenant to obey the laws he would give. The demonstration at Sinai was a *formal* ratification and acknowledgment of their covenant.

The Sabbath Day was instituted about two weeks before the formal giving of the Law on tables of stone at Sinai; *viz.*, at the giving of the manna in the wilderness—a most favorable opportunity for giving them an object lesson in the double supply of manna on the sixth day, and none on the seventh (Ex. 16: 5, 22-30). It was inaugurated as a *memorial* of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, in which they had no rest from their taskmasters. This is clearly stated in Deut. 5: 15: "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 a stretched-out arm: *therefore*, the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." The Law Covenant is continually referred to as dating from that time—"When I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt" (Heb. 8: 9; Jer. 31: 32; Ezek. 20: 5, 6).

SABBATH DAY NOT ORDAINED AT CREATION

(2) God *ordained* the Sabbath at creation (Gen. 2: 2, 3; Ex. 20: 11), and evidently it was observed all along, and was merely repeated and enforced in the Law given by Moses.

Answer: This is a mistake. The account does say that God rested on the seventh creative day, that He blessed it and sanctified it, but not one word is said about the seventh day having been commanded or *ordained*, until it was given to Israel. On the contrary, there is no mention made of the Sabbath during the entire period of 2,000 years preceding Israel's exodus from Egypt, and then we are told, as quoted above, that it was ordained *for* that nation and as a *memorial* of *their* deliverance. From the entire account it is evident that it was something new to the Israelites. Its explanation to them (Ex. 16: 20-30), as well as Moses' uncertainty in the case of the *first* transgression of this law (Num. 15: 32-36), proves that it was *new*, that it had not been previously known among them or their fathers. We should remember, too, that the account in Genesis was

written by Moses, and that he very appropriately called attention to the fact that the seventh-day Sabbath commanded in the Law was not without a precedent. But while God's resting on the seventh day of His week was properly noticed as a precedent for Israel's observance of a seventh-day Sabbath, it does not at all follow that God's rest-day was a 24-hour day; nor that God *rested* in the same manner that the Israelites were commanded to rest.

The Apostle (Heb. 4: 3, 4, 9-11) explains that Israel did not enter into the real *rest* or Sabbath, although they zealously observed the seventh day. He says that the reason was, that they did not exercise the *faith* by which alone the rest can be enjoyed. "We which have believed do enter into rest [and thus have a *perpetual* Sabbath]." "For he that is entered into His rest [the rest of the heart, in faith, given by Christ], he also hath ceased from his *own works* [from attempting self-justifying works], as God did from His [works—*i.e.*, as God left the work of *redemption* and recovery for Christ to do, so we also accept Christ's finished work, and rest in faith therein, with all the obedience possible]." Those who trust in the Law Covenant or who blend its requirements with those of the Grace Covenant, the Covenant of Sacrifice (Psa. 50: 5), cannot fully enjoy this rest, which is for the consecrated only.

God's rest day, instead of being a 24-hour day, is a day 7,000 years long. It began after man's creation. When Adam sinned, instead of undertaking his recovery out of sin and death, God rested from any further *works* on behalf of man and earth, and let things take their natural course, purposing in Himself that Christ should have full charge of man's redemption and restitution. God gave *promises* and *types* and *shadows* in the Law, but did not work toward man's recovery. The first work for man's recovery was the Ransom laid down by Jesus for Adam and his race.

The Heavenly Father has therefore already rested 6,000 years; and He will similarly rest during the Millennium of Christ's reign—until its very close, when Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. Thus we find the key to the period of creation; for if the seventh day be a period of 7,000 years, then each of the preceding days was doubtless of the same length. This period agrees well with the results of scientific research, and gives ample time for the gradual development of vegetable and animal life up to the time of man's creation. *The New Creation* (Vol. 6 of *Studies in the Scriptures*), Study 1, shows the full agreement of the Genesis account of creation with the record of the rocks—geology. Thus considered, the period from the beginning of the ordering of creation on the earth down to the surrender of it perfect to the Father, at the close of the Millennium, is a period of 7 x 7,000 years, or a total of 49,000 years; and the grand epoch then to begin will be the fiftieth thousand, or a great Jubilee, on a grand scale—not the Jubilee of Israel, nor the Jubilee of general restitution, but the Jubilee of earth.

MORAL LAW AND THE COMMANDMENTS

(3) The command to keep the Sabbath is associated with nine moral precepts which are binding upon all men for all time.

Answer: God had a moral law for man before the giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses and Israel; it was graven in man's nature. This moral law, written in the hearts of Adam and Eve, consisted of supreme love to God and equal love to man. No matter how fallen Adam's descendants are, they still have in their hearts vestiges of this moral law; but they have no vestiges in their hearts of the Sabbath law, for it was not a part of the moral law written in the hearts of our first parents. Furthermore, the fourth commandment is not a moral law, but merely a command to do no *work* on the sabbath; the Apostle Paul shows that to observe it or not is entirely a morally indifferent thing (Rom. 14: 5, 6). However, it does have a parallel or antitype in the Law of Love, the law or standard of the Grace Covenant. As already shown, its antitype in the Grace Covenant is the Christian's rest of faith (Heb. 4: 1-11). The poor Jew never could experience such a rest, but, on the contrary, had such experiences as the Apostle describes when personating them, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?" (Rom. 7: 24.) The nearest approach to the real rest of heart was the typical one given them in the fourth commandment of their Law Covenant.

LAW ALL-INCLUSIVE: ONE COVENANT

(4) There were two laws given to Israel, a ceremonial and a moral law; and it was the former only that was done away by Christ, while the moral law remains.

Answer: There is no Scriptural authority for such a division. On the contrary, there was but one law, its ceremonial features providing typically for the cleansing away of sins resulting from the violation of its moral precepts. If it could be seen as the *covenant* mediated by Moses, it would be evident that all of its parts must stand or fall together. After comparing Ex. 34: 28; Deut. 4: 13, 14; 5 and Heb. 8: 6-8, there should be no question on the part of anyone that the Ten Commandments were a part of the covenant which was supplanted for the Church by the Covenant of Grace. Rom. 7: 7 proves that the Ten Commandments were part of the Law, from which the Apostle Paul in v. 6 and the entire chapter shows there is deliverance for those under the Law through Christ. There can be no question that the Law which said, "Thou shalt not covet," is that contained in the Ten Commandments; and this is the very Law from which Christ made Paul free—by fulfilling its claims for him (Rom. 8: 1-4).

When the Apostles wrote to the new Gentile converts respecting the Law—determined not to put upon the Gentiles the yoke of the Law which they themselves as Jews had been unable to keep—and contradicting certain teachers who had said that all Gentiles "must be circumcised and *keep the law*," St. James remarked incidentally that the Law of Moses, to which they referred, was "read in the synagogues every Sabbath Day" (Acts 15: 9-11, 24, 28, 29, 19-21).

CHRIST FULFILLED THE LAW COVENANT

(5) Christ said that He came not to *destroy* the Law and the Prophets, but to *fulfil* them (Matt. 5: 17).

Answer: Yes; Christ fulfilled the Law Covenant—met all of its requirements, and obtained the promised reward, *life*. Thus He fulfilled it; for this was the end for which it was designed and given.

"THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN"

(6) Christ said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2: 27). We understand this to mean that the Sabbath was made for all mankind.

Answer: Your inference is not reasonable. If the Sabbath were meant for all mankind, the fact should and would have been clearly stated to all mankind. But the facts are that it was a command to one nation only, and that Christ and the Apostles did not so command. In this text our Lord is showing to the *Jews*, to whom the command was given, that they were putting an extreme construction upon the command when they refused to do good on the Sabbath day—to a fellow creature, as well as to an ox or an ass. The Sabbath was intended for the blessing of the ones who were commanded to keep it; they were not created nor called as a nation simply to serve the day.

"FROM ONE SABBATH TO ANOTHER"

(7) In Isa. 66: 23, the Sabbath is mentioned in connection with the new heavens and new earth, which to us means that it will be a perpetual institution—throughout eternity.

Answer: It is possible that in the beginning of the Millennial Age the Lord's dealing with the world of mankind, then in process of restitution and trial, will *resemble* His dealings with the House of Servants—Israel. He may restore laws respecting the Sabbath and various festivals. However, we may be assured that the Law Covenant will never be placed over the world as it was over typical Israel; for it made nothing perfect, and righteousness could not come by the *Law Covenant* to others any more than to Israel. The New Covenant will remain open throughout the Millennial Age, for all who desire to flee from sin and to return to full harmony with God. But by that time, the Seed of Abraham having been completed (Gal. 3: 8, 16, 29), none will then have the privilege to become joint-heirs of that promise, but may come under the blessings which flow from the Seed.

To a Jew the expression, "from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another," would merely mean, from month to month, and from week to week; and would not of necessity relate to any special *observance* of the days. The Seventh Day Adventists are surely doing a worldwide work, and whether right or wrong, might not improperly be referred to in the prophecy of Revelation. It does seem rather preposterous, however, to claim that their advocacy of the fourth commandment of Israel's Decalogue constitutes them alone the champions of God's commandments and the faith of Jesus. God's commandment to the Gospel Church under the Covenant of Sacrifice is, "This is My beloved Son: hear him" (Mark 9: 7). And neither He nor any

whom He sent forth as His special ambassadors and representatives ever said one word in favor of the observance of the seventh day.

ROMANISTS DID NOT ORIGINATE SUNDAY-KEEPING

(8) The Roman Catholic Church, which claims to have originated Sunday-keeping, admits that there is no authority for it in the Scriptures, and claims the right to make the change.

Answer: The Church of Rome is quick to turn any point in her own favor; and this is one which furnishes a specially good opportunity. It is nothing to *admit* that Sunday is not commanded in the New Testament (but neither is the seventh-day Sabbath), and it furnishes an excellent chance to emphasize Roman Catholic doctrine—that *tradition* is equally authoritative with God's Word. But this boast that papacy changed the seventh-day Sabbath to the first-day Sunday amounts to nothing. Where is the proof of it? Nowhere. The fact is that for the Gospel Church God has provided *no one day* for rest, but a *rest for every day*; and the early Church met on either or both days according to convenience or advantage. The custom of meeting on the first day came down and gradually crystallized into a habit, and later, a supposed duty. But papacy cannot point back to any date and show by the decisions of any Council that *she changed* the Jewish Sabbath into the Christian Sunday. A Catechism entitled "The Catholic Christian Instructed," in answer to the question, "What are the days which the Church commands to be kept holy?" says, "(1) the Sunday, or our Lord's Day, *which we observe, by Apostolic tradition, instead of the Sabbath.*"

(9) The name *Sunday* is heathenish, and doubtless at one time marked a day on which the sun was worshiped. Consequently the day should not be recognized nor the name used.

Answer: Some great infidel may have been named Robert or Thomas, but this would not make you an infidel if you had been given his name. So the propriety of worshiping God on the first day of the week, or on any other day is not governed by its common or general name. We have no special choice of name—Lord's day, Sabbath, or Sunday—any of them would serve our purpose, and we could worship God in spirit and in truth on that day as well under one name as another. *Sabbath* is a good name, and reminds us of our *rest* by faith in Christ's sacrifice and in God's precious promises to all who follow in the Master's footsteps. *Lord's Day* is good also, and reminds us that the first day of the week marks the great token of Divine favor in the resurrection of our Lord. *Sunday* reminds us of the Sun of Righteousness, our risen Lord, and all the blessings present and prospective that we and the whole world may anticipate through Him (Mal. 4: 2). If the heart be right, any of these names may become fragrant with precious memories of God's grace through Christ.

THE SUM OF THE MATTER

We group below a few conclusions:

(1) The word "Sabbath-day" signifies rest-day.

(2) Any rest-day might therefore with propriety be called a sabbath day. Indeed, this was a custom with the Jews. All of their feast-days they called rest-days or sabbaths; as, for instance, the first and last days of the Passover were called sabbaths, no matter upon what day of the week they occurred.

(3) The Sabbath day commanded in the two tables of stone, delivered by God to Israel by the hand of Moses at Mount Sinai, was the *seventh* day of the week, not the first day; nor was it merely one day in seven. This was particularly indicated by the extra supply of manna on the sixth day.

(4) While any day of the week would have suited equally well, so far as Israel was concerned, God evidently had a choice. The seventh day chosen by Him was evidently typical, as were all of God's arrangements for and with that typical people. We understand that it typified the rest experienced by spiritual Israel, and referred to by the Apostle in Heb. 4: 9, 10.

(5) The fourth commandment was as binding as the others of the Decalogue; and hence, if the others continue in force against fleshly Israel—to whom they all were given—so does this one. But neither the fourth nor any other of the Ten Commandments was ever given to, or made a law for, any nation other than Israel. None could come under its provisions except by becoming Israelites, and practicing circumcision.

(6) The Decalogue was the foundation of the covenant between God and Israel, called the Law Covenant (Deut. 4: 13).

(7) Since the death of Christ the arrangement between God and those whom He acknowledges as His children is one of "grace," operative to Jesus' followers since Pentecost. Its provisions or benefits are not for one race or family of mankind merely, but are open through faith in Christ for all people who desire to come to God through Christ and consecrate their lives to Him. The Jews, and for that matter some among the Gentiles also, who sought communion and fellowship with God, were continually striving *to do something* which would atone for their sins and open communion and harmony with God; but the most earnest were "weary and heavy laden," and almost discouraged with their failure. It is to such that our Lord addressed Himself, saying, "Come unto me, ... and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11: 28).

THE NEW COMMANDMENT IS LOVE

(8) As the Law Covenant had the Ten Commandments for its foundation, so the Grace Covenant has a new law for its foundation—the Law of Love—"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13: 34). The new commandment was not one added to the ten commands of the old covenant—not an eleventh—but took the place of the ten of the Law Covenant, and is *much more comprehensive*.

Love is the only command of the Grace Covenant and bears only upon those who have come under that covenant. The world in general has nothing to do with the Church's covenant, its privileges, its blessings and its law, even as they had nothing to do with the Law Covenant and its Decalogue, *etc.* Only those *under* the Law Covenant were bound by it; and only those *under* the Grace Covenant are recognized by it. In due time under Christ's Millennial reign the world will be dealt with, and all the willing and obedient will be blessed by the New Law Covenant.

(9) The people of the world in general are not now recognized by God. They are called "the children of this world," "children of the devil," "children of wrath," *etc.*; and we are told that they have not "escaped the condemnation that is upon the world," through "one man's disobedience," that they cannot escape except through the provisions of the Grace Covenant now or of the New Law Covenant of the Millennium. Hence "the whole world [God's covenanted people being exceptions] lieth in the evil one" (1 John 5: 19, ASV, RSV). The world once had a law from God, but they have lost it, or most of it, and are now strangers and foreigners, unrecognized by Him (Rom. 1: 21; Eph. 2: 19). The original law was not written upon tables of stone, but was incorporated in man's very character, so that when perfect in God's image, he knew right and wrong instinctively—his conscience was a safe and accurate guide. But 6,000 years of degradation, as slaves of Sin and Death under Satan, have almost effaced that original law from man's heart—have warped his judgment and conscience, and made his will the plaything of his animal propensities and hopes and fears.

(10) Provision was made that Gentiles might, if they chose, become Israelites; and that by circumcision and the observance of the Law Covenant proselytes might be joint-heirs with Israel to all the favors and typical privileges granted to that nation. But the Gentiles were not under either the blessings or the curses of that covenant unless they voluntarily accepted it. So now, under the Grace Covenant, arrangement is made for some to come in under its provisions—under its justification, or forgiveness of sins, and under its Law of Love. But only those who have put themselves under it by complying with the regulations are sharers of either its blessings or its responsibilities.

FAITH-REST IN CHRIST ON EVERY DAY

(11) There was no provision made for *any* Sabbath-day keeping under the Grace Covenant. Every day was to be a sabbath, or day of faith-rest in Christ to all under this covenant, and to no others. The Apostle was careful to guard the early Church against the esteem of one day above another as being more holy (Rom. 14: 5-8). Our Lord's ministry was under the Law Covenant; and hence He observed the seventh-day Sabbath even while He assured the people that He was "Lord even of the sabbath day" (Matt. 12: 8). But neither He nor any of the Apostles ever commanded or even suggested the observance of any special day as a sabbath. And one of these Apostles declared that he had "not shunned to declare all the counsel of God"—thus proving that the observance of a sabbath day was no part of God's counsel to His sons of the Grace Covenant (Acts 20: 27).

(12) There was no authorization of a change from the seventh day to the first day as a sabbath, or rest-day. The early Church was composed chiefly of those who had been God's servants under the typical Law Covenant, and it required time for them to appreciate the fact that the Law Covenant had ended and a Grace Covenant had been introduced, that the Sarah feature (Gal. 4: 21-31) of the Abrahamic Covenant had become operative. Hence they were warned frequently by the Apostles against Judaizing tendencies and teachers and against a tendency to mix the Grace Covenant and its Law of Love and Liberty with the Law of the Mosaic Covenant. Naturally they still observed the seventh day from custom and convenience, and because in Palestine it was the *civil* law, and also because on that day they could most successfully reach with the Gospel the most hopeful class of hearers. Our Lord's resurrection on the first day of the week, and His subsequent showing of Himself upon that day, seems to have started in the early Church the custom of meeting on every first day, having a simple meal, recounting with prayer and praise the Lord's mercies, and remembering their risen Redeemer and testifying how His words burned in their hearts when on that day He had explained to them redemption through His blood—how it was necessary for Christ to die and to rise again from the dead, *etc.*

(13) This pleasant custom grew upon the Church, but without any law, for the Apostles assured them that there is no law but *love* to them that are in Christ Jesus. It was merely a privilege which they prized and used profitably. It was not until centuries had passed, and papacy had arisen with the false idea that its mission was to convert the world by force, if necessary, that laws were made respecting the first day of the week as the Lord's Sabbath or Sunday. Having gathered into the Church multitudes of "tares," who did not appreciate the liberty or the love of the Covenant of Sacrifice, and who were really as much as ever "children of the devil," some laws or regulations were made for their restraint.

(14) The Grace Covenant controls only "believers"—"the faithful in Christ Jesus"—and leaves these entirely free to do or observe whatever *love* might dictate; for they are to *do good*—anything that godly love would dictate or approve—on any day; and it is improper to violate the dictates of love upon any day. Mankind has laws upon the subject, however; and it is God's command to His people that they be subject to civil rulers in all matters not in violation of their consciences respecting His wishes. On whatever day or however frequently the civil law commands *rest* from secular labor, it becomes our duty to obey. We can rejoice that we are at liberty to worship how and whom we please, and should gladly use every opportunity wisely, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves for spiritual refreshments (Heb. 10: 25). We are glad too, and thankful that the day especially set aside as a sabbath by civil governments is the very one of all others that we prefer; for it memorializes the beginning of the new order of things—begun by the resurrection of our dear Redeemer. Hence in outward conduct we conform to the laws of men on the subject, while in our hearts, having fullest freedom toward God, we delight to use the first day of the week especially to His pleasement and praise, in doing good to others, particularly to the household of faith.

WEAK ONES NOT TO BE STUMBLED

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Our liberty in Christ, under the terms of our covenant, must take care that others are not injured by our use of liberty; for this would be condemned by our Law of Love. The Apostle clearly emphasizes this in Rom. 14: 1—15: 7. He there points out that all are not alike strong in the faith. Some, weak in the faith, can see that Christ is our Redeemer, but cannot as yet realize the *liberty* we have in Christ; for one realizes his liberty to eat whatever agrees with him, while another one, who is *weak* (in bondage), eats vegetables only, lest he should violate some law under which he thinks himself. Each should learn to grant the other full liberty of conscience; the stronger should not despise the weaker, nor should the weaker judge others by himself. It should be sufficient to know that God accepts even the weakest ones. So it is also with reference to the observance of days: One man esteems one day above another, while another esteems all days alike. Let each carry out fully the conviction of his own mind.

The Apostle does not here teach, as so many suppose from the common translation, that each should make up his mind and stick to it, whether right or wrong; nor does he teach that one is as right as the other. On the contrary, he urges *growth* into the full liberty of Christ, but counsels patience and consideration on the part of the stronger for the weaker. He approves the stronger, and plainly states that the brother who thinks himself under a *bondage* regarding meat, Sabbath days or fast days, is the *weak* brother. But he urges that if such a weak brother observes such bondage—not as an attempt to keep the Law and to justify himself before God, ignoring Christ's redemption sacrifice, but because he thinks that our Redeemer wishes him to be bound by such ordinances—then the stronger one should not rail at, or make light of, his conscientious weakness, but rather receive him fully as a brother, trusting that discipline and experience and growth in grace and knowledge will gradually bring him to the greater measure of liberty.

And those strong ones who enter fully into the spirit of the Apostle's remark, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak," and deny themselves what their own consciences permit, have the greater blessing. They can realize in an additional degree that they are following in the Master's footsteps; for "even Christ pleased not Himself" (Rom. 14: 21; 15: 2, 3). If the stronger brethren by sarcasm and influence were to force the weaker ones to use a liberty they did not realize, it would be forcing them into sin; for any violation of conscience is sin (Rom. 14: 23). Therefore the weaker brethren should be left to the *liberty* of their *consciences*. They should be received as brethren, the influence of love and truth alone being brought to bear upon them, in the hope of gradually educating them to an appreciation of their full privileges as free men in Christ. Thus the Lord's people should be full of charity and unity, each one carrying out the convictions of his own mind as to the Lord's will, and each seeking to grow in grace and knowledge out of childhood's weakness into manhood's strength, as rapidly as possible; being developed as he feeds upon God's Word.

OBSERVANCE OF DAYS DEPLORED

The Apostle again refers specially to the observance of days as a sign of weakness, childishness and lack of development, saying (Gal. 4: 10, 11), "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am anxious on your behalf, lest my labor for you has been in vain." He here addresses those who had once known the liberty of the sons of God, but who were now getting into bondage through false teaching. He recognized these weaknesses for the things commanded by the Law Covenant as an evidence that they were not growing into the liberty of sons of God, but going backward toward the servant condition (see vs. 6-9, 19-31); and he was even fearful that this weakness and failure to maintain the liberty of sonship, and this subservience to the Law Covenant, might lead them to reject the true Gospel, that Christ gave Himself for our sins, and accept as the Gospel a hopeless substitute— that Christ would save them *if they kept the Law* (Gal. 1: 4-8; 5: 2).

In Col. 2: 13-17, the Apostle declares the same truth with reference to the liberty of all who are in Christ, in respect to the Law, especially singling out the festivals, new moons and sabbaths. He pointedly declares (v. 13) that those believers who had been Gentiles were forgiven fully and freed from all condemnation, while concerning those who had been Jews, he says (v. 14), Christ blotted out the *written Law* which was against *us* (believing Israelites), removed *it* from *our way*, nailing it to the cross; having stripped away (all obscurities) from the original (Law) and its authorities, He made a public illustration of them (in His life of obedience to them), triumphing over them by it (in obedience even unto death, even the death of the cross). Therefore (reasons the Apostle, because our Lord has made both you Gentiles and us Jews free) permit no man to judge you (or teach you as obligatory things) in meat or in drink (dietary matters), or in respect of an holyday (annual festivals), or of the new moon (monthly festivals), or of the sabbaths (weekly festivals). The seventh-day keepers will argue that the sabbaths here refer to some of those yearly occasions, which were also called sabbaths, because part of their observance required rest from ordinary labor. But this cannot be the meaning of St. Paul's language here, for he had already included all these *yearly* Sabbaths under "an holyday." In harmony with his usual systematic forms of expression, St. Paul first mentioned the *yearly* holy days, then the *monthly* festivals, the new moons, and then the *weekly* rest days. Next, St. Paul indicates that these are *shadows* (or types) of future things, the *substance* (or antitypes) of which appertain to the anointed (the Christ, Head and Body).

Glorious is the liberty of the sons of God! Let us stand fast in it!