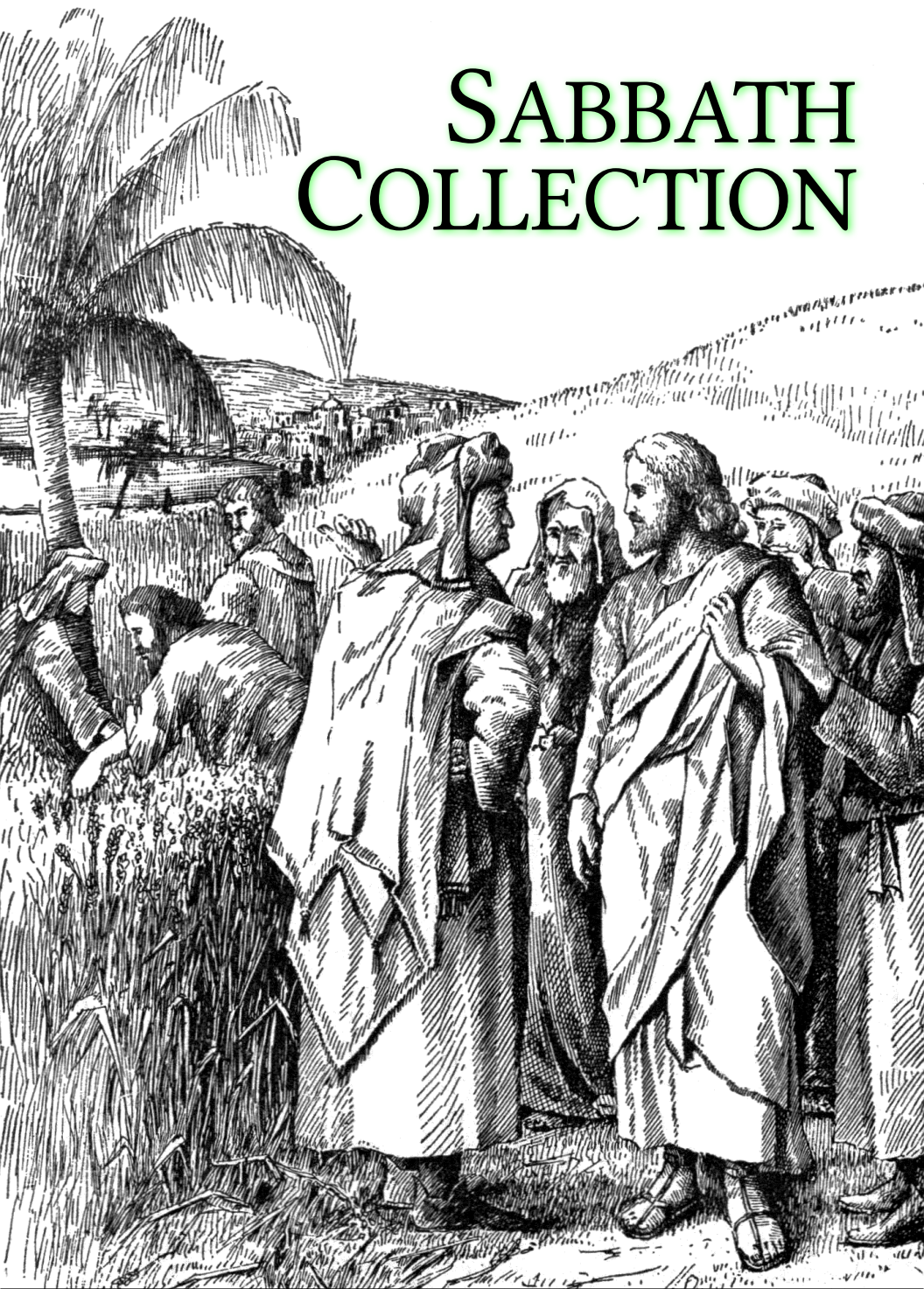


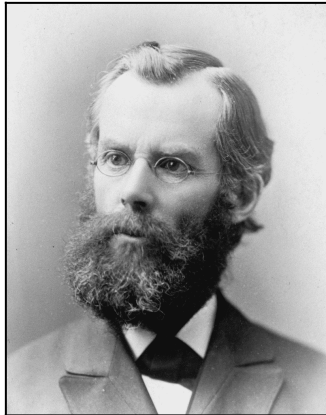
SABBATH COLLECTION



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Contents

Thoughts on the Sabbath

Thoughts on the Sabbath.....	1
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The Perpetuity of the Law of God

The Perpetuity of the Law of God.....	6
<i>Introduction</i>	6
<i>Matthew 5</i>	6
<i>Matthew 22</i>	7
<i>Romans 2</i>	8
<i>Romans 3:9-31</i>	9
<i>Romans 7</i>	12
<i>2 Corinthians 3</i>	14
<i>Galatians 3</i>	19
<i>Galatians 3:23-26</i>	29
<i>Galatians 4:21-31</i>	34
<i>Galatians 5</i>	35
<i>Ephesians 2:11-17</i>	36
<i>Colossians 2:14-17</i>	38
<i>Hebrews 8:6-13</i>	38
<i>James 2</i>	39

The Perpetuity of the Royal Law

Introduction.....	46
1. Did Christ's Teachings Abolish the Law?.....	48
2. Did Christ's Death Abolish the Law?.....	61
3. Did the Apostles Abolish the Law?.....	67
<i>God the Only Law-giver</i>	67
<i>The Testimony of James</i>	69
<i>The Testimony of Paul</i>	70
<i>The Testimony of John</i>	75

Review of Objections to the Seventh-day Sabbath

1. Objections to the Day.....	81
<i>Objections</i>	81
1. <i>Are the Rest and the Day Separate?</i>	82

2. <i>Is the First Day Able to Replace the Seventh?</i>	85
3. <i>Did Christ and the Apostles Observe Sunday?</i>	87
2. Objections Regarding History	89
<i>Objections</i>	89
1. <i>The Origin of Sunday-keeping</i>	89
2. <i>Calling Sunday the Lord's Day</i>	90
3. <i>The Command for Sunday Observance</i>	90
4. <i>Councils and Canons</i>	91
5. <i>The Title of "Lord's Day"</i>	91
6. <i>Enforcing a Rest Day</i>	92
3. Seventh Part of Time Theory	93
1. <i>What Day?</i>	93
2. <i>What Sabbath?</i>	94
3. <i>Which Day is the Sabbath?</i>	94
<i>God Did Not Specify Any Random Day</i>	96
<i>God Did Not Bless Any Random Day</i>	96
<i>No Other Day Was Called the Sabbath</i>	97

The First Day of the Week not the Sabbath of the Lord

Introduction.....	100
1. First Reason.....	103
2. Second Reason.....	107
3. Third Reason.....	109
4. Fourth Reason.....	111
5. Fifth Reason.....	113
6. Sixth Reason.....	115
7. Seventh Reason.....	117
8. Things to Be Considered.....	119

A Refutation of the Claims of Sunday-keeping to Divine Authority

1. The First Day of the Week Not the Sabbath	130
<i>To the Law and to the Testimony</i>	130
1. <i>Is Redemption Greater Than Creation?</i>	132
2. <i>The Disciples Met on the First Day</i>	135
3. <i>Jesus Met Them Again After Eight Days</i>	136

4. The Holy Ghost Descended on Pentecost.....	138
5. Breaking Bread on the First Day.....	139
6. Taking a Collection on the First Day.....	140
7. In the Spirit on the Lord's Day.....	142
2. History of the Sabbath.....	147
<i>From the Time of the Apostles to Constantine.....</i>	<i>148</i>
<i>Testimony for the First Day Examined.....</i>	<i>151</i>
<i>Sunday-Keeping of Heathen Origin.....</i>	<i>155</i>
<i>From the Time of Constantine to the Reformation.....</i>	<i>159</i>
<i>First Day Observance Introduced into Great Britain.....</i>	<i>167</i>
<i>Sunday Keeping Established by Law in England.....</i>	<i>171</i>
<i>The Waldenses Kept the Sabbath.....</i>	<i>174</i>
<i>Sabbath-Keepers in Every Age.....</i>	<i>176</i>

The Sabbatic Institution

1. The Creation.....	183
2. The Institution of the Sabbath.....	187

The Two Laws

The Two Laws.....	205
<i>Moral Obligation of Creature to Creator.....</i>	<i>205</i>
<i>Origin of the Moral Law.....</i>	<i>206</i>
<i>A Law of Shadows.....</i>	<i>207</i>
<i>Relationship of Moral and Ceremonial Laws.....</i>	<i>208</i>
<i>Antitype of Ceremonial System.....</i>	<i>209</i>
<i>Differences Between the Two Laws.....</i>	<i>209</i>
<i>Ten Commandments a Perfect Code.....</i>	<i>212</i>
<i>The Royal Law.....</i>	<i>213</i>
<i>Ceremonial Sabbaths vs. Sabbath of the Lord.....</i>	<i>214</i>

The Definite Seventh Day

The Definite Seventh Day.....	217
<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>217</i>
<i>Statement of the Difficulty.....</i>	<i>217</i>
<i>What Many Persons Conclude from This.....</i>	<i>219</i>
<i>Examination of the Facts in the Case.....</i>	<i>219</i>

Sermons on the Sabbath and the Law

Preface.....	232
Preface to the Second Edition.....	232
1. The Memorial of Creation.....	233
<i>The First Day</i>	233
<i>The Second Day</i>	235
<i>The Third Day</i>	236
<i>The Fourth Day</i>	236
<i>The Fifth Day</i>	237
<i>The Sixth Day</i>	237
<i>Faith in the Creator</i>	238
<i>Faith Expressed in Works</i>	239
<i>The Sabbath an Expression of Faith</i>	240
<i>Faith Without Obedience is Dead</i>	242
<i>Essential for Man</i>	243
<i>Summary</i>	244
2. In the Patriarchal Age.....	247
<i>Relationship of the Law, Sin, and Death</i>	247
<i>The Law Works Wrath</i>	249
<i>A Forfeited Life</i>	252
<i>The Book of Genesis</i>	253
<i>Written in the Heart</i>	255
<i>How Truth Was Passed On</i>	259
3. Entering of the Law.....	263
<i>The Law Existed Before Sinai</i>	263
<i>Not Only For the Jews</i>	264
<i>Given to Those Who Would Receive It</i>	265
<i>God's Attempts To Work With Man</i>	267
<i>The Law in Relation to Adam's Sin and Christ's Death</i>	268
4. Sabbath and the Giving of Manna.....	274
1. <i>Origin of the Sabbath</i>	275
2. <i>Violation of the Sabbath</i>	276
3. <i>Relationship of the Manna to the Sabbath</i>	277
4. <i>Relationship of the Exodus to the Sabbath</i>	278
<i>Why the Sabbath Was Given to Israel</i>	280
5. The Giving of the Law.....	285
<i>Advantages of the Jews</i>	285
<i>Seventh Part of Time Theory</i>	288
<i>Summary</i>	292

6. The Sabbath in the Old Testament.....	294
<i>Foundation of the Sabbath.....</i>	294
<i>Made for Man.....</i>	295
<i>The Fall of the Manna.....</i>	297
<i>The Ten Commandments.....</i>	297
<i>The Sojourn in the Wilderness.....</i>	299
<i>Silence in the Record.....</i>	301
<i>Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel.....</i>	301
<i>The Restoration.....</i>	302
<i>The Kingdom of God.....</i>	302
7. The Two Covenants.....	304
<i>Both Covenants Made With Israel.....</i>	304
<i>Why the Jews Were Chosen.....</i>	306
<i>Ratification of the New Covenant.....</i>	309
<i>Grafting in of Gentile Believers.....</i>	311
<i>The Word "Covenant".....</i>	316
<i>The First Covenant.....</i>	317
<i>The Law, or the Agreement?.....</i>	324
<i>The Ten Commandments Are Not the Covenant.....</i>	326
<i>The New Covenant and the Law.....</i>	334
<i>Why Was the First Covenant Faulty?.....</i>	334
<i>The Excellence of the New Covenant.....</i>	337
<i>The Consummation.....</i>	344
<i>A Practical Illustration.....</i>	346
<i>Hagar and Sarah.....</i>	348
8. In the New Testament.....	350
<i>According to the Commandment.....</i>	350
<i>Sabbath Precedes First Day.....</i>	353
<i>The Flight From Jerusalem.....</i>	354
<i>The Custom of Jesus.....</i>	358
<i>Making the Sabbath Honorable.....</i>	359
<i>The Manner of Paul.....</i>	362
<i>The Apostles Uphold the Law.....</i>	365
9. The First Day of the Week.....	367
<i>The Experiment with Disobedience.....</i>	367
<i>Inventions to Avoid Obedience.....</i>	368
<i>Substituting the Sabbath.....</i>	370
<i>Texts About the First Day.....</i>	371
<i>Fables.....</i>	375
<i>Paul's Custom.....</i>	377
<i>The Lord's Day.....</i>	378

10. The Change of the Sabbath.....	380
<i>Christ vs. Antichrist</i>	380
<i>Magnifying the Law</i>	382
<i>Testimony of History</i>	384
<i>Traditions of Men</i>	388
<i>Borrowed From Paganism</i>	390
<i>A Symbol of the Power of the Roman Church</i>	393
<i>The Sabbath of the Lord in History</i>	397
<i>Superstitions Used to Establish Sunday</i>	404
<i>Sabbath-Keeping Reformers</i>	407



*Thoughts
on the
Sabbath*

1851

Thoughts on the Sabbath

THOSE who observe the Sabbath of the Bible, may plead as their foundation, a *divine institution*.

Genesis 2

³ God BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY AND SANCTIFIED IT.

In *this* consists the Sabbatic institution itself. As God has never taken this blessing from the seventh day, the original institution still exists. As God has never sanctified another day of the week, much less enjoined another day as a weekly Sabbath, it is the only Sabbatic institution.

Jehovah was the first who rested on the seventh day. His example was followed by the Son of God, and by the church universal, so far as the record of inspiration extends. How absurd to believe that the Great Creator observed a “carnal ordinance”!¹ As the seventh day was here sanctified by God, its observance is henceforward a moral duty. *But like the other precepts of the Decalogue*, it was not at first *expressly* enjoined in the written word.

When God enjoined the Sabbath on Israel,² He pointed out the true seventh day, by a threefold weekly miracle, which continued for the space of forty years. Thenceforward the history of the Sabbath is given in the records of inspiration, so that a knowledge of the true seventh day has been preserved to the church.

When the law was given by the voice of the Almighty, we find the observance of the Sabbath enforced by the fourth commandment. The reason for its observance, as well as the date of its sanctification, is also clearly given. The Lord made heaven and earth in six days and rested the seventh,

Exodus 20

¹¹ ...wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

¹ Hebrews 9:10.

² Exodus 16.

The Sabbath then is a standing memorial of God's act of creation. By its observance men would have kept in memory the knowledge of the true God.

We have now considered three important points in the history of the Sabbath:

1. Its institution;³
2. The fact that the true seventh day was pointed out to Israel;⁴ and
3. The grand law of the Sabbath.⁵

As we proceed in this examination, we notice three different Sabbaths:

1. The Sabbath of the Lord—the seventh day;⁶
2. The Sabbaths of the Jews, the first and eighth day of their feasts, etc.;⁷ and
3. The Sabbath of the land, the seventh years.⁸

As the Sabbath of the Lord had a real existence before “the law of commandments contained in ordinances”⁹ was appended, therefore, when *that* law was nailed to the cross, *the* Sabbath remained in full force. Not so with the Sabbaths of the Jews, and the Sabbath of the land. That law gave them their only force; and when that ceased they were abolished.

The most precious blessings are promised to those who keep God's Sabbath.¹⁰ And it is worthy of note, that this prophecy pertains to a period when God's salvation is near to be revealed.¹¹

³ *Genesis* 2.

⁴ *Exodus* 16; *Nehemiah* 9.

⁵ *Exodus* 20.

⁶ See *Exodus* 20.

⁷ *Leviticus* 23.

⁸ *Leviticus* 25.

⁹ *Ephesians* 2:15.

¹⁰ See *Isaiah* 56 and 58.

¹¹ *Isaiah* 56:1.

The blessing is promised to “the son of the stranger,”¹² (the Gentile,) as well as to Israel.

Mark the distinction between God’s Sabbath, and those of the Jews, as presented in the prophets. Of the perpetuity of the first, let us judge after reading *Isaiah* 66:23, where we are informed of its existence in the new earth. But God assures us by the prophet, that the latter shall “cease.”¹³ The fulfillment of this prophecy may be read in *Colossians* 2. Please compare *Isaiah* 66:4, *Exodus* 20:10, with *Hosea* 2, and *Leviticus* 23, and note the language, “any Sabbaths,” and “her Sabbaths.”

Though the scriptures nowhere teach or authorize a change of the Sabbath, yet they contain an accurate prophecy of the power that should do this thing. Let the reader compare *Daniel* 7:25 with the history of the Papal Church, and note its acts of changing “times and laws.”

We have seen the grand law of the Sabbath embodied in the Dialogue. We come now to the New Testament. That our Lord did not destroy the law, or lessen our obligation to obey it, He clearly teaches in *Matthew* 5:17-19. And we may with the utmost safety affirm “that the apostles did not disturb, what their Lord left untouched.”¹⁴ *We say, therefore, that the New Testament teaches the perpetuity of God’s law, and FOR THAT REASON DOES NOT RE-EN-ACT IT.* Brevity forbids a more lengthy notice of this important point.

Our Lord came to “magnify the law and make it honorable.”¹⁵ He kept His Father’s commandments; but He brushed aside the traditions of men by which they were made void.

Mark 2

²⁷ The Sabbath, [says He,] was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

¹² *Isaiah* 56:3.

¹³ See *Hosea* 2:11.

¹⁴ See *Romans* 3:31; *James* 2.

¹⁵ *Isaiah* 42:21.

By which He rebuked the pharisaic observance of the Sabbath on one hand; and the views of those on the other who teach that the Lord's Sabbath is one of the things "against us," which were taken out of the way at Christ's death.¹⁶

The fact that those who had been with Jesus during His ministry "rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment,"¹⁷ after His crucifixion, and resumed labor on the first day of the week, shows clearly that they knew nothing of its change from the seventh to the first day.

The fact that God has never *sanctified* the first day of the week, shows plainly that it is not sacred time—is not a divinely instituted Sabbath.

The fact that He has never required us to rest on that day, shows that its observance in the place of the Sabbath, is a clear instance of making void the commandments of God to keep the tradition of men.

That sanctified time exists in the gospel dispensation, or in other words, that there is a day which belongs to God, is clear from *Revelation* 1:10. That "the Lord's day," is the Sabbath day, is plain from *Isaiah* 58:13.

AS the SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN, we find it under all dispensations, and in every part of the Bible. Those, therefore, who profane the Sabbath, sin against God and wound their own souls.

¹⁶ *Colossians* 2:14.

¹⁷ *Luke* 23:56.

*The Perpetuity
of the Law of God*

1851

The Perpetuity of the Law of God

Introduction

IT IS painful to witness the various inconsistent and self-contradictory positions, resorted to by those who reject the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. But of all the positions adopted, no other one seems equally dangerous, or fraught with such alarming consequences, as the view that the law of God by which the Sabbath is enforced, has been abolished, and that we are therefore under no obligation to...

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day.

The question whether God has abolished His law or not, is indeed the main point at issue in the Sabbath controversy; for when it is shown that that law still exists, and that its perpetuity is clearly taught in the New Testament, it most conclusively settles the question, that the Sabbath is binding on us, and on all men.

Matthew 5

The first testimony on this point was borne by the Lord Jesus in His sermon on the Mount. He says,

Matthew 5

¹⁷ Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets.

We believe therefore that He did not destroy them; consequently they are yet in force. He adds that not...

¹⁸ ...one jot or tittle shall pass from the law till all be fulfilled.

Hence no one of its precepts will cease before the rest. And that shall not be...

¹⁸ ...till heaven and earth pass.

Hence we say that the law of God extends down through the Gospel dispensation to the end. He testifies that He came not to

destroy, but to fulfill; and that He might stop the mouths of those who teach that His obedience to the law annulled it, He adds that:

Matthew 5

¹⁹ WHOSOEVER shall break one of these commandments, . . . shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.

Campbell renders it,

“...shall be of no esteem in the reign of heaven.”

And, that we might not mistake the commandments referred to, He proceeds to quote and comment on the law of the Decalogue, the ten commandments. This is a nail fastened by the Master of assemblies “in a sure place,”¹⁸ and it is a clear proof that the mission of Jesus was not to destroy, but to...

Isaiah 42

²¹ ...magnify the law and make it honorable.

Matthew 22

Jesus teaches that on two precepts, *viz., to love God with all the heart, and to love our neighbor as ourselves,*

Matthew 22

⁴⁰ ...hang all the law and the prophets.

These two great commandments from their nature can never cease to exist, consequently, the law and the prophets, which hang on them, can never fall,—can never be abolished. The law of commandments contained in ordinances has been abolished, that the ordinances of the Jewish church might make way for those of the Christian church. But that the ten commandments are comprehended in these two precepts, and are therefore inseparable from them, is clearly taught in *James 2:8-11; Romans 13:9; 1 John 5:3.*

It is a fact of much importance, that the ten commandments, though often quoted by our Lord, are never introduced upon a

¹⁸ *Isaiah 22:23.*

new account, but stand on their original basis, viz., as the law of God.

It may be said, indeed, that the law of God had not expired before Christ's death, and that we should look to the writings of the apostles for the re-enactment of that part of it which is embraced in the New Testament. It is a sufficient answer to this, to reply that there is but "ONE LAW-GIVER," and if He has abolished His law, the apostles themselves, could not re-enact the smallest part of it. Therefore those who teach that the law of God was destroyed at the death of Christ, must, to carry out the sentiment, teach also, that we may violate any, or even all of its precepts, and be blameless.

Romans 2

The 2nd chapter of *Romans* [verses 11-16] shows that all men are amenable to the law of God, whether they possess that law written in His word, or only on their hearts. To this point Paul testifies again, when he says,

Romans 3

¹⁹ ...that what things soever the law says, it says to them *who are under the law*; [to how many does the law speak?] THAT EVERY MOUTH MAY BE STOPPED, AND ALL THE WORLD MAY BECOME GUILTY BEFORE GOD.

Moses wrote the first books of the Bible; hence it appears, that previous to his time, the world was without a written revelation of God's will. But that the law of God written in the heart, as expressed in this text existed from the beginning, is evident from these considerations.

Romans 5

¹³ *Until the law, sin was in the world*, but sin is not imputed where there is no law.

Now if the work of the law had not been written in the heart before the giving of the written word, how could God have

counted men sinners? For they would have had no law to transgress. Again,

1 John 3

⁴ Sin is the transgression of the law.

Romans 4

¹⁵ Where no law is, there is no transgression.

As the transgression of the law has existed from the beginning, it follows that its requirements have also existed from the same point. To conclude the argument from this chapter, we say that if the doctrine that the law of God was abolished at Christ's death, be carried out, its advocates must also teach that sin has not existed in the world since that point; for it cannot be shown that he has ever re-enacted one of its precepts. If therefore the world has been "without law to God,"¹⁹ since the death of Christ, it has also been without "transgression of the law,"²⁰ for:

¹⁵ Where no law is, there is no transgression.

Romans 3:9-31

The Apostle in this chapter, has stated more fully the argument noticed in chapter 2.

Romans 3

⁹ We have before proved, [says he,] both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.

He did this by showing that those who had not the law written in the oracles of God, had at least the work of the law written in their hearts; and as all men have transgressed the law, all are by the law convinced of sin as transgressors. He proceeds to sustain this doctrine by various quotations from the Old Testament, showing the fearful state of fallen man, viewed in the light of God's holy law.²¹

¹⁹ 1 Corinthians 9:21.

²⁰ 1 John 3:4.

²¹ Romans 3:10-18.

¹⁹ What things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law; *that every mouth may be stopped*, and ALL THE WORLD MAY BECOME GUILTY BEFORE GOD.

²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the laws there shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

If man had not fallen, “a better covenant”²² would not have been needed, than,

Luke 10

²⁸ This do, and you shall live.

But by the fall, man lost the only principle from which true and acceptable obedience can spring, viz., pure love to God. After the fall, man was left with “the work of the law”²³ written on his heart to show him what God required; and with the promise of the Savior, somewhat obscurely expressed, through whom he could hope for pardon.

Salvation by faith in Jesus, was more clearly revealed to Abraham. After four hundred and thirty years, the written law was given to Israel, as the basis of a covenant, which should last...

Galatians 3

¹⁹ ...till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.

Hebrews 10

⁹ Then said He, Lo, I come to do your will, O God. He takes away the first, that He may establish the second.

¹⁰ By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Thus in the Providence of God, man has had a fair trial of his ability to live by a covenant of works,²⁴ and *of himself*, to render acceptable obedience to God’s holy law. It need not be added, that he has fallen under its fearful curse.

²² *Hebrews 8:6.*

²³ *Romans 2:15.*

²⁴ See *Galatians 3:12, 21.*

Galatians 3

¹⁰ For it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Christ was “made under the law,”²⁵ and He, only, of all the sons of Adam, kept its requirements perfectly, then died to atone for our transgressions, and to redeem us from its curse. Our hope of salvation then is through faith in Jesus Christ, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation for our sins. Thus God is...

Romans 3

²⁶ ...just, and [yet] the justifier of him that believes in Jesus.

That we can be justified by Christ, and yet live in violation of God’s law, no one can maintain; but to teach that our present obedience can justify, or atone for our past offences, would be an equal absurdity. Hence we conclude that our justification in the sight of God, is solely on account of faith, and not on account of works. By faith in the atonement of the Saviour our hearts are cleansed from sin, and we receive the...

Titus 3

⁵ ...renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Then with that perfect love to God, restored to us, which Adam lost at his fall, we are prepared to render acceptable obedience to God, and thus to fulfill...

Romans 8

⁴ ...the righteousness of the law.

The law reveals and makes us know
What duties to our God we owe;
But ‘tis the Gospel must reveal
Where lies our strength to do his will.²⁶

²⁵ *Galatians* 4:4.

²⁶ Isaac Watts, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, Hymn 121 “The Law and the Gospel Distinguished,” 1765.

Romans 3

³¹ *Do we then make void the law through faith? GOD FORBID: YEA WE ESTABLISH THE LAW.*

Romans 7

This chapter opens with the assertion that the law claims obedience through life. This fact is illustrated by the marriage covenant. As that cannot cease but with the death of one of the parties, no more could the first covenant with the people of God.

Now as this covenant did end at Christ's death, yet could cease only with the death of one of the parties, the question arises, which of the parties died? The fourth verse answers, not the law, but ourselves.

Romans 7

⁴ Wherefore, my brethren, *you also are become dead* to the law by the body of Christ.

As Christ died to atone for our sins, we are, in the sense of this portion of the Scripture, represented as dying with Him.²⁷ Then mark, **THE LAW STILL LIVES**. The dissolution of the first covenant, does not abolish the law of God, as we shall hereafter show.

The sixth verse may be adduced as proof that the law is also dead.

⁶ But now *we are delivered from the law*, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

But the marginal reading shows that this text refers not to the law but to ourselves. The translations of Macknight and Whiting both render it thus. It is further evident from the fourth verse, which, as we have already seen, states the fact as it is given in the margin of this text.²⁸

²⁷ See *Romans* 6:6.

²⁸ See also *Galatians* 2:19-20.

And it is still more evident from the fact that the death of one party, only, is required in order to dissolve the covenant. In verses 4-6, the fruit of the two covenants is contrasted. By the first covenant we bring forth fruit unto death; by the second we bring forth “the fruit of the Spirit”²⁹ unto God. The first points out our duty, but leaves us unable to perform it; the second points us to the same holy, just, and spiritual law, as the sum of our duty, and at the same time reveals the source of our strength to keep its requirements, viz., the grace of God, through faith in Jesus. Thus we...

Romans 7

⁶ ...serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

In proof of this, contrast the remainder of this chapter from verse 7, with chapter 8. The manner in which the law convinces of sin is shown in verse 7.

⁷ What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, You shall not covet.

In proof that the term “law” here refers particularly to the ten commandments, see the close of the verse where the tenth commandment is quoted. Paul has elsewhere said, that the law was...

Galatians 3

²⁴ ...our school-master to bring us to Christ.

The remainder of this chapter gives us his experience in that school. *Romans* 7:8-11, show Paul’s efforts to live by the law, and also his utter failure to keep its precepts, and satisfy its demands. Verse 12. He acknowledges the holiness, justice, and goodness of the law. Verse 13. But through his inability to keep the law, sin works in him death by its means. Verses 14-25.

He wills that which is good, and even delights in the law of God, but how to perform that which is good he finds not.³⁰ The

²⁹ *Galatians* 5:22; *Ephesians* 5:9.

³⁰ *Romans* 7:18.

“school-master” sets before him the righteous requirements of God’s law, and with unrelenting severity, as he is not able to keep it, compels him to exclaim,

Romans 7

²⁴ O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!

He is now convinced that he cannot be justified by the deeds of the law, and in his despair, he flies to Jesus Christ. The next chapter shows him delivered from “the carnal mind”³¹ by...

Romans 8

² ...the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,

–and having obtained power to obey, as well as forgiveness for past offences, he exclaims,

Romans 8

¹ There is therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...

³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice of sin [margin], condemned sin in the flesh:

⁴ That THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW MIGHT BE FULFILLED IN US.

2 Corinthians 3

The testimony of this chapter has an important bearing on the subject. As those who teach the abrogation of God’s law regard it as their most important evidence, we will briefly state and examine their position. It is as follows:

1. The law of God written on tables of stone constituted the first covenant.
2. This covenant is here called “the “ministration of death” or “ministration of condemnation,” and is abolished or done away in Christ.³²
3. The abrogation of this covenant annulled the law of God.

³¹ *Romans 8:7.*

³² *2 Corinthians 3:7, 13-14.*

To the first point we answer, that a covenant is a mutual agreement between two parties; or, according to its second definition, it is a writing containing the terms of agreement.³³ The first covenant, according to the first definition of the word, may be read in *Exodus* 19. The proposition on the part of God stands thus:

Exodus 19

⁵ If you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall you be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.

The answer of the people is as follows:

⁸ And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord has spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

This completed the mutual agreement. Its stipulation was obedience on the part of the people. Then follows what may, according to the second definition of the word, be called the covenant, *viz.*, the ten commandments as the terms of the mutual agreement already entered into.

The covenant or mutual agreement is one thing, the terms of that agreement, though closely connected with it, are quite another. We say then that the first covenant was strictly speaking the mutual agreement entered into by God and His people, the ten commandments being its terms of agreement. Mark this.

To the second point we answer that the word ministration signifies “the act of performing service,” or “service” itself; consequently it is not the words “written and engraven in stones” to which the Apostle refers, but to “the ministration” or service of those words.³⁴ The careful reading of this chapter shows that its subject is a comparison of the ministrations of the two covenants.

A full account of the ministration of the first and second covenants may be read in *Hebrews* 7, 8, 9, 10. The Levitical priest-

³³ Noah Webster.

³⁴ Please note the use of the word where it occurs. *Luke* 1:23; *Acts* 6:1; 2 *Corinthians* 9:13.

hood with its ordinances of divine service, performed the ministration of the first covenant. The “more excellent ministry” of Christ, including all its branches, fulfills the ministration of the second. And it is a fact of much importance, that the ark of God’s testament is found in the heavenly tabernacle, where Christ is ministering,³⁵ as well as in the earthly tabernacle; that it is clear that the tables of the testament are still the foundation of the divine government.

Then the law of God given to Israel as the basis of the first covenant, is clearly shown to be distinct from its “ministration” as given in “the hand-writing of ordinances.” As the services of the first covenant meet their antitype in Christ’s ministration, how natural the language, that:

2 Corinthians 3

⁹ ...the ministration of condemnation...

¹⁰ ...had no glory...by reason of the glory that excels;

—the glory of the shadow being swallowed up in that of the substance. Then it is clear that the vail which is on the children of Israel, denotes the typical service or ministration of condemnation, which was abolished, or done away in Christ. If you say that it is God’s law which was abolished or done away in Christ, then you teach that Christ destroyed the law.³⁶ Deny this, who can.

To the third point, we answer, that the first covenant ceased *because its conditions were not kept*. We have already shown that the law of God was given to Israel, as the conditions of the covenant between God and His people. The terms of agreement having been broken, the covenant based on them must of necessity cease.

But to teach that the abrogation of the covenant, annulled the law of God also, would in reality be saying that God abolished His law because men would transgress it!

³⁵ Revelation 11:19.

³⁶ Matthew 5:17-19.

Our opponents teach that the law of God is abolished, and that those precepts which are not re-enacted in the New Testament, are not binding on us. The force of this blow is aimed at the Sabbath, but if carried out, its effect would be to overturn the whole law of God.

“The law, [say they,] was abolished at Christ’s death.”

We know that the New Testament dates from the death of the testator, the precise point where the first covenant ceased.³⁷ Now if God abolished His law at Christ’s death, how could He afterwards write it in the hearts and minds of His people according to the promise, as given in *Hebrews* 8:10? How could this be done unless He first re-enacted it? And we challenge you to show that God has ever abolished a law, and then re-enacted it. The word of God is not yea and nay after this manner.

Further. As the new covenant begins at the precise point where the first one ceased, your position requires you to believe that God abolished the ten commandments, and IN THE SAME MOMENT re-enacted nine of them to write on the hearts of His people. Deny this if you can.

Do you say that it is the law of the New Testament, or law of grace, which God writes on the hearts of His people? We answer that you cannot show the existence of such a law, distinct from the precepts of the decalogue.

Besides, if the precepts of the Decalogue are abolished, even its principles cannot now exist without a re-enactment. If you could carry out this sentiment you would show that the ten commandments are all abolished; hence the law of God is destroyed: hence also the moral government of God is destroyed, and men are left without prohibition against any species of wickedness.

Do you say that God abolished his law, and then re-enacted all of its precepts save the Sabbath commandment? We answer that

³⁷ *Hebrews* 9:16-17; 10:9-10.

such an unwillingness on your part to submit to the law of God, shows that you possess...

Romans 8

⁷ ...the carnal mind, [which] is enmity against God, [WHICH] IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF GOD, neither indeed can be.

Jesus has said that...

Matthew 5

¹⁸ ...NOT ONE JOT OR TITTLE SHALL PASS FROM THE LAW till all be fulfilled;

—but you, to avoid the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, teach us that that commandment has been struck out of the law. Such then is your absurd and dangerous position. Will you still cling to it?

We invite the attention of the candid reader to “a more excellent way.”³⁸ We have shown the existence of God’s law from the beginning, and that its observance constituted the conditions, or terms of agreement, on which the first covenant was based. The first covenant ceased because its conditions were not kept.³⁹ But the dissolution of this covenant could not abolish “the royal law”⁴⁰ which had existed from the beginning: hence we believe that the law of God did not cease with the first covenant, but that it continued in full force, ready to be written by the Spirit in the hearts of God’s people.⁴¹

There is therefore no such absurdity in our faith, as in that of our opponents, who would have us believe that God abolished His law, and, at the same moment re-enacted a part of its precepts. Our faith may be expressed in a single sentence: GOD’S LAW COVERS ALL TIME, *and under all* dispensations it stands out before men as the rule of their lives and the sum of their duty to God.

³⁸ 1 Corinthians 12:31.

³⁹ Hebrews 8:9.

⁴⁰ James 2:8.

⁴¹ See the promise, Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 8:10.

The fall of man left “the work of the law”⁴² written in his heart, though faintly indeed: then at Mount Sinai, it was written in tables of stone by the finger of God: then, under the new covenant, it is written in the hearts of God’s people even as it was before the fall. We appeal to men of candor and reason. Are not these things so?

Galatians 3

The great doctrine of justification by faith having been lost sight of by the Galatian church, the Apostle argues the point with them, and with great clearness shows that it is our only hope of salvation. Hence, the different covenants which God has made with His people are here examined and contrasted.

The covenant made with Abraham, which was based on the righteousness of faith, is first introduced. This covenant secured to himself, and to his seed, the inheritance of the earth.⁴³ Four hundred and thirty years after this, that law, the principles of which have existed from creation, “was added”⁴⁴ to the covenant which already existed.

The question now arises,

“Why does the Apostle say that the law could not disannul the promise made to Abraham? Is there any thing in the law, which is against the promise of God?”

No, verily.

Galatians 3

²¹ Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid...

For the law of God which embodies His requirements, and man’s duty, cannot be contrary to His own promise. Why then is it said, that...

¹⁸ ...if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise?

⁴² Romans 2:15.

⁴³ Romans 4:13.

⁴⁴ Galatians 3:17.

We answer, that God made perfect obedience to His law, the condition on which He took Israel, the literal seed of Abraham, to be His people.⁴⁵ This covenant made the works of the law the condition on which they should receive the inheritance, instead of the righteousness of faith, which was the condition of the promise made to Abraham.

But it is plain, that if the deeds of the law be made the ground of justification, then is justification by faith made void. And as it is evident that fallen guilty man cannot be justified by a law which already condemns him, he could then have no hope of salvation. Is it asked,

“How then could Israel hope for salvation, while the law of God stood out before them?”

We answer, that beside “the royal law,”⁴⁶ another law was given to Israel,

Ephesians 2 [Colossians 2:14-17]

¹⁵ ...the law of commandments contained in ordinances.

In all its sacrifices and offerings, this law pointed them forward to the one offering of Jesus Christ, as the great atonement for their transgressions.

“Why then,” it may be asked, “did God give to Israel a covenant which recognized perfect obedience as its only condition?”

We reply, He did it that He might exclude all appearance of heirship from the natural seed, except such as should walk in the faith of their father Abraham. Hear the Apostle:

Galatians 3

²¹ For if there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

²² *But the Scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ* MIGHT BE GIVEN TO THEM THAT BELIEVE.

⁴⁵ *Jeremiah 11:3-4; Exodus 19:5-8; 20.*

⁴⁶ *James 2:8-12.*

Such are the only heirs. But the literal seed of Jacob were the apparent heirs till the coming of the seed, to whom the promise was made, even as Ishmael was the apparent heir of Abraham till the birth of Isaac. God made promise to Abraham and to his seed, that they should inherit the world.⁴⁷ He, who is thus designated as the seed of Abraham, is no less a personage than Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3

¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your seed, which is Christ.

He was “made under the law,”⁴⁸ kept the covenant which requires perfect obedience, then died for our transgressions, and bequeathed to us His own inheritance.⁴⁹

But as this chapter is considered an important proof that the law of God is abolished, we will state this view in its strength, and examine it.

1. The law had no existence prior to its being given from Mount Sinai.
2. It was only binding on literal Israel.
3. It was to last only till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; hence, it expired by limitation at that point.

We answer to the first position, that men, though destitute of the written law of God until the days of Moses, were counted sinners by God. And,

1 John 3

⁴ Sin is the transgression of the law.

Again, if by the term the law was “added,” we are to understand that it had no existence prior to that time, the inquiry arises, How are we to understand the next clause, which reads,

⁴⁷ Romans 4.

⁴⁸ Galatians 4:4.

⁴⁹ Galatians 4:4; 1 John 3:4-5; Hebrews 9:15-17; Luke 22:20.

Galatians 3

¹⁹ ...the law...was added *because of transgressions*?

The Apostle has told us that where there is no law, there is no transgression:

Romans 4

¹⁵ ...for where no law is, there is no transgression.

This point may be fairly settled in *Romans 2*, where Paul shows that in the judgment, all will be left without excuse; for those who have not had the written law, have had at least the work of the law written in their hearts.

To the next position [that the law was only binding on literal Israel] we answer, that such a view would make the Apostle contradict himself. He testifies,

Galatians 3

²² But the Scripture has concluded all under sin.

Again,

Romans 3

¹⁹ Now we know that what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped,
AND ALL THE WORLD MAY BECOME GUILTY BEFORE GOD.

To the third point [that the law was only given until the seed should come] we reply, that God made His law the condition of the covenant into which He entered with the literal seed of Abraham. Thus was an addition made to the Abrahamic covenant, to continue till the seed should come, to whom God made promise.

But to teach that the law itself expired at that point, would be a plain contradiction of clear testimony.

Matthew 5

¹⁷ Think not that I am come to destroy the law...

¹⁸ ...Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.

Romans 3

³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.

Romans 7

⁷ I had not known lust, except the law had said, You shall not covet.

We here inquire, how an abolished law could convict a man of transgression? And further, how could the Apostle hold such a struggle with the law as he describes in *Romans 7*, when that law had ceased to exist?

Further, how can the royal law convince men of sin as transgressors, after God has abolished it?⁵⁰ A law, embodying the moral perfections of the infinite Jehovah, must from its nature be unchangeable and immutable like its author.

The sum of our opponents position may be fairly reduced to this proposition:

“The Jews were the only people amenable to the law of God.”

Hence, we say that our opponents show them to be the only transgressors. For it is clear that those only, who have the law, can be capable of transgressing it. To carry this point further, we say that not only does this view make the Jews the only sinners, but it would show them to be the only persons redeemed by Christ. For He died *to redeem them that were under the law*.⁵¹

But the question,

“Who has abolished the law?”

—becomes deeply interesting. We ask, who? Surely not the apostles. Such power was never delegated to men. Not the Son of God. He was “made under the law,” and himself informs us that he did not come to destroy it.⁵² There is but one being in the uni-

⁵⁰ See *James* 2:8-11.

⁵¹ *Galatians* 4:5; 3:13.

⁵² *Galatians* 4; *Matthew* 5:17-19.

verse who can be supposed to possess this power; we mean the great “Law-giver.”⁵³ And it would be well for our opponents to show how the Most High can take back a law which is perfect, spiritual, holy, just, and good? How can he abolish a law, which says,

Exodus 20

³ You shall have no other Gods before me.

How can he take back the statute, which forbids the worship of idols? How can he say to man,

“I repeal the law which forbids you to take my name in vain?”

How give men the license to profane the day, which He has sanctified as a memorial of himself? Or, which is the substance of the whole matter, How can he abolish the great commandment, which says,

Matthew 22

³⁷ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.

For on this great commandment hang those precepts which contain our duty to God.

But we leave the question, how God could take back a law which embodies His own attributes, and inquire further,

“Has the divine ‘Law-giver’ abolished His own law?”

Our opponents affirm, we deny. Let us listen to their proof.

1. God gave the law for a limited period, which expired at Christ’s death.⁵⁴ Hence, the law expired by limitation.
2. He has abolished the law at the crucifixion.⁵⁵

⁵³ James 4.

⁵⁴ Galatians 3:19.

⁵⁵ 2 Corinthians 3.

These two testimonies are the most important ones offered to sustain the position. To this view we reply, that if the law expired by limitation, then it could not be abolished. If it was abolished, then it did not expire by limitation. The language of Scripture being truth, and its statements not inconsistent with themselves, we say that that position is unscriptural, whose main proofs destroy each other.

In an examination of the first of these proofs, we pointed out the distinction between a law, and the ministration of a law. With reference to the words engraven on stone, we say, that “condemnation” and “death” were there; for while they condemned and made guilty the whole world, they could not, without an atonement, give life to any.⁵⁶ To conclude the point, we say, that if *Galatians* 3:19, avails anything for our opponents, it shows that the law was not repealed, but that it expired by limitation.

Setting aside these conflicting views, we come to a point where there is, perhaps, perfect agreement. On some ground or other, all admit that none of the precepts of the Decalogue are binding on us. The sentiment stands thus:

“When the law expired, the Lawgiver transferred all of its precepts, save one, to the New Testament.”

In another place, we have pointed out the absurdity of the abolition and the re-enactment of the law of God. To make use of *Galatians* 3, the first position is abandoned, and the view is now presented in its stead, that the law has expired through limitation. But the difficulty still remains. For leaving the question, Whether such a law could ever be limited to a period of time, we say, that it is still necessary to show that any part of the law has been re-enacted.

It is idle to talk of the transfer of a law which does not exist. For that which is not in existence cannot be transferred. A law which has been repealed, or which has expired through limitation, does

⁵⁶ *Romans* 3:19, 24, 26; *Galatians* 3:21.

not exist. Hence, the idea of the transfer of a part of the law, after the whole has been abolished, is utter folly. If the law has been abolished, no part of it can now exist without re-enactment. This leads us to inquire,

“Has the law of God been re-enacted? If so, by whom?”

Certainly not by the Son of God, for it is not claimed that the law ceased until His death. Instead of coming to give another law, he came to “fulfill,” to “magnify,” and to make “honorable” the law, which already existed.⁵⁷

Not by the great Lawgiver, for leaving out of the question the fact that the abolition of the law, and its re-enactment in an amended form would be a virtual confession that His law was imperfect and needed correction, we ask,

“Where is the passage of Scripture which shows any such act of the Lawgiver?—where?”

Another question arises,

“Wherein has the law been improved by the alleged amendment? Was it not already ‘perfect,’ ‘spiritual,’ ‘holy,’ ‘just, and good’? Wherein has it been made better?”

It is answered, that the Sabbath has been left out. The subject is brought to this point then: the Lord would strike the Sabbath commandment from His law. To accomplish this purpose, He abolishes His whole law, and then re-enacts all of its precepts, save the fourth commandment! If such a view does not make God “altogether such a one as ourselves,”⁵⁸ we ask, what could?

But we fail to discover wherein the law has been made better. If “the Sabbath was made for man,”⁵⁹ we are by this alteration deprived of one of those blessings, which had been bestowed on the human family. That which has been made for man, is certainly in-

⁵⁷ *Isaiah* 42:21.

⁵⁸ *Psalms* 50:21.

⁵⁹ *Mark* 2:27.

separable from his well-being. But if the Sabbath has been abolished, it has failed to fulfill the original design of God, because a part only of the human family are permitted to share in its blessings. Nay, it would seem that the great Lawgiver had already discovered that the Sabbath was not calculated to benefit man, though He made it for that purpose. Hence, He recalls His law, and having struck out the fourth commandment, gives the remainder to man as His amended will!

But the foundation, the reality, and the perpetuity of the Sabbath, may be learned from a few simple facts.

1. It was instituted in Paradise.⁶⁰
2. It was guarded from profanation by the fourth commandment of “the royal law,” even as marriage was by the seventh.⁶¹
3. Christ testifies, that “the Sabbath was made for man;”⁶² and that “till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.”⁶³
4. We look forward to Paradise restored, and there stands the holy Sabbath.⁶⁴

Think you, that the Gospel so far exceeds, in spirituality, Paradise when first created, or Paradise after its restoration, that the Sabbath is not congenial to its character, and must needs be abolished? Nay, we ask our friends who would thus destroy “the Holy of the Lord,”⁶⁵ how they can reconcile the idea, that the Sabbath has been struck out of existence, with the fact that it existed in Paradise lost, and that it will exist amid the glories of Paradise restored? The Sabbath was made for man; it began with the first

⁶⁰ *Genesis 2.*

⁶¹ *James 2:8; Exodus 20.*

⁶² *Mark 2:27.*

⁶³ *Matthew 5:18.*

⁶⁴ *Isaiah 66:22-23.*

⁶⁵ *Isaiah 58:13.*

man, and continues notwithstanding the “man of sin,” inseparably connected with the history of the human family forever.⁶⁶

The Sabbath is to be in the new earth; but it has long been trodden down by the little horn of *Daniel* 7. The saints are about to return to Paradise from whence they have so long wandered. Is it not in place then, that the holy Sabbath should here be brought out and vindicated, that the church of the living God may carry back to Paradise the very institution which was brought from thence? We say further, that the closing struggle between the dragon and the remnant of the church, is with reference to the COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, *and the testimony of Jesus Christ*.⁶⁷

But there is another strong objection existing in the minds of many, which we will now examine. It is this:

“The world is under the law, but the Christian is under grace, and not under the school-master.”

This view admits the fact that the law of God is not abolished, but attempts to show that the Christian is not under obligation to obey it. Nay, that if he should keep its precepts he would be in danger of falling from grace! We say that this view is based on the fact that the law was *not* abolished at the crucifixion, for an abolished law cannot hold men under it, neither can it convince men of sin as its transgressors, after it has ceased to exist.

The fact that the law is our school-master to bring us to Christ, shows conclusively that it has not been abolished. Because an abolished law can never show men that they are condemned and must perish without a Saviour. This view then, is distinct from the idea that the law was abolished at Christ’s death. For if it was abolished at that time, then the world is not under it. If the world is under the law, then it has not been abolished. Let us examine the testimony on this subject.

⁶⁶ *Genesis* 2:2-3; *Exodus* 16:23-28; 20:8-11; *Isaiah* 56; 58:13-14; *Daniel* 7:25; *Matthew* 5:17-19; *Luke* 22:55-56; *Matthew* 24:20; *Mark* 2:28; *Revelation* 1:10; *Isaiah* 66:22-23.

⁶⁷ *Revelation* 12:17; 14:12.

Galatians 3:23-26

Galatians 3

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

²⁴ Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

²⁵ But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master, for you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6

¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

What is it to be under the law then? Hear the testimony of the Bible.

Romans 3

¹⁹ Now we know, that what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of glory to God.

Then in the sight of God, the whole world is condemned and become guilty before Him, as transgressors of His law. The sentence of condemnation is just and righteous, so that EVERY MOUTH IS STOPPED. Where is there hope of salvation then? Surely, man in this state is lost.

“How is the law a school-master to bring us to Christ?”

Answer. The law shows our guilt and just condemnation, and that we are lost without a Saviour. Read Paul’s account of this school in *Romans 7:7-25*.

Romans 3

²⁰ By the law is the knowledge of sin.

Romans 7

⁷ I had not known sin but by the law.

Then the instruction of the law is absolutely necessary, that we may know ourselves to be sinners in the sight of God. We find ourselves sinners by past offences, and unable to render present obedience. The just penalty of the law hangs over our heads; we find ourselves lost, and fly to Jesus Christ for refuge. What does He do to save us from the curse of the law? Does He abolish the law, that He may save its transgressor? He tells us that He did “not come to destroy” it, and we know that the law being holy, just, and good, cannot be taken back without destroying the government of Him who gave it. Does the Saviour modify its character, and lessen its requirements? Far from it. He testifies that not one jot or tittle shall...

Matthew 5

¹⁸ ...pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.⁶⁸

And He knows that those who in heart commit any act of iniquity, are transgressors of the law.⁶⁹ If the Saviour did not abolish or relax the law, how can guilty man hope for salvation? What then does the Saviour do? He gives himself to die in our stead. He offers His own...

Matthew 20

²⁰ ...life a ransom for many.

John 3

¹⁶ God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

We now lay hold on Jesus Christ as the great atonement for our transgressions, and receive a full and free pardon of all offences. A way has now been laid open by which man, though justly con-

⁶⁸ *Luke 16:17; James 2:10.*

⁶⁹ *Matthew 5:22, 27, 28; 1 John 3:15.*

demned by the law of God, can yet be saved without dishonoring, or making void the law. God can be just and yet...

Romans 3

²⁶ ...the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.

Need we inquire further what it is to be under grace? We have already seen in what manner we are saved, notwithstanding the law condemns us, and yet the claims of the law are not made void. When we were lost and ruined by transgression, and had no way to escape the just sentence of the law, God gave His own Son to die for us. The law can then allow mercy to enter and offer pardon to all who will accept it by faith in Jesus Christ.

In His person mercy and truth meet together. The law justly condemns us; Jesus bears our sins in His own body on the tree; faith in Him justifies, and saves us. The law brings us to faith; faith does not make void the law, but establishes it. Those who are under sin are under the law, those who have been pardoned are under grace.

Two states then are brought to view in the New Testament.

1. Under the law.
2. Under grace.

Those who are under the law, are condemned: those who are under grace, are pardoned. We ask,

“Does Christ come and die to redeem us from the just sentence of the law, that He may bring us to a state where we may at pleasure violate its precepts?”

“Is the law of a character so sacred that it must needs have the death of the Son of God for its atonement, and when the sinner has obtained pardon, is it then “relaxed, or slacked up,” so that it is at his option whether to obey it or not?”

“Does this state of grace give us license to violate the law of God?”

In answer to these inquiries, we are told:

“That part of the law which Christ quoted is certainly binding on us. But those precepts which He did not quote, are not to be regarded, for they ceased at His death.”

We answer, there is an end to this part of the controversy then, for the law which brings us to Christ for salvation, must most certainly be that law which condemns us. And no part of the law can condemn us, save that which is now in existence. And if it be admitted that we are not at liberty to violate any part of that law which brings us to Christ, we leave this part of the subject, and inquire whether a part of the law was left out by Jesus. For the question we are examining turns on this point.

Did our Lord re-enact a part of the law, and leave the remainder to expire, or to be abolished at His death? Let us examine the facts in the case.

At no one time did our Saviour quote all the commandments. And indeed we may say that He never quoted the first, the second, or the fourth commandment. And still further, He does not re-enact those precepts which He quotes, but refers to them as a part of the law of God. But one of two views can be taken of this subject.

1. Christ meant that those commandments which He quoted were the only ones which should henceforth be binding, or,
2. He appealed to the law of God as to the highest authority, and cited those commandments which were particularly adapted to the cases of those persons with whom He conversed.

If the first view be correct, then Jesus meant to teach that henceforward they were not under obligation to obey the first, second, or fourth commandment! And this in the face of the fact that they were all to continue till the crucifixion, when as some say they were all abolished.

Further, it is assumed, not proved, that He re-enacted those precepts which He quoted. For, to say the least, the idea is a very

strange one, that He should re-enact a law which was already in force.

But if the other position be correct, *viz.*, that by quoting a part of the law He sanctioned its high authority, and left it on its own basis, as the law of His Father, then are we correct in saying that the whole law as such brings us to Christ, and when we are justified by faith, we are by no means at liberty to violate one of its precepts.

The fact that the law is our school-master, to show us the just claims of God, and our own just condemnation, shows plainly that it has not been abolished; hence, though we have been pardoned through God's free grace, we can never violate its precepts without being "convinced" by it "as transgressors."⁷⁰

That we are justified by grace though faith is evident,⁷¹ and yet faith does not...

Romans 3

³¹ ...make void the law.

For the whole plan of salvation is based on the justice of God's law, and the sufficiency of Christ's atonement. The law stands out before us to show us our transgressions.

Acts 20

²⁴ The gospel of the grace of God,

—shows us how we may be pardoned. We are justified by grace through faith. Faith works by love.⁷²

1 John 5

³ This is the love of God that we keep His commandments.

Thus,

Romans 13

¹⁰ Love is the fulfilling of the law.

⁷⁰ *James 2:9; also Galatians 2:18.*

⁷¹ *Ephesians 2:8.*

⁷² *Galatians 5:6.*

Galatians 4:21-31

Those who would reject pardon by faith in Jesus Christ, and take their own chance for salvation through a law which justly condemns them, and shuts their mouths, are here addressed.

The Holy Spirit illustrates the old and new covenants by an allegory drawn from the family of Abraham. The great promise having been made to Abraham, that he and his seed should inherit the earth, he was, by virtue of this covenant, called...

Romans 4

¹¹ ...the father of all them that believe.

This covenant was based on “the righteousness of faith,” and contained all those blessing which the subsequent ones secured to his seed.

The covenant from Sinai added another condition, viz., “the righteousness of the law.”⁷³ The new covenant is based on the original condition, and points us to Christ’s atonement, as the source of grace, that we may fulfill the righteousness of the law.⁷⁴

Notice, it is not the law of God which is represented by the bond-woman, neither is it the gospel which is represented by Sarah. But Hagar represents Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children, and Sarah represents Jerusalem which is above, which is free, which is the mother of us all.

The son of the bond-woman [Ishmael] represents the children of Old Jerusalem by the first covenant, even as Isaac represents the children of the New Jerusalem, by the new covenant. The bondage of literal Israel was not because the law of God was given to them, but because they were its transgressors,—the servants of sin.⁷⁵ The freedom of those who are the children of the

⁷³ Romans 2:26; 8:4.

⁷⁴ Romans 8:3-4.

⁷⁵ John 8:33-36.

New Jerusalem is not that the law has been abolished, but that they have been made free from sin.⁷⁶

Galatians 5

That the “yoke of bondage”⁷⁷ here spoken of means “the law of commandments contained in ordinances,”⁷⁸ and not the law of God, is evident from many considerations.

The ordinance of circumcision was not one of the precepts of the royal law—was not a part of the ten commandments; but it belonged to the law of Moses.⁷⁹ The apostles⁸⁰ in treating of circumcision, and the law of Moses in general, call it a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear.

But that the law of God, so far from being a yoke of bondage is the delight of God’s saints, both testaments prove.⁸¹ And the fourth commandment is particularly pointed out as such.⁸² Those who observed circumcision were debtors to do the whole law of Moses; for if one of its ordinances is binding all of them must be. Then we should have to return to its offerings and atonements, and thereby reject the one offering of Jesus Christ, the only ground of justification before God.

The typical service was succeeded by the antitypical, when the bond-woman was succeeded by the free-woman.

Romans 13

¹⁰ Love is the fulfilling of the law.

Why so? Answer: Because,

1 John 5

³ This is the love of God that we keep His commandments,

⁷⁶ *Romans 6:22.*

⁷⁷ *Galatians 5:1.*

⁷⁸ *Ephesians 2:15.*

⁷⁹ *John 8:23.*

⁸⁰ *Acts 15.*

⁸¹ *Psalms 1:2, 119:174; Romans 7:7, 22; 8:1-7; 1 John 5:3.*

⁸² *Isaiah 58:13-14.*

—and,

Romans 13

¹⁰ Love works no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Love to God consists in rendering obedience to those commandments which contain our duty to Him; love to our neighbor consists in obeying those commandments which contain our duty to him. Those who love God with all their hearts, and their neighbor as themselves, render cheerful obedience to those precepts which hang on these two great commandments, not forgetting the “new commandment” of Jesus, that His people love one another **EVEN AS HE LOVED US.**⁸³

Love then does not make void the law, but fulfills it. Charity, the perfect love of God, is then the end, the object, the design of the commandments of God. If we are led by the Spirit we are not under the law, for **AGAINST** those who bring forth its fruit, there is no law.⁸⁴

Ephesians 2:11-17

The care with which Paul has stated what was abolished at the crucifixion, will enable us to understand the subject in its true light. Does he testify that the law of God was abolished? Far from it, for in chapter 6, he enforces the duty of obedience to parents by quoting the fifth commandment.

What does he say? He testifies that Christ abolished in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments contained in ordinances. The middle wall of partition was thus broken down, and the enmity between Jews and Gentiles was slain by the cross, that through the one offering, both might be reconciled to God.

The law of ordinances, which pointed forward to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, was abolished or done away in Him; because the

⁸³ *John* 13:34; *1 John* 3:16, 22-24.

⁸⁴ *Galatians* 5:18-23.

body had been reached which cast the shadow.⁸⁵ To this law the Gentiles never were amenable, for it was a wall of separation between themselves and literal Israel.

But that all men were under the law of God, and condemned by its precepts, is clearly shown.⁸⁶ And this is further evident from the fact that all need a share in the atonement.⁸⁷

- The one law pertained only to Israel, to the other law all mankind were amenable.
- By the one, the whole world was condemned, and shown to be guilty before God; by the other, was given a typical atonement, which pointed forward to the offering of Him who should die for the sins of the world.
- The one having reached its antitype, is abolished; but the other stands, if possible, on a firmer basis than ever.⁸⁸

For the immutability of its character is shown in that the Son of God must lay down His life before guilty man could be rescued from its just sentence. The ordinances of the Jewish Church, ceased with that Church, being succeeded by those of the Christian Church. But the law of God pertains to men not as members of any Church, but as moral agents, amenable to the government of God; hence it is not changed, relaxed, or abolished by any dispensation.

Jesus Christ came not to destroy this law, but He did abolish the law of ordinances, nailing it to His cross. The PRECEPTS of the one were spoken by the voice of God, and were written with His own finger in tables of stone; but the other was written by the hand of Moses in a book. The one was the “royal law” from the “King eternal;” the other is “the hand-writing of ordinances.”⁸⁹

⁸⁵ *Colossians* 2:17.

⁸⁶ *Romans* 3:14-23.

⁸⁷ *Ephesians* 2:16; *Galatians* 4:4-5; *Hebrews* 2:9.

⁸⁸ *Romans* 3:31.

⁸⁹ *Matthew* 5:17, 19; 19:17; *James* 2:8-12; *Romans* 7:7, 12, 22; *Ephesians* 2:15; *Colossians* 2:14; *Acts* 15:5.

Colossians 2:14-17

A second testimony is borne to the same point. The hand-writing of ordinances was taken out of the way by Jesus, and nailed to His cross. This law being written by the hand of Moses in a book might be blotted out, but the words engraven by the finger of God in stone, never! This law having been abolished, we are not to be judged by any of its festivals or ordinances. Mark the contrast.

James introduces that part of the royal law which contains our duty to our neighbor,⁹⁰ quotes several of its precepts, and shows us that he who violates a part, is guilty of breaking the whole law, and adds,

James 2

¹² So speak, and so do, as THEY THAT SHALL BE JUDGED BY THE LAW OF LIBERTY.

That we should not be judged by an abolished law is perfectly natural; that we should be judged by a law to which all men are amenable, is in the highest degree reasonable. We have before noticed other Sabbaths, besides the Sabbaths of the Lord; we here contrast the laws by which they were enforced.

Hebrews 8:6-13

The promises on which the two covenants were based are here noticed. The first required perfect obedience to the law of God,⁹¹ but did not contain those clear and gracious promises of pardon through Jesus Christ that were needed by fallen guilty man. Hence it was not faultless, though the law of God on which it was based as its condition is pronounced by both testaments to be *perfect, holy, just and good*.⁹²

The covenant “waxed old,”⁹³ because its conditions were broken; hence the new covenant, based on better promises, was introduced. This covenant shows us the great atonement from whence

⁹⁰ Compare *Matthew* 22:35-40; *James* 2:8.

⁹¹ *Jeremiah* 11:4-5; *Exodus* 19; 20.

⁹² *Psalms* 19; *Romans* 7.

⁹³ *Hebrews* 8:13.

we may expect pardon, reveals to us the fountain of grace, from whence we may receive strength to yield obedience, and places the law of God in our hearts.⁹⁴ The transition from the old covenant to the new, is marked by the death of the Testator.⁹⁵

But if the law of God was abolished at that time, then no law was in existence to place in the hearts of the people of God! Nor can this point be met fairly by saying that *Christ brought forward a part of the law* by quoting it, for it would be absurd to believe that he re-enacted part of a law which was already in force, or rather that he re-enacted a part of the law, and then abolished the whole!

Those who adopt this idea, are bound to explain why Christ should omit the first, second, and fourth commandments. Or rather, they are bound to prove that He re-enacted those commandments which He quoted, for their argument is mere assertion till this is done. We repeat, there is but one Law-giver, and this is not the Son, but the Father.⁹⁶

James 2

The royal law is here enforced by James in an unmistakable manner. Had he believed that it was abolished, or that it was a “yoke of bondage,”⁹⁷ he would never have said,

James 2

⁸ If you fulfill the royal law, you do well.

Nay, he would never have asserted that:

⁹ If you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors;

—for an abolished law can never convince a man of sin.⁹⁸ The sixth and seventh commandments of this law are then quoted.

⁹⁴ *Jeremiah* 31:33; *Hebrews* 8:10; 10:16.

⁹⁵ *Hebrews* 9:15-17; *1 Corinthians* 11:25; *Galatians* 3:19.

⁹⁶ *James* 4, *Exodus* 20.

⁹⁷ *Galatians* 5:1.

⁹⁸ *Romans* 4:15.

And we are shown that the transgressor of one precept is guilty of breaking all;⁹⁹ which is not unlike the words of our Lord, that:

Matthew 5

¹⁸ ...one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.

Then if one part be in force, it is all in force. If one commandment be broken, all are broken. Such is the testimony of *James*. How can those, who violate the fourth commandment, meet this in the Judgment?¹⁰⁰ But the fourth commandment is evaded thus:

“The Sabbath has been changed, and good men in past ages have kept the first, instead of the seventh day. Are we not safe in following them?”

We offer to yield the first point when one text is brought which testifies that the Sabbath has been changed, or that the first day was ever sanctified by God, or that we are required to keep it holy.

Further, we reply that every man is accountable to God for the light which shines before him. The fact that God has given us light on this subject, shows that we have no excuse for further disobedience—no cloak for our sins. Certainly we cannot plead the right to make void the “commandment of God” that we may keep “the tradition of the elders.”¹⁰¹

The fourth commandment is definite, requiring us to keep that day holy which God himself rested upon, and sanctified. We may charge God with folly in giving this commandment, but in the day of Judgment we shall find that obedience would have been far better.

1 John 3

³ Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.

⁹⁹ Macknight.

¹⁰⁰ See *James* 2:12.

¹⁰¹ *Mark* 7:9.

⁴ And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins,
and in Him is no sin.

Notice these striking thoughts. The definition of sin is “the transgression of the law.” Every sinner is a transgressor of the law. In Christ was no sin, hence no transgression of the law.

Jesus was manifested to take away our sins. How does He do this? He dies for us that we may be delivered from the just sentence of the law; its execution is stayed, that mercy may be permitted to enter, and offer pardon through the blood of Christ. The refusal of pardon offered at such an immense cost, greatly enhances the guilt of the transgressors; for they have not only violated the law of God, but by this act they tread under foot His Son who died to redeem them.

From these testimonies we conclude that the New Testament, teaches the perpetuity of the law of God, and for that reason does not re-enact any part of it.

Paris, Maine
February 10, 1851

THE SABBATH

By M. N. Stevens

Now dawns through heaven and earth the Sabbath day.
Auspicious season, hail! With cheerful song
Thy glad return we celebrate below,
While, though in loftier yet symphonious strains,
Angelic choirs your welcome chant above.

Yes, you are welcome, for your holy sway
Quells the wild tumult of the troubled soul,
And softly whispers *peace*. The sorrowing heart
Crows glad at your approach, and spirits faint,
Fanned by your hallow'd breath, revive and smile.
From the rapt vision fades the world away,
And saints in union sweet, draw near to heaven.

You prince of days, expressly made for man!
O, had we seraph harps, we'd sing your praise
In numbers worthy the exalted theme.
We'd rise superior to the angelic throng,
And their impassioned minstrels outvie;
Because this sacred morn for us does shine.
(Poor pilgrims wandering 'mid earth's gloom profound.)
To us by the creating hand was given
This dear memorial of creating love;
This beacon lighted at the burning Throne,
Piercing night's deepest shades, and scattering wide
Celestial radiance on the darksome way.

We will ascribe to God the glory due;
Will honor Him who sits upon the throne,
And will rejoice before Him; for His name
Is high exalted far above all gods.
Honor and might and majesty are His.
Creation bears His signature divine,
And loud attests the greatness of His power.

Ere ancient time his measured course began,
When embryo earth appeared, formless and void,
When silence reigned, and universal night
Mantled the bosom of the mighty deep:
Then went the mandate forth, th'omnific word,
Borne on the breath of Deity afar,
Traversed the echoing gloom;—nor void returned;
Nature awoke, responsive to the call,
And sprang to life in all her varied forms.
And in th' approval of the smiling God,
Exulting, her majestic course began.

Six days the Almighty labored with His word;
But now His labors ceased and heralded
By the clear anthem of the "morning stars,"
Crowned with excessive glory, shone on high
The first Sabbatic morn. To greet its dawn
All heaven joined in univocal song;

Mellifluous voices filled the balmy air,
Accompanied by harps of sweetest note,
Hymning the praises of creating love,
And the bright glories of the day of rest.

Momentous day! its first observer, He,
The high and lofty One, whose fearful name
Gleams as a signet on its holy brow.
Alone ordained and sanctified by Him,
And with His blessing blest forevermore.

When from the sacred Mount,
Whose cloudy top and trembling base proclaimed
The awful grandeur of its Guest sublime,
In thunder once went forth the “royal law,”
God’s will to man, made known in ten commands,
On that dread morn, while to its center shook
The steadfast earth, and Israel in dismay
Turned from the fearful sight, nor could endure
The voice of Him that spoke; the great decree,
Unchangeable, was passed on all below.
“Six days may work be done, but on the seventh,
Which is the Sabbath of the Lord your God,
You and all yours shall rest; for in six days
The Lord made heaven and earth and all therein,
And rested on the seventh, and hallowed it.”

Based on this grand foundation, stands secure
The Sabbath of the LORD. And who are you
That rashly dream’st to pluck this fabric down,
And on its ruins to erect your own,
Your blest, your sanctified! Shortsighted man!
Can you command unnumbered worlds from naught!
“Or can you thunder with a voice like Him”
Then may you think to change the law divine
Your weakness know, and know that God is strong,
And jealous of His glory; and who dares
With impious hand to touch His high renown,
Shall His displeasure prove, and taste His ire.

Blest all-immortal day! Ah, it shall STAND
Unmoved amid the strife of mortal tongues—
Unmoved amid the ruin of the world;
And while Eternity his mighty years
Shall roll unnumbered o'er the earth made new.
Effulgent shine in glory's noontide ray,
By nations who are saved, observed for aye.

Paris, Maine
December, 1850.



The Perpetuity of the Royal Law

Or, The Ten Commandments Not Abolished

c1854

Advent and Sabbath Tract, No. 4

Introduction

PP Editor's Note: I initially thought this was a revision of the previous pamphlet on the same topic, from 1851 (*The Perpetuity of the Law of God*). But it appears to be an almost entirely new production. It carries some of the same arguments, and a similar introduction, but is structured differently, and, I think, shows that J. N. Andrews' thinking on this topic had matured over the three intervening years.

IT IS painful to witness the various inconsistent and self-contradictory positions resorted to by those who reject the Sabbath of the Lord. But of all the positions adopted, none seem so dangerous, or fraught with such alarming consequences, as the view that the law of God, by which the Sabbath is enforced, has been abolished, and that we are, therefore, under no obligation to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

The question whether God has abolished His law or not, is, indeed, the main point at issue in the Sabbath controversy; for when it is shown that law still exists, and that its perpetuity is clearly taught in the New Testament, the question is most conclusively settled, that the Sabbath is binding on us, and upon all men.

The Sabbath of the Lord is embodied in the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. This commandment stands in the midst of nine moral precepts which Jehovah, after uttering with His own voice, wrote with His own finger on the tables of stone. These nine commandments stand around the Sabbath of the Lord, an impregnable bulwark, which all the enemies of that sacred institution in vain attempt to destroy.

It is evident that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment cannot be set aside unless the Decalogue can be destroyed. Hence the enemies of the Sabbatic institution have brought their heaviest artillery to bear upon the law of the Most High: calculating that when they had destroyed this strong hold, the Sabbath would fall an easy prey to their attack.

We invite attention then to the law and to the testimony. By the unerring word of God we wish to settle this question; and this we believe can be done in the most satisfactory manner.

That the hand-writing of ordinances containing the feasts, new moons and the associated annual sabbaths of the Jews, has been abolished and taken out of the way, we do not doubt. This was not the moral law of God; but was merely the shadow of good things to come. But the royal law in which are the ten commandments of God is the subject of this investigation, and it is the perpetuity and immutability of this law that we affirm. If the law of God has been destroyed, the act must have been accomplished by one of three things; *viz.*,

1. By the teachings of the Lord Jesus; or
2. By His death; or
3. By the apostles.

We believe that all will agree to this statement.

1. Did Christ's Teachings Abolish the Law?

WAS the law of God abolished by the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ? Let us listen to His own words.

Matthew 5

¹⁷ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

¹⁸ For verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

¹⁹ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Our Lord here testifies that He did not come to destroy the law or the prophets. Then it is a fact that He did not destroy either. But what is it to destroy the law? We answer, that it can only signify to abolish, or to annul it. And thus Campbell renders the word:

“Think not that I am come to subvert the law.”

Whiting renders it:

“Think not that I am come to annul the law.”

It is therefore certain that our Lord did not come to subvert, annul, or destroy, the law of God. Hence it follows that the law of God was not annulled or abrogated by Him. He adds, that instead of coming to destroy, He came to fulfill. If this was the object of the Saviour's mission, did He not by this act do away the law, set it aside, and relieve us from obligation to keep its precepts? Let us see. As Campbell renders the text, it reads,

“I am not come to subvert, but to ratify.”

That is, I am not come to abolish the law, but to confirm, and render still more sacred, its just demands. If that was the object of

our Lord's mission, it follows that he did not lessen our obligation to obey the law of his Father.

But let us return to the word "fulfill." Christ came to fulfill the law, hence He did fulfill it. What is it to fulfill a law? Let the apostle James answer:

James 2

⁸ If you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, You shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well:

⁹ But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

It is evident that James here places the transgression of the law in contrast with, or in opposition to, the fulfillment of the law; therefore it follows that the fulfillment of the law is the reverse of its violation. In other words, it is its observance. To fulfill the law in the manner that James enjoins, is to render complete obedience to its divine requirements.

But it may be contended that to fulfill the law in the sense of our Lord's declaration, accomplishes its purpose, and takes it out of the way. To show the absurdity of this view, let us take another of Christ's sayings which is of the same character, precisely. When John refused to baptize the Saviour, Jesus said,

Matthew 3

¹⁵ Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness.

Did the Saviour, by fulfilling all righteousness, weaken, take out of the way, or destroy all righteousness? Certainly not. No one will claim that He lessened our obligation to fulfill all righteousness also.

But how did Christ fulfill the law of His Father? There is but one way in which this could be accomplished, and that is to answer its just demands. What were those demands? We answer: first, the law of God demands perfect obedience. The justice of

this, none will deny. But when the law has been violated, it demands the death of the transgressor.

1 John 3

⁴ Sin is the transgression of the law.

Romans 6

²³ The wages of sin is death.

Ezekiel 18

⁴ The soul that sins it shall die.

When Christ came to fulfill the law, He came to do this, not for himself, but in behalf of our race. He came to fulfill the law as the Messiah: an office or character which no other being ever possessed. He came to undertake for fallen men, and in a certain sense placed himself in their situation. What then was the relation which our race sustained to the law of God? We answer:

Romans 3

²³ All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

The law of God stopped every mouth, and showed all men sinners in the sight of God.¹⁰²

Then, when the Saviour took upon himself our nature, and came to fulfill the law of his Father, that law not only demanded perfect obedience; but it also justly demanded the death of our race; for all were its transgressors. The work of the Saviour, therefore, in fulfilling the law of His Father, was of a twofold character. He must first render perfect obedience to all its precepts, and then offer up His own life as a ransom for guilty man. To fulfill the law *as the Messiah*, Christ must perform all this. Did he thus do?

- He kept His Father's commandments.¹⁰³
- In Him there was no transgression of the law.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² *Romans 3:19.*

¹⁰³ *John 15:10.*

¹⁰⁴ *1 John 3:4-5.*

- He was the Lamb of God without spot,¹⁰⁵ in whom the Father was well pleased.¹⁰⁶

And this was not all;

- He took upon himself the sin of the world.¹⁰⁷
- He bore our sin in His own body upon the tree.¹⁰⁸
- He died the just for the unjust, giving His own life a ransom for many.¹⁰⁹
- God can now be just, and yet justify him that believes in Jesus.¹¹⁰

Thus Christ lived our example and died our sacrifice. Did this work of the Messiah, in rendering perfect obedience to all the law of God, and then offering up himself as a ransom for its transgressors, weaken that law, or lessen our obligation to obey it? Never. It shows in the most striking light, its perpetuity and immutability.

The law of God condemned our race. Jehovah would open the way for man's salvation. He could not destroy His own moral law; but He could give His own beloved and only Son to die for its transgressors. This evinces the estimate which the Father placed upon His own law. Isaiah predicted that Christ should...

Isaiah 42

²¹ ...magnify the law, and make it honorable.

The record of Christ's life and death shows the fulfillment of this prediction. But Christ adds a solemn affirmation.

Matthew 5

¹⁸ For verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

¹⁰⁵ *1 Peter 1:19.*

¹⁰⁶ *Matthew 3:17.*

¹⁰⁷ *Isaiah 3:6; John 1:29.*

¹⁰⁸ *1 Peter 2:24.*

¹⁰⁹ *1 Peter 3:18; Matthew 20:28.*

¹¹⁰ *Romans 3:25-26.*

What is a jot and a tittle? A jot is the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. A tittle is a small point by which some of those letters are distinguished from others. Our Lord therefore solemnly affirms that the minutest point shall not pass from the law till all be fulfilled. Then it is certain that a part will not be destroyed and the remainder of the law be left in force. Consequently as long as a part of the *original* precepts continue, all of them abide without one jot or tittle being destroyed.

Further than this, Christ has plainly marked the point of time before which no part of the law of God shall pass.

Matthew 5

¹⁸ Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Has heaven and earth passed away? Let those answer who teach the abolition of the law of God. When will heaven and earth pass? Let the beloved disciple answer:

Revelation 20

¹¹ And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

If the fulfillment of the law of God destroys it, that destruction cannot take place before the final conflagration of the heavens and the earth.¹¹¹ Prior to that time the minutest point shall not be destroyed. If therefore one jot or one tittle shall on *no account* pass from the law, till all be fulfilled; and if the point before which this shall not be accomplished is the passing of the heavens and the earth, it follows that the Lord Jesus not only designed that the law should be fulfilled by himself for the brief period of His sojourn on earth, but also, that the righteousness of the law should be fulfilled in his church; or as Whiting renders *Romans 8:4*,

“That the *precept* of the law might be fulfilled by us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

¹¹¹ 2 Peter 3.

The next verse establishes this view.

Matthew 5

¹⁹ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Let us carefully consider this verse. The word “whosoever” takes up all persons through all coming time. The word “therefore” shows that this verse is the conclusion drawn from the premises which the Saviour had just laid down, which were these:

1. “Think not that I am come to destroy the law.”
2. “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.”

As not a single particle of this holy law was to be destroyed, it was fitting that the Lord Jesus should speak with distinctness respecting its observance and its violation. This is what he now utters.

¹⁹ ...shall break one of these least commandments.

Then we have here the opposite of fulfilling the law; viz. the breaking of the commandments. We may also learn that the law in verses 17-18, means the commandments.

¹⁹ ...one of these least.

Christ had said that not one jot or one tittle should pass from the law till all be fulfilled, so that there could be no excuse for those who teach that a part of the law has been destroyed, and that the remainder is yet in force. But Christ did not leave the subject thus. He now tells what shall be the fate of those who violate the least of the commandments. Those who select nine of them, and omit one of the commandments, which they think not worth their notice, are the very persons that Christ here reproves.

¹⁹ ...and shall teach men so.

Who are they that teach men to violate the commandments? Those who teach men that they have all been abolished go far beyond the crime that Christ has here noted. The Saviour spoke of those who should violate the least one. Some at the present day teach men that all of them are abolished. This is the grand and effectual method to teach men to violate the law of God. But those who make any one of the commandments void, that they may keep in its place a tradition of the elders, are doing exactly the work that our Lord has here solemnly warned men against.

Matthew 5

¹⁹ ...he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven;

—or, as Campbell renders,

“...shall be of no esteem in the reign of heaven.”

This is, doubtless, the idea of the Saviour. This is the penalty of a violation of the least precept of the law of God. But how much more fearful must it be to break the commandments and to teach men that they have all been abolished!

¹⁹ ...but whosoever shall do and teach them.

Here we may learn what it is to fulfill the law of God. It is to do and to teach the commandments.

¹⁹ ...the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Or, as rendered by Campbell,

“...shall be highly esteemed in the reign of heaven.”

Here is the ample commission; here is the vast reward of those who teach and keep the commandments of God. Surely, no man ever enjoined obedience to the law of God with such force as did our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us hear His words again:

Matthew 15

³ But He answered and said unto them, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

⁴ For God commanded saying, Honor your father and mother; and, He that curses father or mother, let him die the death.

⁵ But you say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever you might be profited by me; and honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free.

⁶ Thus have you made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

These words disclose to us the sacredness of God's commandments in the mind of the Lord Jesus. He did not deny that He violated the traditions of the Jews, but He boldly arraigned their traditions, and condemned them as worthless in the sight of God. And not only as worthless, but also as sinful, inasmuch as they contradict and make void the commandments of God.

The tradition in question was very venerable with the Jews, inasmuch as they supposed that it had been handed down from Moses; thus being equally ancient and sacred in their estimation with the commandment which it so effectually made void. On such authority the Jews thought themselves fully justified in an open violation of the fifth commandment. Nay, they even supposed that the observance of this tradition was more acceptable to God than the observance of the commandment itself.

At the present time we have a case precisely parallel. The professed church of this day hold a tradition which they say came from Christ and his apostles. On the authority of this tradition they suppose that they are amply justified in violating the fourth commandment. Like the Jews they even think that they are serving God more acceptably by keeping a tradition that contradicts his commandment, than they would be in keeping the commandment itself. The rebuke which Christ applied to the Jews, falls with all its force upon the heads of such:

Matthew 15

⁶ Thus have you made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

⁷ You hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying,

⁸ This people draws nigh unto me with their mouth, and honors me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

⁹ But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Matthew 19

¹⁶ And behold, one came and said unto Him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?

¹⁷ And He said unto him, Why do you call me good? there is none good but one, that is God; but if you will enter into life, keep the commandments.

¹⁸ He said unto him, Which? Jesus said, You shall do no murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness,

¹⁹ Honor your father and your mother: and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Let us carefully consider these words of our Lord. The young man came to Him with the most important question that he could ask. The Saviour returned to him the most simple, direct and appropriate answer. Jesus said to him,

¹⁷ If you will enter into life, keep the commandments.

The young man, who, it is evident from the narrative, thought himself already observing them all, asked Jesus, "Which?" In answer, Jesus quotes from the second table, five of the ten commandments; and to this list He adds the second of the two great commandments on which hang all the rest.

It is often said by our opponents that if we would name only those precepts which our Lord enjoined upon the young man, they would be happy to agree with us; that Christ did not name the fourth commandment, which is not therefore obligatory upon us. We reply that the fourth commandment is no more omitted than is the first, the second, the third and the tenth, and also the first of the two great commandments on which hang all the rest! Does anyone believe that the young man might violate all these and yet enter life eternal?

There can be but one of two positions taken with respect to this text:

1. When the Saviour said, "If you will enter into life, keep the commandments," He named all the commandments which the young man should keep; or
2. When the Saviour said "keep the commandments," He enjoined obedience to them all, and then in answer to the young man's inquiry, pointed him to the precepts of the second table, namely, his duty to his fellow-men, as that in which he was most deficient.

If the first position be correct, it follows that the young man could enter into life in the character of an idolater, a blasphemer, a Sabbath-breaker, and with a heart full of covetousness; for our Lord omitted to specify any of those precepts which define our duty to God, and He also omitted the tenth commandment:

Exodus 20

¹⁷ You shall not covet.

This position needs no refutation, and we turn from it to the other.

That the second position is correct, namely, that Christ enjoined obedience to all the commandments, and then in answer to the young man's request, pointed him to the second table, and to the second of the two great commandments—his duty to his fellow man—the following facts plainly evince:

1. This is exactly what is recorded in the text.
2. The view that Christ specified all the precepts which the young man should observe has been shown to be false and unreasonable.
3. When the young man insisted that he was blameless in regard to his duty to his fellow men, our Lord applied a test to him which undeceived him at once.
4. When Christ said, "If you will enter into life, keep the commandments," He spoke in harmony with His own words in

Matthew 5:17-19. There He had declared that not even the minutest particle should pass from the commandments till the heavens and the earth should flee away, and that whosoever should violate one of the least of them, should be of no esteem in the reign of heaven.

Then, our Lord being allowed to explain His own words, it follows that to keep the commandments, is to observe every one of them; and that the willful violator of the least one, shall have no part in the kingdom of God.

And the apostle James, as we shall thereafter see, establishes in the clearest manner the fact that whoever understandingly violates one of the ten commandments is guilty of breaking them all. What will those say to this who affirm that the young man could keep the commandments, and yet violate every one that defines our duty to God the great Law-giver?

Matthew 22

³⁵ Then one of them which was a lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying,

³⁶ Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

³⁷ Jesus said unto Him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind.

³⁸ This is the first and great commandment.

³⁹ And the second is like unto it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Many mistake the question here proposed to Jesus, and read this text as though the lawyer had said,

“Master what is the great commandment which you will give to take the place of the ten commandments?”

The question was not asked on that wise; and those who present this scripture as evidence that Christ gave a new code to take the place of his Father’s law, labor under a serious mistake. The question related to the original law of God; what is the great

commandment in that? Christ answered this question by pointing out the two great immutable first principles on which hang all the law and the prophets:

Matthew 22

³⁷ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.

This is the sum of our duty to God: on this hang all those precepts which define our duty to Him.

³⁹ You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

On this precept hang all those commandments which contain our duty to our fellow men. This is the sum of them, and out of this they all grow.

The Saviour did not abolish the law of His Father by these two precepts; for they were as ancient as any part of the law of God.¹¹² He did not then hang the law and the prophets upon them; for they had ever hung there; nor did Christ teach that on these two precepts all the law and the prophets were abolished. Nay, He showed by this the immutable basis on which the law of Jehovah rests. These two great precepts are, as all admit, unabolished. And the law of God which hangs upon them is like them, immutable, and, must abide as long as they endure.

Luke 16

¹⁷ And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail.

Then it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than for one of the commandments of God. How hard then must it be for every precept of the law of God to be abolished and a new law of God enacted to take its place. Easier could heaven and earth be destroyed and new heavens and a new earth be created! Should God abolish His great constitution and establish another in its stead, that event would not only be marked as distinctly as the establishment

¹¹² See *Deuteronomy* 6:5; *Leviticus* 19:18.

of the original constitution by himself at Sinai, in person, but it would present even a more extraordinary spectacle than for heaven and earth to flee from the presence of Him that sits upon the throne!

It is an important fact that our Lord in presenting portions of the law of God, always brought them forward as such; that is, He appealed to the law of His Father, as a living authority, and quoted from it, not as giving authority to what He quoted, but presenting those quotations as the authority for His statements. This fact evinces that Christ was not engaged in re-enacting a part of His Father's law, as some are ready to affirm. Our Lord did not act in the capacity of legislator with His Father's law. He was its expositor; and as such he laid open its length and breadth and spirituality. Even the golden rule,

Matthew 7

¹² Whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them,

—our Saviour bases on the fact that this was the law and the prophets.

¹² ...for this is the law and the prophets.

So that this most admirable saying was not given to take the place of the law of God and the prophets, but as a precious truth resting on their authority.

The scriptures which we have quoted must suffice to show the nature of Christ's teachings respecting the law of God. It shows that by His teaching He did not abolish the commandments of God. It also evinces that Christ not only taught that it was *easier* for heaven and earth to pass than for one tittle of the law to fail, but that He also taught, *until* heaven and earth pass a single tittle shall not pass from the law of God; and that whosoever would enter into everlasting life must keep the commandments of God, even the least of them. We will now consider the second question.

2. Did Christ's Death Abolish the Law?

WAS the law of God abolished by the death of Christ? That we may answer this question in a proper manner, let us carefully consider *Romans 3*. We will first examine that portion of the chapter which presents the human family as condemned by the law of God and speechless in His sight.

Romans 3

¹⁹ Now we know that what things so ever the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

This portion of scripture presents in a striking light the state of mankind without a Saviour. The Apostle had been presenting in the previous verses numerous quotations from the Old Testament, showing the fearful state of fallen man. The verses which we have quoted, present us with the holy standard of rectitude by which the unrighteousness of men is made manifest, and their fearful crimes left without excuse.

¹⁹ What things so ever the law says, it says to them who are under the law.

How many, then, are under the law? The remainder of the verse determines this with certainty.

¹⁹ ...that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

This fact then is plainly stated: that the whole human family are addressed by the law of God; that all of its members without distinction of rank, or order, share in one general condemnation; and that condemnation is so just, that every mouth is shut, and all the world stands speechless before the bar of God. The twenty-third verse explains the cause of this:

Romans 3

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

The law of God can justify no flesh in His sight. But why cannot the law justify sinful man? Because by the law is the knowledge of sin. Man is guilty of transgression, and the law of God discovers and manifests this fact. The law is God's great rule of right; and as such, it shows every departure from rectitude and holiness. We have thus seen the sad state of fallen men. Let us now consider what God does for their salvation. If He takes back His law, one of two things must be true:

1. He takes back an *unjust* law, and thus acknowledges that He was the cause of man's condemnation. But this is false; for we have seen that the law is so just that none can plead against its righteous sentence. Hence if God has taken back His law we shall be compelled to adopt the second position; namely,
2. He takes back a just law, thus denying His own moral character as expressed in that law, and overthrowing His own moral government. God cannot lie; and it is manifestly absurd to teach that God has abolished the principles of His own moral government. Hence we conclude that God did not, and could not overthrow His own moral law, in order to save its transgressors.

We inquire again,

"What did the great Law-giver do in order to save men?"

If He did not take back His law, and abolish His own moral government, what did He do? It would seem that but one other thing could be done; namely, to put the law in force upon its transgressors. In other words, to execute its penalty upon the human race. If this were done, all must be destroyed; for all were its transgressors; and the wages of sin is death.

Let us now with gratitude and adoration look at the wondrous plan which God has devised for man's redemption: a plan in

which justice and mercy meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other:¹¹³ a system of redemption by which God can be just and yet can justify Him that believes in Jesus. It is set forth by Paul in the following language:

Romans 3

²⁴ Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

²⁵ Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

²⁶ To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.

In these words the great plan of redemption is set forth; but oh! what has it not cost! Man had broken the law of Jehovah and fallen under its awful and yet just condemnation. God could not reverse His holy law without destroying the moral government of the universe; but He so loved our race that He gave His only Son to die for perishing man.¹¹⁴ He sent his Son to be the propitiation or offering for the sins of men.¹¹⁵ Christ came to take the curse of the law upon himself, and to offer His life as a ransom for its transgressors.¹¹⁶

The Father had two objects of the dearest affection: His own perfect law, and His only Son. He would save man who had revolted from allegiance to that law, and openly set it at naught. To do this, the great Law-giver must sacrifice either His perfect law, or His beloved and only Son. The first He could not do; for God cannot deny himself; and He has in all ages ever magnified His word above all His name;¹¹⁷ but He could give His only Son to die, that revolted man might have a sacrifice to bring to God that could avail to take away sin.

¹¹³ *Psalm* 85:8-13.

¹¹⁴ *John* 3:14-17.

¹¹⁵ *1 John* 4:10.

¹¹⁶ *Galatians* 3:13; *1 Timothy* 2:5-6.

¹¹⁷ *Psalm* 138:2.

Romans 4

²⁵ [Jesus] was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.

He ascended into the true Tabernacle in heaven, the new covenant Sanctuary, where the ark of God stands, containing His holy law—as a great High Priest, to plead the merits of His blood in behalf of penitent men.¹¹⁸ As the ancient high priest entered the typical tabernacle to sprinkle the ark of the testament with blood even thus was it necessary that our great High Priest should act.

The earthly high priest did *not* sprinkle the blood of sin-offering upon the ark that he might blot out the ten commandments which it contained, or that he might lessen the obligation of men to observe them. On the contrary, he entered the tabernacle with blood, because man had violated that holy law, and could not be pardoned without the offering of blood to take away sin.

Even thus did our Lord. By His own blood He entered the true Tabernacle, and presented himself before the Father on our account. In fulfilling the ministration of the true holy places, the two dearest objects of affection to the great Law-giver are again united. But how wondrous the union! Jesus, who has died for the transgressors of that sacred law, now stands as a great High Priest before the ark containing the law of God, pleading in behalf of men, the merits of his own sacrificial death. The Law-giver can accept the offering, and man, who has broken the law of God, can be pardoned.

It is evident, therefore, that the death of our Saviour sustains the same relation to the law of God, that the death of the victim in the ancient typical system sustained to that law. The design of either was not that man should have liberty to violate the law of God, but that man who had violated that law, might have the offer of pardon. The typical system could not, indeed, take away sin; but it pointed out the fact that without the shedding of blood

¹¹⁸ *Hebrews 9; Revelation 11:19.*

there could be no remission of sins,¹¹⁹ and clearly pointed forward to the great Sacrifice which should be offered for the sin of the world.

If it were possible for God to give men an adequate idea of the immutability of his sacred law, he has given it in the spectacle of His Son dying upon the cross for us. Those who think that the death of the Son of God abolished the very law which made that death necessary, are requested to consider the following points:

1. If the law that condemned man could have been abolished, it would not have been necessary that the blood of Christ should be shed, that atonement might be made for its transgressors. But the Son of God died because the law which man had broken could not be taken back.
2. But if the death of Christ destroyed the law which condemned men, then they are delivered from its just sentence, whether they repent or not: in other words, Universalism is true.
3. But this view makes the law of God, and the Son of God, both fall beneath the same blow, and without honoring God, or leading man to repentance: it destroys both the cherished objects of Jehovah's affection: subjecting the Son of God to a shameful death, and overturning the moral government of the great Law-giver.
4. But the *conditional* offer of pardon made to man through the gospel of the Son of God, plainly evinces that the law of God still exists, and that men can only be delivered from it, on condition of repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hence the law of the Most High is not abolished by the death of the Son of God. His death indeed permits mercy to enter and offer pardon to guilty man; but the law of God abides all the while; and when the work of mercy is accomplished, our great High Priest will leave the tabernacle of God, no more to plead for sinful man,

¹¹⁹ *Hebrews* 9:22.

and the penalty of the law, the second death, will be awarded to its transgressors.

It is clearly established, therefore, that the death of the Son of God did not blot out the law of God the Father. On the contrary, His death is that fact which, above all others, testifies to its immutability. But we cannot employ so strong language on this point as that which Paul has used in summing up this very argument. He says:

Romans 3

³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Having shown conclusively that the law of God was neither abolished by the teaching nor by the death of the Son of God, we will now examine the third question.

3. Did the Apostles Abolish the Law?

WAS the law of God abolished by the apostles? It may seem to some individuals that this last question is propounded in a singular form. But if the law of God was not abolished by the teaching nor yet by the death of the Son of God, it follows that if abolished at all, it must have been by the apostles.

Many have asserted that the apostles re-enacted nine of the ten commandments, to take the place of the ten which ceased at Christ's death: but as we have shown that the Son of God offered himself up as the great Propitiation for the transgression of the law, and not as the means of its abolition, it follows that the ten commandments must be abolished by the apostles, before they could re-enact one of them.

It is no more absurd to speak of the apostles' abolishing the ten commandments than it is to speak of their re-enacting nine of them. And if it seem absurd to any individual to believe that the apostles abolished the ten commandments and then re-enacted nine of them, we ask them to consider whether the doctrine which represents the infinite Law-giver as doing this very thing, is not a still greater absurdity?

God the Only Law-giver

If the apostles abolished the law of God, who gave them authority? The Son of God indeed commissioned them to teach all things whatsoever He had commanded them;¹²⁰ but we have seen, in all His teaching to them, that He maintained the immutability of His Father's law, so that from their divine Master they never received such a commission. If they taught as He taught, we shall find them setting forth the perpetuity and immutability of the law of God. And that they did speak the same doctrine which their Lord had taught them, we have divine assurance.

¹²⁰ *Matthew 28:20.*

John 14

²⁶ But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

If the apostles abolished the law, they must have done it in the very epistles in which, according to some of our opponents, they re-enacted nine of the commandments for the gospel dispensation. These epistles were written not far from 60 AD; so that if the law of God was abolished by the apostles, it was abolished about thirty years after the crucifixion.

We have presented the question in this form, that attention might be called to the folly of those teachers who represent the apostles as legislating upon the law of God. A single testimony from the apostle James ought to make those blush for shame who represent the apostles as abolishing the law of God, or as re-enacting a part of it, to take the place of the original code.

James 4

¹² There is *one* Law-giver who is able to save and to destroy.

From the preceding verse it is certain that James thus designates Him who gave the law in person at the first; that law, the authority of which he so distinctly recognizes in chapter 1:25; 2:8-12. According to James, there is but one such being in the universe; namely, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.¹²¹ It is therefore the height of absurdity to represent the apostles as amending, abolishing, or re-enacting the law of God. The twelve apostles never yet attempted to dethrone the one Law-giver, or to usurp any of his prerogatives.

We shall now present the plain and explicit testimony of the apostles relative to the perpetuity of the law of God, and thus allow them to speak on this subject in their own behalf. The limits of this tract will not admit an extended notice of objections.¹²² The

¹²¹ 1 Timothy 1:17.

¹²² For this part of the subject the reader is referred to larger works published at Review Office.

word of God is not yea and nay; therefore the plain statements of our Lord and His apostles must forever vindicate the immutability of the divine law.

The Testimony of James

James 2

⁸ If you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, You shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well:

⁹ But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

¹⁰ For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

¹¹ For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you are become a transgressor of the law.

¹² So speak, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

Several important facts are clearly set forth in this quotation. That the royal law to which James refers is the original law, is certain from the fact that he quotes it from the Scripture, the Old Testament. This is further evident from the fact that James in citing two of the ten commandments, presents them on their original authority; that is, as spoken by God in person. Or if we adopt the marginal reading of verse 11, he expressly acknowledges the authority of that law which contains the sixth and seventh commandments. That law is not abolished: on the contrary, it still stands ready to convince of sin every one who dares to violate it.¹²³ While those who fulfill it, instead of falling from grace, are said to do well.

James 2

¹⁰ For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

This verse furnished a perfect parallel to:

¹²³ James 2:9.

Matthew 5

¹⁹ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven [“shall be in no esteem in the reign of heaven” *Campbell’s Translation*].

Each of these texts distinctly announce the doctrine that the willful violation of a single precept of the law of God, is sufficient to exclude the transgressor from the kingdom of God. But it may be denied that this language of James refers to the ten commandments. Those who attempt to maintain such a position would do well to read the next verse, in which he brings the whole force of his argument to bear upon the ten commandments. He that violates one of these precepts is guilty of all. Let those consider this who lightly esteem the fourth commandment. Even were it the least precept in the Decalogue, those who willfully violate it, and teach men so, shall be of no esteem in the reign of heaven.

The “ALL” here referred to, means one of two things.

1. It means only those precepts which James has quoted, which makes “the whole law” to consist of the three precepts here cited, and leaves us at liberty to violate the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, eighth, ninth and tenth commandments, and also the first of the two great precepts from which James quotes—and those who think this tenable ground must occupy it at their own peril; or
2. The “ALL” to which James refers, includes the ten precepts from which he quotes; and he that violates one, has transgressed them all. By this law of liberty, or royal law, men will be judged in the day of God.

The Testimony of Paul

Ephesians 6

² Honor your father and mother, (which is the first commandment with promise;)

³ That it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.

There is an important argument contained in this text, which has been generally overlooked. Paul would enforce upon children their duty to their parents. For this purpose he appeals to the fifth commandment for authority.

Some have attempted to evade this argument by saying that Paul quoted this precept from the new law which Christ established, by quoting a part of the commandments to take the place of the original code as given by the voice of God at Sinai. To answer the assertion from which this inference is drawn, we present the fact that there is no intimation in the New Testament that Christ, by quoting a part of the ten commandments, established a new law in the place of the original code.

But those who insist on the idea that Christ by quoting a part of the ten commandments established a new code, would do well to ask themselves the question, why Christ never quoted one of the first four commandments. This imaginary new law is no great improvement on the original, when the fact appears that the first four commandments are not quoted by Christ, and consequently on its advocates' own showing, do not form a part of this law.

But there is direct evidence that Paul quotes from the Decalogue. By a word of comment inserted in the parenthesis, he identifies this as the first commandment with promise. It is a fact that though Christ has quoted this commandment, He has never appended any promise to it whatever; much less has He added the one here quoted by Paul. It is also a fact that this commandment does stand in the Decalogue, not only as its first commandment with promise, but with the very promise in question annexed! Hence it is a fact that Paul quotes from the Decalogue, and this too for the purpose of enforcing one of the clearest duties in the word of God: thus distinctly acknowledging the fifth commandment as the fountain head of all authority on this subject.

With this important fact before us, we can judge whether those do not wrest the words of Paul, who represent him as teaching the abolition of all the ten commandments. Paul tells the Eph-

esians that he had kept back nothing that was profitable to them.¹²⁴ If therefore the moral law had been abolished, Paul must have revealed this important fact to them. What must the Ephesians have thought when Paul wrote them four years later, appealing to the Decalogue, and not to his apostolic authority, to enforce the duty of children to their parents? Paul was never guilty of such inconsistency; it belongs only to those who teach the abolition of the ten commandments.

Romans 3

³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

This text has been already quoted as concluding Paul's argument on redemption through the death of Christ. We quote it again to give Paul an opportunity to speak explicitly on the question before us. No one of the apostles has treated so largely upon the doctrine of justification by faith as the apostle Paul. But lest any should conclude from the earnest manner in which he insists upon this doctrine that he believed the law of God abolished, he asks this very question that he may answer it in the most definite manner. His answer should put to the blush those teachers who represent Paul as setting aside, or teaching the abolition of the moral law.

³¹ God forbid, [says the Apostle,] yea, we establish the law.

Nor can an exception be taken to the form of the Apostle's question; for the same word that is rendered "make void" in this verse, is in *2 Corinthians* 3:13; *Ephesians* 2:15; *2 Timothy* 1:10, rendered "abolished." Paul has therefore rendered a definite answer to the question under consideration. And the strong language he uses in denying that he taught the abolition of that sacred law, should forever silence those who lay such an accusation against him.

¹²⁴ *Acts* 20:20.

Paul well understood the fact, that, though men now have the offer of pardon through the blood of Christ, the time will arrive when this work of mercy will be finished, and the just penalty of the law of God be inflicted upon all who are then in their sins. Knowing the terror of the Lord, he labored night and day to persuade men to become reconciled unto God, and thus escape the penalty of the law—the second death. Paul affirms that he did not teach the abolition of the law. Who dare affirm that he did?

“Yes,” said he, “we establish the law.”

Who dare deny it?

Romans 7

⁷ What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, You shall not covet.

The conversion of Paul took place some years after the crucifixion of Christ; so that what he says relative to the law of God has direct bearing upon this subject.

The experience of the Apostle, as here narrated by himself, is a proper example of sound conversion to God. The law of God struck the first blow in Paul’s religious experience; and thus it is with all others. The tenth commandment of the decalogue convinced Paul that he was a sinner; and he testifies that had it not been for that precept of the law, he had not known himself a sinner: thus exemplifying his own statement that...

Romans 3

²⁰ ...by the law is the knowledge of sin,

—showing that the law is God’s great standard of right. The remainder of chapter 7 exhibits the powerful struggle of Paul, as an awakened sinner, to keep the law of God. He is constrained to call the law holy, and the commandment holy and just and good (verse 12); and he testifies that it is by the commandment that sin becomes exceeding sinful (verse 13). He adds that the law is spiritual, but that he is carnal, sold under sin (verse 14).

His language depicts in the most striking manner the power of the carnal mind. Notwithstanding he approved the holiness and excellence of the law of God, he was carnal, sold under sin, and unable to render acceptable obedience to its precepts. The other law of sin in his members baffled all his efforts to keep the law of God.

In despair he flies to Christ for refuge and help. He obtains forgiveness of his past transgression of the law of God, through faith in the great propitiation for sin; he is delivered from the carnal mind—that other law of sin in the members—and grace is given him, that he may hereafter render acceptable obedience to the law of God.¹²⁵

The guilt of transgression, and the just condemnation of the law, are now gone; Paul is under grace; the law of God is now placed in his heart; and he manifests his love to God by keeping His commandments. The first part of *Romans* 8, presents this happy change.

This narration of the Apostle's experience strikingly illustrates the words of David:

Psalm 19

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.

Several important truths are clearly brought to view by this portion of scripture.

1. The law of God has not been abolished; for here is direct testimony that it existed in its full strength, several years after the crucifixion.
2. The law here referred to is the decalogue; for Paul quotes its tenth precept. Nor can this be evaded by saying that Paul quoted from the law of Christ.
 - a. The words purport to come from “the law:” an expression never used with reference to the words of Christ.

¹²⁵ *Romans* 8:1-4.

- b. The words in verse 7 are a *literal quotation* from the decalogue; but as Christ never used the expression, they are not a quotation from His words.
 - c. There is direct proof in verses 22 and 25 that Paul quotes from “the law of God.”
3. The law of God is his standard of holy principles; if these were abolished, sin could not be known.
 4. The law of God began Paul’s experience. If that were abolished, there could be no Christian experience, for there could be no knowledge of sin, the Apostle being judge.¹²⁶
 5. “Sin by the commandment” becomes exceeding sinful.¹²⁷

The reference to the law and the commandment, in this chapter cannot be mistaken. No one will attempt to deny that Paul refers directly to the decalogue, using the tenth commandment as a representative of all the rest. The sin forbidden by each of the commandments, becomes “exceeding sinful” when viewed in their holy light. How great, then, must be the guilt of those who openly desecrate the fourth commandment, after they have once been enlightened respecting it by the word of God!

Finally, the great design of the gospel is to deliver fallen man from the just condemnation of the law of God, and to place him where he may fulfill the righteousness of the law.

The Law reveals and makes us know
 What duties to our God we owe;
 But 'tis the Gospel must reveal
 Where lies our strength to do his will.¹²⁸

The Testimony of John

1 John 3

⁴ Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.

¹²⁶ *Romans* 3:20; 4:15; 7:7.

¹²⁷ *Romans* 7:13.

¹²⁸ Isaac Watts, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, Hymn 121 “The Law and the Gospel Distinguished,” 1765.

⁵ And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.

⁶ Whosoever abides in Him sins not: whosoever sins has not seen Him, neither known Him.

⁷ Little children, let no man deceive you: he that does righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.

⁸ He that commits sin is of the devil.

This text is worthy of careful examination. Let us notice some important truths here presented.

1. The New Testament definition of sin is here given: "Sin is the transgression of the law." Every sinner is a transgressor of the law of God.
2. John establishes the fact that this is the original law of God, by the statement that Christ was "manifested to take away our sins;" (transgressions of the law;) thus showing that it was a law which existed, and was transgressed prior to the first advent.
3. In Christ there was no sin; no transgression of the law. This ought forever to silence those who affirm that Christ broke the fourth commandment.
4. "You know that He was manifested to take away our sins."

Those who think that Christ was manifested to take away the law of his Father, would do well to consider this verse. He was manifested to take away (not the law of God, but) sin, the transgression of law.

If Christ was manifested to take away the law, it follows that to remove our transgression, He took away the law which He had transgressed: thus showing that He had a greater dislike to the law of His Father than he had to sin, the transgression of that law!

But how did Christ take away sins?

Hebrews 9

²⁶ He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

He shed His own blood as a propitiation for the sins of men: thus honoring the law of God, and opening to guilty man a way of escape.

5. “Whosoever abides in Him sins not;” that is, whosoever abides in Christ, does not transgress the law.

This is a truth of the deepest importance to those who think that the law is made void by faith, or done away by the gospel. Not a few who understandingly break the fourth commandment, quiet their consciences with the thought that Christ is their Saviour. Let such remember that none abide in Christ, who understandingly transgress the law of God. In this matter of vital importance, the Apostle utters a solemn warning:

1 John 3

⁷ Let no man deceive you: he that does righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.

⁸ He that commits sin (transgresses the law of God) is of the devil.

Psalms 119

¹⁷² All your commandments [says the Psalmist,] are righteousness.

Every violation of the law is sin. Those who understandingly transgress the law of God, to use the severe language of the beloved disciple, are “of the devil.” To break any one of the commandments of God constitutes a man a sinner, and exposes him to the penalty of the law.¹²⁹

1 John 2

¹ My little children, these things write I unto you that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

² And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world.

¹²⁹ *Romans 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4, 20; Revelation 20:14-15.*

We have already listened to John's definition of sin, and have learned that it is the "transgression of the law." Many affirm that this is the law of Christ. In the text before us we have the means of deciding this point. John begins by exhorting those to whom he writes, not to sin; that is, not to transgress the law. He adds,

1 John 2

¹ If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Then it is God the Father whose law is broken, and with whom an advocate is needed, by the sinner. There is one Law-giver, whose holy law has been broken by all mankind; and there is one Mediator between that Law-giver and the transgressor.¹³⁰ The *one* Law-giver is God the Father; the *one* Mediator is our Lord Jesus Christ. If Christ were the Law-giver, then our mediator must be between Christ and us. But instead of this, God the Father is the being whose law has been transgressed, and Jesus is the great High Priest between that broken law and its guilty transgressors. And this fact is confirmed by the next sentence:

² He is the propitiation of our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Then Jesus stands between the Law-giver and the sinner, not only as an advocate, mediator and High Priest, but also as the propitiation for the sins of men. In other words, He is the great Sacrifice offered for man's transgression of the law of God.

How deeply interesting is the thought that in the temple of God in heaven, where the ark containing the law of God abides, we have a great High Priest, who has once offered himself for our transgression of that free pardon of all our transgressions.¹³¹

To the professed people of God who still violate His law, we would address a word of exhortation and entreaty.

¹³⁰ *James 4:12; Romans 3:19, 23; 1 Timothy 2:5-6.*

¹³¹ *Revelation 11:19; Hebrews 8:1-3.*

2 Corinthians 5

²⁰ As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be reconciled to God.

The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to His law. Pray that God may deliver you from it. Would you possess that charity or perfect love, so fully described in *1 Corinthians 13*, which is the fulfilling of the law? Then heed the words of the apostle John:

1 John 5

³ This is the love of God that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.

The fourth commandment has long been trodden down, but under the latest message of mercy to men, the people of God are seen keeping all His commandments and the faith or testimony of Jesus Christ.¹³² Will you not be of this number? The dragon is yet to make war upon this remnant of the church; but he shall not prevail.¹³³ The last testimony respecting the commandment-keepers is given by the Son of God:

Revelation 22

¹⁴ Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

This is the fruition of our blessed hope, shortly to be realized.

¹³² *Revelation 14:9-12.*

¹³³ *Revelation 12:17.*

*Review of Objections
to the
Seventh-day Sabbath*

c1854

1. Objections to the Day

WE HAVE ever doubted the right of any man, or body of men, to make a purely human assertion the basis of an argument for changing the word of Jehovah. We remain of the same opinion. Every “thus says the Lord” is rock-bottom; and every doctrine which rests on such a foundation must stand. But that argument which is based on the assertion of men, has at best a very precarious foundation, however strongly it may be stated.

Objections

1. The definite day—the seventh—is of the nature of a positive institute, capable of change, while the observance of a day of rest, and worship and commemoration, is moral and eternal.

2. The object to be obtained, of rest etc., can be as well carried out by the first day, now observed, as by the seventh; being after six days of labor, and no difference but in the number and name. It is more convenient and can only be changed for Saturday with *great difficulty*.

3. The first day observance by Christ and the apostles, and John’s calling it the Lord’s day, gave it sacredness, and caused its observance among the primitive Christians, from the first century, and first writers that we have after the apostles.

- D. I. R.

- In the first objection, the writer asserts that the fourth commandment of the moral law is *capable* of being changed.
- In the second, he asserts that the commandment, when thus changed, would answer the divine purpose as perfectly as though it had not been altered.
- The third objection contains the writer’s proof that the commandment has actually been changed.

1. Are the Rest and the Day Separate?

Let us candidly consider the first objection. Whether this objection is just or not, none will deny that it rests wholly on the assertion of men.

The writer—as many others have done—has here separated the fourth commandment into what he is pleased to call its moral and its positive parts. The requirement to keep a day is moral, and therefore eternal. But that part of the commandment which tells us what day it is that God would have us keep, is positive and therefore changeable. In other words, this argument may be thus stated:

That part of the fourth commandment which designates the seventh day as the Sabbath has passed away and left only words enough in force, to require that some day be kept.

We now ask for the commission by which men have been authorized to cut in twain the fourth commandment. As the Scriptures do not furnish it, the answer must be that reason authorizes this act. Reason, then, is sufficient to prepare for destruction that part of the commandment which requires the observance of the hallowed Rest-day of the Creator. Let us try the same engine upon the remainder of the commandment, as follows:

The duty to rest is no doubt a moral duty, and of an unchangeable character, but the requirement to devote a day to this “is of the nature of a positive institute capable of change” so as to require *a part of each day*, instead of the observance of any entire day!

If this same mode of reasoning does not as effectually destroy the remaining portion of the fourth commandment, as it does that part which it was aimed against, we certainly fail to see the difference. Indeed it shows that the one part of the commandment is equally as changeable and positive as the other. So that if it is sufficient to prepare a part of the commandment for destruction, it is of equal value to those who would destroy the remainder.

When did God ever authorize men to take His commandments to pieces in such a manner? Is not this the very course which the Romish church has taken with the second and the tenth? Nay did not the Protestant church borrow this very argument from the church of Rome? Here are the words of the “mother church” on this point:

As far as the commandment obliges us to set aside some part of our time for the worship and service of our Creator, it is an unalterable and unchangeable precept of the eternal law, in which the church cannot dispense; but forasmuch as it prescribes the seventh day in particular for this purpose, it is no more than a ceremonial precept of the old law, which obliges not Christians.

And therefore, instead of the seventh day, and other festivals appointed by the old law, the church has prescribed the Sundays and holy days to be set apart for God’s worship; and these we are now obliged to keep in consequence of God’s commandment, instead of the ancient Sabbath.¹³⁴

From what has been said, two important facts are made plain:

1. That this argument was invented by the church of Rome to justify the change of the Sabbath.
2. That if this argument be just, it proves conclusively that no part of the fourth commandment is moral, unless it be the requirement to rest.

This argument first cuts off from the commandment, the requirement to keep the seventh day, because that is positive and susceptible of change to another day; and it cuts off the duty of keeping any day, as such a requisition is also positive, and susceptible of being changed so as to require the observance of a *part of each day*.

We think the fourth commandment has undergone a sufficient amputation to have nothing now left but the moral part. But what now remains? Alas, not enough to hold the form of a command-

¹³⁴ *Catholic Christian Instructed*, page 204.

ment together! In cutting off the seventh day from the fourth commandment, we cut off the term “Sabbath of the Lord,” for that term is expressly applied to the Rest-day of the Creator, the seventh day. And when this has been severed from the commandment, no man can show that the requirement to keep any day remains behind.

Here is the fourth commandment with the “positive” and changeable parts taken out:

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember to . . . keep . . . holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor and do all your work:

¹⁰ But . . . of the Lord your God: . . . you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested . . . wherefore the Lord blessed . . . and hallowed.

Like a building with its frame taken out, the fourth commandment is now only a mass of ruins. And even could we allow men to repair the commandment, by inserting the words, “first day of the week” where they have taken out the seventh day, it would only turn the truth of God into a lie, as the commandment would then require us to keep holy the first day of the week, because God rested upon that day from His work of Creation.

Nor would there be any way to mend the matter, except to strike out the reason on which the fourth commandment is based; viz.,

“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it,”

—and to insert instead, these words:

“Jesus arose from the dead on the first day of the week; wherefore the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath.”

The fourth commandment would then read thus:

“Remember the first day of the week to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor and do all your work: but the first day of the week is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates; for Jesus arose from the dead on the first day of the week; wherefore the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath.”

Here is the commandment as multitudes desire to have it read. As it requires the observance of a different day from the original commandment, and for a different reason from that which is there assigned, it leaves no part of the original Sabbatic institution in existence and thus this matter ends in the total destruction of the fourth commandment.

2. Is the First Day Able to Replace the Seventh?

Let us now examine the second objection. In this it is asserted that the first day of the week will answer the purpose of rest, worship and commemoration, equally as well as the seventh.

We reply that so far as rest from toil is concerned, men may doubtless obtain this on the first day of the week; though the idea of a day of rest at the commencement of the week instead of one at its termination, is the very reverse of God’s plan, not to say of propriety also. It is only by joining the last six days of one week to the first day of the following week, that men are able to hide this absurdity.

But we deny that the worship of God can be maintained as acceptable to Him in the observance of a different day from that which He ordained, as in the observance of the right one.

John 4

²⁴ God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in *truth*.

Those who make the commandments of God of none effect by their tradition, worship God *in vain*, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.¹³⁵ That this is strictly true of Sunday-keeping, none can deny. It is a tradition of the elders that directly makes void one of the ten commandments. If God should pronounce it a vain oblation, and say in the day of judgment to its observers,

“Who has required this at your hands?”¹³⁶

—would they not be speechless?

But will not Sunday answer as a day of commemoration equally as well as the Lord’s Sabbath? We answer that the fourth commandment requires us to commemorate the rest of Jehovah from the work of creation. The seventh day—the day of His rest—is the memorial of that event. Hence the commandment says,

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day [literally the Rest-day,] to keep it holy.

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath [Rest-day] of the Lord your God.

The first day of the week can never become the memorial of the Creator’s rest; for He began His labor on that day. It is not the memorial of Christ’s resurrection, for the Lord never set it apart for that purpose, but ordained a far more appropriate memorial of that event, *viz.*, baptism.¹³⁷ It is not a *divine* memorial of *any* event. If any one thinks that it is, let them tell us where God has said so.

¹³⁵ *Matthew* 15:3-9.

¹³⁶ *Isaiah* 1:12.

¹³⁷ *Romans* 6:4-5.

The fourth commandment presents before us an important event which God would have commemorated. It presents us also with the memorial by which He would have us commemorate that event. And it states distinctly how God made that memorial, and when. To insert Sunday in the commandment as the memorial of Christ's resurrection, not only destroys the divine memorial there given, but also destroys, as we have seen, the *reason* which God assigned for giving the commandment.

3. Did Christ and the Apostles Observe Sunday?

The third objection contains the writer's proof for First-day observance. It asserts that Christ and the apostles observed the day, and that John called it the Lord's day. Did Christ observe the first day of the week? If He did this, when, where and how, did He do it?

The resurrection of the Saviour, it is true, occurred on this day; but this was not so remarkable an event as the sacrifice of the Lamb of God which occurred on another of the six working days. Jesus showed himself to His disciples on the day of His resurrection, and perhaps on that day the next week, though this cannot be claimed as *certain*.

But to show that the day of His appearing was not thereby made sacred, the next time He appeared to them was a fishing-day, and the last time was on Thursday.¹³⁸ This is all the evidence that can be brought to show that Christ observed Sunday!

Did the apostles observe the first day of the week? The first instance which is cited as proof, is this: The disciples sat at meat, and while thus engaged, Jesus came in and upbraided them for their unbelief respecting His resurrection.¹³⁹

The next incident which is cited, was "after eight days" from the one just noticed.¹⁴⁰ It is *possible* that this was on the first day of

¹³⁸ *John* 21; *Acts* 1.

¹³⁹ *Mark* 16:9-14.

¹⁴⁰ *John* 20.

the week, but it is by no means *certain* that such was the case. But whether it was Sunday or not, nothing transpired which might not have occurred with equal propriety on any day.

Paul's act of breaking bread on that day may also be cited. But though he broke bread on that day—just as his Master had done on another of the working days, and as the apostolic church at Jerusalem had done every day—he never dreamed that it had become the Christian Sabbath; for as soon as it was light, he started on his long journey to Jerusalem!—a positive proof that he did not consider that day the Sabbath.

Paul commanded the members of the Corinthian church, every one to lay by himself in store on that day for purposes of charity. But this is the very reverse of a public collection, as each must be at his own home in order to obey.

John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, but he does not say that the Lord's day was Sunday. The objector *says that* for him. The Bible many times calls the Sabbath, the Lord's holy day. It never tells us that He has put another day in its place. It never calls Sunday the Lord's day.

Those, therefore, who affirm that the Sabbath of the Lord is not His holy day, and assert that Sunday is such, directly contradict the authority of the holy Scriptures.

2. Objections Regarding History

Objections

1. To say that it was *first appointed* or *caused* to be *observed* by Constantine, or *by the Pope* is historically false!

2. Or to say that “Pope Nicholas first called it the Lord’s day” is *historically false*, as may be seen in *Bingham’s Christian Antiquities*.

3. Constantine caused it by *law* to be observed by the *unconverted* and the *heathen* and *officers of government*; but it had been observed by the saints 150 years before, voluntarily.

4. And the councils which made canons on it, did not *introduce* it thereby, but only required *uniformity*, where there were some neglectful. For it was *generally* held sacred and observed from the first century.

5. It was also called Lord’s day by 168 AD, or the middle of the second century, by Dionysius writing *to* Pope Soter, and was thus in the second and third century distinguished from the Sabbath.

6. But the seventh Saturday Sabbath *never* was made a day of legal rest, nor strictly a rest by the church or councils; but a day of meetings only. Both were called “festivals,” but the *first day* had the *pre-eminence*.

- D. I. R.

1. The Origin of Sunday-keeping

We have never said that the keeping of Sunday as a *festival*, began with Constantine, or originated from the law which he enacted in its behalf. On the contrary, we believe that the Papal apostasy as stated by Paul, began even in the days of the apostles.¹⁴¹

Hence we are not surprised that some time after the days of the apostles, men began to pay some regard to Sunday, as also to

¹⁴¹ 2 Thessalonians 2.

good Friday and to holy Thursday. Dr. Chambers says,

It was Constantine the Great who first made a law for the observance of Sunday.

But whether such a law had been made before his time or not, it is a fact, obvious to every reader of the New Testament, that Christ and His apostles never established such a precept. Not the first word was ever uttered by one of the apostles, enjoining Sunday-keeping.

Hence the first-day Sabbath is a human institution which has usurped the place of the Lord's Sabbath, and which has nothing divine or apostolic about it.

2. Calling Sunday the Lord's Day

The statement to which the objector refers was made in the *History of the Sabbath* published by the American Sabbath Tract Society. Here it is:

To give the more solemnity to the first day of the week, (as we learn from Lucius' *Ecclesiastical History*) *Sylvester*, who was bishop of Rome while Constantine was Emperor, changed the name of Sunday, giving it the more imposing title of *Lord's day*.

We understand the above extract to teach that Pope Sylvester, by *formal act* christened Sunday with the name of Lord's day. But the same writer speaks of certain, who before the days of Constantine, regarded Sunday, not in the place of the Lord's Sabbath, but as a festival under the name of Lord's day, and who kept as equally sacred, good Friday, and holy Thursday.

3. The Command for Sunday Observance

If Sunday was observed 150 years before the edict of Constantine, this would only extend as far back as 171 AD, *eighty or one hundred years this side of the apostles*. Whoever then observed it, did it as the writer has well expressed it, "*voluntarily*," for they were doing what God had never required.

Those who then kept Sunday as a festival, were careful to observe the Sabbath. Hence we cannot refer to such cases as a justification of those who now coolly violate the fourth commandment in order to keep a day which God never enjoined.

And to say that the apostles gave a commandment for Sunday-observance which was not recorded, but which was handed down by tradition, is to say that the Bible does not contain all the commandments of God necessary to salvation and to assert the right of men to supply from tradition that which the Bible lacks, and to correct by tradition that which is not right in the Word of God.

As an instance take the fourth commandment, which men without hesitation correct by the tradition of the elders. In other words, this work begins by adding tradition to the Bible, and ends with correcting the Bible by tradition. This is the earliest and leading principle of the Papal apostasy.

4. Councils and Canons

The councils which have made canons respecting the change of the Sabbath, were engaged in a fearful work. They had no warrant from God to justify them in corrupting the fourth commandment, or to sanction their acts of bolstering up that which God had never ordained.

5. The Title of “Lord’s Day”

The following from the *History of the Sabbath* may be to the point:

We will notice but one more of these misinterpreted citations, and this is from Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, who lived a little after Justin. His letter to Soter, bishop of Rome, is cited as saying,

“This day we celebrated the holy Dominical day, in which we have read your epistle.” As given by Eusebius, it is thus: “Today we have passed the Lord’s holy day.” etc.

The only ground upon which this phrase can be referred to the first day of the week is, that this day was at that time known by

the same title that God has given to the Sabbath, [*Isaiah* 58:13] of which there is no proof.

6. Enforcing a Rest Day

The Lord's Sabbath is none the less sacred because that men have never made laws to enforce its observance. Neither is Sunday-keeping a divine institution, because the edicts of emperors and the canons of councils can be produced in its favor. A stream can never rise higher than its fountain.

The command for keeping Sunday originated this side of the apostles: hence it follows that, although its observance should continue ten thousand years, it would never become apostolic or divine.

3. Seventh Part of Time Theory

Shown to be False by the Following from J. W. Morton's *Vindication of the True Sabbath*.

THE only object, direct or indirect, of this [the fourth] commandment, is "*the day*." What are we commanded to remember? "The day." What are we required to keep holy? "The day." What did the Lord bless and hallow? "The day." In what are we forbidden to work? In "the day." Now let us inquire:

1. What Day?

What day? *Not* the day of Adam's fall; nor the day Noah went into the ark; nor the day of the overthrow of Sodom; nor the day of the Exodus; nor the day of the Provocation; nor the day of the removal of the ark; nor the day of Christ's birth; nor the day of his crucifixion; nor the day of his resurrection; nor the day of his ascension; nor the day of judgment.

It may be, and certainly is, proper, that we should remember all these; but we are not told to do so in this commandment. Neither is it some one day of the week, but no one in particular; for how could we remember "*the day*," that is no day in particular?—how could we keep holy "*the day*" that has not been specified?—and how could we say that God had blessed and hallowed "*the day*," that was no one day more than another?

What day, then? God says,

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember *the Sabbath day*,

—or *the day of the Sabbath*; Keep holy *the day of the Sabbath*;

¹¹ ...the Lord blessed and hallowed *the day of the Sabbath*.

He also says,

¹⁰ *The seventh day* is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: *in it* you shall not do any work.

This day therefore, is “the seventh day,” or “the day of the Sabbath.”

2. What Sabbath?

What Sabbath? Not “*a* Sabbath,” or any Sabbath that man may invent, or that God may hereafter keep; for that would be “some Sabbath,” but no one in particular. Not some institution yet undetermined, that God may require man to observe weekly; for the command is not,

“Remember the Sabbath institution,”

–but,

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the *day* of the Sabbath;

–not,

“Keep holy the Sabbath institution,”

–but,

⁸ Keep holy...the *day* of the Sabbath.

The Lord did not bless and hallow “the Sabbath institution,” but “the *day* of the Sabbath.” We are not forbidden to do work in “the Sabbath institution,” but in “the *seventh day*.”

In fact, the phrase, “the Sabbath,” in this commandment, means neither more nor less than “the rest.” It is not *here* the name of any institution at all, though it is often thus used in other parts of the Bible. Hence, this Sabbath is...

¹⁰ ...the Sabbath [or rest] of the Lord your God.

3. Which Day is the Sabbath?

Which day of the week is “the day of the Sabbath?” No other than that day on which the Lord rested; for the command refers to God’s Sabbath. On which day of the week did He rest?

Genesis 2

² And He rested on the seventh day.

Therefore, “the day of the Sabbath” is the same day of the week on which God rested from the work of creation; and as He rested on the seventh day of the first week, and on no other, the seventh and no other day of every week must be the only “day of the Sabbath.”

Let it be particularly observed, that God does not say, “Remember the Sabbath,” or, “Remember the Sabbatic institution,” though this is necessarily implied in the command; but, Remember “the day of the Sabbath”—the day on which I have ordained that the Sabbatic institution be observed. As if He had said,

“There is little danger, *comparatively*, that you will forget the fact of my having kept Sabbath; nor is it likely that you will altogether neglect to observe *some day* of rest from your arduous toils, for you will be driven to this by the ever returning demands of your exhausted bodies; but you are, and always will be, in especial danger of forgetting the proper day of the week for honoring me in my own institution.

“Satan, who takes infinite delight in all kinds of “will-worship,” while he hates with a perfect hatred every act of strict obedience to my law, will do all he can to persuade you that some other day will do just as well, or even better.

“Remember, therefore, the day of my Sabbath, and keep the same day holy in every week; for—mark the reason—I have myself rested on the seventh day, and on that account I have blessed and sanctified that and no other day of the week, that you may observe it, and keep it holy, not because it is in itself better than any other day, but because I have blessed and sanctified it.”

There is only one day of American Independence; only one day of the Resurrection of Christ; only one day of the birth of any one man; and only one day of Judgment. And why? Because American Independence was declared on but one day; Christ rose on but one day; the same man cannot be born on two different days; and God has appointed only one day in which He will judge the world.

Now, on the same principle, there can be but one “day of the Sabbath” of the Lord our God. If I should say that the day of Christ’s Resurrection is not any particular day of the week, but only “one day in seven,” you would not hesitate to call me a fool, while my ignorance would excite your deepest sympathy; but when *you* say that “the day of the Sabbath” does not mean that particular day on which the Lord’s Sabbath occurred, but only “one day in seven,” you expect me to receive your assertion as the infallible teaching of superior wisdom. I cannot, however, so receive it, for the following reasons:

God Did Not Specify Any Random Day

If God had meant “one day in seven,” He would have said so. His first and great design, in writing His law on tables of stone, was to be understood by His creatures; but, for more than two thousand years after He gave the law, no human being ever suspected that “the day of the Sabbath” meant anything else than the seventh day of the week, because it was commonly known that that day alone was in reality “the day of the Sabbath.”

Indeed, this “one-day-in-seven” doctrine is known to have been invented within a few hundred years, with the pious design of accounting for a change of Sabbath, without the necessity of repealing a portion of the moral law. It is a matter of great surprise, that those pious theologians, who first substituted “one day in seven” for “the day of the Sabbath,” did not shudder at the thought of presuming to mend the language of the Holy Ghost.

God Did Not Bless Any Random Day

God never blessed “one day in seven,” without blessing a particular day. He either blessed some definite object, or nothing.

You *may* say, indeed, without falsehood, that God blessed “one day in seven;” but if you mean that this act of blessing did not terminate on any particular day, you ought to know, that you are asserting what is naturally impossible. As well might you say of a

band of robbers, that they had killed “one man in seven,” while in reality they had killed no man in particular.

No, brethren, yourselves know very well, that God had not blessed and sanctified any day but *the seventh of the seven*, prior to the giving of the written law. You know, that if God blessed any day of the week at all, it was a definite day, distinct from all the other days of the week. But this commandment says, that:

Exodus 20

¹⁰ ...the Lord blessed the Sabbath day.

Therefore the Sabbath day must be a particular day of the week. Therefore “the Sabbath day” is not “one day in seven,” or an indefinite seventh part of time. Therefore it is not “one day in seven” that we are required to remember, and keep holy, and in which we are forbidden to do any work; but “the seventh day” of the week, which was then, is now, and will be till the end of time, “the day of the Sabbath” of the Lord our God.

No Other Day Was Called the Sabbath

No day of the week but the seventh was ever called “the day of the Sabbath,” either by God or man, till long since the death of the last inspired writer.

Search both Testaments through and through, and you will find no other day called “*the Sabbath*,” or even “*a Sabbath*,” except the ceremonial Sabbaths, with which, of course, we have nothing to do in this controversy. And long after the close of the canon of inspiration, the seventh day, and no other, was still called “the Sabbath.”

If you can prove that any one man, among the millions of Adam’s children, from the beginning of the world till the *rise of Antichrist*, ever called the first day of the week “*the Sabbath*,” you will shed a light upon this controversy, for which a host of able writers have searched in vain.

If you say, that when God speaks of “the Sabbath day,” He means “one day in seven, but no day in particular,” you are as far from the truth as if you said that, when He speaks of Moses, He does not mean any particular man, but “some one of the Israelites.” Moses *was* one of the Israelites, just as the Sabbath day *is* one day in seven. But when God says Moses, he means Moses the son of Amram; and when he says “the Sabbath day,” he means the seventh day of the week.

You *may* give different names to the same object, without interfering with its identity; but to apply the same name to two different objects, and then to affirm that these two objects are identically the same, so that what is predicated of the one must be true of the other, is as though a navigator should discover an island in the Southern Ocean, and call it “England,” and then affirm that the late work of Mr. Macaulay, entitled *The History of England*, is a veritable and authentic history of his newly discovered empire.

Which would you wonder at most, the stupidity or the effrontery of that navigator?

I cannot close this chapter without reminding you that, in attempting to refute the above reasoning, the main thing you will have to show is, that “the Sabbath day,” or “the day of the Sabbath,” is an indefinite or general expression, applicable alike to, at least, two different days of the week, and that it is used indefinitely in this commandment. If it has been proved, that “the day of the Sabbath” refers, and can refer, *only* to the seventh day of the week, then it is true, and will remain for ever true, that the original Sabbath law requires the sanctification of no other day.

*The
First Day of the Week
not the
Sabbath of the Lord*

1855

Advent and Sabbath Tract, No. 1

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Introduction

2 Timothy 3

¹⁶ All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

IN THIS text we are assured that every word of the Sacred Scriptures was given by the Holy Spirit; that every doctrine which men should believe, is therein revealed; that every fault is therein reproofed; every error is corrected by its words of truth; and that perfect instruction in all righteousness is therein given.

The design of its Author in providing such a book, was that the man of God might thereby be made perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. This is the treasure which God has given to His church. Nor is this all that He has done. To those who are willing to obey the teachings of His word, He has promised the Spirit to guide them into all truth.

To men thus situated, Jehovah thus speaks:

1 Thessalonians 5

²¹ Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

That is, bring every part of your faith and practice to the test of God's sure word; ask the Holy Spirit's aid, that your mind may be delivered from prejudice, and your understanding enlightened in the word of truth. Then what you find revealed in that word hold fast; it is of priceless value; but relinquish at once every precept or doctrine not therein recorded, lest you make the doctrines of men of equal weight with the commandments of God.¹⁴²

Jeremiah 23

²⁸ What is the chaff to the wheat? says the Lord.

¹⁴² *Matthew 15:3-9.*

As the first day of the week is now almost universally observed in the place of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, we design in this Tract to examine the grounds on which this observance rests. Those who are willing to submit their opinions to the test of scripture and of reason, are invited to unite with us in the examination of this subject.

- For what reason do men prefer the first day of the week to the ancient Sabbath of the Lord?
- On what authority do men continually violate the day which God sanctified, and commanded mankind to keep holy?

Come, now, and let us reason together.¹⁴³ Here is the commandment which it is said has been changed:

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor, and do all your work:

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

That this commandment requires men to remember, and to keep holy the Rest-day of the Creator, which He hallowed at the close of the first week of time, none can deny. We now ask for the authority for the change of this commandment.

Papists believe that their church had power to change the fourth commandment; and, on that authority, alone, they are perfectly satisfied in observing the first day of the week.

¹⁴³ *Isaiah* 1:18.

Protestants deny the authority of the church of Rome, and attempt to vindicate the change of the Sabbath, by an appeal to the Bible. This is what we wish them to do.

- We ask them, therefore, to present a single text in which it is said that God has changed His Sabbath to the first day of the week. The advocates of the change have none to offer.
- If they cannot present such a text, will they give us one which testifies that God ever blessed and sanctified the first day of the week? Its observers admit that they have none to present.
- But will they not give us one text in which men are required to keep the first day holy, as a Sabbath unto the Lord? They acknowledge that they have none.

How then do they dare to exalt the first day of the week above the Sabbath of the Lord, which the commandment requires us to remember, and keep holy?

The Bible thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto all good works. Can Sunday-keeping be a very good work, when the Bible has never said anything in its favor? Or if it is a good work, can men be very thoroughly furnished in its defense, when God has said nothing in its favor? Instead of being a good work, must it not be a fearful sin against God to thus pervert the fourth commandment, when once the mind has been enlightened on the subject?

But there are several reasons urged for the observance of the first day of the week, which we will here notice.

1. First Reason

Redemption is greater than creation; therefore we ought to keep the day of Christ's resurrection, instead of the ancient Sabbath of the Lord.

WHERE has God said this? Sunday-keepers are compelled to admit that He never did say it. What right, then, has any man to make such an assertion, and then to base the change of the Sabbath upon it?

But suppose redemption is greater than creation, who knows that we ought to keep the first day of the week on that account? God never required men to keep any day as the memorial of redemption. But if it were duty to observe one day of the week for this reason, most certainly the crucifixion-day presents the strongest claims. It is not said that we have redemption through Christ's resurrection; but it is said that we have redemption through the shedding of his blood.

Revelation 5

⁹ And they sung a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by your blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Ephesians 1

¹⁷ In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.¹⁴⁴

Then redemption is through the death of the Lord Jesus; consequently, the day on which he shed his precious blood to redeem us, and said,

John 19

³⁰ It is finished,

¹⁴⁴ See also *Colossians* 1:14; *Hebrews* 9:12, 15.

—is the day that should be kept as the memorial of redemption, if any should be observed for that purpose.

Nor can it be plead that the resurrection-day is the most remarkable day in the history of redemption. It needs but a word to prove that in this respect it is far exceeded by the day of the crucifixion. Which is the most remarkable event?

- The act of Jehovah in giving His beloved and only Son to die for a race of rebels, or
- The act of that Father in raising that beloved Son from the dead?

There is only one answer that can be given: it was not remarkable that God should raise His Son from the dead; but the act of the Father in giving His Son to die for sinners, was a spectacle of redeeming love on which the Universe might gaze and adore the wondrous love of God to all eternity. Who can wonder that the sun was veiled in darkness, and that all nature trembled at the sight! The crucifixion-day, therefore, has far greater claims than the day of the resurrection. God has not enjoined the observance of either; and is it not a fearful act to make void the commandments of God by that wisdom which is folly in His sight.¹⁴⁵

But if we would commemorate redemption, there is no necessity of robbing the Lord's Rest-day of its holiness in order to do it. When truth takes from us our errors, it always has something better to take their place. So the false memorial of redemption being taken out of the way, the Word presents in its stead those which are true. God has provided us with memorials, bearing His own signature; and these we may observe with the blessing of Heaven. Would you commemorate the death of our Lord? You need not keep the day of His crucifixion. The Bible tells you how to do it.

¹⁴⁵ 1 Corinthians 1:10, 20.

1 Corinthians 11

²³ For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread:

²⁴ And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.

²⁵ After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do you, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death, till He come.

Would you commemorate the burial and resurrection of the Saviour? You need not keep the first day of the week. The Lord ordained a very different, and far more appropriate memorial.

Romans 6

³ Know you not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death?

⁴ Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.

Colossians 2

¹² Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised Him from the dead.

It is true that the professed church has changed this ordinance to sprinkling, so that this divine memorial of our Lord's resurrection is destroyed. And that they may add sin to sin, they lay hold of the Lord's Sabbath, and change it to the first day of the week, thus destroying the sacred memorial of the Creator's rest, that they may have a memorial of Christ's resurrection!

Isaiah 24

⁵ The earth is also defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

When will the professed church cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? Not until

⁶ ...the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

2. Second Reason

The disciples met on the day of our Lord's resurrection to commemorate that event, and the Saviour sanctioned this meeting by uniting with them. *John 20:19.*

IF EVERY word of this was truth, it would not prove that the Sabbath of the Lord has been changed. But to show the utter absurdity of this inference, listen to a few facts.

The disciples at that time did not believe that their Lord had been raised from the dead; but were assembled for the purpose of eating a common meal, and to seclude themselves from the Jews. The words of Mark and of John make this clear:

Mark 16

¹² He appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

¹³ And they went and told it unto the residue: neither did they believed them.

¹⁴ Afterward He appeared unto the eleven, as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief, and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen.

John says:

John 20

¹⁹ Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.

It is a fact, therefore, that the disciples were not commemorating the resurrection of the Saviour; it is equally evident that they had not the slightest idea of a change of the Sabbath.

At the burial of the Saviour, the women who had followed Him to the tomb, returned and prepared spices and ointments to embalm Him; the Sabbath drew on; they rested the Sabbath day ac-

according to the commandment; and when the Sabbath was past, they came to the sepulchre upon the first day of the week to embalm their Lord.¹⁴⁶ They kept the Sabbath “according to the commandment,” and resumed their labor on the first day of the week.

¹⁴⁶ *Luke* 23:55-56; 24:1.

3. Third Reason

After eight days Jesus met with his disciples again. *John* 20:26. This must have been the first day of the week, which is thereby proved to be the Christian Sabbath.

WERE it certain that this occurred upon the first day of the week, it would not furnish a single particle of proof that that day had become the Sabbath of the Lord. But who can be certain that “after eight days” means just a week? It would be nearer a literal construction of the language to conclude that this was upon the ninth day. As an illustration, read:

Matthew 17

¹ And after six days, Jesus took Peter, James, and John,...

Now turn to:

Luke 9

²⁸ And it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, He took Peter, and John, and James,...

Then “after six days” is about *eight days* in this instance. But if “after eight days” means just a week, how does this prove that Sunday has taken the place of the Lord’s Sabbath? Rather how does it prove that Sunday has become the Christian Sabbath, when there is not a particle of evidence that either Christ or His apostles ever rested on that day? There is no such term as “Christian Sabbath” found in the Bible. The only weekly Sabbath named in the Bible is called:

Exodus 20

¹⁰ ...the Sabbath of the Lord.

Was the act of Christ in appearing to His disciples sufficient to constitute the day on which it occurred the Sabbath? If so, why did He next select a fishing day as the time to manifest himself to them?¹⁴⁷ If it is not sufficient, then the Sunday on which He was

¹⁴⁷ *John* 21.

first seen of them, the fishing day on which they next saw Him, and the Thursday on which He was last seen of them, may not be Sabbaths. It was not very remarkable that Christ should find His disciples together, in as much as they had one common abode.

Acts 1

¹³ And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

4. Fourth Reason

The Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, which was the first day of the week. Therefore the first day of the week should be observed instead of the Sabbath of the Lord. *Acts 2:1-2.*

ADMITTING that the day of Pentecost occurred upon the first day of the week, it remains to be proved that it thereby became the Sabbath. But that it was the feast of Pentecost, and not the first day of the week, that God designed to honor, the following facts demonstrate.

1. While the day of Pentecost is distinctly named, the day of the week on which it occurred is passed in silence.
2. The disciples had been engaged in earnest prayer for the space of ten days; for the day of Pentecost was fifty days from the resurrection of Christ, and forty of those days He spent with his disciples.¹⁴⁸

Forty days from His resurrection would expire on Thursday, the day of His ascension. A period of ten days *after* His ascension on Thursday, would include two First-days, the last of which would be the day of Pentecost. If the design of God had been to honor the first day of the week, why did not the Holy Ghost descend on the first of those First-days?

Why must the day of Pentecost come before the Holy Ghost could descend? This answer is obvious. It was not the design of Heaven to honor the first day of the week, but to mark the anti-type of the feast of Pentecost. Hence the first day of the week is passed in silence.

The slaying of the paschal lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month, had met its antitype in the death of the Lamb of God on that day.¹⁴⁹ The offering of the first fruits on the sixteenth day

¹⁴⁸ *Acts 1.*

¹⁴⁹ *Exodus 12; John 19; 1 Corinthians 5:7.*

of the first month, had met its antitype in the resurrection of our Lord on that day, the first fruits of them that slept.¹⁵⁰ It remained that the day of Pentecost, fifty days later, should also meet its antitype.¹⁵¹ The fulfillment of that type is what the pen of inspiration has recorded in *Acts* 2:1-2.

God has spoken nothing in this place respecting a change of His Sabbath. Yet grave men, calling themselves Doctors of Divinity, consider this text one of their strongest testimonies for their so-called Christian Sabbath. They might be profited by this advice of the wise man:

Proverbs 30

⁶ Add not unto His words, lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar.

¹⁵⁰ *Leviticus* 23; *1 Corinthians* 15:20, 23.

¹⁵¹ *Leviticus* 23:15-21.

5. Fifth Reason

Paul once broke bread upon the first day of the week at Troas. Hence this day was observed as the Christian Sabbath. *Acts 20:7.*

WE ANSWER, that at one period the apostolic church at Jerusalem broke bread every day.¹⁵² If a *single* instance of breaking bread at Troas upon the first day of the week, was quite sufficient to constitute it the Sabbath, would not the continued practice of the apostolic church at Jerusalem in breaking bread *every day*, be amply sufficient to make every day a Sabbath?

Moreover, as the act of the Great Head of the church in breaking bread, must be quite as important as that of His servant Paul, must not the day of the crucifixion be pre-eminently the “Christian Sabbath,” as Christ instituted, and performed this ordinance on the evening with which that day commenced?¹⁵³

But on what day of the week did this act of Paul occur? For, if it is of sufficient importance to make the day of its occurrence the future Sabbath of the church, the day is worth determining. The act of breaking bread was after midnight; for Paul preached to the disciples until midnight, then healed Eutychus, and after this attended to breaking bread.¹⁵⁴ If, as time is reckoned at the present day, the first day of the week terminated at midnight, then Paul’s act of breaking bread took place upon the second day of the week, or Monday, which should henceforth be regarded as the Christian Sabbath, if breaking bread on a day makes it a Sabbath.

But if the Bible method of commencing the day, *viz.*, from six o’clock PM, was followed, it would appear that the disciples came together at the close of the Sabbath, for an evening meeting, as the Apostle was to depart in the morning. (If it was not an

¹⁵² *Acts 2:42-46.*

¹⁵³ *1 Corinthians 11:23-26.*

¹⁵⁴ *Acts 20:7-11.*

evening meeting, why did they have many lights there?) Paul preached to them until midnight, and then broke bread with the disciples early in the morning of the first day of the week.

Did this act constitute that day the Sabbath? If so, then why did Paul, as soon as it was light, start on his long journey to Jerusalem? If Paul believed that Sunday was the Christian Sabbath, why did he thus openly violate it? If he did not believe it had become the Sabbath why should you?

And why do you grasp, as evidence that the Sabbath had been changed, a single instance in which an evening meeting was held on Sunday, while you overlook the fact that it was the custom of this same Apostle to preach every Sabbath, not only to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles?¹⁵⁵

Paul broke bread on the first day of the week, and then immediately started on his long journey to Jerusalem. So that this, the strongest argument for the first day of the week, furnishes direct proof that Sunday is not the Sabbath.

¹⁵⁵ Acts 13:14, 42, 44; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4.

6. Sixth Reason

Paul commanded the church at Corinth to take up a public collection on the first day of the week; therefore it follows that this must have been their day of public worship, and consequently is the Christian Sabbath. *1 Corinthians* 16:2.

WE ANSWER, it is a remarkable fact that Paul enjoins exactly the reverse of a public collection. He does not say,

“Place your alms in the public treasury, on the first day of the week;”

—but he says,

1 Corinthians 16

² Upon the first day of the week let every one of you *lay by him* in store.

J. W. Morton in his *Vindication of the True Sabbath*, pages 51-52, says:

The Apostle simply orders, that each one of the Corinthian brethren should lay up *at home* some portion of his weekly gains on the first day of the week. The whole question turns upon the meaning of the expression, “by him;” and I marvel greatly how you can imagine that it means “in the collection box of the congregation.” Greenfield, in his *Lexicon*, translates the Greek term, “*by one’s self, i.e., at home.*”

Two Latin versions, the Vulgate and that of Castellio, render it, “*apud se,*” with one’s self, at home. Three French translations, those of Martin, Osterwald, and De Sacy, “*chez soi,*” at his own house, at home. The German of Luther, “*bei sich selbst,*” by himself, at home. The Dutch, “*by hemselfen,*” same as the German. The Italian of Diodati, “*appresso di se,*” in his own presence, at home. The Spanish of Felipe Scio, “*en su casa,*” in his own house. The Portuguese of Ferreira, “*para isso,*” with himself. The Swedish, “*noer sig sielf,*” near himself. I know not how much this

list of authorities might be swelled, for I have not examined one translation that differs from those quoted above.

The text, therefore, does not prove that the Corinthian church was assembled for public worship on that day; but, on the contrary, it does prove that each must be at his own home, where he could examine his worldly affairs, and lay by himself in store as God had prospered him. If each one should thus from week to week collect of his earnings, when the Apostle should come, their bounty would be ready, and each would be able to present to him what they had gathered. So that if the first-day Sabbath has no better foundation than the inference drawn from this text, it truly rests upon sliding sand.

7. Seventh Reason

John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, which was the first day of the week. *Revelation 1:10.*

THIS is the kind of reasoning which the advocates of Sunday are invariably obliged to adopt. But we ask,

“What right have they to assume the very point which they ought to prove?”

This text, it is true, furnishes direct proof that there is a day in the gospel dispensation which the Lord claims as His; but is there one text in the Bible which testifies that the first day of the week is the Lord's day? There is not one. Has God ever claimed that day as His? Never. Has God ever claimed any day as His, and reserved it to himself? He has.

Genesis 2

³ 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.

Exodus 16

²³ Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord.

Exodus 20

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.

Isaiah 58

¹³ If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on *my holy day*...

Mark 2

²⁸ Therefore, the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

Then the seventh is the day which God reserved to himself, when He gave to man the other six; and this day He calls His holy day. This is the day which the New Testament declares the Son of man to be Lord of.

Is there one testimony in the Scriptures that the Lord of the Sabbath has put away His holy day, and chosen another? Not one. Then that day which the Bible designates as the Lord's day, is none other than the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

8. Things to Be Considered

WE HAVE now examined the main pillars on which the first-day Sabbath rests; and it is perfectly apparent that there is not a single particle of divine authority for the observance of that day. Hence, its advocates must observe the Sabbath of the Lord, or they must resort to the tradition of the “fathers” for proof of its change. The history of the change will be given in its place. But we now ask,

“What right had the elders of the Christian church to change the fourth commandment, any more than the elders of the Jewish church had, to change the fifth?”

The Pharisees pretended that they had a tradition handed down from Moses, which authorized them to change the fifth commandment. The Papist and Protestant Doctors of Divinity pretend that they have a tradition handed down from Christ and the apostles, authorizing them to change the fourth. But if Christ rebuked the Pharisees for holding a damnable heresy, what would He say to the like act on the part of His own professed followers?¹⁵⁶

The same fathers which changed the fourth commandment, have also corrupted all the ordinances of the New Testament, and have established purgatory, invocation of saints, the worship of the Virgin Mary and prayers for the dead.

The Protestant professes to receive the Bible *alone* as his standard of faith and practice. The Papist receives the Bible and the tradition of the fathers as his rule. The Protestant cannot prove the change of the Sabbath from his own standard, (the Bible,) therefore he is obliged to adopt that of the Papist, *viz.*, the Bible as explained and corrupted by the fathers. The change of the Sabbath is proved by the Papist as follows:

Question: What warrant have you for keeping the Sunday, preferably to the ancient Sabbath which was the Saturday?

¹⁵⁶ *Matthew* 15:3-9.

Answer: We have for it the authority of the Catholic Church, and apostolic tradition.

Q: Does the Scripture anywhere command the Sunday to be kept for the Sabbath?

A: The Scripture commands us to hear the Church, [Matthew 18:17; Luke 10:16,] and to hold fast the traditions of the apostles. *2 Thessalonians* 2:15. But the Scripture does not in particular mention this change of the Sabbath. John speaks of the Lord's day; [Revelation 1:10,] but he does not tell us what day of the week this was, much less does he tell us that this day was to take the place of the Sabbath ordained in the commandments. Luke also speaks of the disciples meeting together to break bread on the first day of the week. *Acts* 20:7. And Paul [1 *Corinthians* 16:2] orders that on the first day of the week the Corinthians should lay by in store what they designed to bestow in charity on the faithful in Judea; but neither the one nor the other tells us that this first day of the week was to be henceforward the day of worship, and the Christian Sabbath; so that truly, the best authority we have for this, is the testimony and ordinance of the church. And therefore, those who pretend to be so religious of the Sunday, while they take no notice of other festivals ordained by the same church authority, show that they act by humor, and not by reason and religion; since Sundays and holy-days all stand upon the same foundation, viz., the ordinance of the church.

Q: What was the reason why the weekly Sabbath was changed from the Saturday to the Sunday?

A: Because our Lord fully accomplished the work of our redemption by rising from the dead on a Sunday, and by sending down the Holy Ghost on a Sunday; as therefore the work of our redemption was a greater work than that of our creation, the primitive church thought the day on which this work was completely finished, was more worthy her religious observation than that in which God rested from the creation, and should be properly called the Lord's day.¹⁵⁷

If further testimony is needed listen to the following:

¹⁵⁷ *Catholic Christian Instructed.*

Question: What does God ordain by this commandment?

Answer: He ordains that we sanctify, in a special manner, this day, on which he rested from the labor of creation.

Q: What is this day of rest?

A: The seventh day of the week, or Saturday, for He employed six days in creation, and rested on the seventh. *Genesis 2:2; Hebrews 4:1*, etc.

Q: Is it then Saturday we should sanctify, in order to obey the ordinance of God?

A: During the old law, Saturday was the day sanctified; but the church instructed by Jesus Christ, and directed by the Spirit of God, has substituted Sunday for Saturday, so we now sanctify the first and not the seventh day. Sunday means, and now is, the day of the Lord.

Q: Had the church power to make such a change?

A: Certainly; since the Spirit of God is her guide, the change is inspired by that Holy Spirit. The uniform, universal, and perpetual tradition of all ages and nations, attest the antiquity of, and consequently the Divine assent to, this change: even the bitterest enemies of God's church admit and adopt it.

Q: Why did the church make this change?

A: Because Christ rose from the dead upon Sunday, and rested from the great work of redemption; and because, on this day, the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and on the church.¹⁵⁸

The testimony shows conclusively that the fourth commandment, which the New Testament has never changed, has been corrupted by the Romish church. It was from Rome, as we may here see, that Protestants learned to say that the Sabbath was changed because redemption was greater than creation. Here we will mention some things for special consideration.

1. Those who are now paying religious respect to the first day of the week, may possibly be led to examine the reasons for this course, by the following significant fact: The church of Rome un-

¹⁵⁸ *Catechism of the Christian Religion.*

dertakes to prove purgatory by the Bible, but acknowledges that Sunday-keeping cannot be proved by it, as she instituted that herself. Those, therefore, who despise the Lord's Sabbath, and in its stead honor the sabbath of the Romish church, virtually acknowledge that the authority of that church is above the authority of God, and sufficient to change His times and laws. Here is her statement respecting purgatory:

Question: But what grounds have you to believe that there is any such place as a purgatory, or middle state of souls?

Answer: We have the strongest grounds imaginable from all kind of arguments, from scripture, from perpetual tradition, from the authority and declaration of the church of God, and from reason.¹⁵⁹

Hear the Catholic church once more, while she contrasts purgatory with Sunday-keeping:

The word of God commands the seventh day to be the Sabbath of our Lord, and to be kept holy: you [Protestants] without any precept of scripture, change it to the first day of the week, only authorized by our traditions. Divers English Puritans oppose against this point, that the observation of the first day is proved out of scripture, where it is said the first day of the week. *Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10*. Have they not spun a fair thread in quoting these places?

If we should produce no better for purgatory and prayers for the dead, invocation of the saints, and the like, they might have good cause indeed to laugh us to scorn; for where is it written that these were Sabbath days in which those meetings were kept? Or where is it ordained they should be always observed? Or, which is the sum of all, where is it decreed that the observation of the first day should abrogate or abolish the sanctifying of the seventh day, which God commanded everlastingly to be kept holy? Not one of those is expressed in the written word of God.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ *Catholic Christian Instructed*, page 146.

¹⁶⁰ *An Antidote, or Treatise of Thirty Controversies*.

Reader, shall not such facts as the above open your eyes? Have you any better authority for Sunday-keeping than Romish tradition? What think you of that prophecy which foretells that the Pope should speak great words against God, and think to change times and laws?¹⁶¹ That church who styles her head, “Lord God the Pope,” has here openly testified, that without any authority from Scripture, she has changed the commandments of God. She also declares that of her two children, Purgatory and Sunday-keeping, the former is the most important personage. Cannot that mother judge impartially between two such darlings?

2. But perhaps the fathers, as they are called, may be regarded by the reader as the best of authority. We are aware that not a few, who profess to be Bible Christians, rest their Sunday-observance solely upon such evidence. We request the attention of such to the following from Storrs’ *Six Sermons*. It was written in defense of the author’s views of future punishment; but the remarks are of equal value with respect to the Sabbath question.

It is said, “The *fathers* believed in the *endless* torments of the wicked.” In reply, I remark, Our Lord and Master has prohibited my calling any man *father*. But, if the fathers, as they are called, did believe that doctrine, they learned it from the Bible, or they did not. If they learned it there, so can we. If they did not learn it from the Bible, then their testimony is of no weight. It may have been an error that early got into the church, like many others. Mosheim, in his *Church History*, tells us, as early as the third century, that the defenders of Christianity, in their controversies, “degenerated much from primitive simplicity,” and that the maxim which asserted the innocence of defending truth by artifice and falsehood, “contributed” to this degeneracy. And he adds:

“This disingenuous and vicious method of surprising their adversaries by artifice, and striking them down, as it were, by lies and fictions, produced, among other disagreeable effects a great number of books, which were falsely attributed to certain great men, in order to give these spurious productions more credit and weight; for as the greater part of mankind are *less governed by*

¹⁶¹ *Daniel* 7:25.

reason than authority, and prefer in many cases, the decisions of fallible mortals, to the unerring dictates of the Divine Word, the disputants of whom we are speaking, thought they could not serve the truth more effectually than by opposing illustrious names, and respectable authorities, to the attacks of its adversaries.”

This practice, spoken of by Mosheim, increased as the darker ages rolled on; and through these dark ages, what there are of the writings of the “fathers” have come down to us. It is a truth, also, that the practice of corrupting the simplicity of the apostolic doctrine was commenced much earlier than the third century. Enfield, in his philosophy, says: “The first witness of Christianity had scarcely left the world when” this work began. Some of the “fathers” seemed intent upon uniting heathen philosophy with Christianity, and early commenced the practice of clothing the doctrines of religion in an allegorical dress.¹⁶²

Those who make the “fathers” their rule, would do well to consider the above facts. Every damnable heresy of the Romish church, she proves by those same fathers. Tradition is the unfailing resort of Romanists, to prove their dogmas; indeed, they openly acknowledge that tradition is part of their rule of faith.

Protestants claim that they make the Bible their only rule of duty; but, whenever their unscriptural arguments for Sunday-keeping are exposed, they fly for refuge to the fathers. Thus Protestants defend their heresies with the same weapons that the Papists employ to defend theirs. The same fountain head of corruption feeds the several streams of error that flow through both these bodies.

3. “But,” says one, “do you not think that it would be safe to believe what those have said who conversed with the apostles, or at least, conversed with some who had conversed with them? If such should tell us that the Sabbath of the Lord was changed, would it not be safe to receive their testimony?”

¹⁶² *Fourth Sermon.*

We answer, that the holy Scriptures come to us with the divine guarantee that every word therein contained was divinely inspired. The tradition of the elders comes to us without a particle of such testimony. Wherefore it follows that the man who fears God will not reject that which he knows came from heaven, for the sake of following that which directly contradicts it, and which by that fact is proved to have come from the great enemy of divine truth.

But does the Bible contain the least intimation that what was written near the days of the apostles is any more sacred than what was written at a later period? Paul told the Thessalonian church that “the mystery of iniquity,” or Romish apostasy, had already begun to work.¹⁶³ If Paul was correct, it follows that it is far from being safe to adopt as sacred truth a doctrine which is not found in the New Testament, merely because it is said to have come from some who lived near the days of the apostles. Satan was then busily engaged in nursing in the bosom of the early church, the viper which should ere long infect with deadly poison a great portion of the professed people of God.

Did not Paul warn those with whom he parted at Ephesus, that grievous wolves were to enter among them, and that of themselves men were to arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them?¹⁶⁴ When any doctrine is brought to us from those who lived near the days of the apostles, it is then proper for us to inquire whether this comes from those who spoke the sentiments of the holy apostles, or whether it comes from those grievous wolves who were to follow after them, and speak perverse things.

Is there no way by which we can determine this question? Certainly there is an infallible test. The New Testament contains the precise language of Jesus Christ and the apostles. Now if the fathers speak according to that word, they speak the precious

¹⁶³ 2 Thessalonians 2.

¹⁶⁴ Acts 20:29-30.

truths of God. But if they speak that which makes void the word of truth, it is a very strong evidence that they belong to that class which Paul notified the church, should arise in their very midst, and speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. If the Holy Spirit has given us notice that that false teachers were to arise in the very days of the apostles, should it not serve as a warning to us, that things which purport to come from the successors of the apostles, may, for all that, contain the most deadly poison.

4. If it were certain that the *early* fathers, in their zeal to improve upon the New Testament, changed the fourth commandment, it would only prove that they were of the number of grievous wolves that were to arise. But it by no means follows that the mystery of iniquity was able thus early to change times and laws. The testimony given from Storrs' *Fourth Sermon*, evinces clearly that even the fathers themselves do not now come to us with their own words. Their testimony has been corrupted, and many shameless forgeries are palmed off as their genuine testimony.

If the reader ever looked into a Romish controversial work, he will there find the very fathers, who are so much relied upon to prove the change of the Sabbath, quoted to prove all the heresies of the anti-christian church. It follows, therefore, that one of two things must be true: either the testimony of the early fathers has been shamefully corrupted, or those so-called early fathers were wolves in sheep's clothing.

5. If the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles were now on earth, mingling with the men of this generation, as they once mingled with a former generation, we ask,

“Would it be safe for the men of the third or fourth generation from this to receive as sacred truth all that the fathers of the present generation might transmit to them?”

Is it not self-evident that unless human nature should undergo a radical change, the men of the following generations would

have handed down to them as Christ's saying, all the vain and foolish sentiments that different partizans might wish to maintain? In the case supposed, we ask,

“What would be the safety of the coming generations?”

There is but one answer, and in this all will agree. If this were the age in which the New Testament was written, the safety of the coming generation would be secured *only*, by faithfully testing, by that sure rule, whatever might be handed down to them as gospel truth from the fathers of the present age. Should they thus rigidly cleave to inspiration, they would be safe; but if they added to that sure word all the fables which Satan would instigate the present fathers to attribute to Christ and the apostles, what would become of them?

If the Advent body itself were to furnish the *fathers* and the *saints* for the future church, Heaven pity the people that should live hereafter! Reader we entreat you to prize your Bible. It contains *all* the will of God, and will make you wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Those who believe in a change of the Lord's Sabbath should look at these facts: The Sabbath of the Lord means the Rest-day of the Lord. Six days the Almighty wrought in the work of creation, and the seventh day He rested from all His work. The Sabbath or Rest-day of the Lord, is, therefore, a definite day, which can no more be changed to one of the days upon which God wrought, than the resurrection-day can be changed to one of the days upon which Christ did not rise, or the crucifixion-day be changed to one of the six days of the week upon which Christ was not crucified. Hence it is as impossible to change the Rest-day of the Lord as it is to change the crucifixion-day or the day of the resurrection.

Men of God, to whom the Scriptures have been committed, can you longer pervert the commandments of Jehovah and not be guilty of willful transgression? Must it not be exceeding sinful in

the sight of Heaven for you to change the Sabbath of the Lord for another day, and then to steal that commandment which guards the holy Sabbath, to enforce the observance of that new day?

When the hailstones of Jehovah's wrath shall sweep away the refuge of lies,¹⁶⁵ how many of the arguments for Sunday-keeping will be left? The Bible thoroughly furnishes the man of God to all good works.¹⁶⁶ Sunday-keeping is not, therefore a good work; for the Scriptures furnish nothing in its favor. Why should you be ready of heart to believe what God has never spoken, and slow of heart to believe his plain testimony?¹⁶⁷ Thus says the Lord.

Exodus 20

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God;

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.



¹⁶⁵ *Isaiah 28:17; Revelation 16:21.*

¹⁶⁶ *2 Timothy 3:17.*

¹⁶⁷ *Luke 24:25.*

*A Refutation
of the Claims
of Sunday-keeping
to Divine Authority*

~1858

1. The First Day of the Week Not the Sabbath

AS THE first day of the week is now almost universally observed in the place of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, we design in this article to examine the ground on which this observance rests. It is an injunction of the New Testament, that we...

1 Thessalonians 5

²¹ Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

This precept we shall attempt to follow in this investigation. Those who are willing to submit their opinions to the test of scripture and reason, are invited to unite with us in the examination of this subject.

To the Law and to the Testimony

If the first day of the week is the Sabbath of the New Testament, and the Rest-day of the Christian church, that fact will appear in all its strength, if the sacred record is examined. But if there is no divine authority for the change of the Sabbath, then the observance of the first day, in the place of the Sabbath of the Lord, must be regarded as a tradition of the elders which makes void the commandments of God.¹⁶⁸

This subject is not taken up for the benefit of such as do not believe in any Sabbath. Other portions of truth must be presented in order to benefit such. But those who do believe in a Sabbath, yet observe a different day from that enjoined in the commandment, may be benefited by an examination of their reasons for this.

Papists believe that their church had power to change the Sabbath, and, on that authority alone, they are perfectly satisfied in observing the first day. Protestants deny the authority of the Romish church, and consequently, attempt to vindicate the change by an appeal to the Bible. This is what we desire them to do. We cannot better weigh the testimony in favor of a change of

¹⁶⁸ *Matthew 15:3, 6; Mark 7:8-9.*

the Sabbath, than by introducing the Sabbath commandment, which is supposed has been changed.

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor, and do all your work:

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

This precept, which states the will of God in plain and explicit language, requires us to remember and keep holy, not the day on which God began to labor, but the day of His rest, which He blessed and hallowed. As the commandment is now exactly reversed by the great mass of the professed church, and that too when the majority suppose that they are observing the commandment, we inquire for the authority on which this practice rests.

One of three things is indispensable to those who would prove the change of the Sabbath.

1. One plain statement that God has changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week.
2. Or a single statement that God has blessed, hallowed and sanctified the first day of the week.
3. Or a single commandment to keep the first day holy as a Sabbath unto the Lord.

The reasonableness of this must be apparent to every one. For a plain commandment from the Lord of hosts, can only be changed by an explicit, divine statement authorizing such change. And as the God of heaven has blessed and sanctified his Rest-day, no human authority may presume to choose in its stead another day, and require that that day be observed, unless the Lord himself

shall transfer His blessing to that day and command that it be kept holy. These truths are self-evident.

But how many of the above particulars do the advocates of this change claim? They do not claim one of them!

1. They do not claim that there is one statement in the Bible that the Sabbath has been changed.
2. They do not claim that there is a single testimony in the Scriptures, that God has ever blessed and sanctified the first day of the week.
3. Nor do they claim that there is one precept in the Volume of inspiration which commands us to observe the first and keep it holy.

By what authority, then, do they show for changing the Sabbath? Not a particle of direct testimony, as we have already seen. However, they have several inferences which they think make the subject very plain.

1. Is Redemption Greater Than Creation?

Redemption is greater than creation; therefore we ought to keep the day of Christ's resurrection, instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

Where has God said this? Nothing of the kind is found in either Testament! Who, then, knows that this is according to truth? Those only, who are wise above what is written. Is not that act by which God formed the world out of nothing, infinitely beyond our conception? Certainly, nothing but *infinite* power could create the universe; and *finite* man must be a poor judge of how much creation is exceeded by redemption.

But admitting that redemption is greater than creation, who knows that we ought to keep the first day of the week on that account? Has God said that we should? No, never. God has not said that we should keep any day to commemorate redemption. But if it were duty to observe any day for this reason, most certainly the

crucifixion day presents the strongest claims. It is not said that we have redemption through Christ's resurrection, but it is said that we have redemption through his blood.

Ephesians 1

⁷ In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

Colossians 1

¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Revelation 5

⁹ And they sung a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the book, and open the seals thereof; for you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by your blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation.

Hebrews 9

¹² Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

¹⁵ And for this cause He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Then redemption is through the death of the Lord Jesus. Consequently the day on which He shed His precious blood to redeem us and said,

John 19

³⁰ It is finished,

—is the day that should be observed as a memorial of redemption, if any one day should be observed for that purpose. Nor can it be pled that the resurrection day is the most remarkable day in the history of the church. It needs but a word to prove that it is far exceeded in this respect, by the day of the crucifixion. Which is the most remarkable event, that God should give His beloved Son to die for a race of rebels, or that He should raise that beloved

Son from the dead? Every one must acknowledge, that while it is an event of a most wonderful character that God should give His only Son to die for guilty man, it is not a wonderful thing that He should raise that beloved Son from the dead. Then the crucifixion day has far greater claims than the day of the resurrection. But God has not enjoined the observance of either. And how shameful it is to make void the fourth commandment by wisdom that is folly in the sight of God.¹⁶⁹

If we would commemorate the events of redemption, no necessity exists that we should destroy the holy Sabbath in order to do it. God has provided us with memorials bearing His own signature; and these we may observe with the blessing of Heaven. Would you commemorate the death of our Lord? Then heed the following:

1 Corinthians 11

²³ For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread:

²⁴ And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

²⁵ After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do you, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death till He come.

Would you commemorate the burial and resurrection of the Saviour? The following scriptures teach us the will of God in this:

Romans 6

³ Know you not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death?

⁴ Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

¹⁶⁹ 1 Corinthians 1:19-20.

⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.

Colossians 2

¹² Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised Him from the dead.

We have now examined the argument for a change of the Sabbath from the supposed superiority of the work of redemption over that of creation. As it is not found in the Bible, it can only occupy the rank of a cunningly devised fable.¹⁷⁰ Can such an argument be deemed sufficient authority for the open desecration of the fourth commandment?

2. The Disciples Met on the First Day

But the disciples met on the day of our Lord's resurrection, to commemorate that event, and the Saviour sanctioned this meeting by uniting with them.

Were every word of this true, it would then amount only to a very slender inference that the Sabbath was changed. But to show the utter fallacy of this inference, we will agree to prove that they did not at that time believe that he had been raised from the dead; but were assembled for the purpose of eating supper, and secluding themselves from the Jews.

John 20

¹⁹ Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples *were assembled for fear of the Jews*, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and says unto them, Peace be unto you.

Mark 16

¹⁴ Afterward he appeared unto the eleven, as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief, and hardness of heart,

¹⁷⁰ 2 Peter 1:16.

because they *believed not* them which had seen him after he was risen.

Then it is a fact that the disciples were not engaged in commemorating the resurrection of the Saviour, for they did not believe that that event had taken place. Certain it is that the disciples did not entertain the most distant idea of a change of the Sabbath. At the burial of the Saviour the women who had followed Him, prepared spices and ointments to embalm Him; the Sabbath drew on; they...

Luke 23

⁵⁶ ...rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment;

—and when the Sabbath was past, they came to the sepulchre upon the first day, to embalm Jesus.¹⁷¹ Then there is not even a plausible inference, in this case, for perverting the fourth commandment. The disciples kept the Sabbath according to that precept, and resumed their labor upon the first day of the week.

3. Jesus Met Them Again After Eight Days

But after eight days Jesus again met with the disciples, (*John 20:26*,) and this must have been upon the first day of the week.

Were it certain that this occurred upon the first day of the week, it would be very slight evidence that that day had become the Sabbath; for there is not even an intimation of the kind. But who knows that “*after eight days*” means just a week? Certainly it would be nearer the *literal* construction of the language to conclude that this was upon the ninth day. As an illustration, read:

Matthew 17

¹ And after six days, Jesus takes Peter, James and John,...

Now turn to:

¹⁷¹ *Luke 23:53-56; 24:1.*

Luke 9

²⁸ And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, He took Peter, and John and James,...

Then *after six days* is about eight days. But if *after eight days* means just a week, it would then bring this appearing of Christ upon the second day of the week. For the week must be reckoned from the evening, at the close of the first day,¹⁷² and the day itself closes at six o'clock. As the day was *far spent* when the two disciples were at Emmaus,¹⁷³ and as they returned to Jerusalem, a distance of seven and a half miles, *before* Christ appeared to the assembled disciples;¹⁷⁴ it is evident that Christ's first appearing to the eleven¹⁷⁵ must have been in the evening which followed the first day, and with which the second day commenced!

But granting that Christ's appearing on this occasion was actually upon the first day of the week, would that appearing make a Sabbath of the day? The appearing of Christ is sufficient to constitute a day a Sabbath, or it is not. If it is sufficient, then the fishing day on which He next showed himself to His disciples, and on which He miraculously aided them to take fish, was a Sabbath!¹⁷⁶

But if it was not sufficient to constitute the day of its occurrence a Sabbath, then His appearing to several of His disciples on the first day of the week, and to all of them on the Thursday of His ascension,¹⁷⁷ did not cause those days to become Sabbaths.

If it be asked, how the disciples could be found together,¹⁷⁸ unless they had some special object, we answer, that they had one common abode, as may be learned from *Acts 1:13*. Who can help regretting that such reasons as we have examined, should be deemed sufficient authority for violating one of the ten com-

¹⁷² *John 20:19.*

¹⁷³ *Luke 24.*

¹⁷⁴ *Mark 16:12-14.*

¹⁷⁵ *Luke 24:33-36.*

¹⁷⁶ *John 21.*

¹⁷⁷ *Acts 1.*

¹⁷⁸ *John 20:26.*

mandments? But are there no other and better arguments for the change of the Sabbath than those which have been examined? We answer, there are several other reasons urged as proof of this. Whether they are better than those we have already examined, we shall soon learn.

4. The Holy Ghost Descended on Pentecost

The Holy Ghost descended upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, which was the first day of the week. Therefore the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath. *Acts 2:1-2.*

One can hardly refrain from feelings of indignation that grave Doctors of Divinity should found their first-day Sabbath upon such a basis as this.

The disciples had been engaged in earnest prayer for ten days. For the day of Pentecost was fifty days from the day of Christ's resurrection, and forty of those days, the Saviour spent with His disciples.¹⁷⁹ Forty days from the resurrection day would end on Thursday, the day of His ascension. A period of ten days after the ascension on Thursday, would include two first days. If the design of God had been to honor the first day of the week, why did not the Holy Ghost descend upon the first of those first days? Why must the day of Pentecost come before the Holy Spirit could descend?

The answer is obvious. It was not the design of Heaven to honor the first day of the week, but to mark the antitype of the feast of Pentecost. The slaying of the paschal lamb, on the fourteenth day of the first month, had met its antitype in the death of the Lamb of God, on that day.¹⁸⁰ The offering of the first fruits, on the sixteenth day of the first month, had met its antitype in the resurrection of our Lord on that day, the first-fruits of them that

¹⁷⁹ *Acts 1:3.*

¹⁸⁰ *Exodus 12; John 19; 1 Corinthians 5:7.*

slept.¹⁸¹ It remained that the feast of Pentecost, fifty days later, should also have its fulfillment.¹⁸²

The fulfillment of this type is what the pen of inspiration has here recorded. As God has spoken nothing in this place respecting a change of the Sabbath, those who contend that He has, are cited to:

Proverbs 30

⁶ Add not unto His words, lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar.

5. Breaking Bread on the First Day

Paul once broke bread upon the first day of the week. Therefore the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath. Acts 20:7.

We answer, that at one period the apostolic church at Jerusalem broke bread every day.¹⁸³ Hence, according to this view, every day of the week is a Christian Sabbath! If a single instance of breaking bread at Troas, upon the first day of the week, was quite sufficient to constitute it a Sabbath, would not the continued practice of the apostolic church in breaking bread *every* day, be amply sufficient to make every day a Sabbath?

Moreover, as the act of the Great head of the church in breaking bread must be quite as important as that of His servant Paul, must not the day of the crucifixion be pre-eminently the Christian Sabbath, as Christ instituted, and performed this ordinance on the evening with which that day commenced?¹⁸⁴ And as the breaking of bread commemorates the crucifixion of our Lord, and not His resurrection, would not the crucifixion day be as appropriate for the breaking of bread, as the resurrection day?

¹⁸¹ *Leviticus 23; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23.*

¹⁸² *Leviticus 23:15-21.*

¹⁸³ *Acts 2:42-46.*

¹⁸⁴ *1 Corinthians 11:23-36.*

But on what day of the week did this act of Paul occur? For if it is of sufficient importance to make the day of its occurrence the future Sabbath of the Church, the day is worth determining.

The act of breaking bread was after midnight. For Paul preached to the disciples until midnight; then healed Eutychus; then attended to breaking the bread.¹⁸⁵ If, as time is reckoned at the present day, the first day of the week terminated at midnight, then Paul's act of breaking bread took place upon the second day of the week, which should henceforth be regarded as the Christian Sabbath, if breaking bread on a day makes it a Sabbath.

But if the Bible method of commencing the day, viz: from six o'clock PM was followed, it would appear that the disciples came together at the close of the Sabbath for an evening meeting, as the Apostle was to depart in the morning. Paul preached until midnight, and then broke bread with the disciples early in the morning of the first day of the week. Did this constitute that day the Sabbath? If so, then why did Paul, as soon as it was light, start on his long journey to Jerusalem? If Paul believed it to be the Christian Sabbath, why did he violate it? If he did not believe it to be sacred time, why should you?

This text affords direct proof that the first day of the week is not the Sabbath. And it is indeed quite remarkable that this single instance of religious worship on the first day, should be urged as proof that the Sabbath of the Lord has been changed, while this same book gives the account of religious worship on at least eighty-four Sabbaths.¹⁸⁶

6. Taking a Collection on the First Day

Paul commanded the church at Corinth to take up a collection on the first day of the week. Therefore the Sabbath must have been changed to that day. *1 Corinthians 16:2.*

¹⁸⁵ Acts 20:7-11.

¹⁸⁶ Acts 13:14, 44; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4, 11.

The readiness with which men grasp at every thing that can be made to support this first-day Sabbath, may be seen in the use made of this text. It is first claimed that Paul commanded a public collection on that day, and then it is inferred that He, who once commanded that we remember and keep holy the day of his rest, had now changed His mind and would have us remember and keep holy the day on which He began to labor.

But it is a remarkable fact that Paul enjoins exactly the reverse of a public collection. He does not say,

“Place your alms in the public treasury on the first day of the week;”

—but he says,

1 Corinthians 16

² Upon the first day of the week let every one of you *lay by him* in store.

The text, therefore, does not prove that the Corinthian church was assembled for public worship on that day, but on the contrary, it does prove that each must be at his own home, where he could examine his worldly affairs, and lay by himself in store as God has prospered him.

If each one should thus, from week to week, collect of his earnings, when the Apostle should come, their bounty would be ready, and each would be able to present to him what they had gathered. The method of giving, enjoined in the New Testament, is the reverse of a public contribution.

Matthew 6

³ But when you do alms, let not your left hand know what your right hand does:

⁴ *That your alms may be in secret; and your Father which sees in secret, himself shall reward you openly.*

This humble, unostentatious method of giving alms in secret, was what Paul enjoined upon the Corinthians. So that if the first-

day Sabbath has no better foundation than the inference drawn from this text, it truly rests upon sand.

7. In the Spirit on the Lord's Day

John was in the Spirit upon the Lord's day, which is the first day of the week. *Revelation 1:10.*

It is peculiarly unfortunate for the advocates of a change of the Sabbath, that in every instance they are obliged to assume the very point which they ought to prove.

This text is clear proof that there is a day in the gospel dispensation which the Lord claims as His. But is there one text in the Book of God that testifies that the first day of the week is the Lord's day? There is not one. Has God ever claimed the day as His? Never. Has God ever claimed any day as His, and reserved it to himself? He has.

Genesis 2

³ 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.

Exodus 16

²³ Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord your God.

Exodus 20

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.

Isaiah 58

¹³ If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable,...

Mark 2

²⁸ Therefore, the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

Then the seventh day is the day which God reserved to himself, when He gave to man the other six; and this day He calls His holy

day. This is the day which the New Testament designates the Son of man as Lord of. Is there one testimony in the Scriptures that the Lord of the Sabbath has put away His holy day and chosen another? Not one. Then that day which the Bible designates as the Lord's day, is none other than the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

We see, therefore, that there is no authority for the change of the Sabbath; hence, those who believe in a Sabbath, must either resort to the so-called Christian Fathers for proof of the change, or they must observe the Sabbath according to the commandment. The history of the change will be given hereafter. But we now ask,

“What right have the elders of the Christian church to change the fourth commandment, any more than the elders of the Jewish church had to change the fifth?”

The Pharisees pretended that they had a tradition handed down from Moses, which authorized them to change the fifth commandment; the Papist and Protestant Doctor of Divinity pretend that they have a tradition handed down from Christ and the apostles, authorizing them to change the fourth. But if Christ rebuked the Pharisees for holding a damnable heresy, what would He not say to the like act on the part of His own professed followers?¹⁸⁷

And further, if we allow the Fathers to corrupt the fourth commandment, must we not also admit their right to corrupt all the ordinances of the New Testament? And as they have established purgatory, invocation of saints, the worship of the virgin Mary, etc., must we not receive those also?

The Protestant professes to receive the Bible *alone* as his standard of faith and practice. The Papist receives the Bible and the tradition of the Fathers as his rule. The Protestant cannot prove the change of the Sabbath from his own standard, (the Bible,) therefore he is, on this point, obliged to adopt that of the Papist.

¹⁸⁷ *Matthew* 15:3-9.

viz: the Bible as explained and corrupted by the Fathers. The change of the Sabbath is proved by Papists as follows:

Question: What warrant have you for keeping the Sunday, preferably to the ancient Sabbath which was the Saturday?

Answer: We have for it the authority of the Catholic Church, and apostolic tradition.

Q: Does the Scripture any where command the Sunday to be kept for the Sabbath?

A: The Scripture commands us to hear the Church, (*Matthew* 18:17; *Luke* 10:16,) and to hold fast the traditions of the apostles. *2 Thessalonians* 2:15. But the Scripture does not in particular mention this change of the Sabbath.

John speaks of the Lord's day [*Revelation* 1:10;] but he does not tell us what day of the week this was, much less does he tell us that this day was to take the place of the Sabbath ordained in the commandments. Luke also speaks of the disciples meeting together to break bread on the first day of the week. *Acts* 20:7. And Paul [*1 Corinthians* 16:2] orders that on the first day of the week the Corinthians should lay by in store what they designed to bestow in charity on the faithful in Judea; but neither the one nor the other tells us that this first day of the week was to be henceforward the day of worship, and the Christian Sabbath; so that truly, the best authority we have for this, is the testimony and ordinance of the church.

And therefore, those who pretend to be so religious of the Sunday, whilst they take no notice of other festivals ordained by the same church authority, show that they act by humor, and not by reason and religion; since Sundays and holy-days all stand upon the same foundation *viz:* the ordinance of the church.

Q: What was the reason why the weekly Sabbath was changed from the Saturday to the Sunday?

A: Because our Lord fully accomplished the work of our redemption by rising from the dead on a Sunday, and by sending down the Holy Ghost on a Sunday; as therefore the work of our redemption was a greater work than that of our creation, the primitive church thought the day on which this work was com-

pletely finished, was more worthy her religious observation than that in which God rested from the creation, and should be properly called the Lord's day.¹⁸⁸

This testimony from the "Right Rev. Dr. Challoner," shows conclusively that the fourth commandment, which the New Testament has never changed, has been corrupted by the Romish Church. And in this testimony we find the authority of the Protestant church for saying that the commandment was changed because redemption was greater than creation.

We have seen that there is no divine authority for the change of the Sabbath, and that the various arguments urged in its behalf are totally destitute of foundation in the word of God. And we here see that the principal of these arguments were invented by the church of Rome. The change of the Sabbath, therefore, rests upon the Papal church. Those who despise the Lord's Sabbath, and in its stead honor the Sabbath of the Romish church, virtually acknowledge that the Papal apostasy is above God and able to change his times and laws.¹⁸⁹

Those who believe in a change of the Sabbath of the Lord, should look at these facts:

- The Sabbath of the Lord means the Rest-day of the Lord.
- Six days the Almighty wrought in the work of creation.
- The seventh day He rested from all His work.

The Sabbath, or Rest-day of the Lord, is, therefore, a definite day, which can no more be changed to one of the days upon which God wrought, than the resurrection day can be changed to one of the days upon which Christ did not rise, or the crucifixion day be changed to one of the six days of the week upon which Christ was not crucified. Hence, it is as impossible to change the Rest-day of the Lord, as it is to change the crucifixion day, or the day of the resurrection.

¹⁸⁸ *Catholic Christian Instructed*, Chapter xxiii.

¹⁸⁹ *Daniel 7:25; 2 Thessalonians 2.*

To all who read this article we submit one question:

“Must it not be sinful in the sight of Heaven for men to change the Sabbath of the Lord, for another day, and then steal that commandment which guards the holy Sabbath, to enforce the observance of that new day?”

2. History of the Sabbath

THE observance of a different day of the week from that enjoined in the fourth commandment, and for a different reason from that which is there assigned, is by many, supposed to be the apostolic mode of rendering obedience to that precept. That such an idea has no foundation in the New Testament, we have already seen.

For the benefit of such as wish to learn the manner in which the first day of the week obtained the place of the Lord's Sabbath, we present the following important testimony. It is taken from the *History of the Sabbath* published by the American Sabbath Tract Society, New York. We think that those who will read the testimony on this subject with care, will acquiesce in the frank testimony of Dr. Neander, the distinguished historian of the church. He thus remarks:

Opposition to Judaism introduced the particular festival of Sunday, very early, indeed, into the place of the Sabbath. . . . The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance; and it was far from the intention of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect—far from them; and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday. Perhaps at the end of the second century, a false application of this kind had begun to take place; for men appear by that time to have considered laboring on Sunday as a sin.¹⁹⁰

The apostle Paul informed the Thessalonian church that the mystery of iniquity had already begun to work, and that in the predicted period, the man of sin would be revealed.¹⁹¹ As the great apostasy had begun to develop itself in the days of the apostles, it follows that the early observance of any precept, or belief of any doctrine does not stamp it as apostolic or divine, if it have no foundation in the word of God. To us, therefore, it is a matter of peculiar interest to trace the gradual corruption of the truths of

¹⁹⁰ *History of the Christian Religion and Church*, page 168.

¹⁹¹ 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10.

the Bible, even from the days of the apostles, down to the complete development of the man of sin.

The History of the Sabbath, after proving from the New Testament that the Lord Jesus and His inspired followers observed the Sabbath according to the commandment, narrates the circumstances connected with its observance in the early church. It speaks as follows:

From the Time of the Apostles to Constantine

After the period described in the *Acts* of the apostles, Christianity soon became widely spread in the Roman empire, which, at that time, extended over most of the civilized world. But as it receded from the time of the apostles, and the number of its professors increased, the church became gradually less spiritual, and more disposed to deck the simple religion of Jesus with mysteries and superstitious formalities; and the bishops or pastors became ambitious of their authority over the churches.

Those churches, even in Gentile cities, appear to have been composed, at first, principally of converted Jews, who not only observed the weekly Sabbath, but also the feast of the Passover, adapted particularly to Christian worship; respecting which, there was much contention. In the mean time, converts were greatly multiplied from among the Gentiles, and were united with those from the Jews, who, not without reason, considered themselves entitled to some distinction as the original founders of the gospel church, and as being better informed in the writings of Moses and the prophets, having been in the habit of reading them every Sabbath in the synagogues.

About three years after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, according to the common account, Judea was invaded by the Roman armies, and Jerusalem was besieged and destroyed, as our Lord had predicted. By this awful calamity it is supposed that most of the churches in Judea were scattered; for they fled their country at the approach of their enemies, as they were taught by Jesus

Christ to do.¹⁹² This war resulted not only in the breaking up of the nation, and the destruction of a great portion of the people, but also in bringing a general odium upon the Jews wherever they were found; so that even the Christians of Judea suffered what our Saviour taught them to expect,

Matthew 24

⁹ And you shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

These circumstances, added to the enmity which formerly existed between the Gentiles and the Jews, produced a prejudice which had its influence in the church, in bringing into disrepute, and in fixing a stigma upon, whatever was regarded as Judaism.

“The doctrines of our Saviour and the church flourishing from day to day, continued to receive constant accessions,” says Eusebius, “but the calamities of the Jews also continued to grow with one accumulation of evil upon another.”

The insurrectionary disposition of the conquered Jews in the reign of Trajan, in the early part of the second century, and the calamities that followed them, seemed to confirm the opinion, that the Jews were given over by the Almighty to entire destruction. But their calamities increased in the reign of Adrian, who succeeded Trajan, in whose reign the revolt of the Jews again proceeded to many and great excesses,

...and Rufus, the lieutenant governor of Judea, using their madness as a pretext, destroyed myriads of men, women and children, in crowds; and by the laws of war, he reduced their country to a state of absolute subjection, and the degraded race to the condition of slaves.

The transformation of the church in Jerusalem is thus described by Eusebius:

The city of the Jews being thus reduced to a state of abandonment for them, and totally stripped of its ancient inhabitants, and

¹⁹² *Matthew 24:16.*

also inhabited by strangers; the Roman city which subsequently arose changing its name, was called AElia, in honor of the emperor AElias Adrian; and when the church was collected there of the Gentiles, the first bishop after those of the circumcision was Marcus.

Thus was extinguished the Hebrew church in Jerusalem, having had a succession of fifteen pastors;

“...all which,” says Eusebius, “they say, were Hebrews from the first. At that time the whole church under them,” he adds, “consisted of faithful Hebrews, who continued from the time of the apostles to the siege that then took place.”

This church, which heretofore held the first rank in regard to its influence, being now composed entirely of Gentiles, and stripped of its apostolic character and influence, could no longer successfully oppose the growing ambition and influence of the bishops of the church in the metropolis of the empire.

Up to this period, and for some time after, there does not appear to have been any change in the sentiments or practice of the church, in any place, relative to the Sabbath; but from what is related by subsequent writers, which will be noticed in its place, it is certain that it was observed by the churches universally.

This fact is so generally acknowledged by those acquainted with the history of the matter, that we need refer to only a few passages in proof. The learned Grotius says,

Therefore the Christians also, who believed Christ would restore all things to their primitive practice, as Tertullian teaches in Monogamia, kept holy the Sabbath, and had their assemblies on that day, in which the law was read to them, as appears in *Acts* 15:21, which custom remained till the time of the council of Laodicea, about 365 AD, who then thought meet that the gospels also should be read on that day.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ *Explication of the Decalogue.*

Edward Brerewood, Professor in Gresham College, London, in a treatise on the Sabbath, 1630, says:

It is commonly believed that the Jewish Sabbath was changed into the Lord's Day by Christian emperors, and they know little who do not know, *that the ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed by the eastern churches three hundred years after our Saviour's passion.*

Testimony for the First Day Examined

At what time the first day of the week came into notice as a festival in the church, it is not easy to determine. The first intimation we have of this, in any ancient writer of acknowledged integrity, is from Justin Martyr, about 140 AD. He is cited as saying,

...that the Christians, in the city and in the country assembled on the day called Sunday; and after certain religious devotions, all returned home to their labors;¹⁹⁴

—and he assigns as reasons for this, that God made the world on the first day; and, that Christ first showed himself to His disciples on that day, after His resurrection. These were the best, and probably all the reasons that could then be offered for the practice. He also speaks of Sunday only as a festival, on which they performed labor, when not engaged in devotions; and not as substitute for the Sabbath.

From this author we can learn nothing as to the extent of the practice; for though he says this was done by those “in the city and in the country,” he may have intended only the city of Rome and its suburbs, since Justin, although a native of Palestine, in Syria, is stated by Eusebius to have made his residence in Rome. Now can we determine from this, that he intended anything more, than that they did thus on the Sunday in which the church of Rome, a short time after this, is known to have closed the paschal feast, which was observed annually?

¹⁹⁴ *Apology for the Christians.*

It is contended, however, that mention is made of keeping the first day previous to Justin. The first intimation of this kind, it is believed, is from an apocryphal writing, styled the *Epistle of Barnabas*. But to this epistle it is objected, that there is no evidence of its genuineness. Eusebius, who lived near the time when it was written, mentions it as a spurious writing, entitled to no credit. Dr. Milnor says it is an injury to St. Barnabas, to ascribe this epistle to him. Mosheim says it is the work of some superstitious Jew of mean abilities. And we think it has but little to recommend it besides its antiquity.

Barnabas' theory for observing the first day, rests upon the tradition that the seventh day was typical of the seventh millennium of the age of the world, which would be purely a holy age; and that the Sabbath was not to be kept until that time arrived; and he says,

We keep the eighth day with gladness, in which Jesus arose from the dead.

The citations from Ignatius, are as little to the purpose. In the passage of which most use has been made, he did not say that himself or anyone else kept the Lord's day, as is often asserted. His own words are, that:

The prophets who lived before Christ, came to a newness of hope, not by keeping Sabbaths, but by living according to a lordly or most excellent life.

In this passage, Ignatius was speaking of altogether a different thing from Sabbath-keeping. There is another quotation from him, however, in which he brings out more clearly his view of the relation existing between the Sabbath and Lord's day. It is as follows:

Let us not keep the Sabbath in a Jewish manner, in sloth and idleness. But let us keep it after a spiritual manner, not in bodily ease, but in the study of the law, and in the contemplation of the works of God.

And *after* we have kept the Sabbath, let every one that loves Christ keep the Lord's day *festival*.

From this it seems that he would have the Sabbath kept first, *as such*, and in a manner satisfactory to the strictest Sabbatarian, after which the Lord's day, not as a Sabbath, but as a festival. Indeed with this distinction between the *Sabbath* and a *festival* before us, it is easy to explain all those passages from early historians which refer to the first day. We shall find them to be either immediately connected with instructions about such seasons as *Good Friday* and *Holy Thursday*, or in the writings of those who have recommended the observance of these festival days.

It is also said that Pliny, Governor of Bithynia, in 102 AD, in a letter to Trajan, states that the Christians met on the first day of the week for worship; but by no fair interpretation of his words can he be so understood. He says, in writing about those of his own province,

...that they were accustomed to assemble on a *stated day*.

This might be referred to the first day, if there were credible testimony that this day was alone regarded by Christians at that time; but as there is no evidence of this, and as the Sabbath is known to have been the stated day of religious assembling a long time after this, it seems more proper to refer it to the Sabbath than to the first day.

We will mention but one more of these misinterpreted citations, and this is from Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, who lived a little after Justin. His letter to Soter, bishop of Rome, is cited as saying,

This day we celebrated the holy Dominical day, in which we have read your epistle.

As given by Eusebius, it is thus:

Today we have *passed the Lord's holy day*,...

The only ground upon which this phrase can be referred to the first day, is, that this day was at that time known by the same title that God had given to the Sabbath,¹⁹⁵ of which there is no proof. Therefore it is not just to cite this passage as evidence of the observance of the first day at that time.

It is indeed, a well known fact, that the first day has come into very extensive use among the great body of Christians, as the only day of weekly rest and worship. The origin of this practice does not appear, however, to be as ancient by some centuries, as many suppose; nor was its adoption secured at once, but by slow and gradual advances it obtained general notice in Christian countries. This is frankly admitted by Morer, an English Episcopalian, who says,

In St. Jerome's time, (that is, in the fifth century,) Christianity had got into the throne as well as into the empire. Yet for all this, the entire sanctification of the Lord's day proceeded slowly, and that it was the work of time to bring it to perfection, appears from the several steps the church made in her constitution, and from the decrees of emperors and other princes, wherein the prohibitions from servile and civil business advanced by degrees from one species to another, till the day got a considerable figure in the world.

The same author says on the same page:

If the Christians in St. Jerome's time, after divine service on the Lord's day, followed their daily employments, it should be remembered, that this was not done till the worship was quite over, when they might with innocency enough resume them, because the length of time and the number of hours assigned for piety were not then so well explained as in after ages.¹⁹⁶

It is probable that no other day could have obtained the same notice in ancient times as the first day of the week did; for there were circumstances, aside from the resurrection, that had an in-

¹⁹⁵ See *Isaiah* 58:13.

¹⁹⁶ *Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, page 236.

fluence in promoting its observance. It was at first a celebration of the same character as the fourth and sixth days of the week, and the annual festivals of saints and martyrs. These celebrations were comparatively unobjectionable, when not permitted to interfere with a divine appointment; but when they were made to supersede or cause a neglect of the Sabbath, they were criminal.

In respect to these days of weekly celebration, Mosheim, when remarking upon this early period, and the regard then paid to the seventh and first days, says:

Many also observed the fourth day, in which Christ was betrayed, and the sixth day, in which He was crucified.

He adds,

The time of assembling was generally in the evening after sunset, or in the morning before the dawn.

Sunday-Keeping of Heathen Origin

The respect which the Gentiles had for the first day, or Sunday, while they were Pagans, contributed much to render its introduction easy, and its weekly celebration popular, among such materials as composed the body of the church of Rome in the second, third and fourth centuries.

The observance of the first day of the week, as a festival of the Sun, was very general in those nations from which the Gentile church received her converts. That an idolatrous worship was paid to the Sun and other heavenly bodies by the Gentiles, the Old Testament abundantly testifies; and this kind of adoration paid to the Sun in later times, is so plainly a matter of historical record.

Thomas Bampfield, an English writer of the seventeenth century, quoting Verstegan's *Antiquities*, page 68, says:

Our ancestors in England, before the light of the Gospel came among them, went very far in this idolatry, and dedicated the first day of the week to the adoration of the idol of the Sun, and

gave it the name of Sunday. This idol they placed in a temple, and there sacrificed to it.

He further states, that from his historical reading, he finds that a great part of the world, and particularly those parts of it which have since embraced Christianity, did anciently adore the Sun upon Sunday. It is also stated by Dr. Chambers,

...that Sunday was so called by our idolatrous ancestors, because set apart for the worship of the Sun.¹⁹⁷

The Greeks and Latins also gave the same name to the first day of the week. Dr. Brownlee, as quoted by Kingsbury, on the Sabbath, page 223, also says:

When the descendants of Adam apostatized from the worship of the true God, they substituted in his place the Sun, that luminary, which, more than all others, strikes the minds of savage people with religious awe; and which, therefore, all heathens worship.

Attachment to particular days of religious celebration, from habit merely, is well known, even in our own day, to be very strong, and powerful convictions of duty are often required to produce a change. This was no doubt well understood by the teachers of Christianity in those times. Dr. Mosheim, when treating on that age, says:

That the leaders imagined that the nations would the more readily receive Christianity when they saw the rites and ceremonies to which they had been accustomed, established in the churches, and the same worship paid to Jesus Christ and His martyrs which they had formerly offered to their idol deities. Hence it happened, that in those times, the religion of the Greeks and Romans differed but little in its external appearance from that of Christians.

¹⁹⁷ *Cyclopedia*.

Prejudice against the Jews was another influence against the Sabbath, and in favor of the first day. This was very strong, and directly calculated to lead the Gentile Christians to fix a stigma upon every religious custom of the Jews, and to brand as *Judaism* whatever they supposed had any connection with the Mosaic religion. Hence it was that in those times, as often occurs in our own, to produce disaffection and disgust to the seventh day as the Sabbath, they spoke of it and reproached its observance as Judaizing.

This feeling in relation to Judaism led Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, in Egypt, in the fourth century, who with his people then observed the Sabbath, to say,

We assemble on Saturday, not that we are infected with Judaism, but to worship Jesus the Lord of the Sabbath.¹⁹⁸

In a community of Christians whose religion was formal, and whose celebrations were designed more to act upon their passions and senses than to improve their hearts or to conform them to divine requirements, a more powerful argument could scarcely be used against the Sabbath day, or one that would more effectually promote the observance of the first day, which was raised up as its rival. Dr. Neander says distinctly,

Opposition to Judaism introduced the particular festival of Sunday very early.

The observance of the Passover, or Easter, by the early Christians, aided the introduction of the first day as a religious festival in the church, if it was not indeed the direct cause of it. This feast was held by the Asiatic Christians, who began it at the same time the Jews began their Passover, and ended it in like manner, without regard to the particular day of the week. The church of Rome does not appear to have observed it until the latter part of the second century, when in the time of Victor, bishop of Rome, it seems that it was observed by the Roman and western churches. Victor insisted upon the fast being closed on the first day of the

¹⁹⁸ *Interpretation of the Psalms.*

week, on whatever day it might commence; and he claimed the right, as *bishop of Rome*, to control all the churches in this matter.

“Hence,” says Eusebius, “there were synods and convocations of the bishops on this question, and all (*i.e.*, the western bishops) unanimously drew up an ecclesiastical decree, which they communicated to all the churches in all places, that the mystery of the Lord’s resurrection should be celebrated on no other day than the Lord’s day; and that on this day alone we should observe the close of the paschal feasts.”

The bishops of Asia, however, persisted for a considerable time in observing the custom handed down to them by apostolic tradition, until, either by threats of excommunication which were made, or by a desire for peace, they were induced partially to adopt the custom of the western churches. This change was made, as we are told,

...partly in honor of the day, and partly to express some difference between Jews and Christians.

But the question does not appear to have been fully settled, for we find Constantine, in an epistle to the churches, urging them to uniformity in the day of the celebration, wherein, after a strong invective against the practice of the Jews, he says,

For we have learned another way from our Saviour, which we may follow. It is indeed most absurd that they should have occasion of insolent boasting on account of our not being able to observe these things in any manner unless by the aid of their instruction.

Wherefore, let us having nothing in common with that most odious brood of the Jews.

By this contest an important point was gained for the first day, although it was but an annual celebration. The Sabbath, however, does not appear to have been laid aside in any place, but continued to be the principal day of religious worship throughout the whole Christian church.

At what time the first day began to be observed weekly, we have no particular account; but from the favor it received from the bishops of Rome and some of the Christian fathers at the close of the third and beginning of the fourth century, we suppose it had then become a practice in Rome and some of the western churches.

This brings us near to the close of the third century. And here it ought to be noted, that the Lord's day, or Sunday, was not the only holy-day of the Church during these three centuries. Origen, (as quoted by Dr. Peter Heylyn in his *History of the Sabbath*,) names the *Good Friday* as we call it now, the *Parasceve* as he calls it there; the feasts of *Easter* and of *Pentecost*. And anciently, not only the day which is now called *Whitsunday* or *Pentecost*, but all the fifty days from Easter forward, were accounted holy, and solemnized with no less observance than the Sundays were.

Of the day of the *Ascension* or *Holy Thursday*, it may likewise be said, that soon after, it came to be more highly esteemed than all the rest. Such was the estimation in which the Lord's day was held. It was on a level with those other holy days which are now disregarded by the body of Protestant Church.

It is to be remembered, farther, that the term "Sabbath" was applied exclusively to the seventh day of the week, or Saturday. Indeed, wherever, for a thousand years and upwards, we meet the word *Sabbattum* in any writer, of what name so ever, it must be understood of no day but Saturday.

From the Time of Constantine to the Reformation

We have seen how the matter stood until the commencement of Constantine's career. The Sabbath was generally observed, while the Lord's day was regarded as a festival of no greater importance or authority than Good Friday or Holy Thursday. No text of Scripture, or edict of emperor, or decree of council, could be produced in its favor. But from this time forth may be found emperors and councils combining to give importance to the Lord's day and to oppose the Sabbath.

An important change in the regard paid to the first day, was produced soon after the accession of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, in the early part of the fourth century. When he became master of Rome, he soon gave himself up to the guidance of the Christian clergy. According to Jones,

He built places of public worship. He encouraged the meeting of synods and bishops-honored them with his presence, and employed himself continually in aggrandizing the church. He was scrupulously attentive to the religious rites and ceremonies which were prescribed to him by the clergy. He fasted, observed the feasts in commemoration of the martyrs, and devoutly watched the whole night on the vigils of the saints,¹⁹⁹

—and showed great anxiety for uniformity in the doctrines and observances of religion in the church. He was, therefore, exactly suited to the wishes of the Roman bishop and clergy, in establishing, by his imperial authority, what they had no Scripture to support, and what their influence had hitherto been unable to effect, viz., a uniformity in the celebration of Easter and the first day.

In 321, Constantine first published his edicts enjoining upon his subjects these superstitious celebrations. Eusebius says,

He appointed as a suitable time for prayers the Dominical day, which was then an especial day, and now is undoubtedly the very first. His body guard observed the day, and offered on it prayers written by the emperor. The happy prince endeavored to persuade all to do this, and by degrees to lead all to the worship of God; wherefore he determined that those obeying Roman power should abstain from every work upon the days named after the Saviour, that they should venerate also the day before the Sabbath, in memory, as seems to me, of the events occurring in those days to our common Saviour.

He says again,

¹⁹⁹ *Church History.*

An edict also, by the will and pleasure of the emperor, was transmitted to the Prefects of the provinces, that they *henceforth* should venerate the Dominical day; that they should honor the days consecrated to the martyrs, and should celebrate the solemnities of the festivals in the churches, all which was done according to the will of the emperor.²⁰⁰

And as quoted by Lucius, he says, that he admonished his subjects likewise that those days which were *Sabbaths* should be honored, or worshipped. Sozomen says,

He (Constantine) also made a law that on the Dominical day, which the Hebrews call the first day of the week, the Greeks the day of the Sun, and also on the day of Venus, (*i.e.*, Friday,) judgments should not be given, or other business transacted, but that all should worship God with prayer and supplications, and venerate the Dominical day, as on it Christ rose from the dead; and the day of Venus, as the day on which He was fixed to the cross.²⁰¹

Dr. Chambers says,

It was Constantine the Great who first made a law for the observance of Sunday, and who, according to Eusebius, appointed that it should be regularly celebrated throughout the Roman Empire. Before him, and even in his time, they observed the Jewish Sabbath as well as Sunday; both to satisfy the law of Moses, and to imitate the apostles, who used to meet together on the first day.

He adds,

Indeed, some are of opinion that the Lord's day mentioned in the Apocalypse, is our Sunday; which they will have to have been so early instituted.

By Constantine's laws, made in 321, it was decreed that for the future the Sunday should be kept a day of rest in all cities and towns; but he allowed the country people to follow their work. In

²⁰⁰ *Life of Constantine.*

²⁰¹ *Ecclesiastical History*, b. 1, c. 8.

538, the Council of Orleans prohibited this country labor. To give the more solemnity to the first day of the week, (as we learn from Lucius' *Ecclesiastical History*,) Sylvester, who was bishop of Rome while Constantine was Emperor, changed the name of Sunday, giving it the more imposing title of *Lord's day*.

It cannot be doubted, that the laws of Constantine did much to make the first day conspicuous throughout the empire, as all public business was forbidden upon it. They changed its character from a special day, in which, as a weekly festival, all kinds of business and labor were performed in city and country, to be, as Eusebius says, *the very first*.

This imperial favor for the first day operated against all who conscientiously regarded the Sabbath from respect to the fourth commandment, in obedience to which the seventh day had always been observed; and if it had produced a general abandonment of its observance, it would not have been very surprising, considering the influence of court example, and the general ignorance and darkness of the age. This, however, does not appear to have been the case. The Sabbath was still extensively observed; and to counteract it the Council of Laodicea, about 350 AD, passed a decree, saying,

It is not proper for Christians to Judaize, and to cease from labor on the Sabbath, but they ought to work on that day, and put especial honor upon the Lord's day, as Christians. If any be found Judaizing, let him be anathematized.

But this did not produce any material change, for Socrates, a writer of the fifth century, who resided at Constantinople, makes the following remarks upon the celebration of the Sabbath at the time he wrote, 440 AD. He says,

There are various customs concerning assembling; for though all the churches throughout the whole world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath day, yet the Alexandrians and the Romans, from an ancient tradition, refuse to do this; but the Egyptians who are in the neighborhood of Alexandria, and those in-

habiting Thebais, indeed have assemblies on the Sabbath, but do not participate in the mysteries, as is the custom of the Christians. At Caesarea, Cappadocia, and in Cyprus, on the Sabbath and Dominical day, at twilight, with lighted lamps, the presbyters and bishops interpret the Scriptures. At Rome they fast every Sabbath.

This account of the manner of celebrating the Sabbath in the fifth century, is corroborated by Sozomen, who says,

At Constantinople, and almost among all, the Christians assembled upon the Sabbath, and also upon the first day of the week, except at Rome and Alexandria; the ecclesiastical assemblies at Rome were not upon the Sabbath, as in almost all other churches of the rest of the world; and in many cities and villages in Egypt, they used to commune in the evening of the Sabbath, on which day there were public assemblies.²⁰²

In regard to fasting on the Sabbath at Rome, referred to by Socrates, it ought to be said, that from the earliest times to the fourth century, the practice had been to observe the Sabbath as a holiday. But the Church of Rome, in its opposition to the Jews, made it a fast day, that the separation might be marked and strong. In the eastern churches they never fasted upon the Sabbath, excepting one Sabbath in the year, which was the day before the Passover. But in the western churches they celebrated a fast every week. It was in reference to this that Ambrose said,

When I come to Rome, I fast upon the Sabbath; when I am here, I do not fast.

Augustine also said concerning this,

If they say it is sinful to fast on the Sabbath, then they would condemn the Roman Church, and many places near to and far from it. And if they should think it a sin not to fast on the Sabbath, then they would blame many eastern churches, and the far greater part of the world.

²⁰² *Ecclesiastical History*, b. 7, c. 9.

This Sabbath fasting was opposed by the eastern church; and in the sixth general council, held at Constantinople, it was commanded that the Sabbath and Dominical days be kept as festivals, and that no one fast or mourn upon them. The practice of fasting, therefore, was chiefly in the western churches, about Rome.

It is perhaps difficult to determine exactly the relative importance attached to the seventh and first days of the week at this time. Sufficient may be found, however, to assure us, that the Sabbath was observed, and that no one regarded Sunday as having taken its place. This is shown by the provision of the Council of Laodicea, 365 AD, that the Gospels should be read on that day. It is shown by the action of a Council in 517, which regulated and enforced the observance of the Sabbath. It is shown by the expostulation of Gregory of Nyssa,

How can you look upon the Lord's day, if you neglect the Sabbath? Do you not know that they are sisters, and that in despising the one you affront the other?²⁰³

And as sisters we find them hand in hand in the ecclesiastical canons. Penalties were inflicted by the councils both of Laodicea and Trullo, on clergymen who did not observe both days as festivals.

How the first day of the week, or Lord's day, was observed in the early part of the fifth century, we may learn from the words of St. Jerome. In a funeral oration for the Lady Paula, he says:

She, with all her virgins and widows who lived at Bethlehem in cloister with her, upon the Lord's day, repaired duly to the church, or house of God, which was near to her cell; and after her return from thence to her own lodgings, she herself and all her company *fell to work*, and they all performed their task, which was the making of clothes and garments for themselves and for others, as they were appointed.

St. Chrysostom, patriarch of Constantinople,

²⁰³ Robinson's *History of Baptism*.

...recommended to his audience, after impressing upon themselves and their families what they had heard on the Lord's day, to return to their daily employments and trades.

Dr. Francis White, Lord Bishop of Ely, speaking of this matter, says,

The Catholic Church, for more than six hundred years after Christ, permitted labor, and gave license to many Christian people to work upon the Lord's day, at such hours as they were not commanded to be present at the public service by the precepts of the church.

In the sixth century efforts were made to prevent this labor. The following promulgation of a synod held by command of King Junthran, of Burgundy, will show the condition of things, and the means used to improve it:

We see the Christian people, in an unadvised manner, deliver to contempt the Dominical day, and, as in other days, indulge in continual labor.

Therefore they determined to teach the people subject to them to keep the Dominical day, which, in not observed by the lawyer, he should irreparably lose his cause, and if a countryman or servant did not keep it, he should be beaten with heavier blows of cudgels. The council of Orleans, held 538, prohibited the country labor on Sunday which Constantine by his laws permitted. According to Chambers, this council also declared,

...that to hold it unlawful to travel with horses, cattle, and carriages, to prepare food, or to do any thing necessary to the cleanliness and decency of houses or persons, savors more of Judaism than Christianity.

According to Lucius, in another council held in Narbonne, in France, in the seventh century, they also forbid this country work.

Early in the seventh century, in the time of Pope Gregory I, the subject of the Sabbath attracted considerable attention. There was one class of persons who declared,

...that it was not lawful to do any manner of work upon the Saturday, or the old Sabbath; another, that no man ought to bathe himself on the Lord's day, or their new Sabbath.

Against both of these doctrines Pope Gregory wrote a letter to the Roman citizens. Baronius says,

This year (603) at Rome, St. Gregory, the Pope, corrected that error which some preached, by Jewish superstition, or the Grecian custom, that it was a duty to worship on the Sabbath, as likewise upon the Dominical day;²⁰⁴

—and he calls such preachers the preachers of Antichrist. Nearly the same doctrine was preached again in the time of Gregory VII, 1074 AD, about five hundred years after what we are now speaking of. This is sufficient to show that the Sabbath was kept until those times of decline which introduced so many errors in faith and practice. Indeed, it is sufficient to show, that wherever the subject has been under discussion, the Sabbath has found its advocates, both in *theory* and in *practice*.

According to Lucius,

Pope Urban II, in the eleventh century, dedicated the Sabbath to the Virgin Mary, with a mass.

Binius says,

Pope Innocent I constituted a fast on the Sabbath day, which seems to be the first constitution of that fact; but dedicating the Sabbath to the Virgin Mary was by Urban II, in the latter part of the eleventh century.

About this time we find Eysichius teaching the doctrine that the precept for the observance of the Sabbath is not one of the com-

²⁰⁴ *Councils.*

mandments, because it is not at all times to be observed according to the letter; and Thomas Aquinas, another Romish Ecclesiastic, saying,

...that it seems to be inconvenient that the precept for observing the Sabbath should be put among the precepts of the Decalogue, if it do not at all belong to it; that the precept, “*You shall not make a graven image,*” and the precept for *observing the Sabbath*, are ceremonial.

First Day Observance Introduced into Great Britain

First day observance in this country being derived from England, mainly, we are interested in learning the origin of the observance in that country. As the great body of the professed church drink from this stream, a knowledge of its fountain head is of much value. The *History of the Sabbath* testifies to the point:

The observance of the first day was not so early in England and in Scotland as in most other parts of the Roman Empire. According to Heylyn, there were Christian societies established in Scotland as early as 435 AD; and it is supposed that the gospel was preached in England in the first century by St. Paul. For many ages after Christianity was received in those kingdoms, they paid no respect to the first day.

Binius, a Catholic writer, in the second volume of his works, give some account of the bringing into use of the Dominical day [Sunday] in Scotland, as late as 1203 AD.

“This year,” he says, “a council was held in Scotland concerning the introduction of the Lord’s day, which council was held in 1203, in the time of Pope Innocent III,”

—and he quotes as his authority Roger Hoveden, Matth. Paris, and Lucius’ *Ecclesiastical History*. He says,

By this council it was enacted that it should be holy time from the twelfth hour on Saturday noon until Monday.

Boethus says,

In 1203, William, king of Scotland, called a council of the principal of his kingdom, by which it was decreed, that Saturday, from the twelfth hour at noon, should be holy, that they should do no profane work, and this they should observe until Monday.²⁰⁵

Binius says that in 1201, Eustachius, Abbot of Flay, came to England, and therein preached from city to city, and from place to place. He prohibited using markets on Dominical days; and for this he professed to have a special command from heaven. The history of this singular document, entitled, *A Holy Command of the Dominical Day*, the pious Abbot stated to be this:

It came from Heaven to Jerusalem, and was found on St. Simon's tomb in Golgotha. And the Lord commanded this epistle, which for three days and three nights men looked upon, and falling to the earth, prayed for God's mercy. And after the third hour, the patriarch stood up; and Akarias the archbishop stretched out his mitre, and they took the holy epistle of God and found it thus written.

"I, the Lord, who commanded you that you should observe the Dominical Day, and you have not kept it, and you have not repented of your sins, as I said by my gospel, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away; I have caused repentance unto life to be preached unto you, and you have not believed; I sent pagans against you, who shed your blood, yet you believed not; and because you kept not the Dominical day, for a few days you had famine; but I soon gave you plenty, and afterwards you did worse; I will again, that none from the ninth hour of the Sabbath until the rising of the sun on Monday, do work any thing unless what is good, which if any do, let him amend by repentance; and if you be not obedient to this command, amen, I say unto you, and I swear unto you by my seat, and throne, and cherubims, who keep my holy seat, because I will not change any thing by another epistle; but I will open the heavens, and for rain I will rain upon you stones, and logs of wood, and hot water by

²⁰⁵ *De Scottis*, page 344.

night, and none may be able to prevent, but that I may destroy all wicked men.

“This I say unto you, you shall die the death, because of the Dominical holy day and other festivals of my saints which you have not kept. I will send unto you beasts having the heads of lions, the hair of women, and tails of camels; and they shall be so hunger-starved that they shall devour your flesh, and you shall desire to flee to the sepulchres of the dead, and hide you for fear of the beasts; and I will take away the light of the sun from your eyes; and I will send upon you darkness, that without seeing you may kill one another, and I will take away my face from you, and will not show you mercy; for I will burn the bodies and hearts of all who keep not the Dominical holy day.

“Hear my voice, lest you perish in the land because of the Dominical holy day. Now know you, that you are safe by the prayers of my most holy mother Mary, and of my holy angels who daily pray for you. I gave you the law from Mount Sinai, which you have not kept. For you I was born into the world, and my festivals you have not known; the Dominical day of my resurrection you have not kept; I swear to you by my right hand, unless you keep the Dominical day and the festivals of my saints, I will send pagans to kill you.”

Provided with this new command from heaven,

Eustachius preached in various parts of England against the desecration of the Dominical day, and other festivals; and gave the people absolution upon condition that they hereafter reverence the Dominical day, and the festivals of the saints.

And the people vowed to God, that thereafter they would neither buy nor sell any thing but food on Sunday.

“Then,” says Binius, “the enemy of man, envying the admonitions of this holy man, put it into the heart of the king and nobility of England, to command that all who should keep the aforesaid traditions, and chiefly all who had cast down the markets for things vendible upon the Dominical day, should be brought to the king’s court to make satisfaction about observing the Dominical day.”

Binius relates many miraculous things that occurred on the Sabbath to those that labored after the ninth hour (*i.e.*, after three o'clock in the afternoon) of the seventh day, or Saturday. He says, that upon a certain Sabbath, after the nine hour,

- A carpenter, for making a wooden pin, was struck with the palsy;
- And a woman, for knitting on the Sabbath, after the ninth hour, was also struck with the palsy.
- A man baked bread, and when he broke it to eat, blood came out.
- Another, grinding corn, blood came in a great stream instead of meal, while the wheel of his mill stood still against a vehement impulse of water.
- Heated ovens refused to bake bread, if heated after the ninth hour of the Sabbath; and dough, left unbaked, out of respect to Eustachius' new doctrine, was found on Monday well baked without the aid of fire.

These fables were industriously propagated throughout the kingdom;

“Yet the people,” says Binius, “fearing kingly and human power more than divine, returned as a dog to his own vomit, to keep markets of saleable things upon the Dominical day.”

Mr. Bampffield says,

The king and princes of England, in 1203, would not agree to change the Sabbath, and keep the first day, by this authority. This was in the time of King John, against whom the popish clergy had a great pique for not honoring their prelacy and the monks, by one of whom he was finally poisoned.²⁰⁶

Binius states that King John of England, in 1208, in the tenth year of his reign, for not submitting to popish impositions upon his prerogatives was excommunicated by the Pope, and his king-

²⁰⁶ *Enquiry*, page 3.

dom interdicted, which occasioned so much trouble at home and abroad, that it forced him at last to lay down his crown at the feet of Mandulphus, the Pope's agent. After he was thus humbled by the excommunication and interdiction, the king, in the fifteenth year of his reign, by writ, removed the market of the city of Exon from Sunday, on which it was held, to Monday. The market of Lanceston was removed from the first to the fifth day of the week. In the second and third years of Henry III many other markets were removed from the first to other days of the week, which the King at first would not permit. He also issued a writ which permitted the removal of markets from the first day to other days without special license.²⁰⁷

The Parliament of England met on Sundays until the time of Richard II, who adjourned it from that to the following day. In 1203, according to Boethus,

...a council was held in Scotland to inaugurate the king, and concerning the feast of the Sabbath; and there came also a legate from the Pope, with a sword and purple hat, and indulgences and privileges to the young king. It was also there decreed, that Saturday, from the twelfth hour at noon, should be holy.

The Magdeburgenses say that this Council was about the observance of the Dominical day *newly brought in*, and that they ordained that it should be holy from the twelfth hour of Saturday even till Monday.²⁰⁸

Binius says,

A synod was held in Oxford, 1223 AD, by Stephen, Archbishop of Canterbury, where they determined that the Dominical day be kept with all veneration, and a fast upon the Sabbath.

Sunday Keeping Established by Law in England

According to Bampfield, the first law of England made for the keeping of Sunday, was in the time of Edward VI, about 1470.

²⁰⁷ *Councils*, cent. 13.

²⁰⁸ B. 13, of *Scotland*, p.788, Bamp. Enq. 114.

Parliament then passed an act, by which Sunday and many holy days, the feasts of all Saints and of holy Innocents, were established as festivals by law. This provided also, that it should be lawful for husbandmen, laborers, fisherman, and all others in harvest, or at any other time of the year when necessity should require, to labor, ride, fish, or do any other kind of work, at their own free will and pleasure, upon any of the said days.

By such means as these, the observance of the first day was gradually forced upon the people wherever they owed allegiance to the Pope as head of the church, and the Sabbath was as gradually brought into contempt and disuse. The process by which the change was effected appears to be this:

- By first obtaining an annual celebration of the first day at the close of Passover, in honor of the resurrection;
- Then a partial observance of the day weekly, it being generally so observed among the heathen;
- Then obtaining for it the support of civil laws, ecclesiastical canon and penalties, and by giving it the title of Lord's day;
- Then by requiring the consecration of the entire day.

To abate and ultimately eradicate all respect for the Sabbath,

- It was first turned into a fast;
- Then it was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, resting upon it was stigmatized as Judaism and heresy, and the preaching of it was called Antichrist;
- And finally the fourth commandment was pronounced ceremonial, and was effectually abstracted from the Decalogue.

And thus, so far as the Roman church was concerned, the point was gained; and thus, probably, she performed her part in the fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel,

Daniel 7

²⁵ He shall think to change *times* and *laws*; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

The cause of the Sabbath must also have been seriously affected by the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the seventh century, and the success of the Mohametans in conquering the eastern division of the church. Mohamet formed the plan of establishing a new religion, or, as he expressed it, of replanting the only true and ancient one professed by Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and the prophets; by destroying idolatry, and weeding out the corruptions which the later Jews and Christians had, as he supposed, introduced.

He was equally opposed to both Jews and Christians. To distinguish his disciples from each, he selected as their day of weekly celebration the sixth day, or Friday. And thus, as a writer of the seventeenth century remarks,

They and the Romanists crucified the Sabbath, as the Jews and the Romans did the Lord of the Sabbath, between two thieves, the sixth and the first day of the week.

We have thus traced the history of the Sabbath in the Roman church down to the thirteenth century; and we see that through the whole of this period, the seventh day every where retained the honor of being called the Sabbath, and that no other day had ever borne that title; that not until the remarkable letter found on St. Simeon's tomb, had it been asserted by any one, that the observance of the *first day*, *Lord's day*, or *Sunday*, was enjoined by the authority of Jesus or His apostles, nor was any example of theirs plead in its favor. Even then it was not pretended that the Scriptures required its observance.

There are some traces of the Sabbath among those Christians who separated from the Catholic communion, or were never embraced in it. The Greek church separated from them about the middle of the eleventh century, and had a larger extent of empire than the Papists. According to Brerewood's *Enquiries*, page 128, this church solemnized Saturday festivals, and forbade as unlawful to fast on any Saturday except in Lent, retaining the custom followed before their separation.

The same author states that the Syrian Christians, who composed a numerous body in the East, celebrated divine worship solemnly on both the Sabbath and the first day, continuing the custom of the Roman church at the time they separated from that community. Sandy's *Travels*, page 173, speak of a Christian empire in Ethiopia that celebrate both Saturday and Sunday,

...that they have divers errors and many ancient truth.

The Abyssinian Christians, another numerous body are represented as being similar in some respect to the Papists; and Purchase speaks of them as...

...subject to Peter and Paul, and especially to Christ,

—and as observing the Saturday Sabbath. They are also mentioned by Brerewood. Mosheim mentions a sect of Christians in the twelfth century, in Lombardy, called Pasaginians, charged with circumcising their followers, and keeping the Jewish Sabbath. Mr. Benedict considers the account of their practicing the bloody rite a slander charged on them on account of their keeping the Jewish Sabbath.

Binius says that in 1555 there were Christians in Rome who kept the Sabbath, and were therefore called Sabbatarii, and they are represented as differing in other respects from the Romanists. Many of the Armenian Christians are believed to observe the ancient Sabbath. Dr. Buchanan, in his *Researches*, when speaking of those of them who are settled in the East Indies, says,

Their doctrines are, as far as the author knows, the doctrines of the Bible. Besides this, they maintain the solemn observation of Christian worship throughout our empire on the seventh day.

The Waldenses Kept the Sabbath

Probably there has not existed a class of Christians since the times of the apostles, who could more justly claim to be apostolic than the Waldenses, formerly a numerous people living in the valleys of Piedmont; whither they retired, says Burnside, on the

promulgation of Constantine's laws for the observance of the first day, in the fourth century; and where they remained, according to Scaliger and Brerewood, in the time of Elizabeth of England, in the latter part of the sixteenth century. They adhered firmly to the apostolic faith, and suffered severe persecutions from the Catholics. Robinson says,

They were called *Sabbati* and *Sabbatati*, so named from the Hebrew word Sabbath, because they kept the Saturday for the Lord's Day.²⁰⁹

They were also called *Insabbatati*, because they rejected all the festivals, or Sabbaths, in the low Latin sense of the word. The account the Papists gave of their sentiments in 1250, was briefly this:

- That they declared themselves to be the apostolic successors, and to have apostolic authority;
- That they held the church of Rome to be the "whore of Babylon;"
- That none of the ordinances of the church which have been introduced since Christ's ascension ought to be observed;
- That baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot actually believe.
- They reject the sacrament of confirmation, but instead of that their teachers lay their hands upon their disciples.

Jones, in his *Church History*, says, that because they would not observe *saints' days*, they were falsely supposed to neglect the Sabbath also. Another of their enemies, an Inquisitor of Rome, charged them with despising all the feasts of Christ and His saints. Another, a Commissioner of Charles XII of France, reported to him,

...that he found among them none of the ceremonies, images, or signs of the Romish church, much less the crimes with which they were charged; on the contrary, they kept the Sabbath day,

²⁰⁹ *History of Baptism.*

observed the ordinance of baptism according to the primitive church, and instructed their children in the articles of the Christian faith and commandments of God.

Sabbath-Keepers in Every Age

It is believed that there have been Christians in every age who have kept holy the seventh day. During the first three centuries of the Christian Church, the Sabbath seems to have been almost universally kept. It was kept generally in the Eastern Church for six hundred years. And from that time onward to the present, frequent traces of Sabbath-keepers may be found, either in the history of individuals, or in the acts of Councils against those who kept it. These notices extend to the time of the Reformation; and are as frequent as are the references to the first day of the week under the title of Lord's day.

In Germany, according to Ross' *Picture of all Religions*, observers of the seventh-day as the Sabbath were common in the sixteenth century, their numbers being such as to lead to organization, and attract attention. A number of these formed a church and emigrated to America in the early settlement of the country.

There were Sabbath-keepers in Transylvania about the same time, among them was Francis David, first chaplain to the Court of Sigismund, the prince of that kingdom, and afterwards superintendent of all the Transylvanian churches.

In France, also, there were Christians of this class, among whom was M. de la Roque, who wrote in defense of the Sabbath, against Bossuet, the Catholic Bishop of Meaux. But it is difficult to determine to what extent this day was observed in those countries.

In England we find Sabbath-keepers very early. Dr. Chambers says,

They arose in England in the sixteenth century;

—from which we understand that they then became a distinct denomination in that kingdom. They increased considerably in the seventeenth century; and we find that towards the close of that century there were eleven flourishing churches in different parts of that country.

Among those who held this view were some men of distinction. Theophilus Brabourne was called before the Court of High Commission, in 1632, for having written and published books vindicating the claims of the seventh day. One Traske was about the same time examined in the Star Chamber, where a long discussion on the subject seems to have been held. Nearly thirty years after this, John James, preacher to a Sabbath-keeping congregation in the east of London, was executed in a barbarous manner, upon a variety of charges, among which was his keeping of the Sabbath. Twenty years later still, Francis Bampfield died in Newgate, a martyr to non-conformity—especially as one who could not conform in the matter of the Sabbath.

It is needless to mention more names, or to speak particularly of Edward, Joseph, Dr. Joseph, and Dr. Samuel Stennett, John Maulden, Robert Cornthwaite, and others, who have written and suffered in proof of their attachment to this truth.

But the Sabbath met with great opposition in England being assailed, both from the pulpit and the press, by those who were attached to the established church. Many men of learning and talent engaged in the discussion, on both sides of the question. It is evident that the opposers of reform felt the difficulty of defending themselves against the strength of talent and scripture brought to bear in favor of the seventh day.

The civil powers attempted to check the progress of all Dissenters by means of the famous *Conventicle Act*. By that law, passed in 1664, it was provided, that if any person above sixteen years of age, was present at any meeting of worship different from the Church of England, where there were five persons more than the household, for the first offense he should be imprisoned

three months, or pay five pounds; for the second, the penalty was doubled; and for the third he should be banished to America, or pay one hundred pounds sterling.

This act was renewed in 1669, and, in addition to the former penalties, made the person preaching liable to pay a fine of twenty pounds; and the same penalty was imposed upon any person suffering a meeting to be held in his house. Justices of the Peace were empowered to enter such houses, and seize such persons; and they were fined one hundred pounds if they neglected doing so.

These acts were exceedingly harassing to those who observed the Sabbath. Many of their distinguished ministers were taken from their flocks and continued in prison, some of whom sunk under their sufferings. These persecutions not only prevented those who kept the Sabbath from assembling, but deterred some who embraced their opinions from uniting with them, and discouraged others from investigating the subject.

At present the Sabbath is not as extensively observed in England as formerly. But the extent of Sabbath-keeping cannot be determined by the number and magnitude of the churches, either there or in other countries. For many persons live in the observance of the seventh day and remain members of churches which assemble on the first day; and a still greater number acknowledge its correctness, who conform to the more popular custom of keeping the first day.

At what time the Sabbath became the subject of attention in America, we cannot definitely say. The intolerance of the first settlers of New England was unfavorable to the Sabbath. The poor Christian who may have been banished to this country for its observance could find no refuge among the *Pilgrim Fathers*. The laws of Rhode Island were more tolerant than those of some other States, and observers of the Sabbath first made their appearance at Newport in 1671.

The cause of the Sabbath has gradually gained ground in this country from that period; but it has found much to oppose its progress, even in Rhode Island. It was in opposition to the general practice of Christians, on which account an odium was put upon it, and those who have kept the Sabbath have been reproached with Judaizing, and classed with Jews. Besides this, they have ever been subjected to great inconvenience in their occupations, especially in cities and towns.

The common English version of the Bible has been found in many instances a sufficient means of converting men to the truth. Churches observing the Sabbath have been formed in Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, and in most of the Western States, embracing, as is supposed, a population of forty to fifty thousand.

The foregoing extracts from the *History of the Sabbath*, give us a definite understanding of the manner in which the Sabbath was changed. The origin of that institution which has usurped the place of the Lord's Sabbath, we can also clearly see. As we have here been permitted to mark the process by which, step by step, the day of the Sun supplanted the Rest-day of the Lord, let us now retrace the path which we have followed down.

1. First-day observance in this country, was introduced by our ancestors from England.
2. The English people received the First-day Sabbath on the authority of a roll which Eustachius, Abbot of Flay, assured them fell from heaven. This was about 1201 AD. This roll was a forgery of the Romish church.
3. Thus, the Protestants of England obtained their first-day Sabbath from the church of Rome.
4. The church of Rome accomplished the change of the Sabbath by a succession of efforts, each of them claiming but a point, but all of them directed toward the one object. These steps began near the days of the apostles. But this does not stamp as apostolic that which the New Testament has

never sanctioned; for Paul plainly testifies that the mystery of iniquity, or Romish apostasy, had already begun to work.²¹⁰ This was the power that should speak great words against the Most High, and wear out his saints, and...

Daniel 7

²⁵ ...think to change times and laws.

5. The Romish church received the first-day festival from the heathen, who very generally observed it in honor of the Sun. This heathen festival the Romanists established in the place of the Lord's Sabbath. And indeed, all the leading peculiarities of Romanism, are derived from the Pagans.
6. The Pagans derived their Sunday-keeping from the Devil. When men apostatized from God, the Devil turned them to the worship of the Sun. And instead of the holy Sabbath which the Creator had instituted as the memorial of himself, Satan set apart the first day in honor of the Sun. As the Sabbath of the Lord can be traced back to Him by whom it was instituted, so this first-day festival, the rival of God's Sabbath, can be traced back to its author, the Devil.

The Sabbath is the great bulwark which God erected against atheism and idolatry. Had men always observed the Sabbath, they never could have forgotten the existence of God; for this institution would always have pointed them back to the time when He created the heaven and the earth. And they never could have been idolaters; for the Sabbath would always have pointed out Him, who, in six days created heaven and earth, and rested on the seventh.

Hence, Satan has ever attempted to destroy the Sabbath of the Lord. To do this, he early led our apostate race to keep the first day in honor of the Sun. The man of sin, who was to change times and laws, established this heathen festival in the place of the Lord's Sabbath. And thus, on the authority of the Roman Pontiff,

²¹⁰ 2 *Thessalonians* 2.

the heathen festival of Sunday has usurped the place of the Rest-day of the Lord.



*The
Sabbatic
Institution*

1860

1. The Creation

TIME, as distinguished from eternity, may be defined as that part of duration which is measured by the Bible. From the earliest date in the book of *Genesis* to the resurrection of the unjust at the end of the millennium, the period of 7000 years is measured off.

Before the commencement of this great week of time, duration without beginning fills the past; and at the expiration of this period, unending duration opens before the people of God. Eternity is that word which embraces duration without beginning and without end. And that Being whose existence comprehends eternity, is he who only has immortality, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.²¹¹

When it pleased this infinite Being, he gave existence to our earth. Out of nothing God created all things;

Hebrews 11

³ ...so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

This act of creation is that event which marks the commencement of the first week of time. He who could accomplish the whole work with one word chose rather to employ six days, and to accomplish the result by successive steps. Let us trace the footsteps of the Creator from the time when he laid the foundation of the earth until the close of the sixth day, when the heavens and the earth were finished, and God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good.²¹²

On the first day of the week God created the heaven and the earth. The earth thus called into existence was without form and void, and total darkness covered the Creator's work. Then,

²¹¹ *Isaiah* 57:15; *1 Timothy* 6:16; 1:17; *Psalms* 90:2.

²¹² *Hebrews* 11:3; *Genesis* 1.

Genesis 1

³ God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

⁴ ...and God divided the light from the darkness,

—and called the one day, and the other night.²¹³

On the second day of the week,

⁶ God said, Let there be a firmament [margin, Heb., expansion] in the midst of the waters: and let it divide the waters from the waters.

The dry land had not yet appeared; consequently the earth was covered with water. Thick vapors rested upon the face of the water; but the atmosphere being now called into existence by the word of the Creator, the fogs and vapors that had rested upon the bosom of the water are borne aloft by it. This atmosphere or expansion is called heaven.²¹⁴

On the third day of the week, God gathered the waters together and caused the dry land to appear. The gathering together of the waters God called seas; the dry land thus rescued from the waters he called earth.

¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind; and it was so.

¹² ...and God saw that it was good.²¹⁵

On the fourth day of the week,

¹⁴ God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

¹⁶ And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also.

Light had been created on the first day of the week; and now on the fourth day he causes the sun and moon to appear as light-bearers, and places the light under their rule. And they continue

²¹³ *Genesis 1:1-5; Hebrews 1.*

²¹⁴ *Genesis 1:5-8; Job 37:18.*

²¹⁵ *Genesis 1:9-13; Psalm 136:6; 2 Peter 3:5.*

unto this day according to his ordinances, for all are his servants.²¹⁶ Such was the work of the fourth day. And the great Architect, surveying what he had wrought, pronounced it good.²¹⁷

On the fifth day of the week,

Genesis 1

²¹ God created great whales, and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

On the sixth day of the week,

²⁵ God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

Thus the earth having been fitted for the purpose, was filled with every order of living creature, while the air and waters teemed with animal existence. To complete this noble work of creation, God next provides a ruler, the representative of himself, and places all in subjection under him.

²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

Genesis 2

⁷ And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

⁸ And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom He had formed.

⁹ And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

²¹⁶ *Psalm 119:91; Jeremiah 33:25.*

²¹⁷ *Genesis 1:14-19.*

Last of all God created Eve, “the mother of all living.”²¹⁸ The work of the Creator was now complete.

Genesis 2

¹ The heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

Genesis 1

³¹ And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good.

Adam and Eve were in Paradise; the tree of life bloomed on earth; sin had not entered our world, and death was not here, for there was no sin.

Job 38

⁷ The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

Thus ended the sixth day.²¹⁹

²¹⁸ *Genesis* 3:20.

²¹⁹ *Genesis* 1:24-31; 2:18-22.

2. The Institution of the Sabbath

THE work of the Creator was finished, but the first week of time had not yet expired. Each of the six days had been distinguished by the Creator's work upon it; but the seventh was rendered memorable in a very different manner.

Genesis 2

² And on the seventh²²⁰ day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.

In yet stronger language it is written:

Exodus 31

¹⁷ On the seventh day He rested, and was REFRESHED.

Thus the seventh day of the week became the rest-day of the Lord. How remarkable is this fact!

Isaiah 40

²⁸ The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fairs not neither is weary.

He needed no rest; yet it is written,

Exodus 31

¹⁷ On the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.

Why does not the record simply state the cessation of the Creator's work? Why did He at the close of that work employ a day in rest? The answer will be learned from the next verse. He was laying the foundation of a divine institution, the memorial of His own great work.

²²⁰ "On the sixth day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day" etc., is the reading of the Septuagint, the Syriac and the Samaritan; "and this should be considered the genuine reading," says Dr. A. Clarke. See his *Commentary on Genesis 2*.

Genesis 2

³ 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.

The fourth commandment states the same fact:

Exodus 20

¹¹ [He] rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

The blessing and sanctification of the seventh day was because that God had rested upon it. His resting upon it then, was to lay the foundation for blessing and sanctifying the day. His being refreshed with this rest implies that He delighted in the act which laid the foundation for the memorial of His great work.

The second act of the Creator in instituting this memorial was to place His blessing upon the day of His rest. Thenceforward it was the blessed rest-day of the Lord. A third act completes the sacred institution. The day already blessed of God, is now, last of all, sanctified or hallowed by Him. To sanctify is:

...to separate, set apart, or appoint to a holy, sacred or religious use.

To hallow is:

...to make holy; to consecrate; to set apart for a holy or religious use.²²¹

The time when these three acts were performed is worthy of especial notice. The first act was that of rest. This took place on the seventh day; for the day was employed in rest. The second and third acts took place when the seventh day was past.

Genesis 2

³ God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work.

²²¹ Webster's Unabridged Dictionary on the words *sanctify* and *hallow*.

Hence it was on the first day of the second week of time that God blessed the seventh day and set it apart to a holy use. The blessing and sanctification of the seventh day, therefore relate not to the first seventh day of time, but to the seventh day of the week for time to come, in memory of God's rest on that day from the work of creation.

The days of the week are measured off by the revolution of our earth on its axis; and hence our seventh day, as such, can come only to dwellers on this globe. To Adam and Eve, therefore, as inhabitants of this earth, and not to the inhabitants of some other world, were the days of the week given to use. Hence when God set apart one of these days to a holy use in memory of His own rest on that day of the week, the very essence of the act consisted in His telling Adam that this day should be used only for sacred purposes.

Adam was then in the garden of God, placed there by the Creator to dress it and to keep it. He was also commissioned of God to subdue the earth.²²² When therefore the rest-day of the Lord should return from week to week all this secular employment, however proper in itself, must be laid aside, and the day observed in memory of the Creator's rest.

The Hebrew verb, *kadash*, here rendered "sanctified," and in the fourth commandment rendered "hallowed," is defined by Gesenius:

...to pronounce holy, to sanctify; to institute any holy thing, to appoint.²²³

It is repeatedly used in the Old Testament for a public appointment or proclamation. Thus when the cities of refuge were set apart in Israel, it is written:

²²² *Genesis* 2:15; 1:28.

²²³ *Hebrew Lexicon*, p.914, Ed. 1854.

Joshua 20

⁷ They appointed [margin, Heb., sanctified] Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and Shechem in mount Ephraim, etc.

This sanctification or appointment of the cities of refuge was by a public announcement to Israel that these cities were set apart for that purpose. This verb is also used for the appointment of a public fast and for the gathering of a solemn assembly. Thus it is written:

Joshua 20

⁷ Sanctify [*i.e.*, appoint] a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God.

Joel 2 [also Joel 1:14]

¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify [*i.e.*, appoint] a fast, call a solemn assembly.

2 Kings 10

²⁰ And Jehu said, Proclaim [margin, Heb., sanctify] a solemn assembly for Baal.

This appointment for Baal was so public that all the worshipers of Baal in all Israel were gathered together. These fasts and solemn assemblies were sanctified or set apart by a public appointment or proclamation of the fact. When therefore God set apart the seventh day to a holy use it was necessary that He should state that fact to those who had the days of the week to use. Without such announcement the day could not be set apart from the others.

But the most striking illustration of the meaning of this word may be found in the record of the sanctification of mount Sinai. When God was about to speak the ten commandments in the hearing of all Israel, He sent Moses down from the top of mount Sinai to restrain the people from touching the mount.

Exodus 19

²³ And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for You charged us, saying, Set bounds about the mount and sanctify it.

Turning back to the verse where God gave this charge to Moses we read:

¹² And you shall set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves that you go not up into the mount or touch the border of it.

Hence to sanctify the mount was to command the people not to touch even the border of it, for God was about to descend in majesty upon it. In other words, to sanctify or set apart to a holy use mount Sinai was to tell the people that God would have them treat the mountain as sacred to himself. And thus also to sanctify the rest day of the Lord was to tell Adam that he should treat the day as holy to the Lord.

The declaration,

Genesis 2

³ God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,

—is not indeed a commandment for the observance of that day; but it is a record that such a precept was given to Adam. For how could the Creator “set apart to a holy use” the day of His rest, when those who were to use the day knew nothing of His will in the case? Let those answer who are able.

This view of the record in *Genesis* we shall find to be sustained by all the testimony in the Bible relative to the rest day of the Lord. The facts which we have examined are the basis of the fourth commandment. Thus spoke the great Lawgiver from the summit of the flaming mount:

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

The term Sabbath is transferred from the Hebrew language, and signifies rest.²²⁴ The command “remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy” is therefore exactly equivalent to saying “remember the rest day to keep it holy.” The explanation which follows sustains this statement:

Exodus 20

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath [or rest day] of the Lord your God.

The origin of this rest day is given in these words:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

That which is enjoined in the fourth commandment is to keep holy the rest day of the Lord. And this is defined to be the day on which He rested from the work of creation. Moreover the fourth commandment calls the seventh day the Sabbath day at the time when God blessed and hallowed that day, therefore the Sabbath is an institution dating from the foundation of the world. The fourth commandment points back to the creation for the origin of its obligation; and when we go back to that point, we find the substance of the fourth commandment given to Adam:

Genesis 2

³ God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it,

—i.e., set it apart to a holy use. And in the commandment itself the same fact is stated:

Exodus 20

¹¹ The Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it,

²²⁴ *Buck's Theological Dictionary*, article, “Sabbath.”

—i.e., appointed it to a holy use. The one statement affirms that “God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it,” the other that “the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” Because the word Sabbath does not occur in the first statement it has been contended that the Sabbath did not originate at creation. From the second statement it has been contended that God did not bless the seventh day at all, but simply the Sabbath institution. But both statements embody all the truth. God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; and this day thus blessed and hallowed was His holy Sabbath or rest day. Thus the fourth commandment establishes the origin of the Sabbath at creation.

The second mention of the Sabbath in the Bible furnishes a decisive confirmation of the testimonies already adduced. On the sixth day of the week, Moses in the wilderness of Sin said to Israel,

Exodus 16

²³ Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord.

What had been done to the seventh day since God blessed and sanctified it as his rest day in Paradise? Nothing. What did Moses do to the seventh day to make it the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord? Nothing. Moses on the sixth day simply states the fact that the morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord. The seventh day had been such ever since God blessed and hallowed the day of His rest.

The testimony of our divine Lord relative to the origin and design of the Sabbath is of peculiar importance. He is competent to testify, for He was with the Father in the beginning of the creation.²²⁵

Mark 2

²⁷ The Sabbath was made for man, [said He,] not man for the Sabbath.

The following grammatical rule is worthy of notice:

²²⁵ *John* 1:1-3; *Genesis* 1:1, 26; *Colossians* 1:13-16.

A noun without an adjective is invariably taken in its broadest extension, as: Man is accountable.²²⁶

The following texts will illustrate this rule, and also this statement of our Lord's.

Job 14

¹² Man lies down, and rises not: till the heavens be no more they shall not awake.

1 Corinthians 10

¹³ There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.

Hebrews 9

²⁷ It is appointed unto men once to die.

In these texts “man” is used without restriction, and therefore all mankind are necessarily intended. The Sabbath was therefore made for the whole human family, and consequently originated with mankind. But the Saviour's language is even yet more emphatic in the original:

“The Sabbath was made for THE man, not THE man for the Sabbath.”

This language fixes the mind on the man Adam, who was made of the dust of the ground just before the Sabbath was made for him, of the seventh day. This is a striking confirmation of the fact already pointed out that the Sabbath was given to Adam the head of the human family.

Exodus 20

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God;

—yet He made the Sabbath for man. God made the Sabbath His by solemn appropriation, that He might convey it back to us under the guarantee of a divine charter, that none might rob us of it with impunity.

²²⁶ Barrett's *Principles of English Grammar*.

But is it not possible that God's act of blessing and sanctifying the seventh day did not occur at the close of the creation week? May it not be mentioned then because God designed that the day of His rest should be afterward observed? Or rather, as Moses wrote the book of *Genesis* long after the creation, might he not insert this account of the sanctification of the seventh day with the record of the first week, though the day itself was sanctified in his own time?

It is very certain that such an interpretation of the record cannot be admitted unless the facts in the case demand it. For it is, to say the least, a forced explanation of the language. The record in *Genesis*, unless this be an exception, is a plain narrative of events. Thus what God did on each day is recorded in its order down to the seventh. It is certainly doing violence to the narrative to affirm that the record respecting the seventh day is of a different character from that respecting the other six. He rested the seventh day; He sanctified the seventh day because He had rested upon it. The reason why He should sanctify the seventh day existed when His rest was closed.

To say, therefore, that God did not sanctify the day at that time, but did it in the days of Moses, is not only to distort the narrative, but to affirm that He neglected to do that for which the reason existed at creation, until 2500 years after.

But we ask that the facts be brought forward which prove that the Sabbath was sanctified in the wilderness of Sin and not at creation. And what are the facts that show this? We answer, such facts do not exist. It is a hypothesis invented to sustain the theory that the Sabbath originated at the fall of the manna and not in Paradise.

Did God sanctify the Sabbath in the wilderness of Sin? There is no record of such a fact. On the contrary, it is mentioned at that time as something already set apart of God. On the sixth day Moses said,

Exodus 16

²³ Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord.

Surely this is not the institution of the Sabbath, but the familiar mention of an existing fact. We pass on to mount Sinai. Did God sanctify the Sabbath when He spoke the ten commandments? No one claims that He did. It is admitted by all that Moses spoke of it familiarly the previous month.²²⁷ Does the Lord at Sinai speak of the sanctification of the Sabbath? He does; but in the very language of *Genesis* He goes back for the sanctification of the Sabbath, not to the wilderness of Sin, but to the creation of the world.²²⁸

We ask those who hold this theory, this question:

“If the Sabbath was not sanctified at creation, but was sanctified in the wilderness of Sin, why does the narrative in each instance²²⁹ record the sanctification of the Sabbath at creation, and omit all mention of such a fact in the wilderness of Sin?”

Nay,

“Why does the record of events in the wilderness of Sin show that the holy Sabbath was at that time already in existence?”

In a word,

“How can a theory subversive of all the facts in the record, be maintained as the truth of God?”

We have seen the Sabbath ordained of God at the close of the creation week. The object of its Author is worthy of especial attention. Why did the Creator set up this memorial in Paradise? Why did He set apart from the other days of the week that day which He had employed in rest?

²²⁷ *Exodus* 16.

²²⁸ *Exodus* 20:8-11.

²²⁹ Compare *Genesis* 2:1-3; *Exodus* 20:8-11.

Genesis 2

³ Because that in it, [says the record,] he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

A rest necessarily implies a work performed. And hence the Sabbath was ordained of God as a memorial of the work of creation. And therefore that precept of the moral law which relates to this memorial, unlike every other precept of that law begins with the word “remember.” The importance of this memorial will be appreciated when we learn from the Scriptures that it is the work of creation which is claimed by its Author as the great evidence of His eternal power and Godhead, and as that great fact which distinguishes Him from all false gods. Thus it is written:

Hebrews 3

⁴ He that built all things is God.

Jeremiah 10

¹¹ The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.

¹⁰ But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King.

¹² He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion.

Romans 1

²⁰ For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.

Psalms 33

⁹ For He spoke and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Thus,

Hebrews 11

³ The worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Such is the estimate which the Scriptures place upon the work of creation as evincing the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator. The Sabbath stands as the memorial of this great work. Its observance is an act of grateful acknowledgement on the part of His intelligent creatures that He is their Creator, and that they owe all to Him; and that for His pleasure they are and were created. How appropriate this observance for Adam! And when man had fallen, how important for his well being that he should...

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

He would thus have been preserved from atheism and from idolatry; for he could never forget that there was a God from whom all things derived their being; nor could he worship as God any other being than the Creator.

The seventh day as hallowed by God in Eden was not Jewish, but divine; it was not the memorial of the flight of Israel from Egypt, but of the Creator's rest. Nor is it true that the most distinguished Jewish writers deny the primeval origin of the Sabbath, or claim it as a Jewish memorial. We cite the historian Josephus and his learned contemporary, Philo Judaeus. Josephus, whose *Antiquities of the Jews* run parallel with the Bible from the beginning, when treating of the wilderness of Sin makes no allusion whatever to the Sabbath, a clear proof that he had no idea that it originated in that wilderness. But when giving the account of creation he bears the following testimony:

Moses says that in just six days the world and all that is therein was made. And that the seventh day was a rest and a release from the labor of such operations; WHENCE it is that we celebrate a rest from our labor on that day, and call it the Sabbath; which word denotes rest in the Hebrew tongue.²³⁰

And Philo bears an emphatic testimony relative to the character of the Sabbath as a memorial. Thus he says:

²³⁰ *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book I, chap.1, clause 1.

But after the whole world had been completed according to the perfect nature of the number six, the Father hallowed the day following, the seventh, praising it and calling it holy. For that day is the festival, not of one city or one country, but of all the earth; a day which alone it is right to call the day of festival for all people, and the birth day of the world.²³¹

Nor was the rest-day of the Lord a shadow of man's rest after his recovery from the fall. God will ever be worshiped in an understanding manner by His intelligent creatures. When therefore He set apart His rest-day to a holy use, if it was not as a memorial of His work, but as a shadow of man's redemption from the fall, man in his unfallen state could never observe the Sabbath as a delight,²³² but ever with deep distress as reminding him that he was soon to apostatize from God. Nor was the holy of the Lord and honorable, one of the...

Hebrews 9

¹⁰ ...carnal ordinances imposed until the times of reformation.

For there could be no reformation with unfallen beings.

But man did not continue in his uprightness; Paradise was lost, and Adam was excluded from the tree of life. The curse of God fell upon the earth, and death entered by sin, and passed upon all men.²³³ After this sad apostasy, no farther mention of the Sabbath occurs until Moses on the sixth day said,

Exodus 16

²³ Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord.

It is objected that there is no precept in the book of *Genesis* for the observance of the Sabbath, and consequently no obligation on the part of the patriarchs to observe it. There is a defect in this argument not noticed by those who use it. The book of *Genesis* was not a rule given to the patriarchs to walk by. On the contrary, it was written by Moses 2500 years after creation, and long after the

²³¹ *Works*, Vol. I, sec. 30.

²³² *Isaiah* 58:13-14.

²³³ *Genesis* 3; *Romans* 5:12.

patriarchs were dead. Consequently the fact that certain precepts are not found in *Genesis* is no evidence that they were not obligatory upon the patriarchs. Thus the book does not command men to love God with all their hearts, and their neighbors as themselves; nor does it prohibit idolatry, blasphemy, disobedience to parents, adultery, theft, false witness or covetousness. Who will affirm from this that the patriarchs were under no restraint in these things?

As a mere record of events, written long after their occurrence, it was not necessary that the book should contain a moral code. But had the book been given to the patriarchs as a rule of life, it must of necessity have contained such a code. It is a fact worthy of especial notice that as soon as Moses reaches his own time in the book of *Exodus*, the whole moral law is given. The record and the people were then contemporary, and ever afterward the written law is in the hands of God's people, as a rule of life, and a complete code of moral precepts.

The argument under consideration is unsound.

1. Because based on the supposition that the book of *Genesis* was the rule of life for the patriarchs.
2. Because if carried out, it would release the patriarchs from every precept of the moral law except the sixth.²³⁴
3. Nor is this all. The act of God in setting apart His rest-day to a holy use, as we have seen, necessarily involves the fact that He gave a precept concerning it to Adam, in whose time it was thus set apart. And hence, though the book of *Genesis* contains no precept concerning the Sabbath, it does contain direct evidence that such precept was given to the head and representative of the human family.

After giving the institution of the Sabbath, the book of *Genesis*, in its brief record of 2370 years, does not again mention it. This has been urged as ample proof that those holy men, who, during this period, were perfect, and walked with God in the observance

²³⁴ *Genesis* 9:5, 7.

of His commandments, statutes and laws,²³⁵ all lived in open profanation of that day which God had blessed and set apart to a holy use. But the book of *Genesis* also omits any distinct reference to the doctrine of future punishment, the resurrection of the body, the revelation of the Lord in flaming fire, and the judgment of the great day. Does this silence prove that the patriarchs did not believe these great doctrines? Does it make them any the less sacred?

But the Sabbath is not mentioned from Moses to David, a period of five hundred years during which it was enforced by the penalty of death. Does this prove that it was not observed during this period? The jubilee occupied a very prominent place in the typical system, yet in the whole Bible a single instance of its observance is not recorded. What is still more remarkable, there is not on record a single instance of the observance of the great day of atonement, notwithstanding the work in the holiest on that day was the most important service connected with the worldly sanctuary.

And yet the observance of the other and less important festivals of the seventh month, which are so intimately connected with the day of atonement, the one preceding it by ten days, the other following it in five, is repeatedly and particularly recorded.²³⁶ It would be sophistry to say that this silence respecting the day of atonement, when there were so many instances for it to be mentioned, proves that that day was never observed; and yet it is actually a better argument than the similar one urged against the Sabbath from the book of *Genesis*.

The reckoning of time by weeks is derived from nothing in nature, and can only be traced to the six days of creation, and to the rest of the Sabbath.

²³⁵ *Genesis* 5:24; 6:9; 26:5.

²³⁶ *Ezra* 3:1-6; *Nehemiah* 8:2, 9-12, 14-18; *1 Kings* 8:2, 65; *2 Chronicles* 5:3, 7:8, 9; *John* 7:2-14, 37.

The reckoning of time by weeks was established in *Genesis* 1:2. This period of time is marked only by the recurrence of the sanctified rest-day of the Creator. That the patriarchs reckoned time by weeks and by sevens of days, is evident from several texts.²³⁷ That the reckoning of the week was rightly kept appears evident from the fact that in *Exodus* 16, Moses on the sixth day declares that:

Exodus 16

²³ Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord.

The brevity of the record in *Genesis* causes us to overlook many facts of the deepest interest. Adam lived 930 years. How deep and absorbing the interest that must have existed in the human family to see the first man! To converse with one who had himself talked with God! To hear from his lips a description of that Paradise in which he had lived! To learn from one created on the sixth day the wondrous events of the creation week! To hear from his lips the very words of the Creator when He set apart His rest-day to a holy use! And to learn, alas! the sad story of the loss of Paradise and the tree of life!

It was therefore not difficult for the facts respecting the six days of creation and the sanctification of the rest-day to be diffused among mankind in the patriarchal age. Nay, it was impossible that it should be otherwise, especially among the godly. From Adam to Abraham a succession of men probably inspired of God preserved the knowledge of God upon earth. Thus Adam lived till Lamech, the father of Noah, was 56 years of age; Lamech lived till Shem, the son of Noah, was 93; Shem lived till Abraham was 150 years of age. Thus are we brought down to Abraham, the father of the faithful. Of him it is recorded that he obeyed God's voice and kept His charge, His commandments, His statutes and His laws.²³⁸

And of him the Most High bears the following testimony:

²³⁷ *Job* 2:13; *Genesis* 29:27-28; 8:10, 12; 7:4, 10; 50:10.

²³⁸ *Genesis* 26:5.

Genesis 18

¹⁹ I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.²³⁹

The knowledge of God was preserved in the family of Abraham; and we shall next find the Sabbath familiarly mentioned among his posterity, as an existing institution.



²³⁹ *Genesis 18:19.*

The Two Laws

1860

The Two Laws

Moral Obligation of Creature to Creator

1 Corinthians 8

⁶ There is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things.

FROM Him all beings derive their existence. He who creates and upholds has certainly the right to govern and control. Hence it is that He is represented in the Scriptures as the one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy.²⁴⁰

Existence being derived from the benevolence of the Creator, all intelligent creatures are amenable to His just government. Of all the creatures made by God to inhabit the earth, man alone is capable of learning the distinction of right and wrong, and he alone is placed under the control of moral law.

Deriving his existence from a Being of infinite purity, he was himself once innocent, pure and upright. He was the creature and the loyal subject of God, and God was the author of his existence and his rightful Sovereign. But God did not sustain toward man the character of a Saviour and Redeemer, for man needed not pardon.

As a creature owing all to God, the author of his existence, it is self-evident that he was under the highest obligation to love Him with all his heart. The existence of other human beings originates a second great obligation, *viz.*, to love our neighbor as ourselves. This precept is also one of self-evident obligation; for others are equally the creatures of God with ourselves, and have the same rights that we also have. These two precepts are the sum of all moral law. And they grow out of the fact that we owe all to God, and that others are the creatures of God as well as ourselves.

In rendering obedience to the first of these two precepts, man could have no other gods before the Lord; nor could he worship idols; neither could he speak the name of God in an irreverent

²⁴⁰ *James* 4:12.

manner; nor could he neglect the hallowed rest-day of the Lord, which was set apart at creation in memory of the Creator's rest.

Equally evident is it that our duty toward our fellow men comprehends our duty to our parents, and the strictest regard to the life, chastity, property, character and interests of others.

The moral law thus divided into two parts, and drawn out and expressed in ten precepts, is of necessity unchangeable in its character. Its existence grows out of immutable relations which man sustains toward God, and toward his fellow man. It is God's great standard of right, and after man's rebellion, the great test by which sin is shown.

Origin of the Moral Law

Where shall we look for the record of such a moral code as we have noticed? In the earliest possible place in the Bible, certainly. And yet the book of *Genesis* contains no moral code whatever. How can this mystery be explained? A few facts will remove the difficulty. The book of *Genesis* was not written until about 2500 years after the creation. As it was written long after the patriarchs were dead, it could not have been a rule of life for them. It is a brief record of events that occurred during that period, and contains several allusions to an existing moral code.

But the book of *Exodus* which brings the narrative down to the author's own time, introduces this code under circumstances of the greatest solemnity. In this book is found the law of God as given by himself in person, and written with His own finger on stone. Indeed, the evidence indicates that no part of the Bible was written until after the ten commandments had been spoken and written by God, and consequently that code is the earliest writing in existence.

Such was the origin of the moral law, and such the character of its precepts. Its proclamation by God himself, prior to His causing any part of the Bible to be written, sufficiently attests the estimate which He placed upon it. From its very nature it exists as early as

the principles of morality; indeed it is nothing but those principles expressed or written out. These principles do not owe their existence to the fall of man, but to relations which existed prior to the fall.

A Law of Shadows

But there is a system of laws that does owe its origin to sin; a system that could have had no existence had not man become a transgressor. The violation of moral law was that which gave existence to the law of rites and ceremonies, the...

Hebrews 10

¹ ...shadow of good things to come.

There could be no sacrifices for sin until man became a sinner. In Eden there could be no types and shadows pointing forward to future redemption through the death of Christ; for man in his uprightness needed no such redemption. Nor did God place upon man before his fall the obligation of carnal ordinances which look forward to the time of reformation; for man was innocent and free from guile.

That it was the violation of moral law that caused the fall of man may be seen at a glance. The motive set before Eve by Satan was that they should become as gods if they ate of that tree;²⁴¹ and as Adam was not deceived,²⁴² it is evident that he chose to follow his wife rather than to obey the Lord; an open violation of the first commandment in each case.

When man had thus become a sinner, and God had promised the means of his redemption, a second relation toward God was brought into existence. Man was a sinner needing forgiveness, and God was a Saviour offering pardon. It is plain therefore that the typical law pointing forward to redemption through Christ owes its origin to man's rebellion, and to God's infinite benevolence. If man had not sinned he would have needed no types of

²⁴¹ *Genesis* 3:5.

²⁴² *1 Timothy* 2:13.

future redemption, and if God had not determined to give His Son to die He would have instituted no typical system pointing forward to that great event.

The existence of such a code, therefore, is in consequence of sin, its precepts are of a ceremonial nature, and its duration is necessarily limited by the great offering that could take away sin. From the fall of Adam till the time of Moses the typical system was gradually developed and matured; and from Moses' time until the death of our Lord, it existed as a "shadow of good things to come."

Relationship of Moral and Ceremonial Laws

At mount Sinai, as we have seen, God proclaimed the moral law, speaking it with His own voice, and writing it with His own finger. By His direction the two tables on which the law was written were placed in the ark of the covenant, which was made on purpose to receive it.²⁴³ And this ark containing the law of God was placed in the second apartment of the earthly sanctuary the most holy place.²⁴⁴ The top of the ark was called the mercy-seat, because that man who had broken the law contained in the ark beneath the mercy-seat could find pardon by the sprinkling of the blood of atonement upon this place. The whole system of ceremonial law was ordained to enable man to approach again to this broken law, and to typify the restitution of the pardoned to their inheritance, and the destruction of the impenitent.

The law within the ark was that which demanded an atonement; the ceremonial law which ordained the Levitical priesthood and the sacrifices for sin, was that which taught men how the atonement could be made. The broken law was beneath the mercy seat; the blood of sin offering was sprinkled upon its top, and pardon was extended to the penitent sinner.

There was actual sin, and hence a real law which man had broken; but there was not a real atonement, and hence the need of the great antitype to the Levitical sacrifices. The real atonement,

²⁴³ *Exodus 25:10-22; Deuteronomy 10:1-5.*

²⁴⁴ *Exodus 40; Hebrews 9.*

when it is made, must relate to that law respecting which an atonement had been shadowed forth. In other words the shadowy atonement related to that law which was shut up in the ark, indicating that a real atonement was demanded by that law. It is necessary that the law which demands atonement in order that its transgressor may be spared, should itself be perfect, else the fault would in part at least rest with the lawgiver, and not wholly with the sinner. Hence, the atonement when made does not take away the broken law, for that is perfect, but is expressly designed to take away the guilt of the transgressor.

Antitype of Ceremonial System

In the New Testament we find the great antitype of all the offerings and sacrifices, the real atonement as contrasted with the Levitical one.

- The death of our Lord Jesus Christ as the great sacrifice for sin, was the antitype of all the Levitical sacrifices.
- The priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the heavenly sanctuary is the great antitype of the Levitical priesthood.²⁴⁵
- The heavenly sanctuary itself is the great original after which the earthly one was patterned.²⁴⁶
- And the ark of God's testament in the temple in heaven²⁴⁷ contains the great original of his law.

And thus we see under the new dispensation a real atonement instead of a shadowy one; a High Priest who needs not to offer for himself; a sacrifice which can avail before God; and that law which man had broken, magnified and made honorable at the same time that God pardons the penitent sinner.

Differences Between the Two Laws

We shall find the New Testament to abound with references to the essential difference between these two codes, and that the dis-

²⁴⁵ *Hebrews 8.*

²⁴⁶ *Hebrews 9:23; Exodus 25:6, 9.*

²⁴⁷ *Revelation 11:19.*

tion in the New Testament is made as clear and obvious as it is made by the facts already noticed in the Old Testament.

Thus the one code is termed...

Hebrews 7

¹⁶ ...the law of a carnal commandment,

–and of the other it is affirmed,

Romans 7

¹⁴ We know that the law is spiritual.

The one code is termed:

Colossians 2

¹⁴ ...the handwriting of ordinances,...which was contrary to us,

–and which was nailed to the cross and taken out of the way; the other code is “the royal law,” which James affirms that it is a sin to transgress.²⁴⁸

The first is a code of which...

Hebrews 7

¹² ...there was made of necessity a change;

–the second is that law of which Christ says,

Matthew 5

¹⁸ Till heaven and earth pass one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.

The one law was a...

Hebrews 10

¹ ...shadow of good things to come,

–and was only imposed...

Hebrews 9

¹⁰ ...until the time of reformation;

–but the other was a moral code of which it is said by John:

²⁴⁸ *James 2:8-12.*

1 John 3

⁴ Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law.

The one is a yoke not able to be borne;²⁴⁹ the other is that “law of liberty” by which we shall be judged.²⁵⁰ The one is that law which Christ abolished in his flesh;²⁵¹ the other is that law which He did not come to destroy.²⁵² The one is that law which He took out of the way at his death;²⁵³ the other is that law which He came to magnify and make honorable.²⁵⁴ The one was a law which was disannulled,

Hebrews 7

¹⁸ ...for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof;

—the other is a law respecting which He inquires,

Romans 3

³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea we establish the Law.

The one is that law which was the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles;²⁵⁵ the other is that law the work of which even the Gentiles are said to have written in their hearts,²⁵⁶ and to which all mankind are amenable.²⁵⁷

The one is the law of commandments contained in ordinances;²⁵⁸ the other law is the commandments of God which it is the whole duty of man to keep,²⁵⁹ which are brought to view by

²⁴⁹ *Acts* 15:10.

²⁵⁰ *James* 2:8-12.

²⁵¹ *Ephesians* 2:15.

²⁵² *Matthew* 5:17.

²⁵³ *Colossians* 2:14.

²⁵⁴ *Isaiah* 42:21.

²⁵⁵ *Ephesians* 2:14.

²⁵⁶ *Romans* 2:12-15.

²⁵⁷ *Romans* 3:19.

²⁵⁸ *Ephesians* 2:15.

²⁵⁹ *Ecclesiastes* 12:13.

the third angel,²⁶⁰ which the remnant of the seed of the woman were keeping when the dragon made war upon them,²⁶¹ and which will ensure to those who observe them, access to the tree of life.²⁶²

Surely these two codes should not be confounded. The one was magnified, made honorable, established, and is holy, just, spiritual, good, royal; the other was carnal, shadowy, burdensome; and was abolished, broken down, taken out of the way, nailed to the cross, changed, and disannulled on account of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

Those who rightly divide the word of truth will never confound these essentially different codes, nor will they apply to God's royal law the language employed respecting the hand writing of ordinances.

Ten Commandments a Perfect Code

That the ten commandments are a perfect code of themselves appears from several facts.

1. God spoke them with his own voice, and it is said "He added no more,"²⁶³ as evincing that He had given a complete code.
2. He wrote them alone on the two tables with his own finger, another incidental proof that this was a complete moral code.
3. He caused these alone to be placed under the mercy seat, an evident proof that this was the code that made an atonement necessary.
4. He expressly calls what He thus wrote on the tables of stone, "a law, and commandments."²⁶⁴

²⁶⁰ *Revelation 14:12.*

²⁶¹ *Revelation 12:17.*

²⁶² *Revelation 22:14.*

²⁶³ *Deuteronomy 5:22.*

²⁶⁴ *Exodus 24:12.*

The precepts of this law are variously interspersed through the books of Moses, and mingled with the precepts of the ceremonial law. And the sum of the first table is given in *Deuteronomy* 6:5; and that of the second table in *Leviticus* 19:18; but there is only one place in which the moral law is drawn out in particulars and given by itself with no ceremonial law mixed with it, and that is in the ten commandments.

The Royal Law

An examination of the royal law in *James* 2, and of the hand-writing of ordinances in *Colossians* 2, will further illustrate this subject; the one is in force in every precept while the other is abolished.

James 2

⁸ If you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, You shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well:

⁹ But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

¹⁰ For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point he is guilty of all.

¹¹ For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you are become a transgressor of the law.

¹² So speak and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

1. The law here brought to view is an unabolished law, for it convinces men of sin who transgress it.
2. It is an Old Testament law; it is taken from the Scriptures.
3. The second division of the law is quoted because he was reproving sin committed toward our fellow men; and hence he takes the second of the two great commandments, the sum of the second table,²⁶⁵ and cites his illustration from the second table of stone.

²⁶⁵ *Matthew* 22:36, 40; *Romans* 13:9.

4. His language shows that the ten commandments are the precepts of the royal law, for he cites them in illustrating the statement that he who violates one precept becomes guilty of all. This is a most solemn warning against the violation of any one of the ten commandments.
5. He testifies that whoever violates one of the precepts of this code becomes guilty of breaking the whole code.
6. And last of all he testifies that this law of liberty shall be the rule in the judgment. The unabolished law of *James* is therefore that code which God gave in person and wrote with his own finger.

Colossians 2

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁶ Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

¹⁷ Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

If this hand-writing of ordinances is the same as the royal law of James, then Paul and James directly contradict each other. But they wrote by inspiration and each wrote the truth of God. We have seen that James' unabolished law refers directly to the ten commandments. Hence, it is certain that the law which Paul shows to be abolished does not refer to that which was written with the finger of God.

Ceremonial Sabbaths vs. Sabbath of the Lord

It is to be noticed that the code which is done away was a shadow extending only to the death of Christ. But we have already seen that the law shut up in the ark was not a shadow, but the very code which made it necessary that the Saviour should die. Not one of the things abolished in this chapter can be claimed as referring to the ten commandments except the term "sabbaths," for the term "holy day" is literally "feast day" [Greek] and there were

three feasts appointed by God in each year.²⁶⁶ The term “sabbath” is plural in the original. To refer this to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to make Paul contradict James. What are the facts in the case?

1. The ceremonial law did ordain at least four annual sabbaths, viz., the 1st, 10th, 15th and 23rd days of the 7th month. These were besides the Sabbath of the Lord, and were associated with the new moons and feast-days.²⁶⁷ These exactly answer Paul’s language. Hence it is not necessary to make Paul contradict James.
2. But the Sabbath of the Lord was “set apart to a holy use” (this being the literal meaning of sanctify) in Eden. It was “made for man” before he had fallen. Hence it is not one of the things against him and contrary to him, taken out of the way at Christ’s death.
3. It was not a shadow pointing forward to the death of Christ; for it was ordained before the fall. On the contrary it stands as a memorial pointing backward to creation, and not as a shadow pointing forward to redemption.

It is plain therefore that the abrogation of the hand-writing of ordinances leaves in full force every precept of the royal law. And also that the law of shadows pointing forward to the death of Christ, must expire when that event should occur. But the moral law was that which caused the Saviour to lay down His life for us. And its sacredness may be judged of by the fact that God gave His only Son to take its curse upon himself, and to die for our transgressions.

Reader, are you in rebellion against the law of God? If so, I beseech you to lay down your arms and seek pardon in the blood of Jesus before the curse of the law falls upon you.

²⁶⁶ *Exodus* 23:14.

²⁶⁷ *Leviticus* 23:23-39.

The Definite Seventh Day

No Date

The Definite Seventh Day

Introduction

“Can a definite day be observed by all the inhabitants of the earth?”

THIS, of course, depends upon the proper answer to another question; viz.,

“Is there such a thing as a definite day of the week, or month, or year, to the whole human family?”

If there is, all can observe it; if there is not, then chronology itself is thrown into confusion by the indefiniteness of dates which necessarily ensues. On what ground, then, is it asserted that the reckoning of a definite day by the whole family of man is an impossibility?

Statement of the Difficulty

Our world is a vast globe which makes a complete revolution upon its axis once every twenty-four hours. In consequence of this, it is night to a portion of its inhabitants while it is day to the other portion. The day is therefore twelve hours earlier on one side of the globe than it is upon the other. And unless we can fix some line, or point, or place, from which to begin the reckoning of the day, we are thrown into confusion as to the definite day.

Moreover, those who circumnavigate the globe in one direction gain a day by the operation; while those who sail around it in the opposite direction lose a day. We cannot, indeed, *actually* gain a day, nor is it possible for us really to lose one. It would therefore be more correct for us to speak of adding a day to our reckoning, or of dropping a day from it, than to speak of a day as actually lost or gained. We drop a day in circumnavigating the globe from east to west. This is done by going with the sun, and thus prolonging the time that it remains above the horizon. By this means we make each of our days a fraction more than twenty-four hours

long. And in the complete circuit of our globe, we thus use up one entire period of twenty-four hours.

And we add a day to our reckoning by going round the world from west to east. For as we thus travel in a direction opposite to the sun, we make the period of sunlight each day a fraction less to ourselves than it would have been had we remained stationary. And so also of the night, which we shorten in the same manner. As we thus take a fraction from each period between the successive sunsets, we do, in the complete circuit of the globe, thus save one day as the sum total of these fractions, though we have had no more real time than those who remained at home, whose reckoning is one day less than ours.

Or to state it in another form: If we travel in the same direction with the motion of the earth, we gain one revolution of the sun by going ourselves one time more around the earth's axis than do those who, during the same time, remain in their own land. And, again, if we travel in the direction opposite to the motion of the earth, *i.e.*, if we go as the sun appears to go, from east to west, we actually make one revolution around the earth's axis less than do those who remain at home.

For as we travel against the motion of the earth, our circuit of the globe offsets one of the revolutions which the earth has made on its axis during this time. As a consequence, those who go round the world eastward are, when they arrive at their starting point, one day in advance of the reckoning of those who live in the country from which they started. And those who go around it in a westerly direction come out one day behind the reckoning of their own country.

The number of those who actually accomplish the circuit of the globe is, comparatively speaking, very small. But these are not the only ones whose case presents a problem for solution. The people of Eastern Asia are one day in advance of the people of California. Also, the people of Alaska, recently transferred from

the government of Russia to that of the United States, have a reckoning of time which is one day in advance of ours.

And such was the case with the inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island in the South Pacific, lying in the longitude of the west side of British America. These people brought their reckoning eastward from the coast of Asia, and thus, when visited by sailors who came westward from England, their time was one day in advance of the reckoning of those sailors.

And, finally, the island of Australia, which lies south of the continent of Asia, gives occasion for a consideration of this question of the proper reckoning of the week. For if it conform in its reckoning of the week to that of the people of Eastern Asia, who are directly to the north of it, its time will be one day in advance of those who go to it across the Pacific Ocean from the west coast of America.

What Many Persons Conclude from This

These considerations are supposed to prove that the observance of the definite seventh day is impossible, and that the fourth commandment requires, not the seventh day, but the seventh part of time.

But before adopting a conclusion which compels us to deny some of the plainest statements of the Bible, let us see whether any such necessity exists.

Examination of the Facts in the Case

To make this examination, let us now see how many definite points we can fix by indisputable facts.

1. A day of twenty-four hours is made up of an evening and a morning; *i.e.*, of darkness and light, or of night and day.
2. The sun, by God's appointment, rules the day.²⁶⁸
3. Each day begins with sunset.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁸ *Genesis* 1:16.

²⁶⁹ *Genesis* 1:5; *Leviticus* 23:32; *Deuteronomy* 16:6; *Mark* 1:32.

4. The setting and the rising of the sun are caused by the revolution of the earth upon its axis once in twenty-four hours.

5. The earth turns from west to east, causing the sun to make the apparent circuit of the globe from east to west.

6. Thus, by divine arrangement, the course of day around our globe is from the east to the west; for it is thus that darkness and light follow each other around the world. For as the day begins with sunset, it cannot begin all around the world at once. And again, as the commencement of day must follow in the track of sunset around the world, it does certainly always go westward, and never eastward.

7. The day must therefore begin in the east. But where on our round earth is the east? The Old World, Europe, Asia, and Africa, is no more east of the New World, North and South America, than is the New World east of the Old.

8. But we must give to the Old World the precedence, and accept it as the Eastern Continent. For it is a matter of fact that each day begins as far east as the eastern coast of Asia, and comes thence westward to America, and that it does not begin in America and go thence to Asia. And it is certain that this order is right; for mankind originated in Asia, and from thence the New World was peopled. The first sunset in creation week was at that point farthest east at which the light of the sun could be first seen.

This is certainly true, and it is of special interest in this case. For if the course of the sun in its westward journey is to rule the day, that rule should begin from the most eastern point at which its light could be seen. That point presented it to the most eastern observer, had men then existed, as just disappearing in the west. And at that very point, the fourth day of creation commenced. And sunset, which has ever since marked the beginning of the twenty-four-hour day, has followed on from that point in a never-ceasing circuit, divided into separate periods by passing that

point from which it first started, which thus marks the commencement of the course of each day.

9. But no argument from the commonly-supposed location of Eden within the bounds of the present Turkish Empire can be admitted as sufficient to establish the beginning of the course of day to be in the western part of Asia. For it is certain that the geography of the antediluvian world cannot be identified with that of the world since the flood. The four rivers which were parted from one near the site of paradise cannot embrace in their number the Euphrates of the present earth, though one of those rivers did bear that name.

Indeed, it is of no consequence to this argument whether paradise was in Western Asia or further east; for there is a manifest unfitness in locating this line through the Garden of Eden. We have, therefore, nothing to do with the establishment of an imaginary line from north to south through the heart of the Eastern Continent, on the west side of which the day should begin, and twenty-four hours later come round the world to those just across it on the eastern side. The wisdom of God has not involved the human family in such confusion as would be inevitable were this the case.

10. It is certain, as we have seen, that each day travels westward round the world, and also that it comes to us from Asia. But there must be some line, or barrier, or natural division, whence the course of day begins; for if there be not, all reckoning of time is thrown into confusion. Were there no starting point to the course of day, we should only need to journey east in order to ascertain that day begins in China twelve hours earlier than with us; and to journey thence eastward to our own country to prove that we are twelve hours in advance of the time in China. Such confusion and contradiction, however, does not exist; a sufficient proof in itself that the course of day does actually have a commencement and termination of its circuit of our globe.

11. There is a point from which each day of the seven sets out on its circuit of the globe. Each of these days makes one circuit, and but one, during each weekly cycle. Each day is made up of sunset, twilight, evening, midnight, cock-crowing, daybreak, sunrise, morning, forenoon, midday, afternoon, and sun's decline. It takes just twenty-four hours for each day, thus constituted, to pass any point in its circuit of the earth. And hence it is evident that the *commencement* of each day completes the compass of our earth twenty-four hours before the *end* of that same day of the week accomplishes the same journey.

12. Moreover, when sunset, which is the commencement of each day, has come round to the point where the circuit of the day is accomplished, it does not tarry for the other parts of the day to come up that they may all cross the line together; but without one moment's delay it passes the line which divides between the commencement and the end of that circuit, and beginning a new day it leaves the other divisions one by one to do their part in filling out the old day east of the line, which stands in the count of days one day behind the day which commences on the west of that line.

And as these different divisions of the day fill out their time, they severally pass that line, and by that very act become corresponding parts of a new day in the cycle of the week.

13. The reckoning of time at the commencement of the course of day must therefore be twenty-four hours in advance of its computation where that course ends. Those, therefore, who cross this line from east to west, or from west to east, have to recognize this fact by dropping one day from their computation, or by adding one day to it.

14. It is a remarkable fact that this line of transition or division between the beginning and the termination of the course of day is found in crossing the Pacific Ocean. For we may start from California and proceed *eastward* to the eastern coast of Asia, and we shall at every meridian we cross be in perfect harmony, as to our

count of the days, with all the people living upon that meridian; and when we reach China we shall have exactly the same count of days that they have in China.

Again, if we start from China and *reverse* this journey, making our way westward to San Francisco, our days will correspond exactly to those of the countries we cross; and when we reach that city we shall have the same day that the people of that place have. This journey takes us fully two-thirds around the world, yet does not change our count of the days of the week.

But take notice: If we cross the Pacific Ocean, either westward to China, or eastward from China to California, we find in the one case that we are one day behind the people of China; and in the other case that we are one day in advance of the people of California. And this is because of the well-known fact that the west shore of the Pacific Ocean is one day in advance of the time on the east shore of that ocean.

15. The dividing line between the commencement and the end of the course of day in its circuit round the world is, therefore, somewhere in the Pacific Ocean.

Now let us put together several facts.

- a. The day comes westward from Asia.
- b. It may be traced back eastward from America to the farthest verge of Asia on the west side of Bering's Straits, and no change take place in the count of the day.
- c. It is manifestly impracticable to establish *upon the land* a line west of which the day is twenty-four hours in advance of that upon the east side of that line. And, therefore, as the day comes to the American continent westward from Asia, we must in our count follow the course of day westward to the confines of America at the east side of Bering's Straits.
- d. And so of Asia: We must trace back the commencement of the course of day to the eastern verge of Asia, on the west of Bering's Straits.

- e. And now observe, the commencement and the termination of the course of day are brought near together. And observe further this remarkable fact, that a line drawn from north to south through Bering's Straits touches no body of land unless possibly some very minute islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. And it is worthy of special notice that no such line can be drawn through any other body of water upon the globe.

16. It is true that the people of Alaska, having come to that country eastward from Asia, across Bering's Straits, have brought with them the numbering of the days which they had in Asia, making it correspond exactly to that on the other side of the Pacific, and causing, so far as their action can do it, that the day should commence the circuit of the globe from the west side of America. This is a manifest error; for the day comes in the divine order with the sun from Asia, and the American continent receiving the day in this manner, its extreme western verge should mark the end of the circuit of day, and not the beginning of that circuit.

The people of Alaska stand one day ahead in their count, holding the same relation to our count of the days that the people of China do to that of those who go thither westward from America. The day which we carry to Alaska as the seventh, the Alaskans call the first day of the week. Let them change the numbering of the days, as they manifestly should, and let them observe as the Sabbath of the Lord the day they now keep; for it is really such.

17. The case of the inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island, a small body of land some six miles in length by three in breadth, has long been used as proof that the definite seventh day cannot be kept in all the world. It is the same thing in principle as the case of the Alaskans.

This island is situated in the South Pacific Ocean, and lies east of the eastern meridian of Alaska. It was settled by sailors who came east to it. When, therefore, they were discovered and visited

by English sailors who went west to them, the same discrepancy was manifested as is now seen between ourselves and the Alaskans. The reckoning of the two parties brought the beginning of the course of day, and the end of that course, to one spot, and they were found to be, as they really are, twenty-four hours apart. Now the decision of this is not hard. As Pitcairn's Island lies farther east than Alaska, it should certainly be governed by the same principles as that country. It should conform to the reckoning of day as it comes westward around the world.

18. Australia presents no real difficulty. It lies south of the continent of Asia, and does not extend as far to the east as the eastern extremity of Asia, by about 40 degrees of longitude, or more than 2000 miles. It is, moreover, closely connected with the continent of Asia by many islands. Its reckoning of time corresponds with that of Asia; and this is as it should be. Our day will be found to correspond exactly with that of Australia, if we trace back the track of the sun by going eastward to it. If, however, we journey to it westward across the Pacific Ocean, we pass from the termination of the circuit of day to that part of the globe where that circuit commences; and we must, in order to have the correct reckoning of the week, set our count ahead just one day.

19. But what about the gain or loss of a day in circumnavigating the globe? The day begins earlier or later according as we journey east or west. This loss or gain of time day by day, as indicated by our watches, is simply because we are tracing back the track of day toward its source, or following forward on that track toward its termination. And this constant change keeps us in exact accord with the progress of day in its course around the world. And when we cross the day line and step forward or backward from one day to another, by that act we change our count that we may conform to the course of day.

This change actually takes place only in the act of crossing the Pacific. If we go westward to China, we pass from the end of the circuit of day to its beginning. If we turn from China, eastward to

America, we pass at once from the beginning of the course of day to the termination of that course. In order, therefore, that we may preserve the proper computation of the week, we must, in one case, add a day to our reckoning, and in the other case we must set that reckoning back one day. And this is both reasonable and just. For there must be a point where the first day of each week and month and year commences. To deny it, is to throw all dates into confusion; to admit it, is to acknowledge that the existence of definite weeks is possible.

And the existence of this line in the Pacific alone is further evinced by the fact that if one man sets out eastward from the east shore of the Pacific, and another sets out westward from the west shore of that ocean, when they meet, they will be in exact harmony in their count of the days; and if they pass each other, each to that point from which the other set out, each will have the same count of the days with the people of the place at which he has arrived; for neither has crossed the line which divides between the commencement and termination of the course of day.

20. The wisdom of God has given to our earth a globular form, and has caused it to revolve upon its axis.

So far is this from presenting any real difficulty in the way of those who keep the definite seventh day, it is actually that without which such observance would be impossible. For if our earth stood still, one side would have perpetual day, and the other side unending night. There could be in that case no succession of day and night, and no such thing as a seventh day.

But by the divine arrangement of a revolving globular world, the definite seventh day comes to all the inhabitants of the earth, and they can observe it, if they have a heart to obey God. Even the dwellers within the polar circles, where for a season it is all night, and for another season all day, can readily determine the revolution of the earth upon its axis, and can, if they are so disposed, observe the Sabbath of the Lord.

21. When God was laying the foundations of the earth in the establishment of the original order of its existence, and the enactment of those laws which govern its operations, He said,

Genesis 1

⁹ Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so.

¹⁰ And God called the dry land earth; and the gathering together of the waters He called seas; and God SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

Were there not this great natural barrier, extending from pole to pole, the reckoning of definite days would be quite impossible. The next day after God had formed the sea, he caused the sun to become the ruler of the day, and the dispenser of light. It is evident that as each of the days of creation began with evening, and as each evening since the creation of the sun is marked by sunset, the fourth day began with the sun's light just disappearing from that part of the earth from which day begins its course. There has never been a moment since then that the sun has not been in the act of setting as seen from some part of our globe.

This does not make the reckoning of time indefinite and uncertain. For when sunset made its first journey around the globe, it carried with it the commencement of the fourth day to each meridian which it passed. And when it had passed the established division between the commencement and the termination of the circuit of day, and began its second journey from the west side of that line, it was the commencement of the fifth day of the week which the course of sunset thus carried around the world.

And this great fact, which no candid man of any sect or party will deny, really explains why in crossing this line to the east we step back one day in our reckoning, and crossing it to the west we add a day to that reckoning. It is because the days of the week are really definite and tangible, and not as our opponents represent them, indefinite and uncertain, that this change takes place. Indeed, we point to it as a conclusive evidence to all thoughtful,

candid persons that the definite seventh day does come to all the dwellers upon our globe.

22. These facts have a decisive bearing upon the question whether it is a seventh part of our time, or the definite seventh day, which God requires us to observe. They are appealed to by first-day people to prove, in opposition to the express letters of the moral law, that God cannot mean the seventh day, but must simply intend that we observe a seventh part of our time as sacred to Him.

Now it is remarkable that these very things do prove just the reverse; *viz.*, that the seventh part of time cannot be intended, and that the true seventh day is the very thing which the fourth commandment requires us to hallow. Those who have to make the change of one day in their reckoning as they pass from the close of the circuit of day to its beginning, or from the beginning of the circuit of day back to its close, do not and cannot observe the seventh part of time. Were that the plain teaching of the commandment, it would forbid their making this change of one day in their count, and would require them to continue to work six days and then to rest one day; whereas the change in the count of the days is made in order to conform to the fact that in passing the line in question, we step forward or backward, as the case may be, from one definite day of the week to another.

23. The change of one day in the count is that we may conform to the actual course of the days of the week in their circuit of the globe. The seventh day of the week, the very day of the Creator's rest, is thus secured by this very act which most people suppose renders its observance impossible.

As the letter of the fourth commandment expressly enjoins the observance of that day on which God did rest from all His works, the seventh day is not any seventh day after six days of labor; but it is the seventh day of the week as established at creation. So the fourth commandment gives permission to labor on six days of the week, but forbids this on the seventh day of that cycle. Those do

not therefore violate this precept when, at the transition from one day to another, they change the count of the days in order that they may actually keep the week as God gave it. They do thereby secure the very day hallowed in paradise, and their action with reference to a prior six days of labor is no more an exception than was that of Adam in his first observance of the Sabbath.

Here are two passages of Scripture which we commend to the careful attention of the reader:

Mark 2

²⁷ The Sabbath was made for man.

Acts 17

²⁴ God that MADE THE WORLD and all things therein...

²⁶ Has made of one blood all nations of men for TO DWELL ON ALL THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

God, who made our world, made it of a globular form, and made man to dwell on all the face of it. And that the creation of the world might be commemorated, He set apart the seventh day of the week, because He rested upon it from that work, to be observed by the human family as the Sabbath of the Lord. And we have seen from a careful survey of the whole subject, that wherever in the providence of God men are placed, the definite seventh day is to be found, and can be kept by those who are so minded.

The observers of the first day of the week have attempted to show, in the things above examined, that the observance of a definite day is impossible, because the days of the week are indefinite and uncertain. The real intent of their action is to excuse themselves for not observing the day enjoined in the commandment.

We have shown that the excuse is without foundation in truth; and we close by calling attention to the remarkable fact, that, whereas Sunday-keepers, who have a definite day to celebrate in their "first day of the week," have much to say concerning the impossibility of keeping a definite day the world over. No observer

of the seventh day, wherever situated, whether Hebrew or Christian, ever found any difficulty of this kind in keeping the definite rest-day of the great Creator.



Sermons on the Sabbath and the Law

1870

*Embracing AN OUTLINE
of the BIBLICAL and SECULAR HISTORY of the SABBATH
for Six Thousand Years*

*PP Editor's Note: I have left off the last sermon in this series
(the "eleventh sermon" mentioned in the "Preface to the Second Edition,")
as it was a very long rebuttal of some elaborate and strange theories
regarding the change of days and weeks in the Old Testament.*

Preface

THE present work is prepared to meet an urgent, existing want. The work entitled, *History of the Sabbath and First Day of the Week* is now out of print. Some time must elapse before a new edition can be furnished. This space of time is demanded for careful research and patient labor, that the forthcoming *History of the Sabbath* may be rendered as perfect as possible, and made such a work as the importance of the subject demands. Some delay in the publication of the new *Sabbath History* is therefore unavoidable. But the writer wishes to say that the utmost diligence shall be used in urging forward the work to completion at as early a date as possible consistent with the many other duties devolving upon him.

The work now presented to the reader is a brief outline of Biblical and Secular History relating to the Sabbath of the Lord. It is believed that even those who have long studied this subject will find something to interest them in this little work, and it is hoped that many who know not the teaching of the Bible relative to the Sabbath and law of God, may be led by the perusal of this work to honor God in the sanctification of His great memorial, the Sabbath.

Preface to the Second Edition

THE present edition differs from the former in that an eleventh sermon has been added,²⁷⁰ showing that Sunday has no claim to be considered the true seventh day. This discourse will be found valuable as meeting the errors of Akers, Jennings, Fuller, and others who have endeavored to prove that our first day of the week is the very day on which God rested from the work of creation.

²⁷⁰ PP Editor's Note: The "eleventh sermon" is not included in this collection as it was a very long rebuttal of some elaborate and strange theories regarding the change of days and weeks in the Old Testament.

1. The Memorial of Creation

Hebrews

³ Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

THE 11th chapter of *Hebrews* is a record of the mighty deeds of faith. At the very head of the list, the apostle places the act of grasping a certain great truth. That truth is the declaration that God framed the worlds out of material that did not previously exist.

The creative act is the highest display of omnipotent power of which we can conceive. We cannot elevate our minds to see how such a work is possible, even for infinite power. The grandest sight in nature is a view of the starry heavens in a clear night. At one glance the eye takes in the host of heaven, or rather what is visible of this host to a spectator standing upon our earth. These are the worlds that God has made.

But if we could be placed back some six thousand years in the past, and from that point survey the vast abyss of space now studded with the stars of heaven, what should we behold? Blank nothing. The host of heaven did not then exist. Our earth itself had not arisen into being. The vast infinity of space was literally, as Job expresses it, “the empty place,” and that which filled it was “nothing.”²⁷¹ Utter and profound darkness rested upon the great void. Even the materials which subsequently formed the worlds, had no existence.

The First Day

But the moment at last arrived, which, in the counsels of infinite Wisdom, had been fixed for the great creative act.

Genesis 1

¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

²⁷¹ *Job 26:7.*

Psalm 33

⁶ He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

⁹ By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

When the Creator had thus spoken, every element came into being which He purposed to use in framing the worlds. But chaos now existed as the first result of the Creator's work. The condition of our world at the moment of its creation may doubtless be safely accepted as the real condition of all the worlds that sprang into existence at the same instant, and in obedience to the same mandate. And thus we read of our globe:

Genesis 1

² And the earth was without form and void.

Its materials now existed, but they had no order. They were without *form*, a strong indication that even gravitation was not in existence at the moment of their creation; else it would at once have given the earth a globular form. And the earth was void, *i.e.*, destitute of living creatures and even of living plants. Darkness reigned supreme. Not one ray of light mingled with its utter blackness.

² ...The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And now the earth, yielding to the law of gravitation, becomes a sphere, or globe, and, as a consequence of this, its whole surface is covered with water, a condition which remained unchanged till the third day.

³ And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

This is the next step in the Creator's work. How God gave existence to light is above our comprehension. But He did it, and it has never ceased to exist. And now He separates the light from the darkness. He calls the one day and the other night. This is why in the divine order the night makes the first division of the twenty-four hours. And Moses tells us that the evening and the morning, *i.e.*, the night and the day, were the first day. This is a

decisive proof that the days of the Mosaic record were such days as an evening and morning constitute, *i.e.*, days of twenty-four hours. Otherwise the record is utterly unreliable, and calculated to mislead.

If it be objected that a day of twenty-four hours is inadequate to the work of the first day of time, the answer is that this is all true, if the work of creation be considered the work of nature; for if nature had to create itself, all eternity would be insufficient for the work. But if an infinite Creator called the worlds into existence out of nothing, and framed them out of materials that before had no existence, then the period of twenty-four hours was quite adequate for the work of the first day of time.

The Second Day

The next thing in order in the work of creation was the act of giving existence to our atmosphere. The firmament, or heaven, which divides the waters from the waters, is the air. It is this in which the fowls fly above the earth.²⁷² The waters above the firmament are the clouds. The waters under the firmament are those upon our earth.

At the time our atmosphere was created, the whole face of the earth was water, for it was not till the next day that the dry land appeared. The atmosphere being denser than the mists and fogs and vapors that form the clouds, they are borne aloft by it. God called this firmament, or atmosphere, heaven. It is the first, or atmospheric, heaven that was thus created. And now the second day being ended, Moses tells what kind of a day it was:

Genesis 1

⁸ The evening and the morning were the second day.

It was therefore such a day as night and day constitute, *i.e.*, it was a day of twenty-four hours.

²⁷² *Genesis* 1:20.

The Third Day

The atmosphere being created, and the fog and vapor being lifted from the face of the waters, the Creator next causes the dry land to appear.

Genesis 1

⁹ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so.

¹⁰ And God called the dry land earth; and the gathering together of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good.

The surface of the earth was now changed by the immediate power of the Creator. One portion was depressed to receive the waters that covered the earth, and another and larger portion was elevated above the waters to constitute the dry land. Probably a very large portion of the water was stored within the earth itself, whence at the time of the flood it came forth, when the fountains of the great deep were broken up.

And now the dry land having been formed, and the atmosphere and the light having been already created, God fills the earth with vegetable life. And God caused the earth to bring forth grass, and herbs, and trees. And at the close of the third day we are again certified that the day was composed of an evening and a morning, *i.e.*, that it was a twenty-four-hour day.²⁷³

The Fourth Day

On the fourth day God caused the sun and moon and stars to appear as light-bearers in the heavens. By this we are not to understand that these heavenly bodies were this day created; for they were doubtless included in the work of the creation of “the heaven” on the first day. As the earth during the first three days underwent a great transformation, we may reasonably conclude that a like work was carried forward in the heavenly bodies during that time. And thus, when the fourth day arrived, they were ready to be made light-bearers to the earth. And at that point God

²⁷³ *Genesis* 1:13.

gave them the office of giving light to the earth, and of measuring time for its inhabitants.

And now, for the fourth time, Moses assures us that these days of creation were composed of day and night; in other words, they were such days as those we now have. And this is confirmed most strikingly in the fact that such days as *Genesis* 1 brings to view, it informs us were subjected to the rule of the sun—a sufficient proof that the days of that chapter are the natural divisions of time, and not vast, indefinite periods, of whose duration we can have no conception.²⁷⁴

The Fifth Day

On the fifth day God peopled the waters with every variety of fish, and caused abundance of fowls to fly in the open firmament of heaven. And God was pleased with the work His hands had wrought. And, for the fifth time, we are told that the day was composed of evening and morning, or night and day, an expression which cannot be explained otherwise than according to its simple and obvious import, that a day of twenty-four hours was intended.²⁷⁵

The Sixth Day

The work of the sixth day was to create the beasts of the field, and every kind of animal that moves upon the face of the earth. And when this great work was thus perfected, last of all, He created man in His own image, and made him ruler over all His works. The earth was full of God's blessing. And the Creator surveyed everything that He had made,

Genesis 1

³¹ ...and, behold, it was very good.

And again the Holy Spirit gives the kind of time used in this record:

²⁷⁴ *Genesis* 1:14-19.

²⁷⁵ *Genesis* 1:20-23.

³¹ ...The evening and the morning were the sixth day;

—that is to say, the sixth day was a day composed of day and night, like the days we now have.

Genesis 2

¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

Faith in the Creator

How vast the work of this six days! Before it began, the infinity of space was simply an abyss of darkness, having nothing in it out of which to form the works of creation. When the six days were ended, an infinite number of worlds had arisen into existence. God had framed them out of things which before did not exist. To grasp this great truth is an act of faith which Paul places with strict propriety at the head of his list of the mighty deeds of faith.

The psalmist tell us that:

Psalm 111

² The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

And he adds:

⁴ He has made His wonderful works to be remembered.

Certainly, the greatest of all His works, and that which surpasses every other in its manifestation of infinite power, is the creation of the heavens and the earth. This is the most wonderful of all the works of His hands. This great work is worthy of being sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. God wrought this wonderful work to be remembered; that is to say, He designed that men who owe their existence to the creation of the heavens and the earth, and or mankind upon the earth, should never forget that He had wrought this work, and that He was their Creator. Indeed, it is this great fact that He appeals to as distinguishing himself from all false gods. And thus He speaks by Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 10

¹¹ Thus shall you say unto them, The gods that have NOT MADE THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.

But He speaks thus of himself:

¹⁰ The Lord is the true God; He is the living God, and an everlasting king...

¹² HE HAS MADE THE EARTH by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion.

One of the highest acts of faith is to grasp the existence of an uncreated Being who has called into existence, out of nothing, an infinite host of worlds. To believe this great truth, which Paul makes so prominent an act of faith, we must credit the testimony of the Scriptures; for he tells us that...

Romans 10

¹⁷ Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Faith Expressed in Works

But faith without works is dead, being alone. No human being can have so perfect a theoretical faith in this great truth as has Satan. But his faith in it is of no benefit to himself. If our faith in this cardinal truth of revelation is of greater value to us than Satan's faith to himself, it must produce certain acts of obedience by which our love for the truth we believe, is made manifest. And thus the apostle James states the case:

James 2

¹⁹ You believe that there is one God; you do well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

²⁰ But will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

Hebrews 11

³ Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.

The Sabbath an Expression of Faith

But by what act of obedience do we manifest our love for this great truth? And by what good work do we show that our faith in the creation of the heavens and the earth is not a dead faith? If God made His wonderful works to be remembered, how are we to remember our Creator? If the creation of the heavens and the earth distinguishes the true God from all false gods, by what acts are we to preserve in our minds the memory of this work of infinite power?

To answer these questions, we have only to return to the record of the creation in *Genesis* 1 and 2. The close of the sixth day witnessed the perfection of the Creator's work. He surveyed all the works of His hands, and behold they were all very good. With the beginning of the seventh day, God's work of creation ceased. And thus we read:

Genesis 2

² 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.

³ 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.

The record tells us what God did on the seventh day as distinctly as it relates what He did on the six days of creation which preceded it. His work was wrought in six days. On the seventh day He rested from that work. He did not rest because of weariness, for the Creator of the heavens and the earth cannot be wearied.²⁷⁶ He made the seventh day His rest-day in order that He might set up an everlasting memorial of His creative work. For when He had rested upon the day, He blessed it, and sanctified or hallowed it. He blessed the seventh day because He had rested upon it, which shows that the day of God's rest was past when

²⁷⁶ *Isaiah* 40:28.

He blessed the seventh day. He did not bless the day because He was about to rest upon it, but because He had rested upon it.

So it is evident that the blessing was placed upon the seventh day for time to come in honor of what God had done upon that day. And thus also with respect to the sanctification of the seventh day. God sanctified it because He had rested upon it. He did not sanctify the day because He purposed to rest upon it, but because He had rested upon it. The sanctification cannot be placed upon a day after it has ceased to exist. And hence God did not sanctify the first seventh day of time because He had made it His rest-day, for when He had thus rested, the day had expired; but He sanctified the seventh day for time to come, in memory of His own rest on that day from the work of creation.

To sanctify is to set apart, or appoint to a holy use. And here we learn at the very beginning of the Bible that God appointed the seventh day to a holy use. He did it because that in it He had rested from all His work. So it is incontestible that the seventh day was appointed to a holy use in order that God's rest from creation might be remembered. And this appointment must have been made to Adam and Eve, for they were the ones who had the days of the week to use. The fact, therefore, is undeniable that God bade Adam set apart the seventh day for sacred rest in memory of His own rest upon that day.

Here, then, we find the memorial of the creation of the heavens and the earth. The seventh day was set apart to a holy use because God had rested upon it from all His work which He *created* and *made*. So the creation which called the elements into existence, and the making of the earth out of those elements, are here distinguished from each other, and both are included in the commemorative rest. He rested from the six days of creation. God made His works to be remembered; and no sooner was His work complete than He set up a lasting memorial of that work. He hallowed every seventh day, that man might remember God, his Creator.

And that man might grasp the great truth that God, in His infinite power, spoke into existence, from nothing, the heaven and the earth, He had ordained, at the very beginning, one grand act of obedience by which his faith in that truth should be declared, and his love for it made manifest. The observance of the Creator's rest-day is that act of obedience by which we declare our faith in God as the creator of the heavens and the earth.

Faith Without Obedience is Dead

To profess faith in God as the creator of all things, and to pay no attention to the memorial which He ordained to keep the work of creation in lasting remembrance, is to have, in this respect, a dead faith. We thus profess to know God; but in works we deny Him. We have faith without works. Our faith in the one God, who, by His sovereign power, framed the worlds out of materials which did not before exist, is like the faith of the devils, a dead faith, because that grand act of obedience which was ordained to express that faith, we do not perform. And we are not to think that there is no need of this effort to maintain faith in the one God who in six days created heaven and earth, and rested on the seventh.

The world is full of atheism. The Sabbath is the grand bulwark against that fatal error. Its observance by the people of God is a solemn protest against atheism, and a public confession, by works corresponding to their faith, that they believe the record of the creation of the heavens and the earth. The atheist has no faith in the record of the creation. To him the rest-day of the Creator is of no account whatever. But, with men believing the Bible record of the creation, the case is different. They confess their faith in the six days of the Creator's work, and His rest upon the seventh, and that He set apart the day because He had rested upon it. If their works correspond with their faith, they will regard the rest-day of the Lord.

Can the Christian, who believes the record of the creation, and the atheist, who denies the existence of the Creator himself, both act alike in disregarding the rest-day of the Lord? See the believer

in the record of the first seven days of time. When the seventh day, which the Creator set apart in memory of His own rest on that day, arrives, he lays aside all labor, and rests from all his work. Every one understands the act. But the atheist continues his labors as on other days. His works are consistent with his unbelief. But what shall be said of those Christians who imitate in their works the conduct of the atheist? Surely, the observance of the Creator's rest-day is the proper act of obedience by which we manifest our faith in God as the creator. And whatever the intention, the violation of the rest-day of the Lord is practical atheism.

Essential for Man

God set apart the seventh day in Paradise. This proves that the observance of the Sabbath is not a carnal ordinance, for it was instituted before sin entered our world. It was not ordained to commemorate the flight of Israel to Egypt, for the children of Israel did not flee out of Egypt till more than two thousand years after this. It was not an institution ordained for the Jews, for it began with the human race, and thus preceded the existence of the Hebrew people for many ages.

But the most remarkable fact that appears in this record is, that this memorial was needed even in the garden of God. Though man could converse with God face to face, yet every week, by the most impressive act, Adam was called to remember and acknowledge God as his creator. The rest-day of God was set apart, not as a mere rest from wearisome toil, for Adam had almost as little occasion for rest from weariness in Paradise, as had the Creator from His work of infinite might, but as a day when man should desist from everything else and think of God.

And even the very manner of this observance was exactly calculated to bring to remembrance the grand fact that distinguished God from all other beings, *viz.*, the fact that He had created the heavens and the earth. He must rest as God rested, and on the very day that He rested. And thus doing, God, His creator, could

never be forgotten, nor the relation which God sustains to all other beings, and to all things, ever pass out of mind.

It was a day of worship in the highest sense, in that it reminded man of his relation to God and kept the great facts respecting the origin of all things vividly before the mind. Man must rest on that day, not because he specially needed rest on account of weariness, nor because rest on a certain day of the week is better calculated to give him relief than resting upon some other day would be. But he must rest in memory of what the Creator did, that he might not forget his infinite obligation to that great Being who had given him existence.

Summary

The record in *Genesis 2:1-3*, is worthy of our most careful attention for the remarkable distinctness, brevity, and freedom from ambiguity, which characterize it.

1. It is certain that God rested upon the first seventh day of time.
2. That He did not bless and sanctify the day because He was about to rest upon it, but because He had rested upon it.
3. And hence it was not the first seventh day of time which He blessed and set apart, for that had expired when He performed these acts.
4. And thus it is evident that the blessing and sanctification related to the seventh day for time to come.
5. This was done because God had rested upon that day, showing that it was in memory of that event.
6. God placed His blessing on the day, thus making it a more precious day than any other.
7. He appointed the day to a holy use, thus making it obligatory upon Adam and his posterity to observe it.
8. And it is also to be observed that He did not bless the institution of the Sabbath, and sanctify that as a movable thing which could be placed upon one day or another, just as it

might best suit the circumstances. Nothing is said of a Sabbath institution. God rested the seventh day. God blessed the seventh day. God set apart the seventh day to a holy use.

9. This indeed made the Sabbath. Or, if the reader chooses to use the expression, this was the setting up of the Sabbath institution. But the seventh day was the recipient of all the things which God conferred. The rest, the blessing, and the sanctification, pertained to that alone.

When, therefore, some other day is taken, every element that constitutes the Sabbath is left out of the account and lost. When another day is taken, we get that which God never rested upon; and as He blessed the seventh day because He had rested upon it, when we take some other day besides that of God's rest, we take a day which God has not blessed. As He sanctified the day on which He rested, and which He had for that reason blessed, when we take one of the six days which God employed in the work of creation, we take a day which has not one element of the Sabbath institution pertaining to it.

Certainly there are but seven days in the week. The first six days God did not rest. On the seventh day He did rest. These facts can never be changed. We cannot place the blessing and sanctification on any day, only the one of God's rest, for they are conferred upon it *because* of that rest. And we cannot change the rest from the day on which He rested to one on which He wrought in creation. Not even Omnipotence can do this. And thus the definite seventh day stands out with the utmost distinctness.

It cannot, therefore, be denied, except by doing violence to the sacred narrative, that the creation of the heavens and the earth was immediately followed by the establishment of a divine memorial of that grand event. And it is evident that this memorial is to be observed as an act of obedience whereby our faith in the creation of the heavens and the earth is shown to be a living faith. Those who profess faith in this great truth do thereby acknowl-

edge themselves under obligation to manifest that faith by observing the memorial ordained by the Creator for that very purpose. Those who neglect this memorial, render their faith in this fundamental doctrine of the Bible a dead faith.

God's great bulwark against atheism was never so much needed as in the last days of our world's history. We have come down some six thousand years from Paradise. Darkness now covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. Surely, an institution that was needed in Paradise, when man conversed face to face with God, is needed a thousandfold more in these days of awful apostasy and atheism.

We have not yet ceased to be under sacred obligation to the almighty Creator, and it is in the highest degree proper that we, by the observance of that institution which He has ordained for the very purpose, should humbly acknowledge that obligation.

2. In the Patriarchal Age

Original title: Moral Obligation in the Patriarchal Age

BY THE patriarchal age is meant the period from Adam to Moses. By moral obligation is meant the duty to observe the precepts of the moral law.

Relationship of the Law, Sin, and Death

The following statement of the apostle Paul relates to this very point, and covers precisely this period of time:

Romans 5

¹³ For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come.

Death reigned from Adam to Moses. But the reign of death is proof that sin also reigns; for death owes its empire to sin, and holds its power as a grant from sin. Sin is the supreme ruler, and death is only a subordinate ruler, holding its dominion at the hands of sin. And so the apostle, in verse 21, represents sin as the real ruler. Thus he says:

²¹ Sin has reigned unto death.

So the reign of death from Adam to Moses is, according to Paul, positive and tangible proof that sin not only existed during that entire period, but that it even reigned. But death is only the shadow which sin casts. The presence of death furnishes, therefore, incontestible evidence that sin is also present. And so the apostle makes these two statements:

¹³ Until the law sin was in the world.

That is, sin, having entered by Adam's transgression, remained in possession till the law entered.

¹⁴ Death reigned from Adam to Moses.

That is, death was able to cut down Adam, and to bear undisputed away over all the human family during the whole period of the patriarchal age; one man alone, Enoch, being excepted.

Hebrews 11

⁵ By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

What, therefore, does Paul mean when he says,

Romans 5

¹³ Sin is not imputed when there is no law?

One of two answers must be returned:

1. Though sin was in the world from Adam to Moses, yet God did not impute it to those who committed it, because there was no law which they transgressed in sinning; or,
2. The fact that sin was in the world before the law entered by the proclamation of the Lawgiver, shows that the law was really present all the time, and taking cognizance of human conduct; for sin cannot be imputed where there is no law.

One of these two views must be true. And we can determine which is true by one simple test. God either did, or did not, impute sin to men in the patriarchal age. If he did not then impute it to the transgressor, the first view is correct, and the law did not exist from Adam to Moses. But if God *did* impute men's transgression to them during that age of the world, then the law *did* exist, and men were held guilty for transgressing it.

But it is certain that God did impute sin to the world of mankind during the patriarchal age. The guilt of murder was certainly imputed to Cain.²⁷⁷ Sin lay at his door. The voice of his brother's blood cried to God from the ground. And the ground was cursed because of Cain's transgression. God did impute the sins of the antediluvians to them, for He determined to destroy

²⁷⁷ *Genesis 4.*

the world of mankind by a flood of waters, and He executed this determination:²⁷⁸ an awful proof,

1. The sin was imputed in that age;
2. And that, therefore, God's law did exist; for sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Again, the case of Sodom furnishes another proof that sin was imputed to men in the patriarchal age.

Genesis 13

¹³ The men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.

The cry of Sodom came up before God, and their sin was very grievous to Him.²⁷⁹ Righteous Lot, dwelling among them, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their UNLAWFUL deeds.²⁸⁰ When God could bear with Sodom no longer, He rained upon it fire and brimstone from himself out of heaven, and the smoke of Sodom went up as a great furnace.²⁸¹ So sin was imputed to the Sodomites, and the law did exist to take notice of their transgressions, or sin could not have been imputed to them.

Certainly these are most convincing proofs that the sins of men were imputed to them during the patriarchal age, and hence they furnish a positive testimony that the law did then exist; for otherwise sin could not have been imputed.

The Law Works Wrath

Yet Paul, wishing to prove the same point, passes over all these mighty facts, and seizes upon another still more mighty and convincing. Paul's proof that sin was imputed to men before the entrance of the law, and that the law of God did therefore exist from Adam to Moses, is found in the fact that death reigned with undisputed sway during the whole period, showing,

²⁷⁸ *Genesis 7.*

²⁷⁹ *Genesis 18:20.*

²⁸⁰ *2 Peter 2:8.*

²⁸¹ *Genesis 19.*

1. That sin was imputed to all mankind, for all died.
2. And thus determining the fact that the law of God did exist during this period, because sin was imputed to all.

Romans 5

²⁰ The law entered that the offense might abound.

Sin was in the world from the transgression of Adam till the law entered. The law did not enter because the lawgiver expected to put an end to sin by its entrance. He did not misjudge with respect to the effect its entrance would produce. It entered that the offense might abound. Not that God was pleased with sin, and wished to increase its force or its amount. He only wished that the law should cause it to show itself to its full extent, and with all its malignity and wickedness.

Sin existed in the world as an all-pervading disease that could not be cured. The law entered to manifest the deadly character of that disease by rousing it into fierce action. Afterward came the great physician, Jesus Christ, with the power to take out the venom of sin, and to restore health to those who were ready to accept it on His terms.

One thing is certain, that what constituted sin before the entrance of the law, did continue to constitute it afterward. Sin then showed itself in its utmost magnitude; but it was the same evil thing which God hates as when it did not so fully manifest itself. To use the figure of Paul elsewhere recorded, death killed men by its sting, sin, and the strength by which it strikes the blow, comes from the law of God.²⁸²

Wherever, therefore, death exists, it is proof that sin also exists; and wherever sin exists, there exists the law of God. Sin is the transgression of the law, and without the law there can be no transgression.²⁸³ It follows, therefore, that the existence of death

²⁸² 1 Corinthians 15:56.

²⁸³ 1 John 3:4; Romans 4:15.

in our world is proof of the existence of the law, for death is the consequence of breaking the law of God.

The universal prevalence of death before the public entrance of the law is, therefore, positive proof that the law of God did exist as the great rule of right during the patriarchal age. Death could not strike down men, were it not that in the sight of God's law their lives were forfeited. Thus death, with his sting, sin, could not have struck down Adam, had not the law of God given strength to the blow. And the law would never have given this strength to death to strike the fatal blow, had not Adam broken that law.

This is a convincing proof that the law did really exist at the beginning, and that Adam did not simply transgress a merely ceremonial and unimportant precept concerning the eating of fruit, but that his transgression, which forfeited his life and that of all who have life from him, was one involving direct rebellion against the principles of the moral law.

Romans 5

¹⁴ Death reigned from Adam to Moses.

But death can only reign when it is armed with its fatal dart, sin. And it can never wield that dart except when the law of God gives it strength to strike the blow. But the law will never give its assent to the death of any person until sin has caused that person's life to be justly forfeited. It is certain, therefore, that the moral law is older than sin.

And when Paul seized upon the fact that death reigned from Adam to Moses, to prove that sin was imputed to men, and that the law of God did therefore exist during that period, for without it sin could not have been imputed, he did seize upon the most mighty and convincing proof of the existence of these two great forces, the law of God, and its deadly antagonist, sin. Death is the wages of sin. Sin is the transgression of the law of God. Sin is therefore certainly older than death, and the law of God is, of necessity, older than sin.

But death, the youngest of the three, did reign from Adam to Moses. Sin began its reign with Adam's transgression; and death began to reign in the destruction of mankind when Abel was murdered by Cain. But God's great rule of right existed before the first act of transgression, and will continue to exist when sin and death shall be destroyed in the gehenna of fire. Sin was certainly imputed to Adam, but it could not have been thus imputed had not the law of God then existed,

Romans 5

¹³ For...sin is not imputed when there is no law.

And not only did that imputation of sin cause death to seize Adam by the strength of the law, and deprive him of life, but by means of that one transgression, death has passed upon all mankind, though they do not sin as did Adam.

A Forfeited Life

Adam was placed upon probation in a state of perfect innocence, that he might become confirmed in virtue. In that trial he failed, and by that failure he forfeited his right to live. His posterity have a period of probation granted them in which to recover that lost innocence, and in the effort to recover it, to become confirmed in virtue.

But our life is only a forfeited life, for it is derived from Adam after he had come under the sentence of death. And nothing can so attest the inflexible justice of the law of God, and its continued existence, as the fact that death cuts down all our race, though it was only the first man who, by his own personal act, forfeited the right to live. Our life is derived from that of Adam, and therefore treated by the law of God as forfeited; but in the day of judgment there will be a second attestation of the strict justice of the law, when every sinner shall die the second time for his own personal transgressions.

The law of God did therefore exist before death entered our world, and it will continue to exist when the second death shall

have destroyed the whole world of sinners. But it is sufficient to say that the reign of death from Adam to Moses proves the existence and the authority of the law of God during that period of time.

The Book of Genesis

But the book of *Genesis* does not contain the law of God. This is an undisputed fact. And because that the law is not found in *Genesis*, many hasty readers of the Bible earnestly contend that the law was unknown during the patriarchal age, *i.e.*, from Adam to Moses. Now let us see what will follow from such reasoning. There is no precept in *Genesis* which says,

Deuteronomy 6 [Matthew 22:37]

⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.

This precept, therefore, on which hangs all the law relating to our duty to God, was not obligatory upon the people who lived during the period embraced in the book of *Genesis*. There is no commandment in that book which says,

Leviticus 19 [Matthew 22:39]

¹⁸ You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

And so this second precept, on which the other half of the entire law of God is suspended, did not exist during that age of the world. Again, there is no law recorded in the book of *Genesis* which forbids blasphemy, Sabbath-breaking, the neglect of parents, adultery, theft, false witness, or covetousness. And if the reasoning of our opponents be good, then these precepts were not in force in the period from Adam to Moses.

But our opponents virtually reply that they will only maintain this kind of argument in the case of the Sabbath, and yield it in the case of all the other precepts enumerated. But why, if this be a good argument against the fourth precept of God's law, is it not a good argument in the case of the two great commandments on which all the law depends, and in that of all the precepts of the moral law named above?

But the book of *Genesis* plainly implies that there was a moral law in existence, though it does not enter that law upon its record. Thus, murder was a great crime in the case of Cain;²⁸⁴ the violation of the fifth commandment was a great sin on the part of Ham;²⁸⁵ adultery would have been such in the case of Joseph;²⁸⁶ and so of other precepts. But while God's law does not appear in *Genesis*, not even in the form of the two great commandments, the existence of His law is expressly named. Thus Abraham is said to have obeyed God's voice, and to have kept His charge, His COMMANDMENTS, His STATUTES, and His LAWS.²⁸⁷

And in the case of the Sabbath of the Lord, we have the most direct and forcible answer to render. We do not need to plead for it as we must for the two great commandments, no trace of either of which appears in *Genesis*. For when we go back to Paradise we find that God first rests upon the day himself, then having spent the day in refreshing rest,²⁸⁸ puts His blessing upon the day because of that rest, and sets it apart to a holy use. Thus we have the explicit testimony of this ancient book that God appointed the seventh day in Paradise itself to a holy use.

And though the book of *Genesis* contains no precept enjoining the sanctification of the Sabbath by mankind, it does contain direct testimony that such precept was given to Adam, the head and representative of the human family. Whatever, therefore, may be said respecting the other precepts of the moral law, it cannot be denied that there was a precept enforcing the observance of the Sabbath in the period from Adam to Moses.

“But if the patriarchs were under obligation to observe the moral law, why does not the book of *Genesis* contain that law?”

²⁸⁴ *Genesis* 4.

²⁸⁵ *Genesis* 9.

²⁸⁶ *Genesis* 39.

²⁸⁷ *Genesis* 26:5.

²⁸⁸ See *Exodus* 31:17.

“How could those ancient men be expected to keep the commandments, if the book of *Genesis* which covers that period of time does not place those precepts upon record?”

These questions are asked with such earnestness that they must be answered very explicitly. Know, then, that the book of *Genesis* was written by Moses after the close of the period concerning which it treats, and long after all the persons whose lives are mentioned therein had gone down to the grave. The book of *Genesis* was not the rule of life for the people during the patriarchal age. It is simply an extremely brief history of two thousand three hundred and seventy years, and was not written till about one hundred and thirty years after the last event of which it treats had taken place.

It is enough, therefore, if the violation of most of the commandments is alluded to as sin, even though the law be not recorded; and that one man is mentioned as keeping God's commandments; a sure proof, by the way, that God had commandments; and, in particular, that we learn that God appointed the seventh day to a holy use in memory of His own rest from the work of creation. We have ample proof that God's law existed during this time, though the book of *Genesis*, written long after the patriarchs were dead, does not contain that code.

Written in the Heart

And now let us consider the circumstances of the patriarchal age with respect to the knowledge of the law of God. The following remarkable passage sheds great light on this point:

Romans 2

¹¹ For there is no respect of persons with God.

¹² For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law;

¹³ (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

¹⁴ For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

¹⁵ Which show THE WORK OF THE LAW WRITTEN IN THEIR HEARTS, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another;)

¹⁶ In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

This passage presents particularly the case of those who have never had the written law of God. It was written with direct reference to the heathen nations, but it makes statements which shed great light on the condition of mankind in the patriarchal age. Here are several points worthy of serious consideration:

1. Man has by nature a copy of the law of God upon his heart. Even the Gentiles, in the darkness of heathenism, have this most precious code written upon their hearts.

2. The existence of this law within the hearts of men is made by Paul the foundation of conscience. It is that inherent principle in man's nature that instinctively determines right from wrong.

3. Nor does this idea of the existence of the law by nature in the hearts of men conflict with the great promise of the new covenant,

Jeremiah 31

³³ I will put my law in their inward parts,

—for men have by nature only a marred and partially-obliterated copy. For there exists also in the human heart the carnal mind, which...

Romans 8

⁷ ...is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

What the new covenant proposes to do for men is, to take away the carnal mind and to give them a perfect copy of the law of God upon the tables of the heart.

4. In confirmation of the apostle's statement that "the work of the law" is in the hearts of men "by nature," take this fact: When the moral law is read, precept by precept, there is something in every breast which responds,

"That is right."

And here is, no doubt, the grand difference between the fall of man and that of angels. The fall of man left within his nature a copy of the law, though marred, and in part obliterated. The fall of the angels was so much less excusable, and their sin was against so much greater light, that their moral ruin was complete, and no part of the principles of God's law remained in their nature. Theirs was strictly total depravity, and their recovery was absolutely impossible. But man retained a copy of the law of God, imperfect indeed, but sufficient to give existence to conscience, and to preserve to man a moral nature capable of loving right and hating evil.

5. Man in his fallen condition has in his heart, "by nature," "the work of the law." Yet that copy of the law which he possesses is a marred one, inasmuch as the new covenant promises to write the law in the heart, *i.e.*, to give a perfect copy of it in place of that one marred by the fall. Or rather, to perfectly restore that half-obliterated copy already existing there.

6. The very fact that man possesses by nature a copy of the law of God, though marred by the fall, clearly indicates that the first man in his unfallen condition had a perfect copy of that law upon his heart. For the new covenant, in restoring man from the ruins of the fall, gives him a perfect transcript of the law upon his heart.

The fall did not put the law into man's heart. It only marred the copy he had there by virtue of his original uprightness. And the great work of conversion, when fully wrought, simply restores what man lost by the fall. There can be, therefore, no mistake on this point, that the first man Adam, in his innocence, had a per-

fect copy of the law of God in his heart. And in this respect, he was like the second Adam, who says of himself,

Psalms 40 [Hebrews 10:5-9]

⁸ I delight to do your will, O my God: yea, YOUR LAW IS WITHIN MY HEART.

7. Thus we see that the first Adam had a perfect copy of the law of God upon his heart; but, sinning against God, he marred that perfect work, and could only transmit to his posterity a defaced and partially-obiterated copy; but the second Adam, having that law in its perfection upon his heart, and never, in a single particular, marring it, he transmits to all his people a perfect copy of that divine law, writing it by his Spirit upon their hearts.

8. What is worthy of special observation is this: The law upon Adam's heart, and upon the hearts of all men, by nature, is THE SAME LAW that God himself proclaimed to his people. Here is the proof:

- a. Those who obey this code, Paul says, "do by nature *the things contained in the law*."
- b. He tells us that they have "the work of the law written in their hearts." So God's law upon stone, and man's copy by nature upon the heart, are the same, only as sin has marred the writing upon the heart, and rendered it more or less imperfect.

9. When the apostle speaks of those that sin "in the law," he refers to those who have the written law of God; and when he speaks of those that sin "without the law," he refers to those that have only the law as nature has given it to them upon their hearts. The conscience accuses or approves, according as they refuse, or as they hearken to the voice of this solemn monitor, "the work of the law written in their hearts."

10. And now observe that this law of God to which every man is subject, and which God has planted in every man's nature, is to be the rule of the Judgment. If we read connectedly verses 12 and

16, omitting the parenthesis, as the rules of language authorize us to do in all such cases, we have the following expressive declaration:

Romans 2

¹² As many as have sinned in the law *shall be judged by the law*,

¹⁶ *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men* by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

11. And in the day of Judgment the men that shall be justified at its awful tribunal, will be simply the doers of the law of God. Faith justifies the penitent sinner. Faith, which produces good works, is that whereby the Christian maintains his justification. But in the Judgment, works alone will be sought, and then “the doers of the laws shall be justified,” and all others found wanting.

Certainly, these facts from the epistle to the *Romans* have a most important bearing upon the subject before us. Adam had a perfect copy of the law of God upon his heart. After his transgression he still retained that copy, though partially effaced by his departure from God. And all the posterity of Adam in the patriarchal age had each a copy of the law of God in his heart. We may well understand that sin was in the world before the proclamation of the law; and we may be sure that when the law of God did enter it was no new rule of conduct, but God’s ancient and invariable standard of right. The law did not come in as a usurper, nor as a new ruler, but as man’s rightful sovereign, asserting its long-despised authority.

How Truth Was Passed On

Nor were men in the patriarchal age merely accountable to God for this copy of His law upon their hearts. It was an age of great light; in some respects of far greater light than the age in which we live. Though man was expelled from Paradise, God did not remove Paradise from the earth. He placed cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life.²⁸⁹ There is no reason to suppose that Paradise was removed

²⁸⁹ *Genesis* 3:22-24.

from the earth till the time of the flood. And thus in the sight of the antediluvians remained the garden of God and the tree of life, and the visible glory of the Almighty. Such a people surely were not in darkness respecting divine truth.

Again, Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years. He was the common father of mankind, and the rightful ruler and governor among men. The interest to see him, among the sons of men, must have been very great. And that interest, instead of diminishing, must have increased in intensity as century after century rolled by. Now to Adam the events of creation were almost those of personal observation. Many events of the sixth day passed under his own notice. And the Creator's act of resting upon the seventh day was to him a matter of personal knowledge. And when He placed His blessing upon that day because He had rested upon it, and when, by solemn appointment, He set it apart to a holy use, Adam stood as the representative of mankind to receive that divine precept, and to promulgate it to his posterity.

And we may be sure that Adam instructed his children, to the latest period of his life, in the events of the creation week, and in the sad history of the loss of Paradise. Nor can we justly question the fact that Adam, as the rightful governor of mankind, repeated, with all the solemnity of divine authority, the words of the Creator addressed to himself as the representative of the human family, when He appointed to a holy use the day on which He rested from the work of creation.

When Adam was six hundred and eighty-seven years of age, Enoch began his three hundred years' walk with God. And we do know from the New Testament that he had clear light even concerning the second advent of Jesus Christ.²⁹⁰ This man, as the contemporary of Adam through the greater part of his own godly life, was not ignorant of the events of the creation week, nor unaware that the Creator had set apart to a holy use the day of His rest from that work of infinite power. And he did not in this

²⁹⁰ *Jude* 14-15.

plainly-understood duty disobey the divine appointment, for it is said of him that...

Genesis 5

²² ...[he] walked with God.

And certain it is that an age of the world in which two such men as Adam and Enoch were contemporary for three hundred years, must have been an age wonderfully enlightened with the light of Heaven. Fifty-seven years after Adam had given his last counsels to his sons, God took Enoch to himself.

Hebrews 11

⁵ ...he...was not found, [says Paul,] because God had translated him.

The translation of Enoch made some stir in the world; and search was made for him, as it was afterward under like circumstances for Elijah. He was not found, for he had been taken to the presence of God.

But what an age was that for knowledge of divine truth, and especially for the knowledge of everything pertaining to the creation of the world. And still Paradise remained upon the earth. And as if the long life of Adam were not enough to instruct men in divine truth, they had Enoch for almost three hundred years of its closing period; and fifty-seven years after Adam's death God took Enoch to himself.

And it is easy to show that all the knowledge of divine truth possessed by the first man could be transmitted readily to that man who bears, in the Bible, the honored appellation of "the friend of God," and whose family God chose as the depositaries of His law and of His Sabbath.²⁹¹ For Adam lived till Lamech was fifty-six years of age. Lamech lived till Shem was ninety-three. And Shem lived till Abraham was a hundred and fifty years of age.

²⁹¹ 2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23.

Enoch lived upon earth till Methuselah was three hundred years of age. Methuselah lived till Shem was ninety-eight years old, and Shem, as we have seen, till Abraham was a hundred and fifty. Thus are we brought down even to the old age of Abraham. And when we see with what facility the knowledge of divine truth could be transmitted from Adam to Abraham, we may well believe that Abraham was ignorant of none of the great truths pertaining to the origin of all things. He certainly could not have been ignorant of the sanctification of the seventh day. And that he was not disobedient to the precepts of God's law, we have the direct testimony of the Most High, who says of him,

Genesis 26

⁵ Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

And of his family government he bears the following honorable testimony:

Genesis 18

¹⁹ I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.

Such was the family selected to be the depositaries of divine truth, and we shall next find the Sabbath of the Lord in the possession of this people as an ancient institution.

3. Entering of the Law

Original title: Why the Law, When it Entered, Came Only to the Hebrews

Romans 3

¹ What advantage has the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

² Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

The Law Existed Before Sinai

THE entrance of the law is that grand event which, according to *Romans* 5, took place in the days of Moses. But Paul takes great care to show that this entrance of the law was not the commencement of its existence, nor the beginning of man's obligation to obey it. He teaches us that the existence of death is proof that sin exists in the world. And he further instructs us that sin cannot be imputed to men, nor even exist itself, unless the law of God also exists. And thus the order of their existence is this:

1. The law, as God's rule of right;
2. Sin, which is the transgression of that law; and
3. Death, which is the consequence of forfeiting life by sin.

The existence of death from the time of Adam proves that sin has existed for that whole period; and the existence of sin from the fall of Adam shows that the law of God did exist prior to that event. And what is more, the universal prevalence of death, not only from Abraham till Moses, but from thence to the time when death itself shall cease in the lake of fire, is absolute proof,

1. That sin has existed with all mankind in all ages.
2. That during all this time the law of God has been in full force, and all mankind have been under obligation to govern their lives by it.

The entrance of the law, then, was not the beginning of its existence. It was rather the entrance of the Lawgiver to assert His rightful authority, and to proclaim in person the precepts of His

just law. It was the most majestic, grand, and awfully solemn, event in the annals of mankind. The God of Heaven descended with the thousands of His angels. The sight of His glory was like devouring fire; the trump of God sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, and then the Almighty spoke the ten precepts of His law.²⁹² Nothing can ever equal this event until the Son of God shall descend in the glory of His Father, and the same trump of God be heard again by the inhabitants of the earth.²⁹³

Such was the entrance of the law. Yet such was not and could not be the beginning of its authority. It is a law founded in the nature of things. It is simply an expression of the principles of right. It is the law of nature as written upon man's heart.²⁹⁴ Each duty enjoined in the law of God existed in man's uprightness, and in fact his uprightness consisted in his perfect conformity to these principles.²⁹⁵ But whatever may be said of the other nine precepts, the fourth commandment traces itself back to the creation of the heavens and the earth, and asserts its sacredness by reasons that are as old as the world.²⁹⁶

Not Only For the Jews

The law of God is older than sin, its deadly antagonist. It is as extensive in its jurisdiction as the race of mankind in whose hearts it exists by nature, written by their Creator.

But when the law of God entered in such majesty by the solemn proclamation of its great Author, it came directly to one people only. The voice of the trumpet must have been heard by other nations, perhaps by all mankind; the revelation of the Almighty in flaming fire must have been witnessed also by the nations of the world. Yet the voice of God was directly addressed to that people which He had delivered from Egyptian bondage by an outstretched hand. The Hebrew people were made the honored

²⁹² *Deuteronomy* 33:2; *Psalms* 68:17; *Exodus* 19:11, 16-19; 24:17; 20:1-18.

²⁹³ *Matthew* 16:27; 2 *Thessalonians* 1:7-8; 1 *Corinthians* 15:52.

²⁹⁴ *Romans* 2:13-15.

²⁹⁵ *Ecclesiastes* 7:29; 12:13.

²⁹⁶ *Exodus* 20:11.

recipients of His perfect law. And this one fact has been urged against the law of God as though it were fatal to its authority.

“The law was given to the people of Israel; therefore it related only to them.”

“The Sabbath of the fourth commandment was given to Israel, therefore the Sabbath is only a Jewish institution.”

Such is the reasoning of many persons at the present day. Yet neither the law nor the Sabbath have in their nature one element of a Jewish character. The law defines with precision the duties man owes to God, and to his fellow-men. And these pertain, not to one nation, nor to one age, but to all mankind in every age of the world. The Sabbath, of right, pertains to all who owe their existence to the six days’ work of creation.

Given to Those Who Would Receive It

But why came the law of God to one nation of mankind? The answer is short, direct and explicit. There was barely one nation that was loyal to the God of Heaven. All other nations had forgotten God, and were idolaters or atheists. The law of God entered to that nation alone which was loyal to Him, while all others were left to their own blindness and folly.

The knowledge of the Sabbath and of the law of God is clearly traceable from Adam, the head of the human family, to Abraham, the friend of God, as in a former discourse has been clearly shown. When we reach the time of Abraham we find circumcision first instituted by God.²⁹⁷ One principal design of this institution was to form a separating line between the family of Abraham and all the rest of the world. And why did God thus elect a single family, and give up all the rest of mankind? Was it because that He was the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles also? Was He an Abrahamic, or Hebraic, or Jewish, God?

²⁹⁷ *Genesis 17:9-14; John 7:22.*

It is certain that God was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the God of the Hebrews, or Israel.²⁹⁸ What occasioned this relation? A correct answer will really solve the question under consideration in this discourse. God gave himself to one family; viz., that of Abraham. Now it was either because no other family of mankind owed allegiance to God, or else because that this family alone rendered obedience to Him while all others worshiped false Gods. But nothing is more certain than that all nations were under solemn obligation to worship the God of Abraham and of the Hebrews. The jurisdiction of the Almighty, of right, extended over all men; but that jurisdiction was acknowledged only by the family of Abraham.

If this great fact be borne in mind we shall not find it difficult to understand why the oracles of God, and the Sabbath itself, were committed to this one people. The oracles of God are holy, spiritual, just and good.²⁹⁹ In their very nature they pertain to the whole family of man, for they define exactly the relations which exist between God and man; and man and his fellow-man. And so of the Sabbath institution. It is something designed of God to commemorate the creation of the heavens and the earth, and does, therefore, like every other part of God's law, pertain of right to all mankind. For the same reason that God gave himself to the Hebrew people, he gave them His law and His Sabbath.

But if all mankind needed the true God as much as the Hebrews, and if His law was the rule of right for the Gentiles as well as for the Israelites, and if the Sabbath was made for mankind at the beginning of our world, had God a right to confer such gifts upon one people and to leave all the rest of mankind to their own ways? Undoubtedly He had. There certainly is no injustice with God. But can His ways in this be justified at the bar of human reason? Let us see.

²⁹⁸ See *Exodus* 3:6, 18; 24:10.

²⁹⁹ *Romans* 7:12, 14.

God's Attempts To Work With Man

It appears that twice God had attempted to maintain His worship with the human family as a whole. First, with the family of Adam; second, with the family of Noah. Each time the attempt ended in disastrous failure. The family of Adam were, during the antediluvian period, favored with wonderful blessings from God. Yet, at the end of that period, only eight persons remained His devout worshipers, who were saved in the ark, while all the others were drowned by the flood.

Then God took the family of Noah as His heritage. But even the terrible lesson of the flood was, in a brief period, forgotten; and when we reach the time of Abraham, in the fourth century after that event, we find scarcely a righteous man, with the single exception of Abraham and those directly connected with Him. There remained, therefore, only one of two things for the God of Heaven to do: either to suffer righteousness to be extinguished in the earth, or to take this one family and separate it from the rest of mankind, and make them the depositaries of His law and His Sabbath, and take them to himself as His peculiar treasure.

This latter is exactly what He did. He therefore ordained circumcision to last during the period that the family of Abraham should remain as the sole depositaries of His law; and having thus set apart the family of Abraham, His friend, He gave to them His oracles.

Romans 3

¹ What advantage then has the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

² Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

God knew Abraham, that He would command His children and His household after Him; and that they would keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.³⁰⁰ The wisdom of God and the justice of God stand alike approved in the choice of Abra-

³⁰⁰ *Genesis* 18:19.

ham's family to be the depositaries of His oracles, the guardians of His Sabbath, and the servants of His cause. It was not because these were the only people who ought to worship the Creator of the heaven and the earth, and to reverence His Sabbath, and to obey His oracles. Far from this. These duties rest upon reasons which make them incumbent upon all the human race.

But God committed this treasure of divine truth to the family of Abraham because they alone were loyal to Him. It was not to the dishonor of the truth, as though it were fit only for one small nation of earth, that it was given to the Hebrews. Rather it was to the shame of the idolatrous and atheistic nations of earth, that they were all passed by as unworthy of the sacred treasure which God gave to the people of His choice. The Hebrew people were honored with great honor in the divine treasure committed to them; but that sacred deposit was not rendered Jewish by their guardianship over it, nor proved thereby to be of no importance to the Gentile world.

The Law in Relation to Adam's Sin and Christ's Death

Thus much concerning the law of God in the hands of the Hebrew people. Let us now consider, in conclusion, the bearing of the law of God upon the sin of Adam and the death of Christ.

Romans 5

²⁰ Moreover the law entered, that THE OFFENSE might abound.

What is meant by this term, "the offense"? It is plain that Adam's sin is intended. See the language of the previous verses:

¹² Wherefore as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world.

¹⁴ ...not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.

¹⁵ But not as the offense [of Adam], so also is the free gift. For if through the offense of one [Adam] many be dead...

¹⁶ And not as it was by one [Adam] that sinned...for the judgment was by one [Adam] to condemnation...

¹⁷ For if by one man's offense [*i.e.*, Adam's] death reigned by one, [Adam]...

¹⁸ By the offense of one, [Adam]...

¹⁹ By one man's disobedience, [*i.e.*, that of Adam]...

²⁰ The law entered, that the offense [of Adam] might abound.

"The offense" spoken of in these verses is thus seen to be the transgression of Adam, which made sinners of all the human race. Before the second Adam comes to die, the law must enter, to show the greatness of the first Adam's transgression.

What is meant by the term,

Romans 5

²⁰ ...that the offense might abound?

Did God send the law, in order that there might be more sin in the world? or that the awful guilt of sin might be revealed? Plainly He did not send His law to increase sin among men; for sin is that abominable thing which God hates. This is not the manner of causing the offense to abound. He caused the law to enter in order to reveal the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Let us compare several texts:

Romans 3

²⁰ For by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Romans 5

²⁰ Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound.

Romans 7

⁷ I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said, You shall not covet.

¹³ That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

These texts show the office of the law not to be the creation of sin, but the discovery of sin. It is not designed to increase the amount of sin, but to reveal the exceeding sinfulness of sin already existing. But how does the entrance of the law of God show the enormity of Adam's transgression?

1. It makes plain the fact that Adam sinned against the principles of the moral law. Its first great precept is the supreme love of

God.³⁰¹ And this kind of love is but another name for perfect obedience from the heart.³⁰² This greatest of all the commandments, Adam certainly violated.

The first of the ten lesser precepts of the law is the prohibition of other gods before the Lord. But the very motive set before Eve in the temptation was, that they themselves should be elevated to the rank of gods. It was, therefore, a most wicked revolt from their allegiance to God. If Adam had no hope of such a result from this sin, he certainly did violate this same precept in this very act of transgression; for he preferred the favor of his wife to the approbation of God. It was base ingratitude to God on the part of both.

God was Adam's only father. Yet Adam dishonored this exalted Father by breaking His express command for the sake of Eve, his wife. Certainly it was a plain case of violating the eighth commandment. It is possible for a man to rob God.³⁰³ God gave to Adam every tree of the garden but one. This, by express command, God reserved to himself. Adam dared to take of this which he knew was withheld from him by the express precept of its rightful owner, who was also his own Creator.

With Eve, *certainly*, and probably with Adam also, there was a palpable violation of the precept,

Exodus 20

¹⁷ You shall not covet.

She longed for the fruit as something...

Genesis 3

⁶ ...good for food,...pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise.

Our first parents rebelled against God. They lost their own innocence, and became possessed of a sinful nature, so that all who

³⁰¹ *Matthew* 22:36-38.

³⁰² *1 John* 5:3.

³⁰³ *Malachi* 3:8-9.

spring from them are of necessity by nature sinful beings. They brought death upon themselves and upon all their posterity. Surely, in all this, the law of God reveals the greatness of that first transgression. To use the expressive language of Paul,

Romans 5

²⁰ The law entered, that the offence might abound.

2. The entrance of the law makes the greatness of that first offense to appear also in the fact that it discovers the universal existence of the carnal mind, which is due solely to the fall of Adam.³⁰⁴

3. And finally, the entrance of the law reveals the magnitude of Adam's transgression, in that it furnishes a perfect mirror to discover every kind of sin, and shows all to originate in that evil nature which Adam, by his offense, entailed upon his whole posterity.

Such was the work of the law. It revealed man's lost condition. It showed the greatness of Adam's offense, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin as everywhere existing among men. But as Paul lays such great stress on what one man, *viz.*, the first Adam, did in introducing sin and death into the world, so does he also lay equal stress upon what one other man, *viz.*, Adam the second, has done to bring righteousness and life to the wretched sons of men. Observe what he says of this other Adam:

Romans 5

¹⁵ The gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, has abounded unto many.

¹⁷ They which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ By the righteousness of one [Christ] the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

¹⁹ By the obedience of one [Christ] shall be made righteous.

³⁰⁴ *Romans 8.*

Such is the wonderful series of antitheses between Adam and Christ, presented in *Romans* 5. The first Adam, by his transgression, brought sin and death upon all his race. The second Adam, by His obedience and His death, brings righteousness and life to all who obey Him.³⁰⁵

It is certain that the sin of Adam was in reality the violation of the moral law; and that the death of Christ is for the purpose of making such sin-offering as that law can accept. If the law of God entered in awful majesty to show the greatness of that one offense which brought death and all our woes into the world, then it is undeniable that in reality that law has been the rule of right from the beginning; and that sin is the same thing in all ages of the world. The law could not show the true character of Adam's transgression if its principles were not obligatory in the days of Adam. The entrance of the law was to show the extent of the transgression of mankind. Adam's sin was the trunk of the grand tree of iniquity, and the sins of his posterity the branches of that tree.

The entrance of the law showed the awful wickedness of man, and revealed, in the clearest light, the purity of God's character. It also revealed the immensity of the task undertaken by the Son of God, the second Adam, to save men from their sins, and yet to preserve untarnished the justice and the veracity of God as revealed in His law. And this He wrought in such a manner that though the law caused sin to abound by revealing it in all its length and breadth, the grace of God did much more abound in the great sacrificial offering of the Son of God in tasting death for every man. The law of God caused the death of the first Adam because he became its transgressor; it caused the death of the second Adam because He took upon himself the sin of the world. Beyond all dispute, the law of God extends from Adam the first to Adam the second.

³⁰⁵ *Hebrews* 5:9.

The law under which Adam was placed, and which was transgressed by him, has never been repealed, and, further than this, has not expired by limitation. No one, perhaps, will attempt to show where it has been repealed; but probably most persons suppose that it ran out by limitation in the days of Adam; and that we have nothing to do with it; yet we have the most palpable proof that that law still exists. Adam's transgression of that law caused the forfeiture of his life and that of his posterity. And, in consequence, the sentence of the law has been inexorably carried out upon every generation of mankind, and is now being executed every day throughout the wide world.

That this is true reasoning, and that this law under which the lives of men have been forfeited, is what Paul calls the law of God, shall now be proved from his own words:

1 Corinthians 15

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

Death is here personified, as if it were a living monster engaged in the destruction of our race. The sting with which it inflicts the deadly blow, is sin. The strength of sin to destroy is derived from the law of God.

In other words, death is inflicted upon men because their lives have been by sin forfeited to the law of God. The existence of death proves the prior existence of sin. The existence of sin proves that the law of God did previously exist. And finally, the entrance of death in consequence of the sin of Adam, shows that the law of God existed from the beginning; and that it is by its just sentence that death has thus far cut down all our race.

4. Sabbath and the Giving of Manna

Original title: The Sabbath at the Fall of the Manna

Exodus 16

⁴ Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

⁵ And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

THE first fall of the manna in the wilderness constitutes a memorable epoch in the history of the Sabbath. The origin of the Sabbath is dated at this point by all who hold it to be a mere Jewish institution. But all who believe that the Sabbath was made for the human family, date its origin at the close of creation.

Here is a very wide difference, certainly. One of the parties must be in serious error. There are, however, several tests by which we may determine where the truth lies.

1. Was the law of the Sabbath in existence before the fall of the manna? or was it enacted on that occasion, and to meet that very circumstance?
2. Was the violation of the Sabbath a sin which Israel here, for the first time, committed? or was it one of which they had long been guilty?
3. Was the Sabbath instituted to commemorate the fall of the manna? or was the fall of the manna made to conform to the sacredness of the Sabbath?
4. Does the Sabbath commemorate the flight of Israel out of Egypt? or is it a memorial of the creation of the heavens and the earth?

The answers to these questions must determine, beyond all reasonable dispute, which class is right respecting the origin of the

Sabbath. And certainly the questions themselves do admit of definite answers.

1. Origin of the Sabbath

Was the law of the Sabbath in existence before the fall of the manna? or was it enacted on that occasion, and to meet that very circumstance?

a) When God announced to Moses His purpose to feed the people with bread from heaven, he referred to His law as an existing code. He said that He would prove the people, whether they would walk in His law, or not. When they were subjected to the proof, it turned directly upon the observance of the Sabbath.³⁰⁶ It is certain, therefore, that God had a law in existence before the fall of the manna, and that one precept of that law required the observance of the Sabbath.

b) When the people had violated the Sabbath by attempting to gather manna upon it, God said,

Exodus 16

²⁸ How long do you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws?

This shows with certainty, first, that God had commandments and laws at that very time; and, second, that one of those commandments related to the observance of the Sabbath.

c) It is to be specially noticed that although the 16th chapter of *Exodus*, in many ways, recognizes the sacredness of the Sabbath, it contains no precept expressly enjoining its observance till after the people had violated it. Thus we are clearly taught that the law of God relative to the Sabbath did not originate in that chapter nor at that time.

d) The existence of the law of God from the beginning has been established by proofs which can never be invalidated. And, moreover, the existence in particular of the law of the Sabbath from

³⁰⁶ See *Exodus* 16:4-5, 22-29.

the time that the Creator set apart the seventh day in Eden in memory of His own rest on that day, has been plainly proved. These four points do, therefore, certainly determine the fact that the law of the Sabbath existed before the fall of the manna.

2. Violation of the Sabbath

Was the violation of the Sabbath a sin which Israel here, for the first time, committed? or was it one of which they had long been guilty?

The words of the Lord to Moses very clearly answer this question. When the people went out to gather manna on the Sabbath, the Lord said,

Exodus 16

²⁸ *How long do you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws?*

This language does certainly imply the long-continued violation of the Sabbath. It is certain that God was particularly testing them with reference to it.³⁰⁷

The evidence already adduced to show that the law did not originate at this time, proves that they had long been under obligation to observe it. But when in Egyptian bondage, they could plead, as a body, the difficulty, and perhaps impossibility in the case of many, of observing this sacred day.

Now that God had broken their yoke, and changed their condition from that of servitude to that of freedom, and had begun to feed them from Heaven in such a manner that every facility for observing the Sabbath was now theirs, He could say of His *providence*, for He had done nothing by way of adding to His *law* on the point, that He had *given* them His Sabbath. It is in evident allusion to the fact that, though their difficulties had been great in time past in the observance of the Sabbath, and had been, therefore, some sort of excuse, now such excuse did not exist.

³⁰⁷ *Exodus 16:4.*

When, therefore, the people were thus subjected to the test, to prove them respecting the Sabbath, and a portion of them continued to violate it, though God had made everything perfectly ready to their hand, He uses the strong language already quoted respecting their long-continued disobedience. We may be certain, therefore, that this was not their first transgression of the Sabbath law.

3. Relationship of the Manna to the Sabbath

Was the Sabbath instituted to commemorate the fall of the manna? or was the fall of the manna made to conform to the sacredness of the Sabbath? Or, to state this question in a different form, Did the seventh day become the Sabbath by virtue of the fact that the manna did not fall that day? or did the manna cease from falling on that day because it was the sacred rest day of the Lord?

Certainly, it makes a very great difference which way this question is answered. And yet there can really be no serious difference as to the true answer. Either the cessation of the manna on the seventh day made that day to become the Sabbath; in which case it follows that the Sabbath is a memorial of the fall of the manna; or, the existing sanctity of the seventh day caused the Author of the Sabbath to withhold the manna on that day. In this case, the Sabbath is proved to be more ancient than the fall of the manna.

But we do know that the Sabbath does not allude to the six days' fall of the manna, and the cessation thereof on the seventh day,³⁰⁸ but to the six days' work of creation, and the rest of the Creator on the seventh.

It is not recorded that at the fall of the manna God rested upon the seventh day, nor that He blessed the day at that time, nor that He did then sanctify it. But all these things were done at the close of the creative work. It does, therefore, follow that the institution of the Sabbath did not originate at the fall of the manna, but did

³⁰⁸ See *Genesis* 2:1-3; *Exodus* 20:8-11; 31:17; *Hebrews* 4:4.

originate at the creation of the heavens and the earth; and that the seventh day did not become the Sabbath in consequence of the cessation of the manna on that day; but that the manna itself ceased on that day because of the existing sanctity of the Sabbath.

4. Relationship of the Exodus to the Sabbath

Does the Sabbath commemorate the flight of Israel out of Egypt? or is it a memorial of the creation of the heavens and the earth? The following reasons are assigned to prove that the Sabbath commemorates the flight of Israel from Egypt:

a) The Sabbath originated in the wilderness of Sin, about one month after the flight out of Egypt.

b) When Moses, in *Deuteronomy* 5, repeats the ten commandments, he closes the fourth precept with these words:

Deuteronomy 5

¹⁵ And remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord your God brought you out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

Our opponents, therefore, claim that the Sabbath is a memorial of the flight out of Egypt.

c) God said to Moses respecting the Sabbath:

Exodus 31

¹⁷ It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.³⁰⁹

The Sabbath, in the view of our opponents, is therefore a Jewish institution, made for them, beginning with their flight out of Egypt, designed to commemorate that event, and expiring with the call of the Gentiles.

³⁰⁹ See also verse 13, and *Ezekiel* 20:12-20.

Such are the grounds for asserting that the Sabbath is a memorial of the flight of Israel out of Egypt. Let us now weigh them one by one.

a) The first of these is of no account, simply because it is not founded in fact. It has been shown that the Sabbath originated at the close of the work of creation, and did not originate at the fall of the manna. This fact is not only fatal to the first of these three reasons, but to all three of them. For if the Sabbath of the Lord was made at creation, it is not a memorial of an event that did not happen till twenty-five hundred years forward.³¹⁰

b) Nor does the second reason possess any real force, even though the fact that the Sabbath originated long before the flight out of Egypt, be left out of the account. For these words of Moses are the last which he utters in behalf of the Sabbath, and are his final appeal to that people who had so generally violated it during the forty years he had led them in the wilderness.³¹¹ It would seem very strange, if the Sabbath was ordained to be a memorial of the flight of Israel from Egypt, that Moses should not tell them of that fact till forty years afterward.

But it does not appear that he made such a statement even then. One of two views must be taken of his words. Either they were designed to teach that the Sabbath commemorates the deliverance out of Egypt, or they were simply an appeal to their gratitude for such mercies, that they should honor God in the observance of His Sabbath. It is in our power to test this thing by quoting, from the same book, other words of Moses, which form an exact parallel to the text under consideration. Thus Moses says:

³¹⁰ PP Editor's Note: In a wider sense, the Sabbath commemorates the creative power of God, whether it is exercised in creation, emancipation, or redemption. Every manifestation of God's creative power is commemorated by the Sabbath. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, therefore the Sabbath remains as a commemoration of that work also, as shown in Christ's resting in the grave after finishing His work of sacrifice on the cross. See *Living Righteousness and the Sabbath of God*, by F. T. Wright.

³¹¹ See *Ezekiel* 20:13-24.

Deuteronomy 24

¹⁷ You shall not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge:

¹⁸ But you shall remember that you were a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you thence; therefore I command you to do this thing.

These words relative to not oppressing the widow and the fatherless, are the same that Moses uses concerning the Sabbath. If they prove in the one case that the Sabbath is memorial of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, they prove in the other that acts of justice and mercy toward the widow and the fatherless, are also a memorial of the flight out of Egypt!

Again, if they prove respecting the Sabbath that it was not obligatory upon men till the deliverance from Egypt, they prove in the other case that justice and mercy toward the widow and orphan was not a part of man's duty till after the Israelites left Egypt!

But such conclusions need only to be stated, in order to show how unreasonable are the premises that lead to them. There is another view to be taken, and one that is strictly logical, reasonable, and just. These words were, in each case, an appeal to the gratitude of a rebellious people. God had conferred on them signal mercies; He asked them to show, by their obedience toward himself, and their pity toward their fellow men, that they remembered this.

c) But the third reason for asserting that the Sabbath is a memorial of the flight from Egypt, or at least for claiming that it originated after that event, is found in what is said in *Exodus* 31, and *Ezekiel* 20, relative to the Sabbath as a sign between God and Israel. Yet the conclusion does not follow from the premises. Why was the Sabbath a sign between God and Israel?

Why the Sabbath Was Given to Israel

The first important fact is, that Israel was the only people that God had upon the earth. The duty to be the people of God was

not something peculiar to Israel; but obedience to that duty distinguished them from the rest of the world.

While the Hebrews worshiped the God that made the heavens and the earth, the nations around them worshiped false gods of every kind. It was perfectly appropriate and suitable to the case that God should designate His Sabbath as a sign between himself and the only people that acknowledged the Creator of the heavens and earth. The sign expressed their faith in the God that made the heavens and the earth, as distinguished from all false gods. It also expressed their faith that God made the heavens and earth in six days, and rested on the seventh, and that He hallowed that day in memory of that fact.

Indeed, the very words in which God appointed the Sabbath to be a sign between Israel and himself, cited their minds to the creation for the origin of the institution:

Exodus 31

¹⁷ It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: *for in six days* the Lord made heaven and earth, and on *the seventh day* He rested and was refreshed.

And thus the grand feature of the Sabbath, that fitted it to be a sign between God and the only people that acknowledged Him, is the fact that the Sabbath points to God as the Creator, and traces itself back to the close of the creation week for its own origin. The reasons therefore assigned for the assertion that the Sabbath was a memorial of the flight from Egypt, are found to be utterly destitute of any evidence for their support. That the Sabbath does not commemorate the flight of the children of Israel from Egypt, can be clearly shown.

a) It has been proved to originate at the creation of the heavens and the earth, and to be a memorial of that event.³¹²

³¹² *Exodus* 20:8-11.

b) There is nothing in resting on the seventh day of each week to commemorate a flight at midnight on the fifteenth day of the first month.³¹³

c) God did give to the children of Israel a twofold memorial of the events of their deliverance out of Egypt: the passover and the feast of unleavened bread.

- The passover, on the fourteenth day of the first month, to commemorate the fact that the angel of God did pass over the Israelites on that day when he slew the first-born of the Egyptians; and
- The feast of unleavened bread, on the fifteenth day of the same, to commemorate the fact that when they fled out of Egypt on that day it was in great haste, and with their bread unleavened.³¹⁴ This memorial pointed the children of Israel back to the deliverance out of Egypt, just as the memorial of the Sabbath points its observers back to the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the Creator's rest from the same.

d) Those who assert that the Sabbath was designed to be a weekly commemoration of the flight of Israel out of Egypt, assert that it originated at the fall of the manna, a little more than a month after they left Egypt. But if it is a weekly commemoration of that event, why was it deferred for five weeks before being appointed? That is very unlike the work of God. We say that the Sabbath is a memorial of the work of creation, and we show that no sooner was that work finished, and the rest of the Creator an accomplished fact, than the Sabbath was set apart to a holy use.

It would be much more proper to say that the Sabbath is a memorial of the fall of the manna, than of the flight out of Egypt, as, on the view held by our opponents, there was no Sabbath till that point; yet there should have been, at least five weeks earlier, if it was a fit thing in the mind of God that there should be a

³¹³ *Exodus 12:29-42; Numbers 33:3.*

³¹⁴ *Exodus 12, 13.*

weekly memorial of that event. God never delays to do His work when the reasons for that work once exist.

The 16th of *Exodus* does not give us the origin of the Sabbath. It treats the sacred rest-day of the Lord as an existing institution, and not as something which came into existence at the fall of the manna. But it does do two things that are of great importance:

1. It shows that God has a definite day for His Sabbath; and,
2. That He took care that it should be definitely known by His people.

The fall of the manna for six days, and its cessation on the seventh, left no chance for doubt as to what day was His Sabbath. God proposed, by the giving of the manna, to prove His people, whether they would walk in His law or no. He gave them bread from heaven. They had only to gather each day what God sent them.

And, whereas they had been in cruel servitude, and in circumstances of deep distress, now their yoke was broken from off their necks, and they were God's free men. The fall of the manna gave them every facility for the observance of the Lord's rest-day.

And, whereas God proposed to prove them, in this new and changed situation, whether they would now observe His Sabbath, He gave them no precept respecting it till they had by their own action on the sixth day shown a purpose to prepare for the Sabbath.

Yet some on the seventh day persisted in the violation of the Sabbath. The fall of the manna began God's work of proving His people respecting the Sabbath. That work continued during the whole period of forty years. And during all that time the Hebrew people did, to a very alarming extent, continue to violate the Sabbath of the Lord.³¹⁵

³¹⁵ See *Ezekiel* 20.

The 16th of *Exodus* shows that the day of preparation for the Sabbath was not a mere Jewish tradition, but something which God himself first enjoined upon that people.³¹⁶

This chapter connects the record in *Genesis* 2:1-3, and the statement of facts given in the fourth commandment, in a most wonderful manner. *Genesis* 2:1-3, gives the sanctification of the seventh day for time to come, in memory of the Creator's rest on that day. It therefore reaches forward into the distant future.

The fourth commandment, given twenty-five hundred years after that event, traces its sacredness back to the creation of the world. The 16th of *Exodus*, standing between these two, presents us the definite seventh day, pointing it out by the fall of the manna. It contains no act of making it holy, on the part of the Lord. It recognizes its sacredness; it treats its observance as a matter of existing obligation. Surely, those who contend that the Sabbath originated with the events of this chapter, do greatly err.

³¹⁶ *Exodus* 16:5, 23, 29.

5. The Giving of the Law

Advantages of the Jews

Romans 9

⁴ Who are Israelites; to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.

THE things here enumerated as pertaining to the Israelites are worthy of our particular attention. These are said to be,

1. The adoption;
2. The glory;
3. The covenants;
4. The giving of the law;
5. The service of God;
6. The promises.

And if we quote the next verse, which reads:

⁵ Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

—we shall be able to make the following important addition to this list of Hebrew “advantages”:

7. Whose are the fathers;
8. Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came.

Those who speak derisively of the moral law as a Jewish code, because “committed” or “given” into the hands of the Hebrews at a certain time, and for a certain period, would do well to study this list of things which “pertain” to the Hebrew people quite as much as does the giving of the law. Here is,

1. The adoption, *i.e.*, the choice of Abraham and his posterity through Isaac, to be the heritage of God, while all other nations were left to the false gods of their own choosing;

2. The glory, as manifested in God's wonderful revelation of His glory to the patriarchs, to Moses, to the judges, the prophets, and the people of Israel;
3. The covenants, *i.e.*, the old and new covenants, both of which are made with this people;³¹⁷
4. The giving of the law upon Mount Sinai;
5. The service of God in the priesthood, and in the worship which He accepted at the hands of this people;
6. The exceeding great and precious promises which were made by God unto the fathers;
7. The fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob;
8. And lastly, what is indeed a very great honor of them, "as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."

We can now appreciate the language of Paul,

Romans 3

¹ What advantage then has the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

² Much every way; chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

After reading his enumeration of the eight distinguished blessings and honors conferred by the God of Heaven upon the Hebrew people, we may say with Paul that the advantage pertaining to the circumcision was "MUCH EVERY WAY." But the Spirit of God led Paul to distinguish, among these eight "advantages" which the Israelites possessed over the Gentiles, that one which is greatest. And here is the manner in which he does this:

² ...*chiefly* because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

The greatest of all these advantages conferred on ancient Israel was, therefore,

³¹⁷ See *Jeremiah* 31:31-32; *Hebrews* 8:8-9.

Romans 9

⁴ ...the giving of the law.

This grand event took place at Mount Sinai, about twenty-five hundred years after the creation. When the law thus “entered,” it was by the personal descent of the Lawgiver with the thousands of His angels in flaming fire, and its proclamation was ushered in by the sound of the trump of God.³¹⁸ The Almighty spoke His law in ten precepts. The fourth precept of the law reads thus:

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor and do all your work:

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

This precept has one very remarkable feature. It asserts its authority from the time that God blessed and sanctified His rest-day in Eden. Man’s obligation to observe this precept rests upon what God did at the close of His work of creation. Even the statement that God hallowed His rest-day, is equivalent to saying that He appointed it to a holy use. And that original appointment is the fourth commandment in the form in which it existed in Eden.

We may therefore assert, without fear of reasonable contradiction, that the law of the Sabbath was in full force from Adam to Moses; and those who during this entire period kept God’s commandments and walked with Him in holiness, were, of necessity, observers of this hallowed rest-day of the Lord.

³¹⁸ *Exodus 19; Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalm 68:17.*

What Paul has designated in the book of *Romans* as the “giving of the law,”³¹⁹ or the entrance of the law,³²⁰ or the committing of the oracles of God to the circumcision,³²¹ was not, therefore, the commencement of existence to the law of God. Indeed, no dispute exists concerning nine of the commandments. Idolatry, and blasphemy, and murder, have never been acts against which God has had no law. And so of all the nine commandments. But it is a remarkable fact that the fourth commandment, concerning which all the dispute in this case exists, is the only one of the ten which asserts its own existence from the beginning of the world.

Seventh Part of Time Theory

At the present day we have a remarkable spectacle presented to us by the religious world.

1. The authority of the fourth commandment is very generally acknowledged.
2. But almost the entire body of professed Christians who thus acknowledge the authority of the law of God, observe, as the Sabbath, a day not enjoined in the commandment.

Here is, indeed, a very palpable contradiction between the theory and the practice of the so-called Christian world. Yet a way has been devised by which it is supposed that the two are made to harmonize. Very few people know the date of this discovery, or even the name of the discoverer. Indeed, the most of those who quiet their consciences by this convenient doctrine, suppose that it is as old as the law of God, and that it is really a part of the faith once delivered to the saints. Here, then, is the doctrine which is now almost universally accepted:

“The fourth commandment enjoins the observance of one day in seven, but not the definite seventh day.”

³¹⁹ *Romans* 9:4.

³²⁰ *Romans* 5:20.

³²¹ *Romans* 3:2.

This important doctrine was first announced to the world in the year 1595, by Dr. Nicholas Bound, of Norton, in the county of Suffolk, England.³²² It soon found general acceptance in the religious world; for it enabled men to observe the first day of the week, and yet to keep a commandment which everyone had previously supposed required the observance of the Creator's rest-day. It was welcomed everywhere by the observers of the first-day Sabbath, for it appeared to show that they were obeying the fourth commandment, a thing which previously they had not even imagined to be true.

But let us consider this modern explanation of the law of God. The fourth commandment, according to this interpretation, enjoins the observance of "one day in seven, but not the definite seventh day."

Is this doctrine true or false? It ought to be true, inasmuch as almost every one believes in it, and all persons who keep the first day of the week depend upon this "seventh-part-of-time theory" as the means of satisfying their own consciences for the serious difference between first-day observance and the letter of the fourth commandment.

No one claims that the commandment actually says, "one day in seven, and no day in particular." Indeed, no one ever taught such a doctrine till the year 1595. Up to that time every one supposed it to require the observance of the very day of the Creator's rest. And, in fact, it is by no means strange that such an idea should have prevailed respecting this precept, inasmuch as the very letter of the commandment does necessarily teach it.

There is not one indefinite expression contained in this precept. It does not say, "one seventh part of time;" it does not say, "a seventh day;" it does not say, "a Sabbath after six days of labor." Such language is constantly used by men respecting the commandment, but never used in it. The indefiniteness is all in the mind of the expositor.

³²² Coleman's *Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, Chap. 26, Sec. 2.

But it does say in plain terms,

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember *the Sabbath day*, to keep *it* holy;

¹⁰ *The seventh day is the Sabbath* of the Lord your God: *in it* you shall not do any work;

¹¹ In six days the Lord made heaven and earth,...and rested *the seventh day*:...the Lord blessed *the Sabbath day*, and hallowed *it*.

There is something to be remembered; it is not the sabbatic institution, but “the Sabbath *day*.” What does this term signify? It signifies literally the rest-day. Whose rest-day is it? The commandment answers this question:

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath [or rest-day] of the Lord your God.

But how did the Lord ever happen to have a rest-day? The commandment answers this question also:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth,...and rested on the seventh day.

But what of all that? How does that indicate any obligation on our part respecting that rest-day? The commandment answers this question also:

¹¹ ...wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

This word, “hallowed,” is the same in the Hebrew, as the word rendered “sanctified” in *Genesis* 2:3. It signifies, in that language, just what hallowed and sanctified signify in English, *i.e.*, “to set apart to a holy use.”

The fourth commandment does, therefore, expressly enjoin the observance of the day of the Creator’s rest. We are to keep that day holy which He himself blessed and hallowed. But that work did not relate to an indefinite portion of time, or to an indefinite seventh day. It related only to the day of His rest.

Nor is the rest-day of the Lord something indefinite in its signification. The Creator employed six days in the work of creation.

The seventh day He rested from all His work. This, His rest-day, He set apart to a holy use. Now it is impossible to confound the day of the Creator's rest with any one of the days on which He wrought in the work of creation.

Nor is the rest-day of the Lord something that the people who listened to the fourth commandment could not identify. The manna had been falling several weeks. And there stood the Sabbath of the Lord each time unmistakably identified. Six days of manna, and one day in which no manna fell, could not otherwise than establish two great facts with the children of Israel:

1. That the commandment did not mean one day in seven, but the definite seventh day.
2. That it was possible to determine with perfect certainty that definite seventh day on which the Creator rested. For the commandment plainly enjoins the day of the Creator's rest; and the fall of the manna left no possible chance to dispute what day this was.

In fact, the definite character of the fourth commandment is established on yet another ground. That precept does not aim, as its principal object, to secure rest for man from wearisome toil; nor yet to secure merely a stated day of weekly worship. Where either of these objects the chief or primary object of the Law-giver, we might well reason that there was no importance to one day of the seven above another.

But the commandment has another object in view. It is the celebration of a memorial. There is something to be remembered. That something is the rest-day of the Lord. The reason for that remembrance is that we may keep in mind the fact that God is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Hence it is that a definite day, the day of the Creator's rest, was hallowed by Him, to be observed by all His creatures, in grateful acknowledgment of the fact that they owe their existence to Him. We cannot change the day, nor render the commandment indefinite, without destroying

its character as a memorial of the creation of the heavens and the earth.

Nor is there any lack of distinctness as to the day of the Sabbath in the New Testament. The gospels do each plainly distinguish the Sabbath as the last day of the week, in that they speak of the day following as the first day of the week.³²³

But the language of *Luke* is peculiarly worthy of our notice, inasmuch as it makes distinct reference to the commandment. We learn that those who kept the Sabbath day according to the commandment, observed the day preceding the first day of the week. Compare *Luke* 23:56; 24:1. Then it is certain that they kept the seventh day of the week in keeping the day designated in the commandment. And as that commandment enjoins the observance of *the seventh day*, and as the New Testament, in recording the observance of that day according to the commandment, makes it come on the seventh day of the week, it is evident that the seventh day of the commandment and the seventh day of the New Testament week are identical.

Finally, the measurement of time by weeks is a conclusive argument for the definite seventh day. The week is not a natural or providential measurement of time, like the day, or month, or year. It is measured by divine appointment in commemoration of God's rest on the seventh day. Weeks exist in consequence of the sabbatic institution. The last day, therefore, of each week is the Sabbath of the Lord. This divine arrangement originated at the close of the creation week, by God's act of appointing the seventh day to a holy use in memory of His own rest upon that day. And the week thus ordained has come down to us, its close each time being marked by the rest-day of the Creator.

Summary

The law of God was given to the Hebrew people. In that law is the precept which enjoins the observance of the sacred day of the

³²³ *Matthew* 28:1; *Mark* 16:1-2; *Luke* 23:56; 24:1; *John* 19:31, 42; 20:1.

Creator's rest. The law and the Sabbath were not rendered Jewish by being thus intrusted to the hands of that people. Indeed, if we object to the law of God on this ground, then we must, as Paul shows in *Romans* 9:4-5, disclaim all part in the new covenant; for that, as well as the old one, was made with the Hebrew people; we must exclude ourselves from the promises made to the fathers, for they were Hebrews; and we must even decline to accept of Christ as our Saviour, because, as concerning the flesh, Christ came of the Jews. Surely, the law of God and the Sabbath were in good company when they were associated with these inestimable blessings which were conferred on the Hebrew race.

Certainly, we have nothing to boast of in the fact that we are Gentiles by nature. If we are the people of God, we belong now, ourselves, to Israel. If God has preserved to us the knowledge of His Sabbath and His law by means of the Hebrew people during all the time that all our Gentile ancestors went astray after false gods, let us not boast ourselves against the oracles of God, nor against that people who were for a time their depositaries. We may now share in the blessings of the law of God, His promises, His new covenant, and His Sabbath. Let us not despise these inestimable blessings.

6. The Sabbath in the Old Testament

Mark 2

²⁷ And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:

²⁸ Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

Foundation of the Sabbath

THE Sabbath does not pertain to one dispensation, merely, but to all. It is not peculiar to the Edenic, or antediluvian, or patriarchal, or Mosaic, or Christian, age. It does not pertain to men as Jews or Gentiles, as sinners, or as saints. It belongs, exclusively, neither to man's innocence, nor to his state of guilt; no, nor even to the period of his final recovery. It covers all time; it embraces all races of mankind. It begins with the first man; it lives with man after he becomes immortal. It commemorates the creation of the heavens and the earth, and shall, therefore, last while heaven and earth endure.

It was made for man. There was, therefore, a time when it was made, and certain acts by which it was made. There was also One who made the Sabbath. It was the same One who also made the heaven and the earth. As the act of creation marked the beginning of the first week, so the making of the Sabbath fitly brought that week to a close. Three acts entered into God's establishment of the sabbatic institution:

1. He rested on the seventh day.
2. He blessed the day.
3. He sanctified it.

These last two acts were wrought because He had rested upon it. No one disputes that the Creator's rest was on the day succeeding the six days of creation. He rested on the *seventh* day. That He did not defer the blessing and sanctification of the seventh day till the time of Moses, is shown,

1. Because this does violence to the narrative in *Genesis* 2:1-3.

2. Because there is not the least trace of such a work on the part of the Lord in *Exodus* 16; for everything in that chapter indicates that the Sabbath was an institution which had been in existence from some previous time.
3. But what is still more definite in fixing the time of this blessing and sanctification of the seventh day is this decisive fact: God did this to the seventh day because He had rested upon it.

The reason existed when the rest of the Creator was complete. And nothing can be more certain than that God acts without delay whenever the reason for His action exists.

Made for Man

God having used the seventh day in rest, man must never use it in labor. No sooner, therefore, had God rested, than He set apart the day for man to do the like. God's rest was to lay the foundation for a divine institution. Man's rest was to commemorate God's. The rest of God was from the work of creation. Man's rest is in grateful commemoration of the Creator's work.

The foundation of the Sabbath being laid by God's act of resting on the seventh day, two further acts were necessary on His part, in order to give it complete form. It was necessary to put His blessing upon the day, so that all who would use it as He should bid them, might share that blessing.

And lastly, it was necessary to give a precept concerning the day. God had rested upon the day; He had for that reason placed His blessing upon it. Now He must bid man use this day for sacred purposes only, that he may commemorate the great Creator's rest. And so the record tells us that God sanctified the day of his rest, *i.e.*, He set it apart, or appointed it, to a holy use. And thus we have the Sabbath made by God's rest and blessing, and set apart by God's appointment.

Its observance was, therefore, certainly incumbent upon the first Adam in the garden of God. And this fact is made very ap-

parent by the text at the head of this discourse. In the original Greek, the definite article is used each time in connection with the noun, *man*. Thus we read:

Mark 2

²⁷ The Sabbath was made for *the* man [Adam], and not *the* man [Adam] for the Sabbath:

²⁸ Therefore the Son of *the* man [Adam] is Lord also of the Sabbath.

Here are the two Adams brought into very close relationship. The Sabbath, being given to the first Adam in Eden when he was the head of the human family, formed no part of any typical or ceremonial code, but did constitute a part of that existing arrangement of perfection that needed no change, and contemplated none.

The second Adam is the Lord of the Sabbath. And well He may be; for in His divine nature, as the Son of God, He was with the Father when the Sabbath was made. Indeed, God, the Father, made the worlds by Him.³²⁴ Our divine Redeemer was, therefore, directly concerned in the institution of the Sabbath of Eden.

And Adam the first having forfeited his place as head of the family of man, the second Adam is ordained of God to fill it. So He is both the observer and the Lord of the Sabbath. He was concerned, as the Son of God, in its institution; He is concerned, as the Son of Man, in its perfect observance.

We have seen in a former discourse that the law of God takes hold of each Adam. Here we see the same in the case of the Sabbath. It began with Adam the first, and it shall endure as long as the reign of Adam the second. But the existence of the Sabbath in the future kingdom of God will be more particularly noticed in the conclusion of this discourse.

³²⁴ *John* 1:1-2; *Ephesians* 3:9; *Colossians* 1:16; *Hebrews* 1:2.

The Fall of the Manna

The fall of the manna is a remarkable event in the history of the Sabbath. It attests the fact that the Sabbath is not an indefinite, but a definite, day. It is a providential testimony to the fact that the knowledge of the true seventh day had been preserved; for there could be no mistaking, when the manna so plainly declared the truth in the case, that a certain day was the Sabbath, and the other six days were not. And it is to be observed that the people have the right reckoning of the week; for of their own accord, without direction given them so to do, till after they had themselves acted, they gathered a double portion on the sixth day in anticipation of the Sabbath.³²⁵

When, therefore, the following month, they reached Mount Sinai, and, after solemn preparation, heard the voice of God in the proclamation of the ten commandments, they were well prepared to appreciate the words of the fourth precept. As the commandment recited the events of the creation week, and bade them observe, in a sacred manner, the seventh day because of what God did to that day at the close of the work of creation, they could understand beyond all doubt what day of the seven that was.

Three miracles in the case of the manna did each week, for the space of forty years, attest the sacredness of the Sabbath, and definitely point out the day which they should honor in obedience to God's commandment. These were,

1. A double portion on the sixth day.
2. None on the seventh.
3. The preservation over the Sabbath of that gathered on the sixth day.

The Ten Commandments

Shortly after the ten commandments had been so solemnly proclaimed from Sinai by the voice of the Law-giver, He called Moses up into the mount to receive His law written in ten command-

³²⁵ *Exodus* 16.

ments upon two tables of stone.³²⁶ God first gave to Moses the plan of the sanctuary, and the ark, and then at the end of forty days' time, gave him the tables of stone to be placed in the ark, and that to be kept in the most holy place of the sanctuary.³²⁷

When Moses came down from the mount, behold the people had made them a golden calf, and were worshiping before it. Then Moses, in his distress, broke the tables, acting in this, as it appears, under a divine impulse.³²⁸ Then Moses caused the leading idolaters to be slain, and next asked God to pardon the sin of the remainder.

And God bade Moses hew Him out a second set of tables, and take them into the mount, and He would again write for the people the words of His law. And at the end of the second period of forty days Moses received again from the Lord the tables of stone, with a second copy of His law written thereon.³²⁹ Thus the Sabbath of the Lord shares, with the other precepts of the law of God, the great honor of having been once publicly proclaimed by the voice of God; and twice written upon tables of stone by the finger of the Law-giver. It has, moreover, one signal honor which the other precepts cannot lay claim unto; *viz.*, the fact that it is founded upon the *example* of the Almighty himself.

The law being thus delivered to Moses, and by him brought down from the mount, was, by God's command, placed beneath the mercy-seat in the ark of God's testament.³³⁰ The whole work of atonement and sin-offering in the earthly sanctuary related to this law of God; and the Sabbath of the Lord constituted one-tenth part of that law.³³¹

³²⁶ *Exodus* 24:12.

³²⁷ *Exodus* 25-31.

³²⁸ *Exodus* 32.

³²⁹ *Deuteronomy* 9, 10.

³³⁰ *Exodus* 40:20; *Deuteronomy* 10:5.

³³¹ *Leviticus* 16.

The Sojourn in the Wilderness

During the period of the forty years' sojourn in the wilderness, the children of Israel did very generally violate the Sabbath. Ezekiel has given us much information on this point. It even appears that while Moses was in the mount during the first forty days, Israel did then greatly pollute the Sabbath. It was one of the sins for which they came so near being shut out of the promised land at that time.³³²

But God gave them a second probation, or rather prolonged their existing probation, but it was, for all that, a failure. So He lifted up His hand in the wilderness and solemnly swore that they should not enter the land.³³³ And here is the reason for this oath, as stated by Ezekiel in the next verse:

Ezekiel 20

¹⁶ Because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my Sabbaths: for their heart went after their idols.

When, therefore, Paul wrote to the Hebrew people, the descendants of these very persons who thus failed to enter the promised land because of their violation of the law of God in general, and of the Sabbath in particular, how significant to them must have been his solemn exhortation,

Hebrews 4

¹¹ Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Their unbelief showed itself in acts of direct and positive disobedience to God's commandments, and in especial manner to His Sabbath. Against their evil example Paul solemnly warns us.

Even after the exclusion of all the adults from an entrance into the land of Canaan, the same acts of disobedience were performed by the children. God entreated them not to act like their

³³² *Ezekiel 20:9-13.*

³³³ *See Numbers 14:28-29; Ezekiel 20:15.*

fathers, but to walk in His statutes, and keep His judgments, and hallow His Sabbaths. And this, strange to say, they refused to heed. They did not regard His law, nor keep His judgments, but they polluted His Sabbaths, until God meditated their overthrow in the wilderness, like the overthrow of their fathers.

Instead of this, He lifted up His hand to them in the wilderness, that He would, even after their entrance into the promised land, scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries, because they had not executed His judgments, but had despised His statutes, and polluted His Sabbaths.³³⁴ Thus the Hebrew people laid the foundation of their future ruin by violating the commandments of God in the wilderness, and, particularly, by the violation of the Sabbath of the Lord.

It was at the end of forty years of that rebellion and Sabbath-breaking that Moses, in the book of *Deuteronomy*, makes his final appeal in behalf of the Sabbath.

Deuteronomy 5

¹⁵ Remember, [says he,] that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord your God brought you out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

In a former discourse particular attention was called to this passage. Doubtless there was the strictest propriety in alluding to their Egyptian bondage and their deliverance therefrom, as it is not at all likely that they could, as a people, in any proper manner, keep the Sabbath of the Lord in Egypt. But a comparison of this text with *Deuteronomy* 24:17-18, shows, beyond all dispute, that this reference to Egyptian bondage is not designed to teach that the Sabbath is a memorial of their deliverance therefrom, but that it is an appeal to their sense of gratitude, and one, too, that would seem sufficient to move very hard hearts.

³³⁴ *Ezekiel* 20:18-24.

Silence in the Record

After this appeal in behalf of the Sabbath, no mention of the sacred institution appears in the Scriptures till we reach the time of David.³³⁵ Some five hundred years thus elapse in which no mention is made of the rest-day of the Lord. Six books of the Bible in succession, which give us the history of this time, preserve a total silence so far as the direct mention of the Sabbath is concerned.

No one argues from this that the Sabbath was not observed during this period; yet many persons, with the fact before them, plainly recorded in *Genesis* 2:1-3, that God set up the Sabbath in Paradise, will earnestly contend that inasmuch as that book makes no further direct mention of that institution, it was, therefore, totally disregarded from Adam to Moses!

Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel

One of the Psalms was written for the Sabbath day, as its title in Hebrew plainly testifies. In verses 4-5, it calls attention to the works of God as the proper theme for meditation on the Sabbath. The sacred day is designed to commemorate the greatest of them all, the creation of the heavens and the earth.³³⁶

Isaiah speaks of the annual sabbaths (of which, according to *Leviticus* 23, there were seven,) and the new moons, as things which were not pleasing to God in their observance, especially because of their sins.³³⁷ But he speaks of God's holy rest-day in terms of strong exhortation and earnest entreaty. If the people of God in their dispersion would observe it, they should be gathered to His holy mountain. If the Gentiles would observe it also, they should be joined with His people in the reception of His blessing.³³⁸ And He makes the further promise in behalf of Sabbath reformers, that if those who are now trampling the Sabbath beneath their feet, will turn away their feet from the Sabbath, and call it

³³⁵ *1 Chronicles* 9:32.

³³⁶ See *Psalms* 111:2, 4.

³³⁷ See *Isaiah* 1:10-14.

³³⁸ *Isaiah* 56.

the holy of the Lord and honorable, and will honor Him thus, He will honor them with a place in His immortal kingdom.³³⁹

When Jerusalem was threatened with destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, the Lord sent to that people, through Jeremiah, an offer to preserve their city from his power, if they would hallow the Sabbath day. He even promised that the city should stand forever, on condition, however, that they should not violate His Sabbath.³⁴⁰

But they did not regard this gracious offer of the God of Heaven. Ezekiel informs us that they profaned the Sabbath of the Lord, and hid their eyes from it.³⁴¹ And he further informs us how they defiled His sanctuary, and profaned His Sabbath; for they slew their children in sacrifice to their idols on that day, and then came into the sanctuary to profane it.³⁴² It was thus that they treated the Sabbath in response to the gracious offer made them through Jeremiah. And thus wrath came upon them to the uttermost in the destruction of their city and the ruin of their nation.

The Restoration

After the Babylonish captivity, when a remnant had returned to their own land, Nehemiah found them again violating the Sabbath. He reminded them that the violation of the Sabbath had been the cause of their ruin, and earnestly entreated them to desist from this great transgression. With this solemn appeal of Nehemiah ends the history of the Sabbath in the Old Testament.³⁴³

The Kingdom of God

The prophet Isaiah has given us a glorious view of the future kingdom of God. When the second Adam shall, with the family of the redeemed, possess the new earth, then shall the immortal saints assemble from the whole face of the earth, on each succes-

³³⁹ *Isaiah* 58:13-14.

³⁴⁰ *Jeremiah* 17:19-27.

³⁴¹ *Ezekiel* 22:8, 26.

³⁴² *Ezekiel* 23:38-39.

³⁴³ *Nehemiah* 13:18.

sive Sabbath, to worship before the Lord of hosts.³⁴⁴ And Paul tells us of this final rest of the redeemed, that there remains a *Sabbatismos*, i.e., as the margin has it, “a keeping of the Sabbath,” to the people of God.³⁴⁵

The Sabbath was made for man in Eden. It has survived the dreadful deluge of sin that has almost drowned out piety and truth in the earth. It exists today as the subject of promise and of prophecy. It stands firm as the pillars of Heaven, and is established in the immutable authority of God’s unchanging law. And when an end is made of sin, and none but holy beings remain to possess the immortal inheritance, the Sabbath made for man shall still exist, and:

All flesh shall keep it with one heart.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁴ *Isaiah* 66:22-23.

³⁴⁵ *Hebrews* 4:9.

³⁴⁶ R. F. Cottrell, Hymn: *Delightful Day, Best Gift of Heaven*.

7. The Two Covenants

PP Editor's Note: This sermon was republished in 1875 as a separate booklet. I've carefully compared both versions. They were almost identical. I've made just a few minor changes to incorporate the best of each.

Jeremiah 31

³¹ Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

³² 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; which my covenant they broke, although I was an husband unto them, says the Lord:

³³ But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

³⁴ And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Hebrews 8

¹⁰ This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.

Both Covenants Made With Israel

THE first covenant was made with the people of Israel at the time of their departure out of Egypt. This covenant no longer exists. The new covenant long since took its place.

But a very serious error prevails in the minds of many persons respecting the points of difference between these two covenants. The old covenant was made with the Hebrew people. For this reason, whatever entered into it is supposed to be Jewish. Thus the law of God is summarily set aside as Jewish; and thus might the God of Israel himself be discarded as a Jewish God. But the new covenant is held up to our admiration, because it is, as they say,

“...not made with the Jews, but with the Gentiles. The old covenant belonged to the Jews, and with it we have no concern; the new covenant is made with the Gentiles, and we, as Gentiles, are interested in it.”

How can men thus carelessly read the Scriptures? The language of inspiration is very explicit in stating that the new covenant is made with the same people that were the subjects of the old covenant. Thus Jeremiah, speaking in the name of the Lord, says:

Jeremiah 31

³¹ I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.

And he further alludes to the fact that the new covenant is made with the Hebrew people when he adds:

³² 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.

And yet again he identifies the Hebrew people when he says:

³³ This shall be the covenant that I will make with *the house of Israel*.

And Paul quotes at length, in *Hebrews* 8, this entire statement of Jeremiah respecting the old and new covenants being severally made with the Hebrew people. And, as if this were not enough, he makes a statement in *Romans* 9:4-5, that exactly meets the case. Thus he says of the Hebrews:

Romans 9

⁴ Who are Israelites; to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, AND THE COVENANTS, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;

⁵ Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever.

Thus it appears that everything valuable God has given to the world through the instrumentality, or by the means, of the Hebrew people. Those who choose to do so can venture to despise

the law of God because given to the Jews, and to reject Christ because He came of the Jews; but one thing they cannot do. They cannot say,

“We accept the new covenant because it pertains to the Gentiles, whereas the first covenant, and the law, etc., pertained to the Jews.”

No such distinction can be drawn. Both the covenants pertain to the Hebrew people, according to the explicit statement of Paul; and both are said by Jeremiah and Paul, or rather by the Spirit of inspiration speaking through them, to be made with Judah and Israel.

Why the Jews Were Chosen

The fact being thus clearly established that the two covenants are both made with the Hebrews, it becomes a matter of interest to inquire into the reason of this thing.

“Why did God thus honor one nation and pass by all others?”

Undoubtedly there was a sufficient reason for this action, and that reason we shall find fully laid open to our view in the Bible. The first thing which Paul has enumerated as pertaining to the Hebrews, is “the adoption;” and if we can understand why God adopted this family, we shall readily understand why all the other things which he has named should also pertain to this people.

Know, then, that God did not adopt the family of Abraham as His first action in behalf of mankind. He attempted thus to make His own the family of the first man, Adam, the common head and father of the human race. But at the end of the antediluvian age, only eight persons remained upon the earth who feared the God of Heaven. There was no alternative with Him but to witness the extinction of piety in the earth, or else, by an awful lesson of judgment, to destroy every wicked man from the earth. And for this reason came the deluge.

And now one family alone remains—the family of Noah, who is the second head of the human race. And this family, thus instructed in divine truth, and thus warned by God’s terrible judgments, might all have been, if they would, the heritage of the Almighty. But when men began again to multiply upon the earth,

Romans 1

²⁸ ...they did not like to retain God in their knowledge.

They forgot God. They plunged into sin. They united under Nimrod to build Babel. As they set God at defiance, He placed His curse upon them by confounding their language.³⁴⁷

In the fourth century after the flood, only a handful of godly persons remained. Abraham, in the midst of this dense moral darkness, for even his immediate ancestors were idolators,³⁴⁸ was so pre-eminent in virtue that he was called the friend of God.³⁴⁹ God said that He knew Abraham, that he would command his children and his household after him, and that they would keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.³⁵⁰

God had pledged himself at the time Noah and his family came forth from the ark, never again to drown the world.³⁵¹ But He must do something to save this one faithful family from ruin, and, by means of them, to preserve in the earth some degree of true piety, and to retain among men a body of faithful worshipers. To do this, He adopts this family of Abraham, his friend, and separates them by circumcision and the rites of the ceremonial law, from all the rest of mankind.

Thus Abraham became the third grand father of mankind. Not the father of the whole race, like Adam and Noah respectively; but the father of the people of God. This was the adoption. He gave up the rest of mankind to idolatry and atheism, not because

³⁴⁷ *Genesis* 10 and 11.

³⁴⁸ *Joshua* 24:2.

³⁴⁹ *James* 2:23.

³⁵⁰ *Genesis* 18:19.

³⁵¹ *Genesis* 9:15.

He was willing that they should perish, but because they would not hearken to His voice.

Yet, though He thus adopted this one family, He did not so reject the rest of mankind that He did not make provision for any of them to be received among the Hebrew people if they would become circumcised and unite with the Hebrews in His service and worship. The adoption was just, and right, and necessary. By means of it, God preserved His knowledge and His worship in the earth.

The Hebrew people being thus adopted, and by means of circumcision set apart from the rest of the world, found to their great profit that, though they were separated from the world, they were united to Him who made the heaven and the earth. They had the Lord for their God. They had much advantage “every way;” the adoption, the glory, the two covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, the promises, the fathers, and the Messiah.

And yet Paul says their chief advantage was that the oracles of God were committed to them.³⁵² It is not best to scorn the law of God because committed to the Hebrews. It is not best to despise the new covenant, as Jewish, because, like the old covenant, it is made with Israel. Nor is it best to reject Jesus as the Messiah because He comes of that despised race; and, finally, it is not best to have some other god besides the God of Israel. Our God, indeed, bears that title; because He was for long ages worshiped by the Hebrews only, and by the Gentiles almost not at all. Yet that is not His fault, but ours.

And so of all the sacred things committed to the Israelites. They were not Jewish, or Hebraic, *but divine*. In fact, we must have a part in these precious treasures which God gave to this people, for their preservation through the long period of Gentile darkness. They are of equal value to us, and we must share in them.

³⁵² *Romans 3:1-2.*

John 4

²² Salvation, [said our Lord to the woman of Samaria,] is of the Jews.

Ratification of the New Covenant

The opening work in the establishment of the new covenant must, at least, be as early as the *closing* hours of the life of Christ. In the last memorable evening of His life, as He was about to be betrayed into the hands of the Jewish rulers, our Lord gave the cup, representing thereby His own blood, into the hands of His disciples, saying as He did it,

Luke 22

²⁰ This cup is the new testament [covenant] in my blood, which is shed for you.

Here is the first mention of the new covenant by our Lord. It is evident that the shedding of His blood, and the pouring out of His soul unto death, was that which should give validity to the covenant.³⁵³ The opening event, therefore, in the *ratification* of the new testament, or covenant, was on that memorable night in which the Saviour was betrayed, when He, the mediator of the new covenant on the one part, and the eleven apostles on the other part, as the representatives of the people of God, entered into solemn contract with each other. He, by giving them the cup representing His own blood, pledged himself to die for them; they, by accepting it, thus pledged themselves to accept of salvation through His blood, and to fulfill the conditions connected therewith.

Indeed, we must date the preliminary acts in the establishment of the new covenant, from the opening of Christ's ministry. Our Lord began to preach at the close of Daniel's sixty-ninth week.³⁵⁴ The remaining, or seventieth, week, He was to employ in confirming the covenant with many; and in the midst of the week,

³⁵³ *Isaiah 53; Hebrews 9.*

³⁵⁴ Compare *Daniel 9:25; Mark 1:14-15.*

He caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease, by being offered himself upon the cross, as their great antitype.³⁵⁵

We must, therefore, assign the ministry of Christ to the introductory work of establishing the new covenant, or new testament. His preaching was a public announcement of its principles. He assigned to the law of God its just place. He laid down the keeping of the commandments as the condition of eternal life.³⁵⁶ He revealed the ground of pardon; viz., the sacrifice of His own life.³⁵⁷ He also stated in distinct terms the conditions on which that sacrifice could benefit men; viz., faith and repentance.³⁵⁸ We cannot, therefore, deny that the ministry of Christ was the opening work in the establishment of the new covenant.

And now we again come to the important fact that the establishment of the new covenant was solely with the Hebrew people. Our Lord confined His ministry to the Jewish people, declaring that He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.³⁵⁹ When He sent out the twelve during His own ministry,

Matthew 10

⁵ [He] commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter not:

⁶ But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And when He sent the seventy also, it was only into those cities and villages whither He himself would come.³⁶⁰ His apostles were all Jews. And with them was the first solemn act of ratification of the new covenant in the cup out of which all drank, representing the new testament in His blood.³⁶¹

³⁵⁵ *Hebrews* 10:5-10.

³⁵⁶ *Matthew* 5:17-19; 19:16-19.

³⁵⁷ *Matthew* 20:28.

³⁵⁸ *John* 7:24; *Mark* 1:15.

³⁵⁹ *Matthew* 15:24.

³⁶⁰ *Luke* 10:1.

³⁶¹ *Luke* 22:20; *1 Corinthians* 11:25.

And here comes in the fact that the seventy weeks of Daniel's prophecy pertain exclusively to the Hebrew people.³⁶² The last, or seventieth, week was devoted to the confirmation of the covenant.³⁶³ It began with our Lord's ministry to the Hebrews, and ended when the apostles turned to the Gentiles. It was in the midst of this week of confirming the covenant that our Lord was crucified. And thus we find that, after our Lord's ascension, the ministers of the word preached the gospel...

Acts 11

¹⁹ ...to none but unto the Jews only.

It was unto the Jews first that God, having raised up His Son, sent Him to bless them in turning them away from their sins.³⁶⁴ The termination of the seventy weeks closed the period in which the work pertained exclusively to the Hebrews.

Grafting in of Gentile Believers

The work for the Gentiles was opened by the conversion of Saul, and by his commission to them as their apostle.³⁶⁵ It was also opened on the part of Peter by his wonderful vision of the sheet let down from Heaven, and the commission given him at that time.³⁶⁶ But what was the condition of the Gentiles before "the door of faith"³⁶⁷ was opened to them? Let the apostle Paul answer this:

Ephesians 2

¹¹ Wherefore remember, that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

¹² That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

³⁶² *Daniel 9:24.*

³⁶³ *Daniel 9:27.*

³⁶⁴ *Acts 3:25-26.*

³⁶⁵ *Acts 9; 26:17.*

³⁶⁶ *Acts 10; 9; 15:7, 14-17.*

³⁶⁷ *Acts 14:27.*

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

The apostle goes on to speak of the union of Jews and Gentiles in one body as follows:

Ephesians 2

¹⁴ For He is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

¹⁵ Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

¹⁶ And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

¹⁷ And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father.

¹⁹ Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

²⁰ And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.

Those who sneer at everything which God has committed to the Hebrews, and boast themselves of their Gentile descent, would do well to compare this statement of the condition of the Gentiles with Paul's statement of the "advantages" of the Jews, and his enumeration of the things that pertain to them.

Romans 3

¹ What advantage then has the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

² Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

God purposed to make of the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision one people for himself. The first thing was to abolish the enmity; viz., the code which created national distinction, which

was circumcision and the ceremonial law.³⁶⁸ Of the Gentiles it is said that they were...

Ephesians 2

¹¹ ...*in time past* Gentiles in the flesh,...

¹² [And] at that time...without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from THE COVENANTS of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

Of the Israelites it is said:

Romans 9

⁴ To whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and THE COVENANTS, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;

⁵ Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Certainly the Gentiles have no occasion for boasting. They did not take into the union that which added much to the common stock. They came in as the veriest beggars. They became rich by sharing with the Hebrews the blessings which God had for long ages preserved in their hands. The Gentiles were made partakers of the spiritual things which God had wisely and justly placed in the hands of Israel.

Romans 15

²⁷ For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

But being thus brought nigh by the blood of Christ, Paul says of those who were Gentiles “*in time past*” (but not now) that they were...

Ephesians 2

¹⁹ ...no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

They were no longer Gentiles, but Israelites. They became sharers in the name and in the riches of Israel. And it is by this adop-

³⁶⁸ See *Acts* 11:3; *Colossians* 2:13-17; *Galatians* 2:11-12.

tion into the commonwealth of Israel that they became sharers in the blessings of the new covenant. The subject is wonderfully illustrated by the words of:

Jeremiah 11

¹⁶ The Lord called your name, A GREEN OLIVE TREE, fair, and of goodly fruit; with the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken.

Romans 11

¹⁷ And if some of the branches be broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

¹⁸ Boast not against the branches. But if you boast, you bare not the root, but the root you.

¹⁹ You will say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

²⁰ Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear:

²¹ For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not you.

²² Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness: otherwise you also shall be cut off.

²³ And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.

²⁴ For if you were cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

Here is the good olive tree, representing the family of Abraham, as adopted by the God of the whole earth, when He gave up the rest of mankind to their own chosen idolatry and wickedness. It is a...

Jeremiah 11

¹⁶ ...green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit.

To this olive tree pertain the covenants of promise. The first covenant is made with the people thus represented. The new covenant is made with the same people that the first covenant was made with. The breaking off of many of the branches of the tree, is because that God's ancient people continued not in His covenant. This is why He regarded them not.

Jeremiah 31

³² 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; which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, says the Lord

Hebrews 8

⁹ Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, says the Lord.

Indeed, in the chapter in which Jeremiah predicts the breaking off of the branches of the olive tree, he assigns the reason: The violation of the covenant God made with His people when He brought them forth out of Egypt.

Jeremiah 11

³ Cursed be the man that obeys not the words of this covenant,

⁴ Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall you be my people, and I will be your God:

⁵ That I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day...

⁶ ...Hear the words of this covenant, and do them.

⁷ For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice.

⁸ Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring

upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do; but they did them not.

By the new covenant, those who were broken off can, if they will, be grafted in again, and not they only, but the Gentiles also with them. We may consider the good olive tree as having twelve larger branches, and a vast number of small branches. The tree will at the close of human probation, stand complete, representing the twelve tribes of...

Galatians 6

¹⁶ ...the Israel of God.

There can be, therefore, no dispute that the first covenant, and the new covenant, were each made with the Hebrew people; the first, at the departure out of Egypt; the second, at the time of our Lord's ministry and death. The Gentiles share in the blessings of the new covenant by becoming members of the commonwealth of Israel.

Ephesians 2

¹² That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

¹⁹ Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

The Word "Covenant"

What is meant by the word *covenant*? In the books of the New Testament, the words *covenant* and *testament* are used as signifying the same thing. They are, indeed, only two different translations of the same Greek word, *diatheke*. So that when our Lord says,

Luke 22

²⁰ This cup is the new *testament* in my blood,

—it is the same as if he had said,

“This cup is the new *covenant* in my blood.”

Webster thus defines *covenant*:

1. A mutual consent or agreement of two or more persons, to do or to forbear some act or thing; a contract; stipulation.
2. A writing containing the terms of agreement or contract between parties.

He thus defines the word *contract*:

1. An agreement or covenant between two or more persons, in which each party binds himself to do or forbear some act, and each acquires a right to what the other promises; a mutual promise, upon lawful consideration or cause, which binds the parties to a performance; a bargain; a compact.
2. The act by which a man and woman are betrothed, each to the other.
3. The writing which contains the agreement of parties, with the terms and conditions, and which serves as a proof of the obligation.

It appears, therefore, that the word *covenant* has two leading significations:

1. That of agreement, or contract, between parties.
2. That of a writing containing the terms or conditions of such agreement.

In the first and fullest sense, a covenant is a contract, or agreement, with the conditions on which that contract is made. In the second and more restricted use of that word, a covenant is the terms or conditions of such contract.

The First Covenant

Such being the signification of the word *covenant*, let us now ascertain what it was which constituted the first covenant. We have ascertained who were the contracting or covenanting parties, *viz.*, God and Israel; and *when* this covenant was made, *viz.*, when God took that people by the hand to bring them forth out of Egypt.

But what was the covenant itself into which these two parties entered?

1. If we take the first definition then, without doubt, it was the mutual agreement, or contract, made at Sinai between God and Israel respecting the moral law.
2. But if we take the second definition, it was the law itself; for that embodied the conditions of the covenant.

Which of these views is the right one? Those persons who hold that the law of God still remains in force believe that the truth is stated in the first of these two answers. But those who believe that the law was abolished at the death of Christ, do, with equal assurance, maintain that the law of God alone was the first covenant, and that the second of these two answers is the right and proper answer. One party, therefore, asserts that the law of God, or ten commandments, was the first covenant. The other, that the mutual agreement between God and Israel concerning that law constituted that covenant.

Let us now trace the acts by which God and Israel entered into covenant. When we have noted all these, we shall be able to determine the truth in this case. Thus we read,

Exodus 19

¹ In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai.

And the people encamped before the mount.

³ And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

⁴ You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

⁵ Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

⁶ And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak unto the children of Israel.

Here is a definite proposition from the God of Heaven:

Exodus 19

⁵ ...IF YOU WILL OBEY MY VOICE,...then you shall be to me a peculiar treasure.

Next we read the action of Moses, the mediator between these parties. Having received this proposition from the Lord, he immediately bore it to the people. Thus we read of his action:

⁷ And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him.

The proposition of the Most High was thus submitted to the people of Israel. And now observe their answer:

⁸ And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord has spoken we will do.

Thus the people with one voice accept the conditions offered them, and pledged themselves to their fulfillment. And now it is the business of the mediator to return this answer to him who had made the proposition to them. And thus we read again:

⁸ And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

The preliminary contract was thus closed. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to the preparation of the people to hear, and the descent of the Almighty to speak, the ten commandments.³⁶⁹ And now the voice of God utters the ten words of the moral law.

Exodus 20

¹ And God spoke all these words, saying,

² I am the Lord your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³ You shall have no other gods before me.

³⁶⁹ *Exodus* 19:9-25.

⁴ You shall not make unto you any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

⁵ You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

⁶ And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

⁷ You shall take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain.

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor, and do all your work:

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

¹² Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you.

¹³ You shall not kill.

¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ You shall not steal.

¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷ You shall not covet your neighbor's house, you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is your neighbor's.

Deuteronomy 5

²² These words the Lord spoke, [says Moses,] unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; AND HE ADDED NO MORE.

This was THE VOICE OF GOD, which the people had so solemnly covenanted to obey.³⁷⁰ When the ten words of God's voice had

³⁷⁰ *Exodus* 19:5.

thus been heard, and the people had witnessed the awful display of the divine majesty, then they removed and stood afar off. And they besought Moses to stand between them and the great God whose voice they had heard, and whose majesty they had witnessed.³⁷¹

Exodus 19

²¹ And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

The remainder of the chapter, and all of chapters 21, 22, and 23, are devoted to statutes and judgments, partly defining man's duty toward God, but principally relating to his duty toward his fellow-man. With these are precepts of a ceremonial character, but the larger part of these chapters is made up of precepts stating the principles of justice among men. These three chapters were spoken to Moses *only*, who was in the immediate presence of God.

Next, the Lord proceeds to the final contract between himself and the people. In the preliminary contract, recorded in *Exodus* 19, the people had solemnly pledged themselves to obey the voice of God. In *Exodus* 20, they heard that voice in ten precepts. And now it is worthy of notice how careful was the Most High, in this work of entering into covenant with His people, to take no advantage of them.

Before hearing His voice, they had pledged themselves to obey it. But the Lord did not treat the contract as closed yet. With an invitation to a large number of persons to come up to Him, He sends Moses again to the people.

Exodus 24

¹ And He said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord, you, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship afar off.

² And Moses alone shall come near the Lord: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him.

³⁷¹ *Exodus* 20:18.

They had heard the voice of God. Do they still stand to their solemn pledge that they would obey it? Lest they had forgotten something of that which God had spoken, and that they might be informed of all that God had communicated to him in the mount, it is next added:

Exodus 24

³ And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments.

The people have the chance now to refuse to close this most solemn compact if they see cause for so doing. They might have said,

“When we agreed to obey the voice of God, we had not heard it. Now that we have heard it, we cannot abide by our promise.”

And Moses, by repeating every word again, gave them the most perfect opportunity for so doing. But, observe the answer of the people:

³ And all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord has said we will do.

We might suppose that this would close the contract between the parties. But not so. Further acts of ratification were to take place. The whole thing must be put in writing. And thus we read:

⁴ And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord.

And now the solemnity of a sacrifice to God must take place. So it is added that Moses...

⁴ ...rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

⁵ And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the Lord.

The sacrifice of these victims having been thus made *to* God *by* the people, the blood itself is carefully secured for an important purpose. And so the record adds:

Exodus 24

⁶ And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

One half of the blood was offered upon the altar, a direct offering to God. The other half was reserved for another and most expressive solemnity.

We learn from verse 4 that Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. Now verse 7 tells us what he did with what was written. What Moses now reads is called the *book of the covenant*. For it contained the covenant between God and the people as far as, at that point, it had been consummated. And observe again the care of the Almighty that the people should understand every word of that to which they agree. Moses reads every word of the whole transaction in the audience of the people. Thus verse 7 states the case:

⁷ And he took THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT, and read in the audience of the people.

Here is yet another opportunity for them to say that they could not abide by their first promise. But, instead of speaking thus, they give their final and unreserved assent to this solemn compact. And thus the verse continues:

⁷ ...and they said, All that the Lord has said will we do, and be obedient.

This closed the contract on the part of the people. But there yet remained a most expressive act on the part of Moses, and a final, solemn announcement to be made by him, which not only proclaimed the accomplishment of the work, but gave a definite idea of what had been done. And so we next read:

⁸ And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people.

Or, as Paul states the case,

Hebrews 9

¹⁹ [He] sprinkled both the book and all the people.

One half of the blood had been already offered to God upon the altar; the remaining half is that which Moses thus uses. And how solemn and expressive is this act! It is what Paul calls the dedication of the covenant.³⁷² He sprinkles both the book and all the people. And thus they enter, in the most solemn manner, into the bond of the covenant. And thus the solemn espousal of the people by the Lord of hosts having been consummated, Moses announces the result in words which define the contract with remarkable precision. Having sprinkled the book, and the people, Moses said to them:

Exodus 24

⁸ Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord has made with you CONCERNING ALL THESE WORDS.

The Law, or the Agreement?

We have now the first covenant, complete and entire. And certainly it is possible for us to determine what constitutes it. We say that the first covenant was this solemn contract, or agreement, between God and the people of Israel concerning the law of God. Our opponents, on the contrary, affirm that the first covenant was simply the law itself.

- According to the first view, the first covenant was the contract made at Sinai between God and Israel concerning the law of God, or ten commandments, obedience to that law constituting the condition of the covenant.
- According to the second view, the first covenant was simply the ten commandments.

The first view is the more comprehensive, as it presents the two leading definitions of the word *covenant*, and answers to them both.

³⁷² *Hebrews* 9:18.

1. It presents as the covenant the contract between the parties.
2. It presents the condition to the contract.

But the second view presents as the first covenant that which answers to the definition of covenant only in its secondary sense; viz., the condition on which the contract rests. Undoubtedly the word *covenant* is thus used in the Bible. And for that reason many persons suppose that the ten commandments answer to, and constitute, the first covenant of which Jeremiah and Paul speak. That view of this subject which is really the truth will give to every part of the testimony its proper place, and will then show a divine harmony of the whole. But error must of necessity suppress, or pervert, the truth.

Here are the more important passages quoted to prove that the ten commandments constitute the first covenant:

Exodus 34

²⁸ And He wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.

Deuteronomy 4

¹³ And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone.

Deuteronomy 9

⁹ When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water:

¹⁰ And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the Lord spoke with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

¹¹ And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the Lord gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant.

1 Kings 8

²¹ And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.

2 Chronicles 6

¹¹ And in it have I put the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, that He made with the children of Israel.

These are the texts relied upon by our opponents to disprove our views of the first covenant and to establish their own. We freely admit that the word *covenant* is applied to the ten commandments; and further, we also admit, or, to speak more properly, we *maintain*, that the ten commandments do sustain a very important relation to the first covenant. But all parties must agree,

1. That the ten commandments are not a covenant in the sense of being a contract or agreement, as they contain no such thing.
2. That they are a covenant in the sense of being the conditions of the agreement which God made with Israel.

It does not seem that either of these two propositions can be denied by any candid man, as they are, manifestly, the exact truth. Both parties to this controversy must here come together upon common ground. And if they each act with a pure conscience, it will be difficult for them to disagree respecting the following proposition:

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS DO NOT CONSTITUTE
THE COVENANT OF EXODUS 24.

The Ten Commandments Are Not the Covenant

That text reads thus:

Exodus 24

⁸ And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the *covenant* which the Lord has made with you CONCERNING ALL THESE WORDS.

Two palpable reasons sustain the foregoing proposition:

1. The covenant made with Israel “concerning all these words,” was the agreement which the people entered into with the Almighty, as recorded in *Exodus* 19 and 24, that they would keep the words spoken by Him.
2. The ten commandments were the words *concerning* which this covenant or agreement was made.³⁷³

These reasons are not likely to be disputed. They establish the fact, therefore, that the covenant which was ratified or dedicated with blood by Moses was not the ten commandments. On the contrary, it is a covenant in a more extensive sense than they can be. It is an agreement between God and Israel concerning His law, and that law is elsewhere called a covenant, not because there is in it a contract between God and His people, but simply because it is the grand *condition* of the contract, or covenant, which Moses here dedicates with blood.

³⁷³ Should it be objected that the words “concerning which the covenant was made” must include in addition to the ten commandments all that was spoken in chapters 21, 22, 23, we do not enter any special objections. This would simply show that the first covenant not only related to the ten precepts of the moral law, but that it was also made concerning the judicial and ceremonial laws of the Jews. For what is said by God to Moses in these chapters is an epitome of the whole judicial and ceremonial laws.

But should it be objected that “these words” concerning which the covenant was made, are only the ones spoken to Moses in *Exodus* 21, 22, 23, and that the ten commandments are not included in what Moses terms, “these words,” it would then follow that this covenant, ratified with blood, which Paul shows to be the *first covenant*, has no connection with the ten commandments. Neither of these positions helps our opponents.

We cannot, however, avoid the conclusion that the ten commandments are either the *only* or the *principal* thing concerning which this covenant was made. For the *opening* of the covenant *preceded* the utterance of the ten commandments; and its *ratification* followed shortly after they were spoken; and the covenant itself *pledged* the people to obey God’s voice, which they heard in the proclamation of the ten commandments; and finally, as the ten commandments are called God’s covenant, though they contain no contract between God and His people, it is manifest that they constitute the grand conditions on which that contract rests.

It is remarkable that the people entered into formal and solemn contract to obey the *voice of God* before they heard it, and that having heard His voice they ratified that contract in the most solemn manner; and that to conclude all, Moses, having written the whole thing in a book, sprinkled both it and all the people, saying,

Exodus 24

⁸ Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you *concerning* all these words.

Both parties to the controversy respecting the first covenant will here again certainly unite in saying that Moses uses the word *covenant* in this remarkable text, not as signifying the ten commandments, but the agreement made respecting them. Here we stand on solid ground, and our opponents will not attempt to drive us hence. And now that we are so happily agreed in this fact, let us advance to the important truth which lies directly before us. Here it is:

The contract made in *Exodus* 19 and 24, relative to the ten commandments, which Moses (*Exodus* 24:8) calls “the *covenant* which the Lord has made with you *concerning* all these words,” is the identical first covenant concerning which we are involved in controversy.

This proposition, our opponents stoutly deny. But so certainly as they are honest men (and we are ready to award this noble quality to every one of them who has not given palpable proof that he does not possess it), they will be constrained to agree with us here also.

Providentially, we have the testimony of the New Testament in so explicit and distinct an utterance as to leave no chance for dispute on this point. Paul quotes this very record in *Exodus* 24:8, respecting the dedication of the covenant *concerning* the law of God, and makes the explicit statement that this covenant thus dedicated was the first covenant. Here are his words:

Hebrews 9

¹⁸ Whereupon neither the FIRST TESTAMENT [covenant] was dedicated without blood.

¹⁹ For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

²⁰ Saying, This is the blood of the testament [covenant] which God has enjoined unto you.

Here, also, we have a right to ask our opponents to agree with us. In fact, the testimony is so explicit that there is no chance for them to do otherwise. Paul settles this point in dispute, and shows that the first covenant is not the law of God, but the solemn contract between God and Israel respecting that law. And that which makes Paul's testimony in this case very valuable is, that he writes as a commentator upon those words of Jeremiah which constitute the theme of this discourse.

And now let us return to the words of Jeremiah, to ascertain what he himself means by the covenant made with Israel when God led them out of Egypt. When Jeremiah predicts the establishment of a new covenant with Israel and Judah, he uses the following language respecting the old covenant. Thus he says:

Jeremiah 31

³² 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; which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, says the Lord.

This text sheds much light on the nature of the covenant to which Jeremiah refers. But it is remarkable that Jeremiah, in another place preceding this, has defined with great precision what he means by the covenant made when God led Israel out of Egypt. Thus we read,

Jeremiah 11

³ Thus says the Lord God of Israel; Cursed be the man that obeys not the words of this covenant,

⁴ Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you; so shall you be my people, and I will be your God.

Here we have Jeremiah's own definition of what constituted that covenant which the children of Israel had, by their disobedience, dissolved. And it identifies this covenant with the solemn contract between God and Israel, which Paul designates as the first covenant. For Jeremiah makes the essential feature of this covenant to consist in one grand stipulation on the part of God toward his people; viz.,

Jeremiah 11

⁴ ...OBEY MY VOICE; . . . so shall you be my people, and I will be your God.

Now it is a remarkable fact that this is *the very stipulation*, and the *only one*, made by God in entering into solemn contract with Israel. It is a stipulation exacting obedience to the voice of God, which was about to utter the ten commandments. Thus the contract was opened by the God of Heaven:

Exodus 19

⁵ If you will OBEY MY VOICE indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.

We cannot, therefore, fail to identify the covenant to which Jeremiah refers. It is not the ten commandments, but the solemn contract made between God and Israel respecting those commandments.

But the words of *Jeremiah* 31:32, are entitled to particular attention in determining what the prophet understood by this covenant of which he spoke. He says:

Jeremiah 31

³² Which my covenant they broke, *although I was a HUSBAND unto them.*

The expression sheds great light on the nature of the covenant in question. Was that covenant simply the law of God? or was it the solemn contract between God and Israel by which the people pledged themselves to obey that law, and God pledged himself on that condition to accept them as His people, and to be their God? Surely, we cannot mistake here. The first covenant made God the husband of His people. The solemn contract between them and himself was that whereby He espoused, or married, that people.³⁷⁴

There can be no mistake, therefore, that a *contract* was requisite, in order that God should become the *husband* of that people; and that contract is found in *Exodus* 19 and 24. He could be their *lawgiver*, by virtue of proclaiming His law to them; but to be their *husband*, He must enter into *contract* with them, and it is precisely this relation that He sustains to Israel by virtue of the covenant of which Jeremiah speaks.³⁷⁵

And this distinction properly introduces a further argument on the nature of this covenant:

Romans 9

⁴ Who are Israelites; to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the *covenants*, and *the giving of the law*, and the service of God, and the promises.

Paul elsewhere informs us that there are two “covenants.”³⁷⁶ Here he distinguishes between the giving of the law and the covenants. Our opponents claim that the giving of the law was the making of the first covenant. We say, Not so; for that covenant was the solemn contract between God and Israel which preceded and followed the “giving of the law;” and that the law of God was that which the people covenanted to obey, when it should be spoken by the voice of God. This text preserves the distinction between the law of God and each of the two covenants.

³⁷⁴ *Jeremiah* 2:2.

³⁷⁵ See Webster’s second definition of contract, previously quoted.

³⁷⁶ *Galatians* 4:24.

And this distinction between the law of God and the first covenant is further shown by another important fact. The new covenant was made because the first covenant had been destroyed by the sins of the people, and because God still desired to save them. The first covenant was rendered null and void by the disobedience of the people.

Hebrews 8

⁹ Because, [says Paul,] they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, says the Lord.

Jeremiah 31 [margin]

³² ...which my covenant they broke, should I have continued a husband unto them? says the Lord.

If, therefore, we hold, as do many at the present day, that the covenant between God and Israel was simply the ten commandments, then we have the people of Israel weaken, and finally bring to an end, the law of God, simply by disobeying it! So that the law of God did depend for its strength upon the obedience of the people, and not upon the authority of the Lawgiver!

But let us test the other view of this subject. It has been shown from Moses, from Paul, and from Jeremiah, that the first covenant was the mutual agreement between God and Israel respecting the ten commandments. This is a covenant in the primary sense of the term. This covenant it was in the power of the people to destroy, by violating its conditions, *i.e.*, by breaking the law of God. This transgression could not in the slightest degree weaken the authority of the law of God; but it could, and did, render null and void the contract which made God a husband unto them.

The truth on this point may be expressed in a word: Men could not release themselves from the obligation to obey God's law by breaking that law; but they could release the God of Heaven from the obligation He had taken upon himself, toward them in the first covenant, by violating its conditions, and thus bringing the covenant to an end.

Hence the distinction is palpable between the law of God and the solemn contract made respecting that law. One could be destroyed by a failure on the part of the people to fulfill its conditions. The other can neither be destroyed, nor even weakened, by such transgression; and it will, in due time, demand the death of all its transgressors.³⁷⁷

The law of the Lord is perfect.³⁷⁸ It is God's great rule of right by which sin is shown.³⁷⁹ But the first *covenant* is declared by Paul not to have been faultless.³⁸⁰ This is another palpable proof of a distinction between the moral law and the covenant which God entered into with Israel respecting it.

Nor is this to be met by the statement that Paul pronounces the law itself to be faulty, and therefore the law and the covenant may be identical. For the law thus designated by Paul was not the ten commandments, but the Levitical law. And here are a few points out of many in proof of this assertion:

1. This law was received under the Levitical priesthood.³⁸¹ But the ten commandments were received *before* that priesthood had been appointed.³⁸²
2. This was a law relating to priesthood, tithes, and offerings.³⁸³ But the ten commandments said nothing concerning this.
3. It was a law which required that the priesthood should be of the tribe of Levi, and which had to be changed in order to have a priest arise out of the tribe of Judah.³⁸⁴ But the ten commandments had no precept that related to the subject, or that needed to be changed for that reason.

³⁷⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:56.

³⁷⁸ Psalm 19:7-11; 111:7-8; 119:96; James 1:25; 2:8-12.

³⁷⁹ 1 John 3:4-5; Romans 3:19-20; 7:12-13.

³⁸⁰ Hebrews 8:7.

³⁸¹ Hebrews 7:11.

³⁸² Compare Exodus 20 with Exodus 28.

³⁸³ Hebrews 7:5, 12, 28.

³⁸⁴ Hebrews 7:12-14.

Finally, with one further proof of the distinction between the moral law and the first covenant, this point of the argument shall be closed. The first covenant having waxed old and vanished away, the new covenant is made by God in its place.³⁸⁵

The New Covenant and the Law

And now observe the grand promise of the new covenant:

Jeremiah 31

²³ But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: *After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.*

It is therefore certain that the dissolution of the first covenant is not the abrogation of the law of God. That which was the law of God in the days of Jeremiah, six hundred years before Christ, is the subject of this prediction. This law was not only to survive the dissolution of the first covenant, but it was to continue to exist under the new covenant, and to sustain even a more sacred relation to the people of God under the new, than under the old, covenant.

Here the argument on this part of the subject is rested. It has been shown,

1. That the first, or old, covenant was not the law of God, but the contract between God and Israel *concerning* that law.
2. That the law of God is a covenant only in a *secondary* sense; *viz.*, in that it constituted the *condition* of *that agreement* or *contract* by which God became *a husband* to Israel.
3. That when the old covenant vanishes away, the law of God remains in full force, and is ready to enter into the most sacred relations with the people of God under the new.

Why Was the First Covenant Faulty?

Let us now consider wherein the first covenant was faulty. It was not because it was so closely connected with the law of God; for

³⁸⁵ *Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-13.*

the new, or better, covenant is even more intimately connected with the law of God than was the first, or old, covenant. The old covenant gave man the law of God upon tables of stone; but the new puts it in his heart. It was not because the law was faulty: for that is so perfect that even under the New Testament it is made the standard by which sin is shown.³⁸⁶

But Paul plainly intimates wherein the new covenant is better than the old one. It is...

Hebrews 8

⁶ ...established upon better promises.

Then it follows that the first covenant was established upon promises not so well adapted to man's case; and this very fact is, of itself, a decisive proof that the first covenant was not simply the law of God, but a contract between God and His people.

Let us now examine the nature of the promise upon which the first covenant was made. Jeremiah designates the first covenant as made when Israel came forth out of Egypt. And thus he has laid open this covenant, and the nature of that *promise upon which* it was established.

Jeremiah 11

³ Thus says the Lord God of Israel: Cursed be the man that obeys not the words of this covenant,

⁴ Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, *Obey my voice*, and do them, according to all which I command you; *so shall you be my people, and I will be your God.*

The promise of the Lord that He would be their God was upon condition that they obeyed His voice. Nay, the condition was even stronger than this:

⁴ ...do them, according to *all* which I command you; so shall you be my people.

³⁸⁶ *Psalm 19:7-11; Romans 3:19-20, 31; 1 John 3:4-5.*

But suppose they should fail to do this? Then the promise was forfeited. Surely, fallen man needs a better promise than this. It was just in God to require a man to live in exact conformity with His perfect law of right; but it was inevitable that man would forfeit his title to the promises of God.

It is true that there were in the ceremonial law ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary connected with the first covenant.³⁸⁷ But these could not take away sins. They could only point forward to Christ. The promises of the first covenant were upon condition of obedience to God's perfect rule of right. But such promises were insufficient to meet the helpless condition of fallen man. So the apostle says:

Hebrews 8

⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

But because the people of Israel broke the covenant of the Lord, He justly finds fault with them, and seeks to give the place to a second and better covenant, established upon better promises. And hence it is, that God, by His prophet, gives the people of Israel to understand that they have forfeited the blessings of that covenant, and that the branches of their olive tree will be broken off.³⁸⁸

And following this announcement, a few years later, is the cheering promise of a new covenant.³⁸⁹ It was about 600 years before the birth of Christ that the new covenant was thus foretold. The apostle Paul makes the following expressive comment:

¹³ In that He says, A *new* covenant, He has made the first *old*.

Now that which decays and waxes old is *ready to vanish away*.

Thus it appears that the first covenant had in Jeremiah's time become old, and thenceforward, to its close, it was "ready to van-

³⁸⁷ *Hebrews* 9 and 10.

³⁸⁸ *Jeremiah* 11.

³⁸⁹ *Jeremiah* 31:31-34.

ish away.” And when our Lord came to do His work, He took away the first that He might...

Hebrews 10

⁹ ...establish the second.

The Excellence of the New Covenant

Let us now consider the excellence of the new covenant, and learn wherein it is a better covenant than the one which it supercedes. Here are the terms of this covenant:

Jeremiah 31

³³ But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

³⁴ And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Certainly, this is “the better covenant,” and these are the “better promises.” Let us enumerate them.

1. “I will put MY LAW in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.”
2. “I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”
3. They shall teach no more every man his neighbor;...for they shall all know me.”
4. “I will forgive their iniquity.”
5. “I will remember their sin no more.”

This is a very remarkable list of new-covenant blessings. First and foremost in this enumeration, stands a promise concerning the law of God. Surely, this is worthy of our notice. But what is this promise respecting the law? Is it,

“I will abolish my law”?

No. Is it,

“I will change my law”?

No. Is it,

“I will supersede my law by a better code”?

By no means. It is very different indeed from such declarations as these. This is the promise:

Jeremiah 31

³³ I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.

He will make His law a part of their very being. He will establish it in their affections; He will engrave it upon the table of their hearts. This is wonderful indeed. The law of God is still uppermost in the mind of its Author.

- The first covenant required obedience to the law of God, but failed to secure it.
- The second covenant insures obedience by making the law a part of the very nature of those with whom the covenant is made.

God does not leave His law till he has accomplished that which He has spoken, the raising up of a people who shall obey Him from their hearts. The first covenant was made *concerning* the law of God. In a still higher sense is this true of the second. The great work of the new covenant is to take away the carnal mind, which is enmity against the law of God, so that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.³⁹⁰

And so the Mediator of the new covenant lays down the immutability of the law of God, and solemnly enforces its observance as the condition of entering eternal life.³⁹¹ And the apostles,

³⁹⁰ *Romans* 8:1-7.

³⁹¹ *Matthew* 5:17-19; 7:12; 15:1-9; 19:16-19; 22:35-40; *Luke* 16:17.

Paul, and James, and John, have faithfully testified to the same great truth.

Romans 2

¹² For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

¹³ (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

¹⁴ For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

¹⁵ Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

¹⁶ In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Romans 3

¹⁹ Now we know that what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Romans 7

⁷ What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, You shall not covet.

⁸ But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

⁹ For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

¹⁰ And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

¹¹ For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

¹² Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

¹³ Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Romans 8

³ For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

⁵ For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

⁶ For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

⁷ Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

1 Corinthians 15

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

Ephesians 6

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

² Honor your father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

³ That it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.

James 1

²⁵ But whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

James 2

⁸ If you fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, You shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well:

⁹ But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

¹⁰ For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

¹¹ For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you are become a transgressor of the law.

¹² So speak, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

1 John 3

⁴ Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

⁵ And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.

Revelation 11

¹⁹ And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of His testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

Revelation 12

¹⁷ And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 14

¹² Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Revelation 22

¹⁴ Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

But how is it that the second covenant is so much more efficacious than the first in securing obedience to the law of God? The answer is found in the difference between Sinai and Calvary.

At Sinai the law of God entered in terrible majesty, but the hard heart of sinful man is incapable of submitting to the law of God. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, and, indeed, cannot be.

At Calvary enters, not the law of God, but the Lamb of God, as our great sin-offering. Not the condemning law, but the sin-aton-ing sacrifice, is the central object upon the hill of Calvary. And yet the law was present there to strike the Son of God with the sword of divine justice.³⁹² How astonishing the events of Calvary! The new covenant is given to us in the blood of Christ. We have pardon through His blood.³⁹³ With His stripes we are healed.³⁹⁴ Mercy and truth meet together³⁹⁵ in the sacrifice made for us by the Son of God.

The new covenant proposes to save those who have broken the law of God. It is able to forgive their sin, the transgression of the law, and not only to pardon them for violating the law of God, but to put that law in their hearts so that it shall be their very nature to obey it. This is what the Bible means by conversion.³⁹⁶ But the Mediator of the covenant can thus give life to the guilty, only by the sacrifice of His life.

- We have life from His death.
- We have pardon from His blood.³⁹⁷
- We have grace from the fountain of His grace.

The new covenant is a system of salvation wherein God is shown to be just, even in the very act of justifying the sinner, and wherein the law is shown to be established even by the doctrine of justification by faith.³⁹⁸

³⁹² *Galatians* 3:13.

³⁹³ *Romans* 3:25; 5:9; *Ephesians* 1:7; *Colossians* 1:14.

³⁹⁴ *Isaiah* 53:5.

³⁹⁵ *Psalms* 85:10.

³⁹⁶ *Romans* 7:7-25; 8:1-9; *Acts* 3:19.

³⁹⁷ *Ephesians* 1:17.

³⁹⁸ *Romans* 3:24-26, 31.

If we place the blessings of the new covenant in chronological order, they will stand thus:

1. The forgiveness of sins.
2. The writing of the law in the heart.
3. The blotting out of sins so that they shall be remembered no more.
4. God fully unites himself to His people, thenceforward forever to be their God, and they to be His people.
5. All shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest.

But the forgiveness of sins is upon condition of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.³⁹⁹ Repentance involves:

1. Godly sorrow for sin;
2. Confession of sin;
3. Reparation of wrong acts, when it is in our power to make it.
4. Change of conduct, so that we cease to transgress, and henceforward obey.⁴⁰⁰

And faith in our Lord Jesus Christ views Him,

1. As our great sin-offering, and accepts His blood as our only ground of pardon;
2. As our great High Priest to plead our cause when we come to God for mercy and grace;
3. And finally it views His life as the perfect example of that obedience which the law of God requires, and the perfect model after which we must pattern.

The writing of the law of God upon the heart is not the work of a moment. When God begins the work of conversion, the first act is to forgive the sins of the past. The next is to write His law in the heart. When this work is fully wrought in men, then they are,

³⁹⁹ Acts 20:21.

⁴⁰⁰ 2 Corinthians 7:10-11.

in the highest sense, Christians; for they are like Christ. He had the law of God in his heart.

Psalm 40

⁸ I delight to do your will, O my God: yea, your law is within my heart.

Then they love God with all the heart, and their neighbor as themselves. Then, also, they observe in truth the precepts of the law written upon their hearts, not less than upon the tables of stone.⁴⁰¹ The whole gospel dispensation is devoted to the work of writing the law upon the hearts of the people of God, even as the whole period of probation with each individual is devoted to this work in each individual case.

Our first ideas of God's law are at best but poor. As the Spirit of God enlightens our minds, we have clearer conceptions of the character of the law; and as the work of conversion progresses, these elevated principles become established in our character. Whenever the minister of Christ opens to our minds new and clearer views of the principles of right, and causes us to see, as never before, the extent of God's demands upon us in His law, then the Spirit of God, if we will cooperate, writes these principles in our hearts. And so the work progresses till the law of God is fully written in our hearts; in other words, till our characters are perfected in virtue.

The Consummation

But human probation does not last forever. The great work of our Lord in saving His people from their sins,⁴⁰² is brought to a final conclusion when all their sins are blotted out.⁴⁰³ Then the books of God's remembrance will be as clean from the record of His people's sins as though that record had never been entered therein. Their raiment having been washed in Jesus' blood, so that not one stain of guilt remains upon them, last of all, the record of that

⁴⁰¹ *2 Corinthians* 3:3.

⁴⁰² *Matthew* 1:21.

⁴⁰³ *Acts* 3:19-21.

guilt is removed from the book, and its pages are left as pure as their character has been rendered by the cleansing blood of Christ. And thus it is that the promise of the new covenant,

Jeremiah 31

³⁴ I will remember their sin no more,

—has its perfect accomplishment. The record of their sins is washed out by the blood of Christ, and then God himself promises that He will remember their sins no more. The probation of the people of God ends in the perfect recovery of their lost innocence, never again (thank God!) to be lost by them.

When the work of our High Priest is thus completed, and the saints made meet for their inheritance in light, the consummation of the new covenant hastens. The Saviour can no longer bear to have His people so far from Him. It is the good pleasure of the Father to give Him the kingdom. He must show them the glory that Christ had with Him before the world was.⁴⁰⁴ So He sends His Son for them, to bring them to himself.⁴⁰⁵

And Jesus, having made all his saints immortal, and taken them into His Father's presence, celebrates His marriage supper, serving His saints in person, and drinking anew, with them, the fruit of the vine in the kingdom of God, which He had not before tasted since the night when He gave them the cup representing the new covenant in His blood.⁴⁰⁶

Then they sit with Christ in thrones of judgment while the cases of the wicked are examined;⁴⁰⁷ and after the execution of the judgment, when the lake of fire has given place to the new creation, then the immortal saints shall receive the eternal inheritance in the new earth. And thus John describes this grand consummation of the new covenant when he says:

⁴⁰⁴ *John 17:24.*

⁴⁰⁵ *1 Thessalonians 4:14.*

⁴⁰⁶ *1 Corinthians 15:51-55; John 14:1-3; Revelation 19:7-9; Luke 12:36-37; 22:15-20.*

⁴⁰⁷ *1 Corinthians 6:1-3; Revelation 20:1-4.*

Revelation 21

³ And I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and *they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

Jeremiah 31

³⁴ And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says the Lord.

And thus Isaiah describes this state of things when all shall know the Lord:

Isaiah 60

¹⁹ The sun shall be no more your light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto you; but the Lord shall be unto you an everlasting light, and your God your glory.

²⁰ Your sun shall no more go down; neither shall your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended.

²¹ YOUR PEOPLE ALSO SHALL BE ALL RIGHTEOUS; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

²² A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation; I the Lord will hasten it in his time.

And thus the grand result may be stated in one sentence:

God is all in all.

A Practical Illustration

The relation of the law of God to the two covenants has been, by many persons, strangely misunderstood. But, having stated the Bible doctrine of the law and covenants, let us now illustrate it. A young American visits Russia, and, by a remarkable turn of events, attracts the attention of the emperor. That monarch, becoming interested in the young man, proceeds to make a covenant with him. He says to him,

“You see my wealth, my power, my greatness; and you have already formed some acquaintance with me. I propose now to take you for my special friend, and to be a special friend to you on this condition: That you obey the law of this realm.”

To this, the young man gladly assents. The emperor then places in his hand the volume containing the law of the empire. This the young man carefully reads. When he has thus read the volume, the emperor calls up the whole matter anew. He says,

“You have now read the volume concerning which we have entered into covenant. Do you now choose to make this a firm covenant, or do you now decline so to do?”

The young man replies that, having read the volume with care, he heartily approves of all that it enjoins, and will obey all its precepts; and that he wishes to consummate the covenant which they have made concerning all its words.

The reader can see the difference between the covenant and the law. The contracting parties have made a covenant concerning all the words of the law. In the primary sense of the word “covenant,” the agreement between the emperor and the young man is the covenant. In the secondary sense, the law of Russia is the covenant, as being the condition on which that agreement rests. Yet, when the covenant which the parties have made concerning all the words of the law of Russia is spoken of, there is a clear, plain, and unmistakable reference to the contract, and not to the law.

We will now suppose that the young man falls under evil influences, and breaks the law of Russia in many particulars. The emperor informs him that the covenant between them is at an end, being rendered null and void by his transgression.

Question:

What is it that the young man has destroyed by his evil course?
Is it the law of Russia?

By no means. That rests upon the sovereign authority of the emperor, and not upon the obedience of this young man.

But what is it, then, that is abrogated?

Simply the contract which they have made concerning the law of the empire. It was in the power of either party to violate its conditions, and thus to release the other from the obligation of the covenant. This the young man had done; and thus, by his own act, he had terminated the covenant.

But we will further suppose that the emperor, out of pity for the inexperience of the young man, and in view of the great temptations which surrounded him, and moved by feelings of true benevolence, makes a second proposition to him. He says,

“I will make a new covenant with you, not according to the one which you broke; for I will this time, by means of faithful instruction, put my law in your heart; and if you break it, I will give you an opportunity by genuine repentance to find forgiveness, and to prove yourself a man worthy of my favor.”

Suppose, now, that this young man is told that his violation of the first covenant had destroyed the law of Russia, and that the new covenant was framed expressly to enable him to disregard the law of that empire; who does not see that such counsel would be ruinous for him to follow?

And who does not also see that great as is the care of the emperor to save that young man, his care that the law of Russia shall be obeyed is still greater? Who will say that the abrogation of the first of these covenants, or the establishment of the second one, rendered null and void the law of the empire of Russia?

Hagar and Sarah

With a few words concerning the allegory in *Isaiah* 54, and *Galatians* 4:21-31, this subject shall be concluded.

1. The two women, Hagar and Sarah, represent, not the law and the gospel, but old Jerusalem and Jerusalem above. For

the mothers of the two families are not the covenants, but the Jerusalems.⁴⁰⁸

2. The two covenants, whereby God is in His worship connected with these two Jerusalems, are represented by the *relation* which Abraham sustained to these two women.
3. The children of old Jerusalem are the natural descendants of Abraham.
4. Those of the new Jerusalem are those who are His children by faith and obedience.⁴⁰⁹
5. The bondage of old Jerusalem was not caused by the law of God, but by sin.⁴¹⁰
6. The freedom of the children of the heavenly Jerusalem is not their liberty to violate the law of God, but their freedom from sin.⁴¹¹
7. Those who are not under the law, but under grace, have been pardoned in consequence of faith and repentance.⁴¹²
8. Finally, our heirship is under the new covenant, not under the old.

We have deliverance from sin through the blood of Christ, but not permission to violate the law of God. The design of the new covenant is to rescue us from the condemnation of the law, and not leave us till the law of God is made a part of our very being, and its righteousness fulfilled in our lives.

The old Jerusalem, with its sanctuary, its ark, and its priesthood, has passed away. But Jerusalem which is above is our mother; and in its sanctuary is found, not alone our High Priest with His atoning blood, but also the ark of God, wherein is that law which the new covenant writes in our hearts.⁴¹³

⁴⁰⁸ See *Galatians* 4:25-31.

⁴⁰⁹ *John* 8:39.

⁴¹⁰ *John* 8:32-36.

⁴¹¹ *Romans* 8:1-7.

⁴¹² *Romans* 3:19-31.

⁴¹³ *Revelation* 11:19.

8. In the New Testament

Original title: The Sabbath and the Law in the New Testament

According to the Commandment

Luke 23

⁵⁶ And they returned and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.

THIS text records the most remarkable instance of sabbatic observance in the Bible. The Lord of the Sabbath had tasted death for sinful man. He had offered up his life as a sin-offering to the majesty of that law which was placed beneath the mercy-seat.

The holy women followed our Lord from His crucifixion to His burial. As the preparation day was just expiring, and the Sabbath about to commence, our Lord was quickly placed in the sepulcher.⁴¹⁴ But this burial did not satisfy them. They returned from the sepulcher, and prepared spices and ointments for the body of Christ. But before they could use them, the Sabbath commenced.

Now observe their action. It was easy to plead that the Sabbath was not so important as the Lord of the Sabbath; that, though the Sabbath had arrived, the Lord of the Sabbath had still stronger claims upon them than had that institution; or, that whatever they might do in the work of anointing Him would be suitable work for the Sabbath. But they did nothing of the kind. They thought the best method of honoring the Lord of the Sabbath was by properly observing the Sabbath itself. And so they laid aside their work, when that work was only acts of reverence and affection for Christ, and they rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.

And Luke, writing a considerable number of years after this, inspired by the Spirit of God, places this on record as a noble act of obedience to God. This act of these godly women was in strict accord with the events of Calvary. It was not the law that was slain by Christ, but Christ that was slain by the law. So, when the Son

⁴¹⁴ *Luke 23:53-54; John 19:41-42.*

of God lay under the power of death, slain by that law of which the Sabbath is a tenth part, it was fitting that the arrival of the Sabbath should be recognized, even though it was the body of the crucified Redeemer that was the occasion of the labor; and that the law of God should be *then* and *there* honored in the observance of the Sabbath day according to the commandment.

The Sabbath of the Lord was honored by the life of Christ, but still more manifestly in His death and burial. In His teaching and His example He took the utmost pains to establish the fact that the Sabbath was a suitable day for acts of *mercy*; and that *such* deeds, performed even in behalf of dumb beasts, were *lawful* upon the Sabbath.

But now observe the lesson at the funeral of the Son of God. His teaching concerning merciful works on the Sabbath was absolutely demanded by the prevalent errors of the Jewish doctors; but there was danger that this might be perverted by that class of teachers who go to the opposite extreme, and deny the sanctity of the rest day of the Lord. The record of His burial teaches a lesson as expressive of the sacredness of the Sabbath, as does the crucifixion, of the sacredness of the law.

When Christ stood with our sins upon Him, either the law must give way or Christ must die. We know very well that the law did not give way. Now, at the burial of Christ, the Sabbath of the Lord stands directly in the way of certain acts of love and tenderness in behalf of the dead body of God's dear Son! Observe, these were not acts of mercy, like those which our Lord approved in behalf of suffering man and animals, for the dear Saviour was sleeping in death; nor were they acts of necessity to give Him a decent burial, for this, though done in haste, had been performed tenderly and with great expense, by Joseph of Arimathea, and by Nicodemus. He was wrapped in fine linen, and with a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about one hundred pounds weight; and a linen napkin was bound about His head.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁵ *John* 19:38-40; 20:5-7; *Matthew* 27:59-60; *Mark* 15:45-46; *Luke* 23:53.

But these faithful women, out of tender regard for the honor of Christ, desired to prepare His body more perfectly for its rest in the grave. In the midst of their preparation, the hour of the Sabbath was marked by the going down of the sun. And observe the expressive language of the Holy Spirit; they...

Luke 23

⁵⁶ ...rested the Sabbath day *according to the commandment*.

Here is a remarkable exposition of the fourth commandment. If we place this in connection with our Lord's teaching and example relative to the Sabbath, we have the following facts:

1. It is *lawful*, *i.e.*, according to the law, to do well on the Sabbath.

But the deeds to be wrought are acts of *worship* toward God the Creator, like assembling at the house of God and reading and expounding His word, or listening to it with serious attention; and also the work of the priests, or acts of mercy in behalf of the distressed, whether they be men or animals.⁴¹⁶

2. But it is not lawful, *i.e.*, not "according to the commandment," to perform unnecessarily even such work as the anointing of the body of Christ, that He might in the most honorable manner be yielded up to the power of death.

The Sabbath is a memorial of God's rest from the work of creation. The Lord of the Sabbath is best honored by obedience on our part to the commandment which requires us to rest in memory of God's rest.

The crucifixion of Christ attested the majesty of the law; the resurrection of Christ attested His personal innocence.⁴¹⁷ The law survived the death of Him who became its sin-offering. The fourth commandment is solemnly recognized the day after the crucifixion, and its sacredness is revealed to us by the most remarkable example of its observance in the whole Bible.

⁴¹⁶ *Luke 4:15-16; Matthew 12:10-12; Luke 14:1-5.*

⁴¹⁷ *Galatians 3:13; Romans 4:25.*

Nor is this to be met by saying that this was simply the act of a few women, and therefore of no real consequence. Even were this all that there is to it, the fact that these women were most intimately acquainted with the teaching of Christ proves that Jesus had never given them to understand that the Sabbath was a day of little consequence.

But it is not the mere act of these pious women. Luke, writing by inspiration, places their example on record as something done in obedience to the fourth commandment. And certainly nothing could so attest the sacredness of the sabbatic institution as does this peculiar act of obedience, indorsed as it is by the Spirit of inspiration, many years after the resurrection of Christ.

Sabbath Precedes First Day

One other truth should be brought out from this text. Here it is: The women who thus observed the Sabbath kept the very day which God ordained in Eden. For we learn that they kept the day ordained in the commandment; and that the following day was the first day of the week.⁴¹⁸ They did, therefore, in keeping the seventh day of the fourth commandment, observe by that very act the seventh day of the New Testament week.

But the day ordained on the fourth commandment is the day hallowed in memory of the Creator's rest.⁴¹⁹ And that we may not be in doubt that this identical day was known to Israel at the time of the giving of the law, the providence of God in sending the manna six days and then withholding it on the seventh, and the testimony of God himself that the manna ceased on that day because it was the Sabbath, both bear an unequivocal witness, and clearly settle this important point.⁴²⁰

And thus we may state the fact that the day following the crucifixion of Christ, His most faithful disciples observed the day ordained in the commandment, which day the commandment itself

⁴¹⁸ *Luke 23:56; 24:1; Mark 16:1-2.*

⁴¹⁹ *Exodus 20:11.*

⁴²⁰ *Exodus 16:22-23.*

identifies as the one hallowed by God in Eden. It is certain, therefore, that the Spirit of God bears testimony to the knowledge of the true seventh day at the time of Christ's crucifixion, even as the providence of God bears testimony to the knowledge of that day at the fall of the manna.

The Flight From Jerusalem

In our Lord's last discourse from the mount of Olives, in which He gives His disciples an outline of events from that time to the day of Judgment, He brings in the Sabbath in a manner to commend it to their peculiar care. Thus He says:

Matthew 24

¹⁵ When you, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso reads, let him understand:)

¹⁶ Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:

¹⁷ Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house:

¹⁸ Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

¹⁹ And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

²⁰ But pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.

Our Lord did thus make the Sabbath a subject of prayer on the part of His people, for the period of nearly forty years after His crucifixion. Whenever the people of God in the land of Judea, during that whole time, should bow before God in prayer, they would be reminded of the Sabbath. It is to be observed that our Lord does not say,

“Let them which be in *Jerusalem* flee into the mountains,”

—but,

“Let them which be in *Judea* flee into the mountains.”

This shows how great an error those commit who assert that our Lord taught His disciples this prayer because that the gates of Jerusalem would be shut on that day, rendering their flight impossible. The words of Christ relate to the *whole land of Judea*. So it is very evident that the shutting of the gates of Jerusalem could affect, at most, only a very small number of the people of God who were concerned in this flight.

But let us consider the case of those who were actually in Jerusalem at that time. Josephus, in the second book of the *Jewish War*, chapter six, informs us of the fulfillment of the sign given by our Lord. Cestius, the Roman commander, encompassed the city with his army, and:

...had he continued the siege a little longer, had certainly taken the city. [But] he recalled his soldiers from the place, and...retired from the city, *without any reason in the world*.

Here was our Lord's promised token by which the disciples were to understand that the moment of flight had arrived. And how evident that it was the hand of God which caused the Roman general, as soon as he had given the Saviour's token, to withdraw from the city "without any reason in the world." And now the disciples must flee without a moment's delay.

Let us admire the providence of God which opened their way in manifest answer to prayer. First, we have the case of those disciples who were in the country of Judea. Josephus informs us that at this time, when Cestius marched upon Jerusalem, he found the country destitute of men; because, as the law of Moses required, all the males were assembled at Jerusalem to keep the feast of tabernacles.⁴²¹ Thus it is manifest that the people of God throughout the land of Palestine, had no Jewish enemies to hinder their flight, even had it been upon the Sabbath.

And now let us see how it was with those who were in the city of Jerusalem itself. We find in the statement of Josephus the most

⁴²¹ *Deuteronomy* 16:16.

convincing proof that, had they had occasion to flee upon the Sabbath, the circumstances were such that they might have done it on that day with as little hindrance from the Jews as could their brethren in the country. Josephus gives us the remarkable information that when Cestius was some six or seven miles distant from Jerusalem, on his way to attack the city, the Jews went out on the seventh day to fight him,

...although the Sabbath was the day to which they had the greatest regard.

Certainly, the disciples could have fled out of Jerusalem when that “multitude went in a sudden and disorderly manner to the fight,” had they been disposed so to do on that Sabbath day. It was but a few days after this that Cestius, having fairly encompassed the city, and thus given the Saviour’s token for His disciples’ flight, did, “without any reason in the world,” raise the siege and suddenly retreat.

And we are told by Josephus that no sooner did the Jews perceive this unexpected retreat of the Roman army than they ran after them,

...and destroyed a considerable number of both their horsemen and footmen.⁴²²

This was the moment of flight for the disciples. It is perfectly evident that, had this retreat of Cestius occurred on the Sabbath, the Jews would have pursued him on that day; for only a few days before, they went out fifty furlongs, to attack him on the Sabbath. When the gates of the city were opened for the disorderly mob to rush forth after the army of Cestius, it was the hour for the disciples to flee. They could then do it unperceived by the wicked men of their nation, who now neither feared God, nor regarded man.

⁴²² *Jewish War*, book ii, chapter xix.

It is, therefore, perfectly evident that had this occurred upon the Sabbath, they could have fled on that day, even from Jerusalem itself. These facts do plainly prove that the interpretation given to our Lord's command respecting prayer that their flight should not happen upon the Sabbath, to the effect, that this was because their enemies would not allow them to flee that day, is entirely false. Had that been the sense of His words, it would have been much more in accordance with the course of things that actually transpired, had He taught them to pray that their enemies might not be so situated as to hinder their flight on that day. For the circumstances show that they were not, and that, if they had no conscientious regard for the day themselves, they could have fled on that day without difficulty.

It follows, therefore, that the Lord of the Sabbath uttered these words out of sacred regard for the Sabbath, even as He joined with it in the same prayer, out of tender regard to His people, the petition that their flight should not be in the winter. And joining these in a prayer that they used some forty years, it taught them a lesson they could never forget. His tender love for His people could not but kindle in their breasts the same love for Him, their Saviour and Redeemer; and His sacred regard for the rest day hallowed in Eden to commemorate the work of the Creator, could not but inspire in the minds of his people the same reverence for that day.

Here, then, is the Sabbath of the Lord sacredly regarded by the Son of God and by His disciples as late as the destruction of Jerusalem, in the year of our Lord 70. And thus we have in the New Testament, not only a distinct recognition of the fourth commandment after the crucifixion of Jesus, and with it such a lesson respecting its sacredness, as we cannot well forget, but we have also a precept from Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath, that does in a most effectual manner, show how sacred was this day in His esteem. He had bidden His disciples flee for life the moment His signal should appear, and lest that flight should happen upon the Sabbath, He taught them to offer prayer to God for the inter-

position of His providence to prevent it. And, certainly, this forty years' lesson was admirably adapted to impress the sacredness of the day upon the first generation of the Christian church, and to transmit that sacredness to the latest age of that church.

The Custom of Jesus

Soon after the commencement of our Lord's ministry, we read of His visit to Nazareth. Luke makes the following record of the visit:

Luke 4

¹⁶ And He came to Nazareth, *where He had been brought up*; and, *as His custom was*, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

As this was just after the *commencement* of our Lord's ministry, the expression respecting His attendance upon the synagogue that it was "as His custom was," must have reference to the fact that it had been His custom previous to the commencement of His ministry, *i.e.*, from childhood up, to attend regularly the worship of God in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

We see also that after becoming himself a public laborer in His great mission to save lost men, He still continued this course of action, leaving us here, as in every other part of His obedient life, an example that we should follow His steps. What a wonderful lesson is this! Here is a hint given us of His life of active obedience, as well as of lowly humility, during the thirty years that preceded His public ministry.

And what a lesson does this teach us respecting our Lord's example in wicked Nazareth! The true worshipers of God in that city were few.⁴²³ But there was one who had a standing *custom* to attend the house of God upon the Sabbath. The weather might be rainy; or it might be otherwise unpleasant; the heat might be excessive; He might be weary with the toil of six days in the lowly family of the carpenter; but He did not remain at home for rain,

⁴²³ *John* 1:46.

or heat, or dust, or weariness. The Sabbath was not His day for sleep. The people of Nazareth knew very well that, whoever might be absent from the synagogue, Jesus, whether in childhood, youth, or manhood, would be there.

And why was this? Not, by any means, because there was so much there for Him to learn. Even at twelve years of age, He could instruct the Jewish doctors.⁴²⁴ He was there, to show proper respect for the Sabbath; He was there, to help maintain the worship of God; He was there, to set an example for others to follow. And so when He became a public laborer, as the great prophet like unto Moses, He followed this same custom of His earlier life. He had no occasion to visit the synagogue that He might find hearers, nor to select the Sabbath as His day of preaching because on no other day could He call out the people. Far from this; vast multitudes thronged Him day after day. But He did by this custom proclaim His sacred regard for the Sabbath, and for the worship of the Most High.

Making the Sabbath Honorable

When our Lord entered upon His ministry He found the Sabbath loaded down with a vast multitude of rigorous and burdensome traditions that rendered it a yoke of bondage to its observers. If the Sabbath had been only a carnal ordinance, imposed on them till the time of reformation, our Lord would have made short work with the whole thing. But the Sabbath was not to be destroyed by His death, and much of His life must therefore be given to the correction of those errors by which Satan had utterly perverted its design.

As the Jews had come to hold that every act by way of healing the sick was entirely unlawful on the Sabbath, the Saviour took great pains to correct this false notion, and to show that it exactly accorded with the design of the Sabbath to perform deeds of mercy to the afflicted on that day. Thus, our Lord vindicated the act of the disciples in eating the ears of corn on the Sabbath when

⁴²⁴ *Luke 2:42-47.*

they were hungry; He justified himself for healing the man with the withered hand; also the blind man; also the woman that was bowed down with infirmity thirty-eight years.⁴²⁵ Certainly, these were acts exactly adapted to the sabbatic institution.

Had our Lord refrained from relieving the sick because it was the Sabbath, then surely it might be said that the Sabbath was a yoke of bondage; and that it was not something made for man's good, but something for the good of which man was made. In one of these cases, however, our Lord bade the man He healed to take up his bed and walk. If this had been a bed, such as we thus designate at the present day, we might well regard this as a violation of the law of the Sabbath. But when we learn that this was nothing more than a blanket or rug on which he lay by the pool, we see that the case is entirely different.

So, also, in the case of the blind man. Jesus moistened clay with spittle, and anointed his eyes, and bade him go to the pool of Siloam and wash them.⁴²⁶ To state these cases is to refute the charges founded on them. They are of equal weight with His alleged violation of the Sabbath in allowing His disciples in their hunger to eat of the ears of corn. None of these acts were done in a careless or irreverent manner. All of them had the relief of the suffering, and the honor of God, in view.

Jesus did not violate the Sabbath. Or, to speak more strictly the perfect truth, our lord kept all the commandments of God and taught men so to do. He testifies that he had kept His Father's commandments.⁴²⁷ Sin is the transgression of the law; but in Christ there is no sin.⁴²⁸ He taught the immutability of every jot and tittle of the moral law. He solemnly warned men not to break the commandments, and to teach men so. He promised that those who do and teach them shall be highly honored in the kingdom

⁴²⁵ *Matthew* 12:1-13; *John* 9; *Luke* 13:11-17; *John* 5:1-20; 7:21-24.

⁴²⁶ *John* 9:6-7.

⁴²⁷ *John* 15:10.

⁴²⁸ *1 John* 3:4-5.

of God.⁴²⁹ The Son of God had His Father's law in His heart.⁴³⁰ All who are saved by Him will have that same law in their hearts also.⁴³¹

Nor is this all. The New-Testament church are to fulfill the righteousness of the law; *i.e.*, the right doing ordained in the law.⁴³² Such a church will assuredly obey the fourth commandment.

Matthew 12

⁸ The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.

It is no disgrace to the Sabbath that Jesus is its Lord. Indeed, it is no dishonor to the Son of God to be the Lord of the Sabbath. The expression, "Lord *even* of the Sabbath day," does certainly imply that it is a very high honor to be Lord of the Sabbath. Nor does it signify that because He is its Lord, He is therefore to destroy it. The very opposite is implied.

Romans 14

⁹ [He] died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living.

These are His people; and He did all this that He might be their Lord, and thus give them eternal life. As the Lord of the Sabbath, He was the right one to determine what was, and what was not, proper upon the Sabbath. And the very fact that He was engaged with the Father in the creation, shows that He was also concerned with Him in ordaining the Sabbath. It is, therefore, with the strictest reason that He claims to be Lord of that institution which God calls...

Isaiah 58

¹³ ...my holy day,...the holy of the Lord, [and] honorable.

⁴²⁹ *Matthew* 5:17-19.

⁴³⁰ *Psalms* 40:8.

⁴³¹ *Jeremiah* 31:33; *Luke* 22:20; *Hebrews* 8:10.

⁴³² *Romans* 8:1-7.

The Sabbath is not an institution unknown to the New Testament, nor is it one peculiar to the New Testament. That book treats it as an existing institution; just as it alludes to the heavens and the earth as something in existence from ancient days. The Lord of the New Testament church, is the Lord of the Sabbath.

- He honored it in His life by setting aside, as its Lord, the burdensome traditions by which it was encumbered.
- He honored it by performing on that day a very large portion of His works of mercy for the distressed.
- He honored it by teaching His disciples to pray that it should not become necessary for them to flee on that day, some forty years after His death.
- He honored it by His *custom* to devote attendance upon the synagogue on that day, from early life till the close of His work.
- He honored the Sabbath, and himself also, by claiming to be EVEN its Lord.
- He honored the Sabbath when He, the Lord of the Sabbath, lay in death, and those who had known Him most intimately, and understood His teaching most perfectly, desisted from a work of love and reverence for Him, not absolutely necessary, that they might rest the Sabbath day according to the commandment.

The Manner of Paul

The book of *Acts* contains an inspired history of the first generation of the Christian church. It makes several important references to the Sabbath. Thus we read that Paul, having preached in the Jewish synagogue at Antioch on the Sabbath, when the congregation was broken up, was entreated by the multitude that these same words might be preached to them the next Sabbath day. And the next Sabbath day, came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God; and the hand of God was with his servants.⁴³³

⁴³³ *Acts* 13:14, 27, 42-44.

It is evident, therefore, that the day which was hallowed by the Jews, was, some fifteen years after the death of Christ, still known as the Sabbath. That Paul not only preached to the Jews on that day, but that he preached also, on the following Sabbath, to the Gentiles, and this at their own request, is strong proof that the apostles regarded the ancient Sabbath as the most suitable day for divine worship; and, that even the Gentiles of Antioch had some regard for the day. Paul was not compelled to use the Sabbath for this second meeting, for he was dealing with Gentiles; he did use it, however; which is a strong proof of his regard for the day, and even that the people of Antioch also had, to some extent, regard for the Sabbath.

When the council assembled at Jerusalem to consider the question of circumcision, it is evident that the question of the Sabbath did not cause any difference of opinion at all. It was a trouble to certain ones that the Gentiles did not observe circumcision.⁴³⁴

Had they been neglecters, also, of the Sabbath, most certainly that fact would have been mentioned, for it could not but create even greater disturbance than the neglect of circumcision. And when the apostle James gives sentence in the council, he makes an important statement respecting the Sabbath. He says:

Acts 15

²¹ For Moses has of OLD TIME in EVERY CITY them that preach him, being read in the synagogues EVERY SABBATH DAY.

He assigns this as a reason why the points named by him, and no others, should be inserted in the letter of instruction to the Gentiles. It is evident that the Jews, in their dispersion, had carried the Sabbath with them into every city of the Gentiles, and that the Gentile Christians were, even before their conversion, acquainted with the Sabbath, and were still receiving the benefit of this Sabbath instruction from the books of Moses.

⁴³⁴ Acts 15:1-5.

When Paul arrived at Philippi to preach Christ, his labors began with a small company of devout Gentiles, mostly women, who were wont to assemble for prayer, upon the Sabbath, by the river side. The first convert was a Grecian woman named Lydia, of the city of Thyatira.⁴³⁵ With this company of Sabbath-keepers, began the Philippian church. Next, the apostle...

Acts 17

¹ ...came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews.

² And Paul, *as his manner was*, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures.

This was Paul's *manner*, even as it was the *custom* of Jesus.⁴³⁶ We never read of his having a similar *custom* respecting any other day of the week. As the result of his preaching, "some" of the Jews,

⁴ ...and of the devout Greeks, a great multitude, and of the chief women, not a few,

—became obedient to the faith. These "devout Greeks" were men, who not only feared the true God, but kept His commandments. And thus we see that the Thessalonian church also began with a company of Sabbath-keepers, part of whom were Jews, but the most, devout Gentiles.

The origin of the Corinthian church is very similar to that of the church of Thessalonica. We learn that Paul came to Corinth, and finding Aquila and Priscilla, he came unto them,

Acts 18

³ And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them and wrought: for, by their occupation, they were tent makers.

⁴ And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

Here, as at Corinth, some of the Jews and Greeks, who thus worshiped God in the synagogue were the first converts to the

⁴³⁵ Acts 16:12-15.

⁴³⁶ Luke 4:16.

gospel. And this church also began, not merely from the labors of a man, who kept the commandments of God, but with those who were already the worshipers of God upon His sacred day.

This was Paul's manner in every place. He began with the Jews who feared God, and with whom, in every case, there appears to have been associated devout Gentiles, and with these kind of converts laid the foundation of his churches. It is certainly worthy of notice, that the day observed by the Jews is ever called the Sabbath by Luke, who writes by the Spirit of inspiration some thirty years after the *abrogation* of the Sabbath, as some say; or, that time after its *change*, as say others.

The Apostles Uphold the Law

We can judge how Paul preached respecting the law of God by what he has written respecting it in his epistles. He represents the whole world as condemned by the law, and every mouth shut by it.⁴³⁷

He tells us that by the law is the knowledge of sin.⁴³⁸ So that when he wished to instruct men as to the nature of sin he opened to them the law of God. He shows how men, thus condemned, can be pardoned, and yet God maintain His justice as represented in His law. It is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus that God can be just, and yet justify the sinner who believes in Jesus.⁴³⁹ And thus he states the immutability of the law in the strongest language:

Romans 3

³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.

Paul held the abrogation of the ceremonial law, with its numerous sabbaths, new moons, and feast days;⁴⁴⁰ but he did sacredly maintain the moral law of God as the unchangeable rule of right.

⁴³⁷ *Romans 3:19.*

⁴³⁸ *Romans 3:20.*

⁴³⁹ *Romans 3:23-26.*

⁴⁴⁰ Compare *Ephesians 2:14-15; Colossians 2:14-17; Leviticus 23:4-44.*

The language of James is a most convincing testimony to the perpetual obligation of the ten commandments:

James 2

⁸ If you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, You shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well:

⁹ But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are *convinced of the law* as transgressors.

¹⁰ For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

¹¹ For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you are become a transgressor of the law.

¹² So speak, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

There can be no mistake that what James calls the royal law is still in full force, and that this law embodies the ten commandments. It is also certain that to violate one of those commandments makes us guilty of violating the whole law of God. So long, therefore, as this code of moral laws endures, so long will the Sabbath of the Lord remain. It is a part of that code which shall stand fast until heaven and earth shall pass away.

The last book of the Bible was given upon the Lord's day.⁴⁴¹ It is a revelation made by Christ to John. As none but the Lord of the Sabbath was counted worthy by God, the Father, to receive this book to give to man,⁴⁴² so He chose, as the most suitable day to give this to man, that day which the Bible designates as His. As only one such day is revealed in the Bible,⁴⁴³ we may be certain, not only that such a day existed at the close of the first century of the Christian church, but that this is the very day hallowed by the Father and the Son in the beginning, and jointly recognized in the Scriptures as theirs.

⁴⁴¹ *Revelation 1:10.*

⁴⁴² *Compare Revelation 1:1; 5:1-7.*

⁴⁴³ *Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13; Mark 2:28.*

9. The First Day of the Week

Original title: The First Day of the Week Not the Sabbath

Ecclesiastes 7

²⁹ Lo, this only have I found, that God has made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

WHEN man came from the hand of his Creator, he was an innocent and virtuous being. He had nothing evil or perverse in his nature. The carnal mind had no place in him. He had the law of God in his heart.

The earth was not tainted with sin. Death had no existence in any nook or corner of the earth. Paradise was upon earth, and man's home was in that Paradise. The tree of life was his; and so also was every tree of the garden except one. Man was appointed ruler over all the earth. Every thing was in subjection to him. The curse of God did not rest upon a single spot under the whole heaven. God was well pleased with the work of His hands.

To commemorate the creation of the heavens and the earth, God gave to man the Sabbath by resting on the seventh day from all His work, and blessing the day of His rest, and setting it apart to a holy use.

The Experiment with Disobedience

Man was surrounded with every blessing that could make life desirable. Not one evil of any kind existed to be a grief to him. All was in subjection to him, for he was in subjection to God. He was upright in the sight of God, and such he might have remained. But man, being in honor, did not thus continue. He was induced by Satan to attempt the improvement of his situation by rebelling against God. This is what Solomon designates as seeking out many inventions. Let us take a view of some of them.

1. When man had the tree of life, and might have had free access to it, and thus have lived forever had he *obeyed* God, he was made to believe that he could find good, superior to this, in *dis-*

obeying him, and in eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, though he had been warned that this would be to him certain death. The result showed that he committed a fatal mistake.

2. When he had knowledge of good *only*, he was made to believe that his well-being would be immensely promoted by the knowledge of evil *also*. He found to his cost that there was no good in evil.

3. When he was “a little lower than the angels,”⁴⁴⁴ he aspired to elevate himself by sin, to the rank of gods. He found that, though sin had no power to elevate, it had fearful power to debase, and that he was rendered earthly, sensual, and devilish.

4. He aspired to greater freedom than he could find in the service of God, but found that though sin promised liberty it could give only servitude, bondage, and death.

5. He was not satisfied with innocence, and reached after good in guilt, finding when it was too late that he made a ruinous exchange.

6. The joys of Paradise, access to the tree of life, the favor of God, free converse with the angels of God and even with the Creator, and life without pain, or toil, or care, and that was not designed to come to an end, these were not good enough for poor man. He must ascertain for himself how much of good there was in the service of Satan. The result of this experiment shows him banished from Paradise, and from its immortal fruit, under the displeasure of God, subjected to labor, to sorrow, and at last to death.

Inventions to Avoid Obedience

7. But though the first man did thus make such palpable mistakes in seeking something better from Satan than that which God had in His infinite benevolence conferred on him, the lesson has been wholly lost upon the vast majority of his posterity. The

⁴⁴⁴ *Psalm 8:5; Hebrews 2:7.*

one God of perfect holiness and excellence, having revealed himself to fallen man, His character has not been admired nor loved. They have not liked to retain God in their knowledge.⁴⁴⁵ So they have...

Romans 1

²³ ...changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

8. God gave to man the institution of marriage.⁴⁴⁶ The perverse invention of man has marred God's work with polygamy, and even, from the hardness of the heart, with divorce. Yet men have not found themselves happier for these changes in God's institution. Witness in this the families of Abraham, of Jacob, and of David.

9. The first of all the duties of the second table of the law, is that which we owe to our parents. The perversity of man's evil heart found out a way to apparently obey God and yet break this commandment.⁴⁴⁷

10. The blood of Christ can cleanse the penitent sinner from every sinful stain. Yet a majority of those who profess to make Christ their Saviour, prefer for this very purpose the flames of purgatory.

11. The Lord's supper commemorates the death of Christ. Yet in the place of the broken bread and the wine in the cup, so expressive of our Lord's sacrifice for us, vast multitudes prefer the celebration of the mass with its wafer for the people, and its wine for the priest.

12. The ordinance of baptism commemorates the burial and resurrection of Christ. Yet even of Protestants there are only a minority who do not exchange the burial with Christ in baptism, so

⁴⁴⁵ *Romans 1:28.*

⁴⁴⁶ *Genesis 2:20-24; Malachi 2:14-15; Matthew 19:3-8.*

⁴⁴⁷ *Matthew 15:1-9.*

expressive as a memorial of the Saviour's burial and resurrection, for a few drops of water sprinkled upon the face.⁴⁴⁸

Ecclesiastes 7

²⁹ God has made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

And every one of these inventions has been a dishonor to God, and a source of evil and of sin to mankind.

Substituting the Sabbath

Let us now consider that invention whereby man has found a substitute for the Sabbath of the Lord. When man was upright and had not yet lost his innocence, and while he dwelt in Eden it-self and held converse with God, the Sabbath of the Lord was given to him as a most expressive memorial of the creation of the heavens and the earth. Thus we read:

Genesis 1

³¹ And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Genesis 2

¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

² 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.

³ 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.

Here is a divine institution set up from the foundation of the world, and designed expressly to commemorate the creation of the heavens and the earth. This institution was made out of the seventh day in consequence of three acts which pertain to that

⁴⁴⁸ *Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12.*

day, and never can pertain to any other. One tenth part of the moral law pertains to this rest-day of the Lord.

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor and do all your work:

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates:

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

But at the present time a rival institution has possession of the field, and this ancient memorial has, even among God's professed people, hardly any to regard it. It is a most palpable fact that this later institution is only an ordinance of man, that makes void God's commandment.⁴⁴⁹ It is one of the many inventions wherein man has found out how to depart from his uprightness.

Texts About the First Day

Yet it is with the first-day Sabbath as with the ceremony of sprinkling: its advocates profess to sustain it by the Bible. After reading the institution of the Sabbath of the Lord, in *Genesis* 2:1-3, and the law enforcing its observance, as uttered by the voice of the great Lawgiver, let us now read the texts which it is alleged prove that the rest-day of the Lord is superseded by the first day of the week:

Psalms 118

²² The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

²³ This is the Lord's doing: it is marvelous in our eyes.

²⁴ This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

⁴⁴⁹ *Matthew* 15:6-9.

Ezekiel 43

²⁶ Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves.

²⁷ And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, that the priests shall make your burnt-offerings upon the altar, and your peace-offerings; and I will accept you, says the Lord God.

Matthew 28

¹ In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher.

² And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

Mark 16

¹ And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him.

² And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun.

⁹ Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.

Luke 23

⁵⁶ And they returned and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.

Luke 24

¹ Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

² And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher.

³ And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

John 20

¹ The first day of the week came Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher, and saw the stone taken away from the sepulcher.

² Then she ran, and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid Him.

¹⁹ Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.

²⁶ And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

Acts 2

¹ And when the day of pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

Acts 20

⁷ And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

⁸ And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

1 Corinthians 16

¹ Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do you.

² Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Revelation 1

¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

These are the texts which are cited to prove that the Sabbath has been changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. Yet not one of them makes any such declaration, or even implies any such thing.

Three of them, viz., *Psalm* 118:22-24; *Ezekiel* 43:26-27; *Revelation* 1:10; do not even name the day, and what is more, cannot have even the slightest reference to it.

Two other of these texts, viz., *John* 20:26; *Acts* 2:1-2 do not mention the day of the week, and record nothing which might not, with the strictest propriety, have transpired on any day of the week so far as that is concerned.

There is the strongest reason to believe that *John* 20:26, cannot even allude to the first day of the week, to say nothing of its utter silence respecting the sacredness of the day as one of abstinence from labor, to be celebrated as the Christian Sabbath.

And as to *Acts* 2:1-2, it has not the slightest bearing upon the subject. It mentions the events of the day of pentecost, which have not, however, any relation, in any way, to the change of the Sabbath, and it is, at least, a disputed point among first-day writers of distinction, whether this day of pentecost actually fell on Sunday, or not.⁴⁵⁰

The remaining eight texts do, however, have this merit as evidence for first-day sacredness, that they each actually mention the day. But when we inquire further what they say respecting the first day as the Christian Sabbath, the answer is simply this: that they have nothing to say on the point. They do mention in three instances the Sabbath, but in each case it is the preceding day which bears this honorable title, and never the first day of the week. Indeed, one of these texts mentions the fact that the day preceding the first day of the week was the Sabbath ordained in the commandment.

The first day of the week has been sacred time, as we are told, ever since the resurrection of Christ; for the Sabbath was changed at that point to commemorate the event. Yet here are *four* inspired men who each describe the resurrection of Christ as historians, and each mentions the first day of the week in connection

⁴⁵⁰ *Hacket's Commentary on the Acts*, p. 50.

therewith, and yet no one of them alludes to this sanctification of the resurrection day. This is the very point where Sunday became sacred, if at all. Yet here is no intimation of any such occurrence.

Fables

Were the sacred writers neglectful of their duty? or, is the sanctification of Sunday, in commemoration of the resurrection, nothing but a fable? We know the first supposition cannot be true, and if the first is not true, the second one must be. As to *Acts* 20:7-8, it contains palpable proof that the first day of the week was not regarded by Paul as a day of abstinence from labor; and *1 Corinthians* 16:2, designates the duty of the people of God at their own homes, and not at the house of God.

On *Psalms* 118:22-24, it is sufficient to remark that there is no proof that Christ became the head of the corner on the day of His resurrection, rather than when He ascended into Heaven.⁴⁵¹ Nor is there any authority for saying that Sunday was ever appointed for the commemoration of Christ's resurrection. The day of this text is the same as in *John* 8:56.

The use of *Ezekiel* 43:26-27, is simply preposterous. The text makes not the slightest allusion to the Sabbath, nor to the first day of the week. The period of seven days was to be employed in cleansing the altar; and on the eighth day, and thence forward, *i.e.*, every day after that, the altar was ready for offerings.

The four evangelists record the resurrection of the Son of God; and as they mention it in connection with the first day of the week, their total silence respecting the sacredness of the day at the very point when it became sacred, if at all, makes these five texts mighty witnesses against Sunday sacredness instead of witnesses in its favor. Thus we set down *Matthew* 28:1-2; *Mark* 16:1-2, 9; *Luke* 23:56; 24:1-3; *John* 20:1-2.

⁴⁵¹ *Ephesians* 1:20-23; 2:19-22.

If *John* 20:19 be cited to prove that the disciples did begin, even on the day of Christ's resurrection, to celebrate the first day of the week in honor of that event, it is sufficient to reply,

1. That no such thing is stated in the text;
2. That we do know, from *Mark* 16:14, that the disciples were assembled on this occasion, simply to eat their evening meal; and that Jesus, on entering their presence, rebuked them for *not believing* His resurrection.

After eight days, Christ met with His disciples again.⁴⁵² This can never be *proved* to have occurred on Sunday. But if it could, it would not make a Sabbath of the day when nothing of the kind is said unless we can thus treat His next meeting, which was a fishing occasion,⁴⁵³ and also His final interview with them when He ascended from the Mount of Olives on Thursday.⁴⁵⁴ But there is very strong reason for believing that this meeting occurred later in the week than on the first day. It was *after* eight days from Sunday night. The period of one week is designated in the Bible as "after seven days."⁴⁵⁵

There is no propriety in citing *Acts* 2:1-2, to prove the change of the Sabbath, as it makes not the slightest allusion to any such thing. But so far as that is concerned, it can be said also of every text that is quoted for the purpose. However, this text does not even mention the day. It is simply the record of the antitype of the feast of pentecost.

The text which is most depended on to prove first-day sacredness, is *Acts* 20:7. And this amounts to nothing for that purpose, unless it can be made to show that this was the customary day for religious services with Paul.

⁴⁵² *John* 20:26.

⁴⁵³ *John* 21.

⁴⁵⁴ *Acts* 1.

⁴⁵⁵ *1 Chronicles* 9:25.

Paul's Custom

It is remarkable that Luke, the writer of the book of *Acts*, had a peculiar turn to note just this thing. Thus he says to Jesus, that it was his “custom” to attend the synagogue on the Sabbath.⁴⁵⁶ Thus also, he speaks of the observance of the Sabbath at Philippi:

Acts 16

¹³ Where prayer was *wont* to be made.

And he states this fact, also, respecting Paul at Thessalonica, that this Sabbath preaching in the synagogue was...

Acts 17

² ...as his manner was.

And thus, also, at Corinth, it is said,

Acts 18

⁴ He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath.

Now if Luke could write thus concerning an ancient institution like the Sabbath, that it was the *custom* or *manner to act* thus in regard to it, how much more important that he should note such a fact respecting a *new* institution, which was absolutely to depend for its sacredness upon the fact that Paul did thus regularly observe the day. Yet it is worthy of the most serious attention of the observers of Sunday, that he says not one word of this, though it was his habit to note these very things, but throws in, as the reason of this special meeting, the immediate departure of Paul. We may, therefore, safely deny the assertion that meetings on first-day were Paul's regular custom:

1. Because neither this text nor any other one asserts it.
2. Because it was a marked peculiarity of Luke's to note such things, which he would certainly have done in this case had it been true.

It is also certain that this was a night meeting on the first day of the week; for the days of the week began at evening, whence it

⁴⁵⁶ *Luke* 4:16.

follows that the morrow morning was first-day morning, on which he resumed his long journey toward Jerusalem.

On *1 Corinthians* 16:1-2, it is proper to remark that this text not only says nothing of the change of the Sabbath, but it does not even allude to public worship on the first day of the week. Each one was to lay by himself in store on that day. Dr. Justin Edwards, in his *Sabbath Manual*, p.116, says this was to be fulfilled by public collections. But in the *Family Testament*, the notes of which were written by him, he confesses the truth frankly. Thus he says on *1 Corinthians* 16:2:

Lay by him in store; AT HOME, That there be no gatherings; that their gifts might be ready when the apostle should come.

The Lord's Day

It is a remarkable instance of handling the word of God deceitfully when *Revelation* 1:10 is quoted as though it read,

“The Lord’s day, which is the first day of the week.”

Never in the Bible has God or Christ claimed the first day as His peculiar day. But from the beginning of the world, He has thus claimed the seventh day.⁴⁵⁷ This holy day He has never put away, to take another in its stead. So this text is a direct proof that there is one day in the gospel dispensation still claimed by the Lord as His; and that this day is His ancient Sabbath—one further fact for the benefit of those who think that John did here give a sacred title to the first day of the week. If he designed to give a sacred title to a day never before designated as sacred in the Bible, it is remarkable that he did not tell what day of the week this new day was.

And it is still more remarkable that when he wrote his gospel some years later, and had occasion therein to designate the first day of the week, he should call it by that plain title, and nothing

⁴⁵⁷ See *Genesis* 2:1-3; *Exodus* 20:8-11; *Isaiah* 58:13; *Mark* 2:28.

else. It is very manifest that he did not consider it a day ordained of God to be sacred to the church.

Such is the testimony adduced to prove the change of the Sabbath. How wicked it is to use these texts to nullify the fourth commandment! How evident that these passages have no reference to the change of the Sabbath! And what a Sabbath must that be which never was ordained in the Bible! How insulting to the Majesty of Heaven to tell the Lord on each first-day morning,

“This is your holy Sabbath.”

How strange that men will cherish a day which God never commanded, and trample down that day which from the beginning of the world He has commanded them to remember, and to keep holy! When man was upright, God gave to him His holy day. He has never authorized him to change this for another of his own selection. Yet man has done this very thing. We are compelled, therefore, to assign the first-day Sabbath a place among the “many inventions,” sought out by man’s perverse ingenuity.

The lesson from all this is obvious. If we would honor our Creator, we must turn from the inventions of men to the commandments of God. He will never accept, as His pure worship, the doctrines of men; and such, most assuredly, is that institution which men call the Christian Sabbath.

10. The Change of the Sabbath

Christ vs. Antichrist

Isaiah 42

²¹ The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will *magnify the law and make it honorable.*

Daniel 7

²⁵ And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and *think to change times and laws*: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

THE first of these prophecies relates to the work of Christ; the second relates to that of Antichrist. Each of these works pertains to the law of God. No one will dispute that the first of these prophecies predicts what Christ shall do to the law of His Father. That Antichrist is the agent presented in the second prophecy, all are agreed. The nature of the work here attributed to him shows conclusively that the laws which he should think to change are those of God. It is a part of his work against the Most High.

1. He shall speak great words against the Most High.
2. He shall wear out the saints of the Most High.
3. He shall think to change times and laws.

And the prophecy adds,

Daniel 7

²⁵ ...they shall be given into his hand.

—for a certain period of time. The nature of the work of this wicked power as here presented by Daniel, clearly determines whose are the times and laws which he shall think to change. It is a part of his warfare against the cause of God. He blasphemes the name of God, he wears out His saints, and he *thinks* to change His law. And this is rendered yet more evident by the form of expression used. It does not say,

“He *shall change* times and laws.”

He actually performs the work in the matter of blasphemy and of persecution. But when we come to the changing of the law, it is said,

“He *shall* THINK to do it.”

How evident that he could not do this in reality. He could blaspheme God; he could wear out His saints; but he could *not* change the law of God. He thinks himself able to do this, which is, indeed, the very language of the Douay Bible. How expressive, therefore, is this language of the Holy Spirit. He shall *think* to do it. Were these the laws of men, there would be no propriety in saying, “He shall *think* to change” them; for he could change them in reality, and to his heart’s content. And, indeed, there would be no propriety in introducing the laws of men into such a connection. It is the warfare of Antichrist against the *name, and saints, and laws*, of the God of Heaven that is the theme of this prophecy.

This great Antichrist is the papal power. Of this there can be no just doubt. The four beasts of *Daniel 7* are in that chapter explained to be the four great kingdoms that have successively ruled the whole world. The ten horns of this fourth beast are the ten kingdoms into which the fourth empire is divided. The little horn arises in the midst of these ten kingdoms, a different power from these, ruled by a *priest-king*, and warring against the cause of God.

Paul, in *2 Thessalonians 2*, presents us this great monster of iniquity as:

2 Thessalonians 2

³ ...that Man of Sin,

—and as...

⁸ ...that Wicked,...whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

He tells us, moreover, that the mystery of iniquity had, even in his time, begun to manifest itself, but that it was restrained by the existing hindrances, *i.e.*, by the pagan government that then controlled the world. Several hundred years of apostasy and rebellion against God were necessary to develop and mature this “Man of Sin,” before he was able to fill the place assigned to him in the prophecy of *Daniel*. Many acts of rebellion against God, and of wicked and blasphemous conduct toward His law, may, therefore, justly be expected of this great apostasy long before it reaches the place where it can stand up in the midst of the ten kingdoms of the fourth empire, in fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy, to war against God, and His law, and His saints.

Here are the actors in these two prophecies—Christ and Antichrist. Their character is not more unlike than is their work.

- One shall magnify the law and make it honorable; the other shall think himself able to change it.
- One shall act in perfect subjection to its precepts; the other shall deem himself superior to the law, and able to change it to suit his own purpose.

The work of Christ has no connection with that of Antichrist. The work of changing the law of God is wrought alone by Antichrist. In this work, the Son of God has no part.

Magnifying the Law

It is the work of Christ to magnify the law and make it honorable. Our Lord did this when He testified that not one jot or one tittle should pass from it till heaven and earth should pass away.

- He did it when He taught that those who do and teach the commandments should be highly esteemed in the kingdom of Heaven, and those who break them and teach men so should not be thus esteemed.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁸ *Matthew* 5:17-19.

- He magnified the law when He showed that it extends even to the intents of the heart.⁴⁵⁹
- He also magnified the law when He founded the golden rule upon it.⁴⁶⁰
- In like manner He did this when He made the keeping of the commandments the condition of entering eternal life.⁴⁶¹
- He did it when He taught that any worship which makes void God's commandments is vain in His sight.⁴⁶²

He did not only magnify the law by such teaching as all this; He did it by His acts. He kept the law of God in every particular.⁴⁶³ And well He might, for this law was written upon His heart.⁴⁶⁴ And yet, by something greater than all this did He honor the law of God. He took the sins of men upon himself, and let the law of God strike Him down in the place of the sinner. And by this act He attested His sense of the absolute perfection of the law, and that it was unchangeable and eternal.

Such was the work of Christ toward the law of the Father. There is no fellowship between Him and the Man of Sin, and no connection between the work of the one and that of the other respecting the law of God. Whatever, therefore, is done by way of striking down the law of God, or changing it, pertains solely to the Antichrist, and not, in any degree or in any sense, to the Son of God. The following propositions are worthy of the attention of all thoughtful persons:

1. It was no part of the work of Christ to change the law of God.
2. It was His express mission to magnify the law of His Father.

⁴⁵⁹ *Matthew* 5:21-22, 27-28.

⁴⁶⁰ *Matthew* 7:12.

⁴⁶¹ *Matthew* 19:17.

⁴⁶² *Matthew* 15:1-9.

⁴⁶³ *1 John* 3:4-5.

⁴⁶⁴ *Psalms* 40:8, 10.

3. The record given in the New Testament shows not one trace of changing the commandments of God on the part of the Saviour.
4. But it does show that by His doctrine His obedience, and His death, He did in the highest degree magnify the moral law.
5. The change of God's law is the work of Antichrist alone; and with that change Christ has no connection.
6. The apostasy which produced this Antichrist began, according to Paul's testimony, in the days of the apostles.
7. We may, therefore, expect to find early traces of the grand heresy which distinguishes Antichrist; viz., the doctrine of the change of the law of God, or of its repeal.
8. In the beginning, the work of apostasy pertained to efforts to change or set aside the second and the fourth commandment as ceremonial; but when the power of Antichrist had reached its greatest height, he was declared to be able to change even virtues into vices and vices into virtues.

Testimony of History

The advocates of the sacredness of Sunday suppose they have gained their cause if they have found some evidences that this day was observed with some respect in the early ages of the church. They seem to be certain that the day was then regarded as the Christian Sabbath, and that it had taken the place of the Sabbath of the Lord. They even argue that the testimonies which they produce out of the so-called fathers of the church are ample proof that the apostles changed the law of God, though the New Testament bears testimony in every way to the contrary of this.

The strongest testimony in behalf of this supposed apostolic change of the Sabbath is produced out of Mosheim, and is as follows:

All Christians were unanimous in setting apart the first day of the week, on which the triumphant Saviour arose from the dead, for the solemn celebration of public worship. This pious custom,

which was derived from the example of the church at Jerusalem, was founded upon the express appointment of the apostles, who consecrated that day to the same sacred purpose, and was observed universally throughout all the Christian churches, as appears from the united testimony of the most credible writers.⁴⁶⁵

This statement of Mosheim is often cited in the most triumphant manner to prove the change of the Sabbath, and to establish, by apostolic authority, the sacredness of Sunday. Now it is a very remarkable fact, that we are able, from the testimony of Mosheim himself, to show that this sanctity of Sunday was at that time utterly unknown. The proof on this point is very direct and plain. Mosheim unwittingly exposes the fallacy of this supposed Sunday sacredness in the following statement respecting the law of Constantine, which was enacted in 321 AD. He says of the law:

The first day of the week, which was the ordinary and stated time for the public assemblies of the Christians, *was, in consequence of a peculiar law enacted by Constantine, observed with greater solemnity than it had formerly been.*⁴⁶⁶

Here is an express statement that the law of Constantine made Sunday observance more strict than it had formerly been, and caused its observance to be attended with greater solemnity. Now carefully read this edict which thus made Sunday a day of greater solemnity than before. Here is the edict:

Let all the judges and town people, and the occupation of all trades, rest on the venerable day of the sun: but let those who are situated in the country, freely and at full liberty, attend to the business of agriculture; because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines; lest the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted by Heaven.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ *Maclaine's Mosheim*, cent. i, part ii, chap. iv, sec. 4.

⁴⁶⁶ *Mosheim*, cent. iv, part ii, chap. iv. sec. 5.

⁴⁶⁷ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, article Sunday.

Certainly, here is something worthy of the notice of those whose respect for Sunday rests upon the authority of Mosheim. Constantine's Sunday law caused the day to be observed with *greater solemnity* than it had *formerly been*. But what was the nature of this law? It gave to the farmer full liberty to carry on his business on the first day of the week. How, then, did it cause the day to be observed with greater solemnity? Take notice of the answer. It forbade those who were *merchants* and *mechanics* from carrying on their business on Sunday.

It follows, therefore, from Mosheim's own showing, that up to this time all classes of men had labored on Sunday. And as he makes his statement with special reference to the case of the Christians, it is also evident that up to this time the whole body of those who bore the name of Christians did freely labor on that day, but that from that time the mechanics were restrained in their business on Sunday, while the farmer was allowed, "freely and at full liberty," to carry on his farming.

We prove, therefore, from the most valued witness in behalf of Sunday observance that it was not kept as a day of sacredness during the first three centuries of the church, but was, with the exception of the time employed in religious meetings on that day, simply a day of ordinary business. And what Mosheim thus unwittingly, but truthfully, states, to the utter discomfiture of his own previous effort in behalf of the sacredness of the day, is also stated by many writers. Bishop Jeremy Taylor, an eminent prelate of the church of England, thus states the case:

The primitive Christians did all manner of works upon the Lord's day, even in the times of persecution, when they are the strictest observers of all divine commandments; but in this they knew there was none; and, therefore, when Constantine the emperor had made an edict against working upon the Lord's day, yet he excepts and still permitted all agriculture or labors of the husbandman whatsoever.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁸ *Ductor Dubitantium*, part i, book ii, chap. ii, sec. 59.

This is a very important statement. The first day of the week was a day of ordinary business in the early ages of the church. And this very fact proves that, though it is now called “the Lord’s day,” it could not have been considered thus in those ages; for men can never innocently appropriate to their own business that time which God claims as His own. Here is another testimony on this same point:

The Lord’s day had no command that it should be sanctified, but it was left to God’s people to pitch on this or that day for the public worship. And being taken up and made a day of meeting for religious exercises, yet for three hundred years there was no law to bind them to it, and *for want of such a law*, the day was not wholly kept in abstaining from common business; nor did they any longer rest from their ordinary affairs (such was the necessity of those times) than during the divine service.⁴⁶⁹

That Sunday was not kept as a day of abstinence from worldly business before the time of Constantine is expressly stated by Sir. Wm. Domville. Thus he says:

Centuries of the Christian era passed away before the Sunday was observed as a Sabbath. History does not furnish us with a single proof or indication that it was at any time so observed previous to the Sabbatical edict of Constantine, in 321 AD.⁴⁷⁰

These testimonies show most conclusively that Sunday was a day of ordinary business prior to the time of Constantine, except such portions of it as were used in public worship. All, therefore, which can be said of Sunday observance in the first three centuries, is in substance this: that it was a day on which, very generally, the professed people of God held religious assemblies, but on which, also, they attended to their ordinary labor, when not in the house of worship.

⁴⁶⁹ *Morer’s Day*, p. 233.

⁴⁷⁰ *Examination of the Six Texts*, p. 291.

Traditions of Men

But not Sunday alone was thus honored as a day of religious meetings in the early church. Wednesday and Friday were honored in the same manner, not as days of abstinence from labor, but as days for public assemblies of the church. Thus Mosheim says of them:

Many also observed the fourth day of the week, on which Christ was betrayed; and the sixth, which was the day of His crucifixion.⁴⁷¹

And Dr. Peter Heylyn says of those who thus chose Sunday:

Because our Saviour rose that day from amongst the dead, so chose they Friday for another, by reason of our Saviour's passion; and Wednesday, on which He had been betrayed; the Saturday, or ancient Sabbath, being meanwhile retained in the eastern churches.⁴⁷²

Here were three days observed as voluntary festivals in the early church; viz., Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday. Of the comparative sacredness of these three festivals, Dr. Heylyn says:

If we consider either the preaching of the word, the ministration of the sacraments, or the public prayers, the Sunday in the eastern churches *had no great prerogative above other days*, especially above the Wednesday and the Friday, save that the meetings were more solemn, and the concourse of people greater than at other times, as is most likely.⁴⁷³

These three ancient festivals were not thought in those days to rest upon any divine command, nor was any one of them considered as worthy to fill the place of the ancient Sabbath, as a day of sacred time, made such by the commandment of God, or by the authority of the apostles. And thus Dr. Heylyn states the case:

⁴⁷¹ *Ecclesiastical History*, cent. i, part ii, chap. iv, note ‡.

⁴⁷² *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. i, sec. 12.

⁴⁷³ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. iii, sec. 4.

Take which you will, either the fathers or the moderns, and we shall find no Lord's day instituted by any apostolical mandate; no Sabbath set on foot by them upon the first day of the week.⁴⁷⁴

And Sir Wm. Domville bears the following remarkable testimony on this point:

Not any ecclesiastical writer of the first three centuries attributed the origin of Sunday observance either to Christ or to His apostles.⁴⁷⁵

These testimonies show very clearly the real foundation of Sunday observance. It is not found in God's commandment, but in the tradition of men that makes that commandment void. We have listened to the strong testimony of Mosheim in behalf of this so-called Christian Sabbath. And we have also seen that though he designates Sunday as set apart by "the express appointment of the apostles," he elsewhere informs us that it was, even with Christians, a day of ordinary labor till the time of Constantine, 321 AD. As to "the express appointment of the apostles," we have seen in a former discourse that no trace of this exists in the New Testament, and there is certainly no claim on the part of the early ecclesiastical writers that such appointment ever was made.

Let us now hear what Neander, the most distinguished of church historians, has to say on this point:

The festival of Sunday, *like all other festivals*, was *always only a human ordinance*, and it was far from the intention of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect; far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday. Perhaps at the *end* of the second century a false application of this kind had *begun* to take place; for men appear by that time to have considered laboring on Sunday as a sin.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁴ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. i, sec. 10.

⁴⁷⁵ *Examination of the Six Texts*, supplement, pp. 6-7.

⁴⁷⁶ *Rose's Translation of Neander*, p.186.

These statements are sufficient to place this subject in a very clear light. We may be certain from them that those who first observed these festivals had no idea of what was afterward to grow out of them. Neander speaks of the *beginning* of the idea that men should not labor on Sunday. He cites Tertullian alone, with whom this idea appears to have originated. These are Tertullian's words as translated in *Kitto's Cyclopaedia*, article, "Lord's Day." He says:

On the day of the Lord's resurrection alone we ought to abstain, not only from kneeling, but from all devotion to care and anxiety, putting off even business, lest we should give place to the devil.

This is the first mention of anything like abstinence from labor, and this is at the end of the second century. Tertullian is the first writer who calls Sunday, Lord's day. Dr. Heylyn, however, speaks thus of him:

Tertullian tells us that they did devote the Sunday partly unto mirth and recreation, not to devotion altogether; when in a hundred years after Tertullian's time, there was no law or constitution to restrain men from labor on this day in the Christian church.⁴⁷⁷

Borrowed From Paganism

One grand element of success in the advancement of the Sunday festival is found in the fact that it was the day most generally observed by the Gentile nations in honor of their chief god, the sun. Even Tertullian, when advocating the observance of Sunday, finds it necessary to state that he has not the same religion as the Persians who worshiped the sun. He says:

But if we, *like them*, celebrate Sunday as a festival and day of rejoicing, it is for a reason vastly distant from that of worshiping the sun.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁷ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. viii, sec. 13.

⁴⁷⁸ *Wm. Reeves' Translation of the Apologies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and others*, vol. i, pp. 238-239.

The name of Sunday is given to the first day of the week,

...because this day was anciently dedicated to the sun or to its worship.⁴⁷⁹

The *North British Review*, an able quarterly, terms Sunday...

...the wild *solar holiday of all pagan times*.⁴⁸⁰

This same writer, speaking of the fact that Sunday was the day generally observed in the Gentile world at the time when it was also springing up as a festival in the Christian church, thus defends the establishment of Sunday in that church:

That very day was the Sunday of their heathen neighbors and respective countrymen; and *patriotism* gladly united with *expediency* in making it at once their Lord's day, and their Sabbath. . . .

That primitive church, in fact, was shut up to the adoption of the Sunday, until it became established and supreme, when it was too late to make another alteration; and it was no irreverent nor undelightful thing to adopt it, inasmuch as the first day of the week was their own high day, at any rate; so that their compliance and civility were rewarded by the redoubled sanctity of their quiet festival.⁴⁸¹

Morer thus speaks of this important fact in the establishment of Sunday in the church:

Sunday being the day on which the Gentiles solemnly adored that planet, and called it Sunday, partly from its influence on that day especially, and partly in respect to its divine body (as they conceived it), the Christians thought fit to keep the same day, and the same name of it, that they might not appear causelessly peevish, and by that means hinder the conversion of the Gentiles, and bring a greater prejudice than might be otherwise taken against the gospel.⁴⁸²

⁴⁷⁹ See Webster's Dictionary.

⁴⁸⁰ Vol. xviii, p. 409.

⁴⁸¹ Vol. xviii, p. 409.

⁴⁸² *Morer's Lord's Day*, pp. 22-23.

It is a remarkable fact that the edict of Constantine in behalf of Sunday was in every respect a heathen law. According to the testimony of Mosheim, Constantine did not renounce heathenism till 323 AD, two years after his famous Sunday edict. He had previously adopted the opinion that Christ ought to be worshiped; but up to 323 AD, he...

...combined the worship of Christ with that of the ancient gods.⁴⁸³

That he was a heathen in 321 AD, when he enacted his edict for Sunday, is further attested in that the day after this edict, he issued a decree commanding the practice of heathen divination.⁴⁸⁴ But the edict speaks for itself. Constantine does not command men to keep the Lord's day, or the Christian Sabbath, or the day of Christ's resurrection. He uses very different language. He commands those to whom his decree relates, to...

...rest on the VENERABLE DAY OF THE SUN.

Here is a plain and explicit reference to the day observed by the heathen world from ancient times in honor of the sun. Milman, the editor of Gibbon, says of this edict:

The rescript commanding the celebration of the Christian Sabbath, bears no allusion to its peculiar sanctity as a Christian institution. It is the day of the *sun* which is to be observed. . . . But the believer in the new *paganism*, of which *the solar worship* was the characteristic, might acquiesce without scruple in the sanctity of the first day of the week. . . . In fact, as we have before observed, the *day of the sun* would be willingly hallowed by almost all the *pagan* world.⁴⁸⁵

These facts are sufficient to show how greatly indebted is Sunday to the ancient worship of the chief god of heathenism on that day.

⁴⁸³ Mosheim's *Historical Commentaries*, cent. iv, sec. 7.

⁴⁸⁴ See *Blair's Chronological Tables*, p.196; *Ross' Index of Dates*, p. 830.

⁴⁸⁵ *History of Christianity*, book iii, chapters i and iv.

A Symbol of the Power of the Roman Church

Let us now consider some things pertaining directly to the church of Rome in connection with the Sunday institution. The earliest mention of Sunday in the Christian church is by Justin Martyr, 140 AD. And it is remarkable that it is written at Rome, and is especially descriptive of the celebration of the Sunday festival in that church. He says:

And upon the day called Sunday, all that live either in city or country meet together at the same place, where the writings of the apostles and prophets are read as much as time will give leave; when the reader is done, the bishop makes a sermon...⁴⁸⁶

It was only 56 years after this time that “the bishop” of Rome attempted to rule the Christian church by AN EDICT IN BEHALF OF SUNDAY. It was the custom of all the churches to celebrate the Passover. But while the eastern churches did this upon the fourteenth day of the first month, the western churches, among which the church of Rome was chief, celebrated the Passover on the Sunday following that day, unless, indeed, the day happened to fall on Sunday. But in the year 196, Victor, bishop of Rome, took upon himself to impose the Roman custom upon all the churches; that is, to compel them to observe the Passover upon Sunday. It is a most significant fact that the first attempt of the bishop of Rome to rule the Christian church was by this edict in favor of Sunday. Bower says of it:

This bold attempt we may call *the first essay of papal usurpation*.⁴⁸⁷

And Dowling, in his *History of Romanism*, p. 32, terms it the “*earliest instance of Romish assumption*.” This was only one generation after the time of Justin Martyr, and it was just prior to the time of Tertullian, the first writer who gives Sunday the title of Lord’s day, and the first one who speaks of refraining from business on that day. Surely, Sunday made some advancement at

⁴⁸⁶ Justin Martyr’s *First Apology*, translated by Wm. Reeves, p. 127.

⁴⁸⁷ *History of the Popes*, vol. i, p. 18.

Rome from 140 AD, to 196 AD, when Victor issued his Sunday edict.

But the churches of Asia informed the Roman bishop that they could not comply with his lordly mandate. Upon the receipt of this letter, Victor gave way to an ungovernable passion, and excommunicated the bishops of all those churches. But he could not compel them to submit to him. Thus the matter rested till the Council of Nice, in 325 AD, when the church of Rome, by the powerful aid of the Emperor Constantine, was able to carry this point. Heylyn says of this struggle:

The Lord's day found it no small matter to obtain the victory.⁴⁸⁸

The next act of the Roman church in warring against the Sabbath, was to turn that day into a fast. Dr. Hase says:

The Roman church regarded Saturday as a fast day, in direct opposition to those who regarded it as a Sabbath.⁴⁸⁹

This was at the beginning of the third century. It was only after a long struggle that the church of Rome prevailed, in turning the Sabbath into a fast. And thus Heylyn states the result:

In the end the Roman church obtained the cause, and Saturday became a fast almost through all parts of the western world.⁴⁹⁰

The object of this was to render the Sabbath despicable in the eyes of men. This was the first great effort of the Roman church toward the suppression of the ancient Sabbath of the Bible.

We have seen the rapid advancement which the Sunday festival made in the early history of the Roman church. We have also seen how exactly adapted to the advancement of Sunday to its final supremacy was the regard of the heathen world for that day. And when the edict of Constantine in behalf of the venerable day of the sun had elevated that heathen festival to the throne of the

⁴⁸⁸ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. ii, sec. 5.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ancient Church History*, part i, division ii, sec. 69.

⁴⁹⁰ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. ii, sec. 3.

Roman empire, the advocates of Sunday, in the church, were not slow to take advantage of the fact.

At a later period, Constantine declared himself a Christian, and his Sunday law, being unrepealed, was enforced as a Christian law. In the meantime, another important event in the history of Sunday usurpation occurred. Sylvester was bishop of Rome while Constantine was emperor. *Lucius' Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 739-740, informs us that Sylvester changed the name of the day, giving it the imposing title of "LORD'S DAY." The observers of Sunday are, therefore, greatly indebted to Constantine and to Sylvester. The one elevated it, as a heathen festival, to the throne of the empire; the other changed it into a Christian institution, giving it the dignified appellation of Lord's day. Certainly, these are very important facts.

Now let us listen to the statement of Dr. Peter Heylyn, a member of the church of England, which he, an observer of what he calls the Lord's day, traces the steps by which it rose to power. He says:

Thus do we see upon what grounds the Lord's day stands: *on custom first*, and *voluntary* consecration of it to religious meetings; that custom countenanced by the authority of the church of God, which *tacitly* approved the same; and *finally confirmed* and *ratified by Christian princes* throughout their empires. And as the day for rest from labors and restraint from business upon that day [it] received its greatest strength from the supreme magistrate as long as he retained that power which to him belongs; as after from the *canons* and *decrees of councils*, the *decretals of popes* and orders of particular prelates, when the sole managing of ecclesiastical affairs was committed to them.

I hope it was not so with the former Sabbath, which neither took original from custom, that people being not so forward to give God a day; nor required any command from the kings of Israel to confirm and ratify it. The Lord had spoken the word that He would have the seventh day from the world's creation to be a

day of rest unto all His people; which said, there was no more to do but gladly to submit and obey His pleasure.

But this was not done in our present business. The Lord's day had no such command that it should be sanctified, but was left plainly for God's people to pitch on this, *or any other*, for the public use. And being taken up amongst these, and made a day of meeting in the congregation for religious exercises, yet for three hundred years there was neither law to bind them to it, nor any rest from labor or from worldly business required upon it.

And when it seemed good unto Christian princes, the nursing fathers of God's church, to lay restraint upon their people, yet at the first they were not general, but only thus that certain men, in certain places, should lay aside their ordinary and daily works, to attend God's service in the church; those whose employments were most toilsome and most repugnant to the true nature of a Sabbath, being allowed to follow and pursue their labors, because most necessary to the commonwealth.

And in the following times, when as the prince and prelate in their several places endeavored to restrain them from that also which formerly they had permitted, and interdicted almost all kinds of bodily labor upon that day, it was not brought about without much struggling and an opposition of the people; *more than a thousand years being past*, after Christ's ascension, before the Lord's day had attained that state in which now it stands. And being brought into that state, wherein now it stands, it *does not stand so firmly* and on such *sure grounds* but that *those powers which raised it up, may take it lower if they please*, yea, take it quite away as unto the time, and settle it on any other day as to them seems best.⁴⁹¹

These remarks of Dr. Heylyn ought to make a deep impression upon every reader who keeps the first day as the Sabbath. Here we have a candid and truthful statement of the grounds of first-day observance. It is simply the customs, and traditions, and ordinances, of men, but not at all the ordinance of God, which enter into the framework of this institution.

⁴⁹¹ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. iii, sec. 12.

Dr. Heylyn thinks the men who built up this Sunday festival were pious men; and that the institution constructed by them was the Lord's day. Yet he frankly testifies that, as it owes its existence to the precepts of men, the very same hands that set it up are capable of taking it down altogether, or of simply transferring it to any other day which may suit them better.

Dr. Heylyn has given us a truthful view of the persons by whom the so-called Lord's day was established among men. It was popes, councils, and self-styled Christian princes. How evident that it was the work of the great apostasy! The institution began with the apostasy; the two increased in strength together; and each of them stands upon the same foundation; viz., the traditions of men, which make void the commandments of God.

The Sabbath of the Lord in History

It is now proper that we inquire concerning the Sabbath of the Lord in these ages in which the foundation of the great apostasy was laid. The very same work that undermined the Sabbath and the law of God, laid the foundation of the Romish apostasy.

It does not appear that the change of the Sabbath to Sunday was contemplated by those who first made Sunday, a day of religious assemblies. Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday, were thus honored with very nearly equal honors. But as the work spread to the Gentiles, and as the first love of the disciples was succeeded by a spirit of seeking convenience and worldly good, it was perfectly natural that they should prefer that one of the three festivals to which they had ever been accustomed, and which was, indeed, the day of general observance by their fellow-men.

And, when this day was established by the authority of Constantine, and hallowed by the act of Pope Sylvester, it was not strange that it should effectually supplant the ancient Sabbath. Sunday was observed as a voluntary festival, while the Sabbath of the Lord was cherished as a divine institution; but, when the Sunday festival became strong enough, then it attempted the utter de-

struction of the Sabbath. Giesler thus states the position of those two days in the early church:

While the Jewish Christians of Palestine retained the entire Mosaic law, and consequently the Jewish festivals, the Gentile Christians observed also THE SABBATH and the Passover, with reference to the last scenes of Jesus' life, but without Jewish superstition. In addition to these, Sunday, as the day of Christ's resurrection, was devoted to religious services.⁴⁹²

Morer speaks thus, concerning the Sabbath at this time:

The primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the day in devotion and sermons. And it is not to be doubted but they derived this practice from the apostles themselves.⁴⁹³

Here is a further statement of the case by Coleman:

The last day of the week was *strictly kept* in connection with that of the first day, for a long time after the overthrow of the temple and its worship. Down even to the fifth century, the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church, but with a rigor and solemnity gradually diminishing, until it was wholly discontinued.⁴⁹⁴

It thus appears evident that the Sabbath of the Lord was long observed, even by the body of the Christian church. And though they had regard to the first day of the week, yet it was a long time before this became a sacred day. Thus the same writer further states the case:

During the early ages of the church, it was never entitled "the Sabbath," this word being confined to the seventh day of the week, the Jewish Sabbath, which, as we have already said, *contin-*

⁴⁹² *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i, chap. ii, sec. 30.

⁴⁹³ *Morer's Lord's Day*, p. 189.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ancient Christianity*, chap. xxvi, sec. 2.

*ued to be observed for several centuries by the converts to Christianity.*⁴⁹⁵

This historian thus states the utter lack of divine authority for the change from the seventh to the first day of the week:

No law or precept appears to have been given by Christ or the apostles, either for the abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath, or the institution of the Lord's day, or the substitution of the first for the seventh day of the week.⁴⁹⁶

This is a very important acknowledgment for a first-day historian. It does not very well accord with Mosheim's statement that the observance of Sunday "was founded upon the express appointment of the apostles." Now let us listen while this historian relates how the Sabbath of the Lord was crowded out and superseded by a day which he acknowledges had no divine warrant for its observance. Thus he states the facts:

The observance of the Lord's day was ordered while yet the Sabbath of the Jews was continued; nor was the latter superseded until the former had acquired the same solemnity and importance which belonged at first to that great day which God originally ordained and blessed. . . . But in time, after the Lord's day was fully established, the observance of the Sabbath of the Jews was gradually discontinued, and was finally denounced as heretical.⁴⁹⁷

This is a very extraordinary statement. Were it made by an observer of the Sabbath, it might be suspected of being unfairly stated. Coming from an observer of the first day of the week, it is open to no such suspicion. The period of five hundred years was sufficient to work a marvelous change in the relative position of these two days. At the commencement of that period, the one stood in its strength, a divine institution, clothed with the majesty of the law of God, and the other was only a voluntary festival,

⁴⁹⁵ *Id.*

⁴⁹⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁹⁷ *Ib.*

having no support in the law of God, or the precepts of the apostles.

At the end of this period, the law of God itself had become of little authority; even in the professed church of Christ; the observance of the Sabbath had become heretical, and its right even to exist at all was vehemently disputed; while the first day of the week had become the Lord's day, and was clothed with the authority of the civil law of the empire, and backed by the authority of the church now far advanced in the work of apostasy.

The following testimony of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, though expressing his opinion concerning the abrogation of the fourth commandment, is nevertheless an explicit statement of the continued observance of the Sabbath for several centuries. He says:

The Lord's day did not succeed in the place of the Sabbath; but the Sabbath was wholly abrogated, and the Lord's day was *merely an ecclesiastical institution*. It was not introduced by virtue of the fourth commandment, because they, for almost three hundred years together, kept that day which was in that commandment; but they did it, also, without any opinion of prime obligation; and, therefore, they did not suppose it moral.⁴⁹⁸

Here, also, is the testimony of another competent witness, who, though an observer of Sunday, and a believer in the abrogation of the Sabbath, makes a very plain and express statement respecting the observance of the Sabbath by the early church. It is Edward Brerewood, professor in Gresham college, London, who speaks thus:

The ancient Sabbath did remain, and was observed, together with the celebration of the Lord's day, by the Christians of the east church, above three hundred years after our Saviour's death; and, besides that, no other day, for more hundred years than I spoke of before, was known in the church by the name of Sabbath, but that. Let the collection thereof, and conclusion of all, be this: the Sabbath of the seventh day as teaching the obligation of

⁴⁹⁸ *Ductor Dubitantium*, part i, book ii, chap. ii, sec. 51.

God's solemn worship to it, was ceremonial; that Sabbath was religiously observed in the east church three hundred years after our Saviour's passion. That church being a great part of Christendom, and having the apostles' doctrine and example to instruct them, would have restrained it if it had been deadly.⁴⁹⁹

Even after the enactment of Constantine's Sunday law, in 321 AD, the Sabbath of the Lord again rallied, and its observance became very general. Thus, Prof. Stuart writes of the period between Constantine's edict and the council of Laodicea, 364 AD. He says:

The practice of it [the keeping of the Sabbath] was continued by Christians who were jealous for the honor of the Mosaic law, and finally became, as we have seen, predominant throughout Christendom. It was supposed at length that the fourth commandment did require the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath (not merely a seventh part of time), and reasoning as Christians of the present day are wont to do; viz., that *all* which belongs to the ten commandments was immutable and perpetual, the churches in general came gradually to regard the seventh-day Sabbath as altogether sacred.⁵⁰⁰

Now it was time for the advocates of Sunday to come to the rescue. And this they did at the council of Laodicea, 364 AD. Here an awful curse was pronounced upon those who should observe the Sabbath and should not observe Sunday. William Prynne thus states the action of this council:

The seventh-day Sabbath was solemnized by Christ, the apostles, and primitive Christians, till the Laodicean council did in a manner quite abolish the observation of it. . . . The council of Laodicea, 364 AD, first settled the observation of the Lord's day, and prohibited the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath *under an anathema*.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁹ *Learned Treatise of the Sabbath*, p. 77, edition of 1631.

⁵⁰⁰ *Appendix to Gurney's History of the Sabbath*, pp. 115-116.

⁵⁰¹ *Dissertation on the Lord's Sabbath*, pp. 34, 44, edition of 1633.

But even at this time, Sunday labor was considered perfectly lawful. Thus Dr. Heylyn, speaking of the latter part of the fourth century, says:

St. Chrysostom confessed it to be lawful for a man to look to his worldly business on the Lord's day, after the congregation was dismissed.⁵⁰²

Dr. Francis White, bishop of Ely, thus testifies concerning Sunday labor at the beginning of the fifth century:

In St. Jerome's days, and in the very place where he was residing, the devoted Christians did ordinarily work upon the Lord's day, when the service of the church was ended.⁵⁰³

St. Augustine was the contemporary of Jerome, and he gives a summary of the reasons which were urged at that time for Sunday observance, as follows:

It appears from the sacred Scriptures, that this day was a solemn one; it was the first day of the age, that is, of the existence of our world; in it the elements of the world were formed; on it the angels were created; on it Christ rose also from the dead; on it the Holy Spirit descended from Heaven upon the apostles, as manna had done in the wilderness. For these, and other such circumstances, the Lord's day is distinguished; and therefore *the holy doctors* of the church *have decreed* that all the glory of the Jewish Sabbath is transferred to it. Let us, therefore, keep the Lord's day as the ancients were commanded to do the Sabbath.⁵⁰⁴

St. Augustine did not regard the Sunday festival as a divine institution. He gave the credit of the work, not to Christ or His inspired apostles, but to the holy doctors of the church, who, of their own accord, had transferred the glory of the ancient Sabbath

⁵⁰² *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. iii, sec. 9.

⁵⁰³ *Treatise of the Sabbath*, p. 219.

⁵⁰⁴ *Cox's Sabbath Laws*, p. 284.

to the venerable day of the sun. Of the fifth and sixth centuries, Heylyn bears the following testimony:

The faithful, being united better than before, became more uniform in matters of devotion; and, in that uniformity, did agree together to give the Lord's day all the honors of an holy festival. Yet was not this done all at once, *but by degrees*; the fifth and sixth centuries being fully spent before it came unto that height which has since continued. The emperors and the prelates in these times had the same affections; both [being] earnest to advance this day above all others; and *to the edicts of the one*, and to *the ecclesiastical constitution of the other*, it stands indebted for many of those privileges and exemptions which it still enjoys.⁵⁰⁵

But the first day of the week had not yet acquired the title of Sabbath. Thus Brerewood bears testimony:

The name of the Sabbath remained appropriated to the old Sabbath; and was *never* attributed to the Lord's day, *not of many hundred years* after our Saviour's time.⁵⁰⁶

And Dr. Heylyn, says of the term Sabbath in the ancient church:

The Saturday is called amongst them by no other name than that which formerly it had, the Sabbath. So that whenever, for a thousand years and upwards, we meet with *Sabbatum* in any writer of what name soever, it must be understood of no day but Saturday.⁵⁰⁷

Of Sunday labor in the eastern church, Heylyn says:

It was near nine hundred years from our Saviour's birth, before restraint of husbandry on this day had been first thought of in the East; and probably being thus restrained did find no more obedience then than it had done before in the western parts.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁵ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. iv, sec. 1.

⁵⁰⁶ *Learned Treatise of the Sabbath*, edition of 1631.

⁵⁰⁷ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. ii, sec. 12.

⁵⁰⁸ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. v, sec. 6.

Of Sunday labor in the western church, Dr. Francis White, bishop of Ely, thus testifies:

The Catholic church, for more than six hundred years after Christ, permitted labor, and gave license to many Christian people to work upon the Lord's day, at such hours as they were not commanded to be present at the public worship by the precept of the church.⁵⁰⁹

Superstitions Used to Establish Sunday

The history of the dark ages is full of the edicts of emperors and princes, and of the decrees of popes, bishops, and councils, all directed to the one object of establishing the sacredness of Sunday. Miracles, prodigies, and judgments, were not wanting with which to confirm these edicts and decrees. Banishment, confiscation of goods, stripes, slavery, the loss of one hand, and then of the other, and the like, were the penalties by which Sunday observance was, by these edicts, forced upon the people. One of these miracles is thus given in Francis West's *Historical and Practical Discourse on the Lord's day*. He says:

Gregory of Tours [about 590] reports that a husbandman, who, upon the Lord's day, went to plough his field, as he cleaned his plough with an iron, the iron stuck so fast in his hand that for two years he could not be delivered from it, but carried it about continually to his exceeding great pain and shame.

According to Morer's *Lord's Day*, p. 271, the council of Paris, 829 AD, brought forward that Sunday argument, which in these days is often and largely used to supply the place of Scripture testimony. They announced God's judgment upon those who labor on that day:

For, say they, many of us by our own knowledge, and some *by hearsay*, know that several countrymen following their husbandry on this day, have been killed with lightning, others, being seized with convulsions in their joints, have miserably perished.

⁵⁰⁹ *Treatise of the Sabbath day*, pp. 217-218.

Whereby it is apparent how high the displeasure of God was upon their neglect of this day.

To strengthen the sacredness of this “venerable day,” the doctors of the church were not wanting. Heylyn makes the following statement:

It was delivered of the souls in purgatory by Petrus Damiani, who lived 1056 AD, that very Lord’s day they were manumitted from their pains, and fluttered up and down the lake Avernus, in the shape of birds.⁵¹⁰

And even hell itself could be benefited if those yet living upon earth would keep Sunday well. Morer, speaks thus:

Yet still the others went on their way; and, to induce their proselytes to spend the day with greater exactness and care, they brought in the old argument of compassion and charity to the damned in hell, who, during the day, have some respite from their torments, and the ease and liberty they have is more or less, according to the zeal and degrees of keeping it well.⁵¹¹

In 1095 AD, Pope Urban II consecrated the Sabbath to the weekly service of the Virgin Mary. This was a great indignity to the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In the following century an apparition from St. Peter charged the king of England to allow “no buying or selling, and no servile work,” on Sunday.⁵¹²

But in the very midnight of the dark ages, when the papal power had reached its highest elevation, Pope Innocent III, in 1202 AD, sent into England by one Eustachius a roll which fell from Heaven, containing the long-needed divine authority for Sunday. Here is this remarkable document:

A HOLY MANDATE, touching the Lord’s day, which came down from Heaven unto Jerusalem, found on St. Simeon’s altar in Golgotha, where Christ was crucified for the sins of all the

⁵¹⁰ *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. v, sec. 2.

⁵¹¹ *Lord’s Day*, p. 68,

⁵¹² Morer’s *Lord’s Day*, p. 288.

world, which, lying there three days and three nights, struck with such terror all that saw it, that falling on the ground they besought God's mercy. At last the patriarch and Akarias, the archbishop (of I know not whence), ventured to take into their hands that dreadful letter, which was written thus. Now wipe your eyes and look awhile on the contents:

"I am the Lord who commanded you to keep the Lord's day, and you have not kept it, neither repented of your sins; I caused repentance to be preached unto you, and you believed not; then I sent the pagans among you, who spilt your blood on the earth, and yet you believed not; and because you did not observe the Lord's holy day, I punished you awhile with famine; but in a short time I gave you fullness of bread, and then you behaved yourselves worse than before.

"I again charge you that from the ninth hour [*i.e.*, three o'clock, PM] on Saturday, until sunrising on the Monday, no man presume to do any work, but what is good, or if he do, let him repent for the same. Verily I say unto you, and swear by my seat and throne, and by the cherubim which surround it, that if you do not hearken to this my mandate, I will send no other letter unto you, but will open the heavens, and rain upon you stones, wood, and scalding water, by night, so that none shall be able to provide against them.

"I say you shall die the death for the Lord's day, and other festivals of my saints which you have not kept; and I will send among you beasts with the heads of lions, and the hair of women, and the tails of camels, which being very hungry shall devour your flesh. And you shall desire to flee to the sepulchers of the dead, and hide you for fear of those beasts. And I will take the light of the sun from your eyes, and send such darkness that, not being able to see, you shall destroy each other. And I will turn my face away and not in the least pity you. I will burn your bodies and hearts of all them who do not keep the Lord's day.

"Hear then my words, and do not perish for neglecting this day. I swear to you by my right hand, that if you do not observe the Lord's day and festivals of my saints, I will send pagan nations to destroy you."⁵¹³

⁵¹³ *History of the Sabbath*. part ii, chap. vii, sec. 6; *Morer*, pp. 288-290; *Wilkin's*

We have two very remarkable facts in the history of Sunday, and of the Romish apostasy:

1. The first act of papal aggression was in behalf of Sunday.
2. When the papal power had reached its utmost height of usurpation, it furnished the world with a roll from Heaven commanding the observance of Sunday under awful penalties.

The two arose together from very small beginnings to vast power and greatness. But God was not in either. The mission of Eustachius was attested by miracles and prodigies. Thus we read as follows:

A carpenter making a wooden pin, and a woman making up her web, both after three on Saturday in the afternoon [for the pope in this letter had fixed “the Lord’s day” from three o’clock on Saturday afternoon until sunrise on Monday], are suddenly smitten with the palsy. A certain man, of Nasserton, baking a cake on Saturday night and keeping part until the morrow, no sooner broke it for his breakfast but it gushed out blood. A miller, of Wakefield, grinding corn on Saturday after three of the clock, instead of meal found his bin full of blood; his mill-wheel standing still of its own accord.⁵¹⁴

Sabbath-Keeping Reformers

But God did not leave himself without witnesses to his truth, even in the dark ages. A portion of the Waldenses bore the title of *Sabbatati*. Mr. Benedict says of this term:

Mr. Milner supposes this name was given to them because they observed not the Romish festivals, and rested from their ordinary occupations only on Sundays.

Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hibernae, vol. i, p. 510; *Matthew Paris*, p. 141, and many other writers.

⁵¹⁴ Heylyn’s *History of the Sabbath*, part ii, chap. vii, sec. 6.

A Sabbatarian would suppose that it was *because they met for worship on the seventh day*, and did regard not the first-day Sabbath.⁵¹⁵

Mr. Robinson speaks thus of this designation of the Waldenses:

One says they were so named from the Hebrew word Sabbath, because they kept the Saturday for the Lord's day.⁵¹⁶

Other writers allude to this term in the same manner. The Cathari, or Puritans, were a body of witnesses who during the dark ages protested against Rome. The papal writers, to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of this people, say of them, that they kept the Sabbath and held also to circumcision. The same statement is made concerning the Passaginians, a branch of the Waldenses. Mr. Benedict speaks of them as follows:

The account of their practicing circumcision is undoubtedly a slanderous story forged by their enemies, and probably arose in this way: because they observed the seventh day, they were called, by way of derision, Jews, as the Sabbatarians are frequently at this day; and if they were Jews, it followed of course that they either did, or ought to, circumcise their followers. This was probably the reasoning of their enemies; but that they actually practiced the bloody rite, is altogether improbable.⁵¹⁷

Dr. Francis White, bishop of Ely, says that the Petrobrusians, and a portion of the people known as Anabaptists, were observers of the seventh day.⁵¹⁸ Thus, within the limits of the Roman empire, God preserved faithful men who kept His commandments during the dark ages. And it is a remarkable fact that the Abyssinians of Africa have held fast to the Sabbath to the present time, as have also the Armenians of the East Indies.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁵ *General History of the Baptist Denomination*, vol. ii, pp. 412, 413, edition of 1813.

⁵¹⁶ *Ecclesiastical Researches*, chap. x., pp. 303, 304.

⁵¹⁷ *General History of the Baptist Denomination*, vol. ii, pp. 412-418.

⁵¹⁸ *Treatise of the Sabbath day*, pp. 8, 132.

⁵¹⁹ See Geddes' *Church History of Ethiopia*, pp. 87, 88; Buchanan's *Christian Researches in Asia*, pp. 159, 160.

When the Reformation of the sixteenth century had lifted the vail of darkness that covered the nations of Europe, Sabbath-keepers were found in Transylvania, Germany, Holland, France, and England. It was not the Reformation that gave existence to these Sabbatarians, for the leaders of the Reformation, as a body, were not friendly to the Sabbath of the Lord. On the contrary, these observers of the Sabbath appear to be remnants of the ancient Sabbath-keeping churches that had witnessed for the truth during the dark ages.

And now we come to a remarkable event in the history of Sunday. In the latter part of the sixteenth century, a controversy arose between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians of England, that compelled the latter either to give up the first day of the week, or defend it by the Bible. They chose the latter course.⁵²⁰ It was at this juncture that Dr. Nicholas Bound, of Norton, England, discovered what he called the “True Doctrine of the Christian Sabbath.” This was nothing else than that the law of God does not require the seventh day, but only one day in seven, or a seventh part of time. With the aid of this theory, Sunday has, since that time, wrapped itself in the authority of the fourth commandment, and challenged the obedience of the world as the veritable Sabbath of the Lord.

Sabbath-keepers still remain in England, and for more than two centuries have they been found in the United States. The Seventh-day Baptists during this period have stood as witnesses to this great memorial of the Bible, the Sabbath of the Lord. During the past twenty-four years have arisen also the people known as Seventh-day Adventists, who are interested in the proclamation of God’s commandments and the faith of Jesus, as presented in the third angel’s message. They hope to induce many to turn away their feet from trampling down the Sabbath of the Lord.

And when the Sabbath shall be observed in the new earth by the whole host of the redeemed, they hope to be of that number

⁵²⁰ Hengstenberg’s *Lord’s Day*, p. 66.

who shall assemble on that day, every week, to worship in the heavenly Jerusalem before the Lord of hosts.

Revelation 14

¹² Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Isaiah 58

¹³ If you turn away your foot from the sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words:

¹⁴ Then shall you delight yourself in the Lord; and I will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.

Isaiah 66

²² For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.

²³ And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, says the Lord.



