

# **The True Sabbath**

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# **1. The Birthday of the World**

ON ONE occasion, as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Michigan was traveling by railway train, he espied a young evangelist and, taking his seat beside the preacher, began the conversation essentially as follows:

Now, my young friend, I have you just where I desire. Tell me why you and your church keep Saturday as the Sabbath."

The latter opened his Bible, read the fourth commandment, then turned to cite further Scripture authority. But the jurist interrupted by relating the story of an attorney who could give several reasons why his client did not appear in court, the first being that the man was dead.

"You, my friend," the judge continued, "remind me of that attorney. I ask why you and your church observe the seventh day for the Sabbath. In reply you refer me to the law of God. There in the bosom of that law God Himself, whose creatures we are, commands us to keep the seventh day, enjoining us to perform no manner of work therein. After quoting to me that authority, you turn and prepare to give me a second reason.

"Young man, when that one reason is given, no other should be called for! When God says that the seventh day is the Sabbath, that ends all controversy with men who believe God. If a man will not believe what He says in the fourth commandment he will not believe what He says in the sermon on the mount, or anywhere else."

Careful thought should convince every sincere Christian that the findings of the eminent judge are absolutely correct. There is but one authentic, reasonable story of the origin of this world: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis 1:1. The divine narrative gives a daily record of the work accomplished throughout creation week. While the invariable use of the phrase, "the evening and the morning were the first day," "the evening and the morning were the second day," etc., indicates that those were just ordinary days of twenty-four hours each.

Modernism has attempted to substitute evolution for creation. But consider: If the first three chapters of Genesis are discarded, the entire Bible as a divine revelation is nullified. For if man was not created in the image of God, but was evolved throughout long ages from lower forms of life, the story of the "fall" is but a myth. And if our first parents did not "fall," there is no need of a Savior, an atonement, or a plan of redemption. Then the entire Book from Genesis to Revelation is relegated to the status of an interesting classic.

Away with such philosophic doubt! All who make an impartial investigation, obtain overwhelming evidence that the Bible is the inspired message of the living God. With the Apostle Paul "we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." "For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Hebrews 11: 3; Psalm 33: 9.

The footsteps of the Creator during the first week of time are clearly indicated:

First day:	Light created.
Second day:	Firmament, or atmosphere, formed.
Third day:	Land and water separated; vegetation produced.
Fourth day:	Sun, moon, and stars appear.
Fifth day:	Fish and birds brought into being.
Sixth day:	Animals and man created.

Eden bloomed upon earth. Sin had not yet entered to mar the fair estate. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job 38: 7. "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 1: 31.

With the completion of the great creative task, our heavenly Parent erected an appropriate memorial; and the record reveals that the Sabbath was instituted by three specific acts:

"On the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." Genesis 2:2,3.

1. He "rested," not because of physical weariness; for "the everlasting God, the Lord the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not, neither is weary." Isaiah 40:28. "Sabbath" is a Hebrew word meaning "rest," and the divine Architect "rested, and was refreshed." Exodus 31:17. This clearly reveals that spiritual refreshment was the great divine purpose. God was laying the foundations of an institution that throughout all succeeding ages would commemorate His power as Creator of the heavens and the earth. "He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered." Psalm 111: 4.

1. "God blessed the seventh day." Why? "Because that in it He had rested." Upon no other day was the divine blessing pronounced. Accordingly it should ever be regarded as God's blessed rest day. He blessed Abraham, that the patriarch might be a blessing to others. He blessed the Sabbath that it might be a blessing to the entire human family. How appropriate the words of Scripture, "He hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it!"

2. He "sanctified" the Sabbath, the expression meaning to "separate", "set apart", or "appoint" for a holy or sacred use. When Israel encamped at Sinai, it was God's presence that sanctified the mount. In the experience of both Moses and Joshua, it was the

divine presence that made the ground holy. (Exodus 19:11, 23; 3:2-6; Joshua 5:13-15) And as Jehovah sanctified the seventh day, He placed within it His own sacred presence, separating it from all ordinary days and appointing it to a holy use.

By these three acts of resting, blessing, and sanctifying, the Sabbath was established. Concerning its origin, the distinguished Jewish historian Josephus bears witness:

"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 labors on that day, and call it the Sabbath; which word denotes rest in the Hebrew tongue .....Antiquities of the Jews," Book 1, chap. 1, sec. 1.

Philo Judaeus, another Jewish writer of the first century AD, adds his testimony to the character of the Sabbath:

"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 birthday of the world." "Works of Philo," Vol. 1, sec. 80.

"That man on earth and fading things below Might not his best affections all bestow, But calm his soul with holy thoughts of heaven. The rest day of the Lord was kindly given. A blest memorial which to mind should bring Creation's birthday and creation's King." - "A Word for the Sabbath."

Anciently, faithful Nehemiah warned from the gates of the restored Jerusalem, the traders and would-be money gatherers who thought to engage in commerce on the Sabbath day.

Said Christ, "The Sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2: 27), in no way against him, but for his highest good. It was designed as a day of joy and delight, when men would lay aside business cares and daily toil to think upon life's spiritual values, to view the divine handiwork of the heavens, to admire the beauty of hill and vale, of field and forest. And to remember that He who paints the gorgeous sunset, who gives the flowers their exquisite tints, who imparts to the rose its rich perfume is also the loving Father who gives us life, and breath, and a myriad other blessings to enjoy.

The weekly cycle and the Sabbath, both of which originated in the events of creation, have together marched down the centuries to the present time in regular and unbroken succession. The year, the month, and the day, are periods of time fixed by the revolutions of the earth and the moon; while "the week," in the language of the Encyclopedia Britannica, "is a period of seven days, having no reference whatever to the celestial motions, a circumstance to which it owes its unalterable uniformity. . . . It has been employed from time immemorial in almost all Eastern countries." -Eleventh Edition, Art. "Calendar."

Apart from the narrative of creation, the world has found no reason for the origin of the week, or the existence of the weekly Sabbath. In a marvelous way the hand of God has preserved both of these from the possibility of change or loss. It is inconceivable that an entire race of people and scores of nations should lose their weekly reckoning.

The pick and the spade have furnished remarkable testimony to the observance of the original seventh-day Sabbath in such ancient lands as Accad and Chaldea; while Mr. George Smith, the well-known archeologist, says:

"I discovered among other things a curious religious calendar of the Assyrians, in which every month is divided into four weeks, and the seventh days, or Sabbaths, are marked out as days on which no work should be undertaken."-"Assyrian Discoveries," George Smith, p. 12.

In the library of King Asshur-bani-pal of Assyria, clay tablets have been found which present an account of creation, and on one of these are the significant words:

"On the seventh day He appointed a holy day, And to cease from all business He commanded."

Likewise in an old Chinese record, the "Book of Diagrams," there is evidence that the ancient kings of Sinim. and their people observed the seventh day as a Sabbath. See "Our Rest Day," by Hamilton, pp. 43-52.

In a "Chart of the Week," prepared by the late Dr. William M. Jones of London, it is shown that the week was known from the most ancient times, and that at least 108 languages of earth designate the seventh day as the Sabbath, or holy day. A few of these are as follows:

Language	Name	Meaning
Hebrew	Shabbath	Sabbath
Greek	Sabbaton	Sabbath
Latin	Sabbatum	Sabbath
Arabic	Assabt	The Sabbath
Persian	Shambin	Sabbath
Russian	Subbota	Sabbath
Hindustani	Shamba	Sabbath
French	Samedi	Sabbath day
Italian	Sabbato	Sabbath
Spanish	Sabado	Sabbath

God designed that the Sabbath was to speak to all races and peoples of the Creator of the universe. In the language of another:

"The Sabbath was committed to Adam, the father and representative of the whole human family. Its observance was to be an act of grateful acknowledgment, on the part of all who should dwell upon the earth, that God was their creator and their rightful sovereign; that they were the work of His hands, and the subjects of His authority. Thus the institution was wholly commemorative, and given to all mankind. There was nothing in it shadowy, or of restricted application to any people.

"God saw that a Sabbath was essential for man, even in Paradise. He needed to lay aside his own interests and pursuits for one day of the seven, that he might more fully contemplate the works of God, and meditate upon His power and goodness. He needed a Sabbath, to remind him more vividly of God, and to awaken gratitude because all that he enjoyed and possessed came from the beneficent hand of the Creator." "Patriarch and Prophets," p. 48.

"Hence it is a constant witness to His existence and a reminder of His greatness, His wisdom, and His love. Had the Sabbath always been sacredly observed, there could never have been an atheist or an idolater." -Id., p. 886.

## **2. The Sabbath of the Patriarchs**

TRACING the footprints of faith along the centuries, we observe many conspicuous examples of lives that were marvelously energized and strengthened by the divine touch.

Enoch is commended because he "walked with God" (Genesis 5:22); and Noah is termed a "just" and "righteous" man (Genesis 6:9; 7:1); while of the "father of the faithful" the Lord testified: "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." Genesis 26:5.

All of these, together with other loyal patriarchs who kept God's commandments, certainly observed the seventh-day Sabbath. It had been established in Eden before sin entered, being set apart as the universal rest day for mankind by the Creator of all. It is therefore self-evident that no one of that age could be termed righteous and law-abiding who did not reverence and keep God's chosen, sanctified day of rest.

That the week was well known to the patriarchs is apparent from God's word to Noah, "Yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth," and Noah's marking off the weeks, as the flood was abating, by repeatedly sending out the dove. The Scripture says: "He sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark.... And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came in to him in the evening. . . . And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove." Genesis 8: 8-12.

But Enoch, Noah, and Abraham were not the only ancient worthies who faithfully kept all God's commandments. Another nobleman of faith was Moses, of whom it is written that he chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. . . . For he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." Hebrews 11:25-27.

When Moses returned to Egypt with the divine commission to lead Israel out of the house of bondage, his greatest task was to encourage the people to realize that obedience to God's law and reverence for His Sabbath were first conditions of deliverance. This naturally produced a serious crisis; and Pharaoh hurled the charge against Moses and Aaron: "Behold, the people of the land now are many, and you make them rest [Hebrew Shabbath] from their burdens.. . . Let them not regard vain words." Exodus 5: 5, 9.

This conflict for liberty to observe God's holy day gives added significance to the words: "Remember that thou was a servant in the land of Egypt, .... therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." Deuteronomy 5:15. The psalmist also testifies that God "brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness: . . . that they might observe His statutes, and keep His laws." Psalm 105:43-45.

About six weeks after leaving Egypt, and a month before the law was spoken from Mount Sinai, God gave Israel a divinely impressive lesson in Sabbath-keeping. Some three million men, women, and children were traveling through desert wastes; their food supplies were exhausted; and to meet this emergency, God wrought a mighty miracle. He said:

"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. 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.... And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take you every man for them which are in his tents..."

"And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them. And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted. And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord. Bake that which you will bake today, and seethe that you will seethe; and that which remains over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that today; for today is a Sabbath unto the Lord: today you shall not find it in the field. Six days you shall gather it. But on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse you to keep My commandments and My laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the

Sabbath, therefore He gives you on the sixth day the bread of two days. Abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day." Exodus 16:4-30.

This narrative reveals:

1. That God's law existed prior to the miracle of the manna.

1. That the holy Sabbath was a part of this law for the divine test of their attitude toward the law was concerning Sabbath-keeping. When God asked, "How long refuse you to keep My commandments and My laws?" it was because they had violated the Sabbath.

2. That the people were already acquainted with the Sabbath precept.

3. That the calendar of the week was being accurately kept, and that the days were numbered, "sixth," "seventh," etc.

4. That no new Sabbath law was enacted.

5. That the appeal presented to the people entreated them to "refuse" no longer to obey that which they recognized as the law and the Sabbath of Jehovah.

In this experience Sabbath sacredness was emphasized by a threefold miracle: (a) bread from heaven for six days of each week; (b) a double portion on the preparation day; (c) and the Sabbath supply especially preserved from decay in that tropical climate.

Had there been any "lost time" prior to this, God would have corrected the mistake. While during that forty-year period in the wilderness (Exodus 16: 35), the Creator Himself kept the reckoning, so that Israel entered Canaan with the accuracy of a divine calendar, and the assurance that they were observing the original Sabbath of creation.

### **3. The Handwriting of God**

A CAREFUL study of mathematics, chemistry, light, electricity, heat, cold, energy, color, sound, plant life, and animal life reveals that all of these operate within the realm and reign of precise and established law. Look upward to the glorious heavens and there behold satellites, planets, suns, and systems, all marching onward in their appointed order and obedient to celestial law. On every hand harmony and symmetry are expressed in myriad forms. No wonder the redeemed, standing at last on the sea of glass, sing in adoration, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty." (Revelation 15: 3)

Are the morals of man an exception? Did He who made a "weight for the winds" (Job 28:25), who placed bounds for the oceans (Job 38:10,11), and set beauty of arrangement everywhere-did He ordain no standards for the conduct of His children? Impossible! Inconceivable!

The Bible narrates the interesting romance of a nation just liberated from age long servitude in the valley of the Nile, and migrating across the Arabian desert to the promised homeland in Canaan. In the third month after leaving Egypt, they reached the great natural amphitheater at the foot of Mount Sinai, and there tarried for nearly a year while their national government was being organized. While in slavery, few of the Hebrews had been granted educational advantages; not many could read or write; they had disregarded and almost lost the weekly Sabbath; while the most of the people retained but a twilight concept of the omnipotent Jehovah, His law, and His love.

But there was a desire to become acquainted with God and obey His will. To meet the situation, our heavenly Parent staged the most spectacular and impressive service that the world has ever witnessed. That hour of solemn grandeur was signalized by vivid lightning, peals of thunder, and an earthquake. "Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it." In full sight of the assembled host "the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire," resting upon the summit. (Exodus 19:16-18; 24:17.) Every eye was focused upon the scene; every heart was stirred to deepest emotion. Suddenly, as with radio broadcast, a clear, distinct voice rang forth throughout the valley saying: "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Exodus 20:2.

He who had wrought so mighty a deliverance in the land of the Pharaohs, who had opened the way for His people through the Red Sea, and who had fed them with bread from heaven, now announced His divine law to the entire encampment. Nor was it for Israel alone. Those ten brief, comprehensive, and authoritative precepts embrace the whole duty of man to God and to his fellow men. Study them carefully, exhaustively, and you will observe that instead of being local, or provincial, they are alike adapted to all ages, classes, conditions, and circumstances of men.

"The American Constitution," declared William Ewart Gladstone, England's grand old man of the nineteenth century, "is the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man." It is a triumph of statesmanship; yet, with all patriotic respect for this fundamental law of our land, we discover another legal document that is infinitely superior. In his eulogy of the Ten Commandments, a distinguished American jurist says:

"In that short and comprehensive code, we find given us a perfect rule of action, covering the whole ground of man's existence. A rule not only prescribing our duty to God and man in our external behavior, but reaching to the secret thoughts and feelings of hearts in every possible condition of life, and in all our relations to our Maker and our fellow beings. The wisdom of ages, the learning and philosophy of the schools, have never discovered a single defect in that code. Not a virtue which is not there inculcated. Not a vice in its most doubtful and shadowy form, which is not there prohibited. Whence then, I ask, did the great Jewish lawgiver derive his spirit of legislation? If that code was written by the finger of the Almighty, let us bow to it with reverence, and seek no better rule of life, nor any wiser principle of action. But if it emanated only from the capacious mind and was dictated by the

wisdom of Moses, then Moses was a wiser, a more learned man than any of our new teachers. And I had rather be under his jurisdiction and keep his commandments, than learn new rules of civil polity and social intercourse from the most learned and wise of the present day." - Quoted in "Will the Old Book Stand?" p. 104.

But those commands were not the product of human genius. The God of heaven proclaimed them in the hearing of that vast multitude; while with the conclusion of the tenth, the broadcast being ended, the Bible narrative uses the significant phrase, "And He added no more." In this way the Ten Commandments are distinguished and honored as the only law code of Scripture spoken by the audible voice of God. They were not written on parchment or papyrus but were penned by the finger of the living God on tables of stone and delivered to men. (Exodus 31: 18)

Lest the people forget, the Lawgiver directed that the tables of stone should be deposited beneath the mercy seat in the ark. This sacred chest was given the most important, the most exalted, place in all the realm of Israel - "the holy of holies" in the sanctuary. This room in the tabernacle was built by divine direction as a miniature model of Jehovah's throne-room in heaven. The ark itself represented His throne; while the tables of stone reposed within as a witness that this law is the foundation of the eternal throne. Says the psalmist: "Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne." Psalm 89: 14.

The law of God is a verbal transcript of the divine character (Exodus 34: 6, 7). It is God's standard of right and wrong (Romans 3:20). It is the constitution of His universal government. Talk about repealing the code from Sinai, or annulling any part of it! It were just as easy to turn back the sun in his march across the heavens or stay the flow of the mighty Amazon. God never has repealed, never will repeal, Himself. "For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." Psalm 119:89. "All His commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness." Psalm 111:7, 8.

Let no one think that the Ten Commandments were given to but one race of people or for a limited period of time. Every principle of that law was in effect from the beginning of the world, as the narrative of Genesis clearly indicates. No legal code ever framed by man is comparable to this; while in the final judgment the attitude of men and women toward this law will decide their eternal destiny:

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Ecclesiastes 12: 13, 14.

In the closing appeal of the New Testament, obedience to God's law is set forth as the only passport to eternal life; for it is written:

"Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12. "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." Verse 14.

In modern times the world's great religious leaders who have accepted the Scriptures as their guide, bear this testimony:

Martin Luther: "The moral law. . . is founded on the nature of God, and cannot be changed: it is of universal application." - "Shorter Catechism," edition 1884, p. 16.

Calvin: "The law has sustained no diminution of its authority, but ought always to receive from us the same veneration and obedience." "Institutes," book 2.

Wesley: "The moral law contained in the Ten Commandments, and enforced by the prophets, He [Christ] did not take away. It was not the design of His coming to revoke any part of this. This is a law which never can be broken, which 'stands fast as the faithful witness in heaven.' . . . Every part of this law must remain in force upon all mankind and in all ages; as not depending either on time, or place, or any other circumstance liable to change; but on the nature of God and the nature of man, and their unchangeable relation to each other." - "Sermons on Several Occasions," Sermon 25, (7 vol. ed.) Vol. 1, pp. 225, 226. New York: Waugh and Mason, 1883.

Spurgeon: "The law of God is a divine law-holy, heavenly, perfect. . . . There is not a command too many; there is not one too few; but it is so incomparable that its perfection is a proof of its divinity." - "Sermon on the Law."

Campbell: "The Everlasting Ten." - "Popular Lectures."

Moody: "The commandments of God given to Moses in the mount at Horeb are as binding today as ever they have been since the time when they were proclaimed in the hearing of the people." - "Weighed and Wanting," p. 15. Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1898.

Inspiration clearly reveals that in his own strength no one can keep a holy law. Human experience also demonstrates man's inability to live in perfect accord with the divine precepts. He must obtain help from without. Thank God that power is provided by the new-covenant promise which comes to lost, ruined man as a message of hope:

"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. 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." Jeremiah 31: 33, 34.

Once God wrote His law upon tablets of stone; by the blood of the new testament He writes it upon the hearts and lives of surrendered, twice-born men and women. The Ten Commandments, instead of being regarded as stern, arbitrary laws, are translated into ten radiant promises of Christ's keeping power. He will protect us from idolatry, blasphemy, Sabbath-breaking, dishonesty, and every other sin; for all His biddings become enablings.

The very thoughts of the Christian become identified with the mind of Christ, so that in following his own desires, the child of God is but doing the will of the Master. Like his divine Lord he can then truthfully say: "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40: 8.

He who lives the transformed life bears marvelous testimony to the world that Christianity is genuine. His friends and associates are persuaded that here is an individual who knows and walks with Jesus. Viewing such a life, such a character, many are led to the conviction that this is the handwriting of God.

## **4. The Fourth Commandment**

IN THE changeless law of God the Sabbath commandment is accorded a position of honor. Had it been placed at the beginning or end, it might have been more easily lost; and some might have excused themselves from obeying it by suggesting that it was not really a part of the divine code.

But observe: it is found in the very heart of the law, and in length embraces approximately one third of the whole length of the Ten Commandments. Preceding it are three precepts prescribing our duty to God; following it are six others outlining man's moral obligation to his fellows. There it has stood for millenniums, and no human sophistry can successfully assail it.

The reader's attention is invited to the radiant and explicit phraseology of this fourth statute:

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shall not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. 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." Exodus 20:8-11.

"Remember the Sabbath day." These words of introduction reveal that God was not instituting a new rest day; but was calling the people to a genuine revival of true Sabbath-keeping. In the busy affairs and absorbing duties of life, men and women neglect and forget so easily; hence the loving Creator entreats all to "remember" the day that commemorates the omnipotent deeds of the world's first week.

"To keep it holy." At creation, twenty-four centuries prior to Sinai, God rested on, blessed, and sanctified the seventh day. His presence made it holy. Henceforth it was man's duty and privilege to keep it holy. This cannot be done by a pagan or an infidel; for only a true-hearted Christian can keep a holy Sabbath. In this way the memorial day of creation becomes a foretaste and pledge of redemption.

A true recognition of these facts dispels the erroneous notion that God is not particular, and that one day of the week as a Sabbath is just as acceptable as any other. Also since God calls for a spiritual rest day, why should anyone presume to set up a man made civil Sabbath to be safeguarded by the laws of the state?

"Six days shall thou labor." This part of the command is just as explicit as that which bids us rest upon the seventh.

The word gives no encouragement to indolence. The Christian is commissioned to be diligent in his business. Having worked with tireless enthusiasm during six days, he accepts with joy the rest and quiet of the Sabbath, which come with refreshing cheer to his careworn spirits. Men have devised an inverted plan of resting on the first day and working the remainder of the week, but this is in direct conflict and antagonism to the divine program for man.

"The Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Some have sought to discredit creation's memorial by terming it the "Old Testament Sabbath," the "Hebrew Sabbath," the "Jewish Sabbath"; but all such intimations and insinuations are wholly false and misleading. No such names or titles can be found in the Bible. The rest day is designated by the Creator Himself as, "The Sabbath of the Lord thy God," "My holy day"; and the duty of all is expressed in words of positive emphasis, "Verily My Sabbaths you shall keep."

"When we present God's holy law, And arguments from Scripture draw, Objectors say, to pick a flaw, 'It's Jewish.'"

"Though from the first, Jehovah blessed And sanctified His day of rest: The same belief is still expressed 'It's Jewish.'"

"Though with the world this rest began, And thence through all the Scriptures ran, And Jesus said, 'It was made for man' 'It's Jewish.'"

"If from the Bible we present The Sabbath's meaning and intent, This answers every argument, 'It's Jewish.'"

"Though the disciples, Luke and Paul, Continue still this rest to call 'The Sabbath day,' this answers all-'It's Jewish.'"

"The gospel teachers' plain expression, That 'sin is of the law transgression,' Seems not to make the least impression 'It's Jewish.'"

"They praise the rest of man's invention, But if Jehovah's day we mention, This puts an end to all contention 'It's Jewish.'"

"O you who thus God's day abuse, Simply because it was kept by Jews, The Savior, too, you must refuse He's Jewish."

"The Scriptures, then, we may expect For the same reason you'll reject, If you but atop to recollect They're Jewish.

"Thus the apostles, too, must fall; For Andrew, Peter, James, and Paul, And Thomas, Matthew, John, and all, Were Jewish.

"Oh it is too bad, that men should slight What God would have them call delight, And stigmatize His gift so bright As Jewish.

"But when old earth shall pass away, And be renewed-the Sabbath day Honored by all-none then will say, 'It's Jewish.'

"That precious boon to man first given, E'er he from Paradise was driven, Will be accepted as from heaven Not Jewish.

"And while eternity's glad days Roll on and on with ceaseless rays, The theme will be Jehovah's praise, And that in universal lays Not Jewish."

R. F. Cottrell (grandfather of the author of this book).

"Thy stranger that is within thy gates." With this expression, compare the following instruction from the Lord: "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that your ox and your ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed." Exodus 23: 12.

This text reveals the universal nature of the Sabbath. The servant, the stranger, and the foreigner were bidden to honor God's rest day, and in it find spiritual refreshment; while even the animals that share the labors with man might not be hired out for gainful service, but were to be granted a day of release from toil.

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." The moral obligation to obey the fourth commandment is here clearly shown. In the beginning when God created all things, He gave to man life, and strength, and every faculty of his being. All came from the Father above; all belong to Him. Six days of every week He gave to man to labor and provide for his own needs. The seventh, or memorial day, He reserved unto Himself, and instructed mankind how its hours should be employed.

This precept of the law does not require that we give to the Lord something of our own: it does direct that no one appropriate to himself that which the Creator has set apart and hallowed for His own worship. Such a theft of time indicates base ingratitude; and more, it is nothing less than robbing God.

On numerous occasions Moses, the spokesman for God, appealed to the multitudes of Israel to observe the Sabbath sacredly. When instructions were given for the erection of a tabernacle, the people might have concluded that since the work was for Jehovah, and the building greatly needed, they would be justified in laboring at the task on the seventh day. But no, even the sacredness and urgency of constructing the sanctuary must not lead them to infringe upon holy time; and with the plans and specifications, the Lord also gave a message of warning against any Sabbath desecration. (Exodus 31:1-18)

In the busy seasons on farm, or ranch, agriculturalists might consider it essential to avail themselves of favorable weather, and guard against material loss. But no matter what the emergency, the instruction was equally definite: "Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in shearing time and in harvest thou shalt rest." Exodus 34: 21.

In spite of all this loving counsel many were careless, and the general disregard of the Sabbath is mentioned as one of the reasons why the adult generation who left Egypt were debarred from entering Canaan:

"But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness: they walked not in My statutes, and they despised My judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and My Sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out My fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them. . . . Yet also I lifted up My hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey." Ezekiel 20:13-15.

Pitched in the midst of the camp of Israel was the tabernacle, and in the second apartment was the ark of the covenant. There reposed the tables of the Ten Commandment law, the fourth precept of which enjoined the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath.

In the days of King Hezekiah, God sounded a call through the prophet Isaiah for true Sabbath reform.

"Blessed is the man that does this, and the son of man that lays hold on it; that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil.... Even unto them will I give in Mine house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters. I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off." Isaiah 56:2, 5.

A part of this appeal was likewise addressed to those of other races and nations:

"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, every one that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and takes hold of My covenant. Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar; for Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people." Isaiah 56:6,7.

This reveals that the Sabbath and the worship of Jehovah ere for those of every land and nationality. A hundred years later, another messenger for God made a stirring appeal to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah. His words carried both a promise and a prophecy:

"Thus says the Lord Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do you any work; but hallow you the Sabbath day, as I



commanded your fathers. . . . And it shall come to pass, if you diligently hearken unto Me, says the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but hallow the Sabbath day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain forever. . . . But if you will not hearken unto Me to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. Then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." Jeremiah 17:21-27.

To this eloquent plea, king, priests, and people were strangely deaf. The narrative states that they "made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction." Jeremiah 17: 23. "They mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy." 2 Chronicles 36:16. Because of Sabbath violation the city that might have stood forever was destroyed, and the people of Judah were uprooted from their beloved native land to become captives by the rivers of Babylon.

With the passing of time, a remnant of the Jews had returned to Palestine; and on the occasion of Nehemiah's last recorded visit to Judah, he was pained to behold some of his countrymen "treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves. . . . and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day." Nehemiah 13:15.

This wrongdoing called for vigorous action, and convening the influential men of the country, Nehemiah came before them with the most solemn appeal:

"What evil thing is this that you do, and profane the Sabbath day?

And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath. And some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day." Nehemiah 13:17, 19.

This record confirms the prophecy of Jeremiah, and reveals that the devoted city was actually destroyed because its citizens profaned the Sabbath. Nehemiah was a dauntless civic leader, and a valiant champion of the law of God. Near the close of Old Testament history he stands forth as one of the rebuilders and restorers of Jerusalem, and also as a vigorous advocate of true Sabbath reform.

## **5. Christ and the Sabbath**

As a distinguishing strand of red runs through all the rope and cordage of the British Navy, so the captivating theme of Christ and His love permeates the entire Bible story from Genesis to Revelation. The Son of God is presented as the great personage of Scripture; and from the beginning He was associated with His Father as the Designer and creator of the worlds.

"By Him [the Son] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him.

And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Colossians 1:16,17. "All things were made by Him [Christ]; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. . . . For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Psalm 33:6,9.

Christ is revealed as the Divine One "upholding all things by the word of His power." (Hebrews 1:1-3.) Christ revealed Himself to Abraham. (John 8:56-58) He was the guide and protector of ancient Israel in their wilderness wanderings. (Deuteronomy 1:33; 1 Corinthians 10:4) "He was their Savior. In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Isaiah 63: 8, 9.

According to the inspired testimony of the martyr Stephen, it was the Lord Jesus who stood upon Mount Sinai and proclaimed the law of God. And let it be remembered that in the very heart of that code the Sabbath commandment is enshrined. (Acts 7:37-38)

As already shown, the Sabbath stands as creation's memorial; and as the active agent in creation's task, it was Christ who day by day during the first week of time brought forth order, beauty, and myriad forms of life upon this planet. Accordingly it was He who rested upon the seventh day, establishing it as the sacred birthday of the world for all mankind. Our Savior's words, "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath," appear as a statement of historic fact. Since He was the Lawgiver and Founder of the rest day, He is its sovereign Lord., and it was pre-eminently His right to teach men how it should be observed and honored.

In New Testament times the Jewish people were deluged with an ever multiplying volume of religious laws and ceremonies; while the Sabbath of the Lord was so covered and hedged about with Pharisaic rules and ritual that its spiritual value was well-nigh lost. If upon the Sabbath a man accidentally stepped upon a head of ripening grain and shelled out the kernels, his act of "threshing" was denounced as Sabbath-breaking.

If a person broke an arm or a leg upon the seventh day, he was prohibited from receiving surgical attention until the sacred hours were past; yet the ox or the sheep that fell into a pit on the Sabbath, having a financial value, might be rescued. Although one could loose his animal "from the stall and lead him away to watering," yet, because burden-bearing was a violation of the Sabbath, a man was not permitted to carry water to a thirsty animal. In this way the divine statutes had fallen into disrepute and dishonor.

Christ came to the rescue. It was His mission to "magnify the law, and make it honorable." Isaiah 42:21. He taught that loyal heart-service is the essence of Christian living; that the Sabbath was appointed as a day of spiritual delight and loving ministry; and

that the alleviation of physical suffering and the supplying of bread to the hungry are in full harmony with the spirit of genuine Sabbath-keeping. Many of His miracles of mercy were performed upon the seventh day. (See Mark 1:21-27; 3:1-5; John 5:1-9; 9:1-14.)

For these reasons the religious teachers of Palestine accused Jesus of Sabbath desecration, and repeatedly sought to put Him to death. That intense conflict was waged, not concerning the day of the Sabbath, but regarding its proper observance. By precept and example our Master honored the day that He had instituted at creation. The Gospel writer says: "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." Luke 4:16. It will be observed that church attendance on the Sabbath was "His custom". And looking nearly forty years into the future to the time when Jerusalem would be destroyed, He bade His disciples pray that their flight from the doomed city might not occur upon the Sabbath day, and thus impel them to desecrate its holy hours. (Matthew 24: 20.)

The disciples and apostles of Christ followed His Sabbath keeping example. The story of the crucifixion relates these incidents:

"That day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." Luke 23: 54-56.

This inspired Gospel, written nearly a score of years after the resurrection, mentions the day preceding the Sabbath as the "preparation" day, and designates the seventh day as "the Sabbath according to the commandment." Throughout the entire Bible there is but one weekly Sabbath mentioned, and but one Sabbath commandment, the fourth precept of the great code.

Following the ascension of Christ, the New Testament records but one meeting upon the first day of the week; while during the same period it tells of eighty-four religious gatherings upon the seventh-day Sabbath. Two of these occurred at Antioch, one at Philippi, three at Thessalonica, and seventy eight at Corinth. (Acts 13:14,42-44; 16:12,13; 17:1,2; 18:1-4,11)

It is interesting to observe that all of these meetings were conducted by Paul and his associates, who were God's chosen ambassadors to the Gentiles. During their second evangelistic effort in Europe, held at the city of Thessalonica, the narrative states that "Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures." Acts 17:2. Christ's "custom" and Paul's "manner" of Sabbath keeping were therefore identical.

In spite of the plain teaching of Christ and the apostles, many have obtained a false impression that the New Testament somehow sanctions a change in the Sabbath and the law of God. But this concept is wholly wrong.

Visit with us that elevation by the Sea of Galilee, famed in gospel story as the mount of blessings. Tidings of the young baptism at the Jordan, of His dynamic sermons and acts of healing, are carried throughout Palestine. The people are electrified. Has the deliverer appeared to free them from the yoke of Rome? Is a new age about to dawn? Will He substitute new laws and customs for those of old? Multitudes flock to His mountain retreat; and there in one of His notable public utterances, He sets at rest the whisperings and surmising of the people. "Think not," He said, "that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. 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." Matthew 5: 17, 18.

Can man shake the solid earth? Can he rend the heavens? No more can he alter the divine law, which is changeless and eternal. In unmistakable language Christ declares that not "a jot" (the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet), or a "tittle" (a part of a letter), is to pass from that royal code announced from Sinai.

The Master's pure, spotless conduct was ever in harmony with the divine law. He lived what He taught. "In His life the law appears Drawn out in living characters."

To its He speaks: "If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." Christ repudiated the priestly traditions and cold, legal exactions that had brought the law into disfavor. He taught that the spirit of willing obedience transcends the letter of dead works and stern formalism. To love one's friends and hate one's enemies was then an accepted virtue; but Christ commanded, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." Matthew 5:44. The law said, "Thou shall not kill: Thou shall not commit adultery"; but through the gospel magnifying glass it was seen that "whosoever hates his brother is a murderer," and that the very thought of impurity is sin.

In Christ, the law operated upon the golden hinge of love. When asked which commandment was the greatest, He replied: "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself." Matthew 22:37-39. If I truly love my God, it will be my joy to keep the first four commandments; if I love my neighbor as myself, there could be no intentional violation of the last six. This leads to that high and happy experience, the life of victory in Christ.

Would you follow Jesus all the way? Come to Calvary, and tell me the meaning of the cross. Why was it necessary for Him to spill His precious lifeblood? Here is the answer: "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. "The wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. Christ "died the death that was ours that we might live the life that was His," are the words of a devout writer.

The monarch Darius labored strenuously, feverishly, to save Daniel from the den of lions; but there stood the "law of the Medes and Persians, which alters not." The majesty of law, the very stability of the government, demanded that the sentence be executed, else the throne itself would be imperiled. Even so, had there been another way to vindicate the sovereignty of divine law, Jesus need not have died. But infinite love and wisdom could devise no other plan; for to abolish the law would have immortalized sin. The royal law must stand unshaken, even though it cost the life of the beloved Son.

And, friends, as we "survey the wondrous cross On which the Prince of glory died," we behold the mightiest monument ever erected to the changeless, eternal law of God.

An enduring law includes also an abiding Sabbath. The rest day that Jesus made in the beginning is likewise the rest day that He kept while upon earth, and all who adore the Christ are reminded that He left "us an example, that you should follow His steps." 1 Peter 2: 21. Listen to the test of discipleship spoken on the eve of the crucifixion: "If you love Me keep My commandments." John 14:15. Many years later the favored Apostle John expressed the same truth: "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5: 3.

Today God is lifting His Sabbath out of the dust, and is calling upon honest, loyal Christians throughout the world to believe in God. To keep His precepts, to honor His holy day, to esteem the Sabbath as a transcendent gift of divine love to those of every race and nation. And to accept it as a delightful weekly memorial for every child of God, "The best, the holiest, happiest day, The sweetest of the seven."

## **6. The Shadowy Sabbaths**

When the claims of the Bible Sabbath are presented many seek to justify their disregard of the fourth commandment by quoting the words of the Apostle Paul. "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." Colossians 2: 16.

Does this scripture grant license for all to eat and drink what they please, and to keep any day, or no day whatsoever, as the Sabbath? Friend, how reads thou? If this be its intent, it speaks in utter contradiction to all those Bible principles and precepts that enjoin sobriety, temperance, and Sabbath devotion. Peruse it carefully and you will observe that it counsels the believer to stand firm in the right; that in the face of bigotry and opposition, lie is to remain unshaken in his religious convictions.

In New Testament times tile disciples of Christ found themselves struggling between two extreme classes of religionists. The orthodox Jews together with many of the converts from Judaism, clung tenaciously to the traditions, superstitions, and ceremonies of their fathers, and zealously sought to force all these upon the early Christians. On the other hand, paganism with its multitude of degrading rites, its subtle arts and gilded pomp, menaced the infant church; and from the hour of its birth stood ready to swallow it up. Between these two opposing systems of error, the followers of Christ were to walk the straight and narrow way. They were not to be warped and enslaved by the prejudices and fables of Jewry; they were not to be lured by the glitter and gold of pagan society.

"Let no man therefore judge you." So confident was Paul of the divine origin and verity of the gospel message that he declared, " Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Galatians 1: 8. No adverse criticism or judgment was to weaken their faith or influence their conduct.

The text used at the beginning of this chapter is but a part of the complete sentence. To grasp the correct meaning, we read it in full: "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: which are a shadow of things to come. But the body is of Christ." Colossians 2: 16, 17.

These words are explicit. The "Sabbath days" here mentioned were "a shadow of things to come." In thought we are taken backward to the time our first parents sinned and were driven from Eden. In contrition for sin, and as an expression of faith in the coming Deliverer, they were instructed to bring an offering. The innocent victim died for guilty man; and the slain lamb was a prophecy, or shadow, of "the Lamb of God that bore away the sins of the world."

Many centuries later, when Israel emerged from Egyptian bondage, these typical rites were expanded into a beautiful, comprehensive system. In the forms and ceremonies centering about the temple service were many impressive object lessons, ordained of God to teach His people the sinfulness of sin, heaven's remedy for transgression, and vividly present before their minds the prophecy of the coming Savior.

Three times each year all Israel was to assemble for worship at the sanctuary in Jerusalem. The Passover, a memorial of the deliverance from Egypt and a forecast of the greater deliverance through the world's Redeemer, was celebrated in the early spring. Fifty days later came the feast of harvest, or Pentecost; and in the autumn, when the year's work in field, orchard, and vineyard was completed, the day of atonement and the feast of tabernacles were observed. In connection with each of these gatherings were annual Sabbaths, hallowed by Jehovah, and concerning which He solemnly charged His people, "You shall do no servile work therein." Leviticus 23:7. See also verses 21,25,35.

These ceremonial Sabbaths were wholly separate and distinct from the weekly rest day that was established in ancient Eden as a memorial of creation. After enumerating the various annual assemblies and Sabbaths, the divine record continues:

"These are the feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day. Beside the Sabbaths of the Lord, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which you give unto the Lord." Leviticus 23:37,38.

Note carefully these words of Inspiration. Lest anyone should confuse the two, God Himself makes clear the distinction between the yearly and the weekly rest days, and enjoins Israel to observe all of these holy annual convocations "beside the Sabbaths of the Lord." Again, the ceremonial Sabbaths were fixed days in the annual Jewish calendar, and occurred on the various days of the week, even as the Fourth of July and Christmas do now.

The seventh day Sabbath was instituted in the beginning before the entrance of sin; while the yearly Sabbaths were not appointed until twenty-five hundred years later. (Genesis 2:1-3; Leviticus 23:4-44) The seventh day Sabbath is presented to man as an

essential part of the moral law that defines sin; the others were given to Israel as object lessons of God's remedy for sin. (Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 16:29-34) The seventh-day Sabbath was proclaimed by the Lord Himself from Mount Sinai, was written by the finger of God on the tablet of stone, and formed a part of the royal law that reposed in the sacred ark of the covenant. The other Sabbaths, being part of the temporary, typical system, were rehearsed to Moses, who wrote of them in a book, which was placed in the side of the ark. (Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 4:13,14; 10:1-5; Exodus 24:4,7; Deuteronomy 31:24,26)

The Sabbath of the fourth commandment, as an original precept of the law of God, stands unchanging and eternal; while the annual Sabbaths serving as "a figure for the time then present," "a shadow of good things to come," passed away when Christ offered Himself on Calvary's cross. Type then gave place to antitype. The true Light appeared, and the shadows faded away. (Psalm 111:7,8; Isaiah 66:22,23; Hebrews 9:9-11; 10:1-4.)

Accordingly, disciples and Christians who accepted the Lamb of God as a crucified and risen Savior no longer brought their sacrifices to be offered upon an altar of stone or of brass. They no longer celebrated the feast of unleavened bread, the sprinkling of blood, and the Passover Sabbaths; for, with Paul, they gloried in the knowledge that "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Corinthians 5:7,8. No longer with vigils and fasting did they observe the ancient day of atonement and other ceremonial Sabbaths. for they unhesitatingly testified, "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Romans 5:11.

But the Sabbath of the commandment' established before the entrance of sin, and forming no part of the shadowy, ceremonial law, remains the same throughout all generations and dispensations. As Article IV of the "royal law," it is not subject to amendment or repeal. While the apostle to the Gentiles emphatically proclaimed that the Levitical ritual had passed away, he adored the law of God as the very constitution of Christianity. To the Romans, he said: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:31. And again: "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Romans 7:12.

With these thoughts in mind we appreciate more fully the significance of those Sabbath days "which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Those ritual Sabbaths of old with their services and symbols, foreshadowed Christ and taught of Him as the coming Messiah. He was the body, or substance, that cast the shadow. Patriarchs and prophets of old beheld the shadow, and by faith visioned the advent of Christ. Such was the meaning of our Lord's words when He said to the Jews: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad." John 8: 56.

Many times the question is asked, "But what about the law that was nailed to the cross?" It could not have been the moral law of ten precepts, for these define right and wrong, and in their very nature remain the same from age to age. The New Testament, however, tells of another code which was abolished:

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." Colossians 2:14.

Reference is here made, not to the law of God, but to "the handwriting of ordinances" that regulated the sanctuary services, eating, drinking, the annual feasts, and holy days that were "a shadow of things to come." See verses 16,17. Concerning these the Bible speaks:

"It came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." Deuteronomy 31: 24-26.

These laws and ordinances may be found in the last chapters of Exodus, in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, and gave specific instruction concerning diet, sanitation, the Levitical priesthood, the temple ritual, and the ceremonial Sabbaths. For example: "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall you have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation." Leviticus 23:24.

All of that service was Israel's kindergarten" for the time then present"; but when Christ came and offered Himself on Calvary, the kindergarten lessons were no longer required. The so-called "law of Moses," or ceremonial law, had served its purpose; and the Redeemer "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." Ephesians 2:15.

The sanctuary service and other rites had served as a wall of separation between Jew and Gentile. They had been the occasion for much controversy and enmity; but when Christ as the great antitype died upon the cross, He brought an end to the law of ordinances ' and swept away all spiritual distinction between Jew and Gentile. (Colossians 3: 11.)

The difference between the two law codes of Scripture is also clear and obvious. The one is that law which Christ "abolished in His flesh" (Ephesians 2: 15); the other is the law which He did not come to destroy (Matthew 5:17). The one is "the law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Ephesians 2:15); the other law is embraced in the Ten Commandments, which are presented to both Jew and Gentile alike as embracing "the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12: 13).

#### **THE MORAL LAW**

Is called the "royal law." (James 2:8.)

Was spoken by God. (Deuteronomy 4:12,13)

Was written by "the finger of God." (Ex. 31:18.)

Is "perfect." (Psalm 19:7)

#### **THE CEREMONIAL LAW**

The law contained in ordinances." (Ephesians 2:15.)

Was spoken by Moses. (Leviticus 1:1-3.)

Was written by Moses in a book. (2 Chron. 35:12)

"Made nothing perfect." (Hebrews 7:19.)

Is eternal and unchangeable. (Psalm 111:7,8)	Was nailed to the cross. (Colossians 2:14.)
Was not destroyed by Christ. (Matthew 5:17)	Was abolished by Christ. (Ephesians 2:15)
Was magnified by Christ. (Is. 42:21; Ps. 40:7,8.)	Was taken out of the way by Christ. (Col. 2:14.)
Is the divine code that defines sin. (Rom. 3:20; 7:7.)	Was instituted in consequence of sin. (Lev. 3-7.)

## **7. The Gospel Remedy**

GOD'S plan for His sons and daughters of earth is divinely simple. In the beginning when Adam and Eve were created and located in their Eden home they were given, on condition of obedience, the assurance of an endless life. Soon came the tragic fall; yet even then, God did not wholly cast them off. In the promise of a Savior to rescue them from sin, they might still perfect righteous characters and attain the goal of eternal life.

At length the prophecy of the coming Redeemer was fulfilled, and Christ visited this earth to set before all mankind the example of a model life. He also presented the two New Testament precepts of love to God and love to man as embracing everything that is taught in the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament.

Our Lord did not adapt, dilute, or moderate the law to meet man's helplessness, but magnified, elevated, and honored the divine code which He Himself had spoken from Mount Sinai. As already shown, those moral precepts are eternal, and can never be altered, repealed, or amended. (Psalm 111:8; Matthew 5:17,18)

Yet in spite of the clear and definite teaching of Scripture, many believe that commandment-keeping was designed alone for the Jews, while the gospel is a special gift to those of the new dispensation. It is taught by some that in Old Testament times, men were saved by keeping the law; while since the days of Christ, they are saved by grace. The statement, "You are not under the law, but under grace," is regarded as an admirable defense and convenient alibi for those who would disregard one or more of the divine precepts.

Were these notions correct it would indicate that the pious of old rescued themselves by their own works; while those who have lived since New Testament times, being too weak to keep the law, are compelled to trust wholly to the merits of Christ. Such an arrangement would anticipate two plans of redemption and a divided heaven: here a company acclaiming their own works and worthiness; there a multitude praising Christ for His love and salvation.

In imagination picture a foreign missionary teaching the people that the grace of Christ has now become the substitute and successor of an obsolete law. If one of his baptized natives were seen offering incense before a Buddhist shrine, the surprised missionary would doubtless remonstrate with the offender for violating the second commandment of the Decalogue. But the native son could calmly reply that according to his new found faith he is "not under law, but under grace." The missionary's servant steals his goods, and attempts to cover up the theft by falsehood: but when caught in the overt act, he meekly answers that he is so happy to be "not under the law, but under grace."

As another illustration, consider the case of a convicted murderer who has been condemned to die. His conduct in the death cell may be upright and perfect; but his flawless deportment does not postpone the moment of execution; and the law still cries out to him, "You must die." Only one thing may rescue him from the gallows, and that is a pardon from the governor of his commonwealth. While in prison he has been under condemnation, "under the law"; but with a signed reprieve in his pocket, he walks out of the prison to freedom.

Since he is now "under grace," is he therefore at liberty to kill and steal at pleasure? Does the pardon abolish the law, and grant the erstwhile convict a special dispensation to commit crime? The very suggestion is absurd. If executive clemency has been extended, the recipient is placed under added restraint to live an exemplary life. As the Apostle to the Gentiles declared: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:31.

There is another fallacy frequently expressed in the phrase, "To believe on Jesus is all that is necessary." But the Master said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." John 14:15. And the Apostle James emphasizes the great truth that "faith without works is dead." James 2:26.

We are told that on one occasion the well-known evangelist, D. L. Moody, promised to take his little son to the park to see the animals. After having a bath and clean clothes, the lad played in the mud; and his father said, "I can't take you to the park looking like that; I couldn't be seen with such a dirty little boy."

"Why, I am clean; mamma washed me," he cried.

"Do you think I argued with him? No. I just took him up in my arms, and carried him into the house, and showed him his face in the looking glass. He had not a word to say.

"Now, the looking glass told him that his face was dirty; but I did not take the looking glass to wash it; of course not. Yet that is what thousands of people seek to do."

The mirror is no substitute for soap and water, neither can the law take the place of Jesus Christ. Man's most heroic attempts to attain peace or holiness by his own efforts are doomed to failure. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may you also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jeremiah 13: 23.

While the African cannot change his color, the gospel of Christ can and does wondrously transform the heart. "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. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:13, 4.

Because God's moral looking glass, the law, reveals our imperfections, and condemns our evil ways, shall we retaliate by attempting to destroy it? Yet, preposterous as that may appear, many would demolish the great mirror if they could. Says the Infinite: "I have written to him the great things of My law, but they were counted as a strange thing." Hosea 8:12. Men have devised human religions. Genuine Christianity is the only divine one. Confucius elaborated a princely system of ethics, but confessed utter inability to attain his own ideals. Jesus not only taught the truth, but He is "the way, the truth, and the life." Of all the great founders of religion, He alone could say without qualification, "Follow Me." And to us the Master speaks: "Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48. The same power that stilled the tempest and raised the dead can produce the miracle transformation in your life and mine.

We are told of a man who built a clock for one of the great cathedrals across the sea. It was marvelous in its mechanism; and when the chimes pealed forth, it almost seemed that a company of angels had descended to the tower to sing heaven's sweetest music. Time passed; and the clockmaker received no remuneration for his labors; so one night he stealthily entered the cathedral and climbed into the clock tower to touch one of the magic springs. The mechanism was still there, but the wheels did not move; the chimes were there, but they no longer rang.

Later, when the artisan had been compensated for his services, he came again to touch the intricate spring; immediately the great clock sprang into action, and the same beautiful music charmed the senses of thousands.

Many in our world today appear to be living good moral lives. They are evidently trying to do the best they can; but there is a great lack of spiritual vision and strength. It is a sad thing to see a human heart without hope, or a man attempting the battle of life in his own strength. Defeat is inevitable.

When however, the heart is surrendered to Christ, and the touch of the Master's hand turns on the current of divine power, what an amazing transformation! A new life is begun. A supernatural element now controls the will. Hereditary traits and evil habits are overcome. Christ's biddings become his heart's desire. More and more fully he reflects the image of his Master; and in the power of a crucified and risen Savior, the true Christian goes forth with radiant confidence to a life of complete victory.

#### POEM

"I was battered and scarred, and the auctioneer Thought it scarcely worth his while To waste much time on the old violin, But he held it up with a smile. 'What am I bidden, good folks?' he cried, 'Who'll start the bidding for me? A dollar, a dollar now two, only two dollars, and who'll make it three?

"Three dollars once, three dollars twice, Going for three!' but no! From the room far back a gray-haired man Came forward and picked up the bow; Then wiping the dust from the old violin, And tightening up all the strings, He played a melody pure and sweet, As sweet as an angel sings.

"The music ceased, and the auctioneer, With a voice that was quiet and low, Said: 'What am I bid for the old violin?' And he held it up with the bow. 'A thousand dollars and who'll make it two? Two thousand - and who'll make it three? Three thousand once and three thousand twice And going and gone!' said he.

"The people cheered, but some of them cried, 'We do not quite understand What changed its worth?' The man replied: 'The touch of the master's hand!' And many a man with life out of tune, And battered and worn with sin, Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd, Much like the old violin.

A 'mess of pottage,' a glass of wine, A game and he travels on. He's going once, and going twice, He's going - and almost gone! But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd Never can quite understand The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought By the touch of the Master's hand."

Author Unknown

## **8. Sunday in New Testament Times**

THE word "Sunday" is not found in the Bible; but in the New Testament the expression "first day of the week" occurs eight times. It is not called a rest day, a day of worship, or a holy day; and neither Christ nor the apostles recognized it as having any sacred character or religious significance.

Each of the gospel writers refers to the rest day observed by the Jews as "the Sabbath," and mentions it as the day that immediately precedes "the first day of the week." Matthew, who is said to have written the first book of the New Testament about 61 A. D., narrated the death and burial of his Lord, then said:

"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." Matthew 28: 1.

Mark, the contemporary Gospel writer, employed similar language:

"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. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun. .

.. 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." Mark 16:1,2,9.

The Gospel penned a few years later by the "beloved physician " tells the same story with certain additional features:

" They returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. 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." Luke 23:56; 24:1.

Near the close of the first century of our era, and approximately sixty-six years after the crucifixion of Christ, John the beloved recorded his version of the same event:

"The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away." John 19:31. "The first day of the week comes Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher, and sees the stone taken away from the sepulcher. . . . 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." John 20:1,19.

If, subsequent to the resurrection, Christ or the apostles had instituted or recognized a new day of rest, or a weekly Sabbath, some of these inspired writers certainly would have recorded such a change. But the above references to the "first day of the week," six in number, include all that the Gospel authors wrote concerning the day that is now called Sunday. There is no evidence that it even had a name, only a number; while the preceding day was honored with the revered title, the Sabbath.

The record states that Christ was crucified on the "preparation" day, that His followers "rested" on the following day, which was not termed the "old Jewish Sabbath," or the "Old Testament Sabbath," but "the Sabbath day, according to the commandment."

"That day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day, according to the commandment." Luke 23:54-56.

Very early on the first day of the week, when the women came to the sepulcher to anoint their crucified Lord, they found an empty tomb. The narrative shows that Sunday to have been a day of labor and travel (Luke 24:13-33), and also a time of fear and anxiety. During the evening of the same day, when Jesus presented Himself to His disciples, He found them convened, not for a religious service, but with closed doors "for fear of the Jews." (John 20:19.) He met them again 9 ' after eight days." (John 20:26) Reckoning from Sunday night, this would place the next meeting not earlier than Monday evening of the following week.

The next recorded meeting of Christ with His disciples was on their return from a fishing excursion, which certainly occurred on one of the regular working days. The time of the gathering on a mountain in Galilee is not given; while according to the New Testament narrative, Christ's farewell to His disciples at the time of the ascension occurred on the fifth day of the week. (Acts 1:1-11.) This event terminated our Lord's earthly life; and the most careful study of the entire gospel story reveals that neither by word nor act did the Master ever sanction or suggest a change of the Sabbath from the seventh day of the week to the first.

The next New Testament reference to the first day is found in the record of Paul's farewell meeting at Troas:

"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. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves for his life is in him. When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed." Acts 20:7-11.

According to Biblical precept and usage, the setting sun marks the beginning and ending of the day. (Leviticus 23: 32; Mark 1: 21, 32) Since this was an evening service convened upon the dark portion of the first day of the week, the meeting was held upon what is now termed Saturday night. Says Conybeare and Howson, a standard authority:

"It was the evening which succeeded the Jewish Sabbath. On the Sunday morning the vessel was about to sail. The Christians of Troas were gathered together at this solemn time to celebrate that feast of love which the last commandment of Christ has enjoined on all His followers." - "Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul," Vol. I, p. 206. New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Co., 1878.

Two facts contributed to make this a noteworthy occasion. It was an all-night farewell gathering, and here also Paul wrought a notable miracle in restoring life to the young man who fell from a window. During the remainder of that Sunday Paul's companions were sailing the ship around the promontory from Troas to Assos, a distance of some fifty miles; while the apostle himself walked overland across the isthmus to join the boat at the latter-named seaport. Thus Paul and his company employed that Sunday in arduous labor and travel.

The eighth and last reference to the first day in the New Testament occurs in a request addressed to the church at Corinth:

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do you. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." 1 Corinthians 16: 1, 2.

This instruction from the Apostle Paul suggests no public meetings; nor does it give any intimation of Sunday sacredness. Quite the reverse! To determine the amount one has been prospered frequently implies the keeping and balancing of accounts. The expression, "Let every one of you lay by him in store," is rendered by Moffatt, "Let each of you put aside a sum from his weekly gains." This language does not imply a transfer of money to the church treasurer, but a separate personal fund to be laid aside by the

individual. Again, there is no indication that this plan was proposed as a financial arrangement for all believers; but merely that it was suggested by the Apostle as a local plan in Galatia and Corinth, and for a limited time only.

Aside from the foregoing texts, the New Testament is silent concerning the first day of the week. But study these citations carefully; scrutinize all available evidence. And for the conscientious student, there appears but one unavoidable conclusion: Throughout apostolic times the entire church of Christian believers knew nothing of Sunday observance, but kept the seventh day holy, and regularly devoted the first day of the week to secular toil.

Some have assumed that the New Testament speaks of the first day of the week as "the Lord's day," but this assumption is wholly unfounded. The expression occurs but once, and the text states:

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." Revelation 1:10.

As the context gives no explanation, we appeal to other scriptures for information, and inquire, Does Jesus designate any particular day as His own, over which He is Lord? The Master Himself replies: "And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27,28.

Concerning the Sabbath here mentioned, no one is left in doubt, for there stands one of the plainest declarations of the Bible: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20:10. As shown in Chapter 5, Christ was associated with His Father as Creator and Lawgiver. He rested upon the seventh day, and established it as the Sabbath for all mankind. He spoke the law from Sinai's height; and it was His supreme right to proclaim Himself in Lord of the Sabbath. In the light of these facts, there is but one possible conclusion: The Lord's day is the seventh day of the week.

Certain novices in the Greek language have attempted to construct an argument for Sunday based upon their amateur translation of a few New Testament texts; but all of these stand rebuked by the ripest Christian scholarship represented by the translators of the Authorized, the Revised, and the American Revised versions. No genuine Greek authority has ever attempted to prove Sunday sanctity through a manipulation of the original text.

Likewise the great majority of Biblical scholars concede that the New Testament offers no evidence in support of Sunday as a day of rest. Irrespective of creed or practice, they generally agree that "there is not on record any divine command, issued to the apostles, to change the Sabbath from the day on which it was held by the Jews, to the first day of the week."-"Watson's Theological Institutes" (Methodist), Vol. 2, p. 511.

From a large number of authoritative statements on this question, we present only a few:

Methodist-"It is true there is no positive command for infant baptism. . . nor is there any for keeping holy the first day of the week." "M.E. Theological Compendium," p. 108.

Baptist-"The Scripture nowhere calls the first day of the week the Sabbath.... There is no Scriptural authority for so doing, nor, of course, any Scriptural obligation."-"The Watchman."

Baptist-"Earnestly desiring information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask, Where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament, absolutely not. There is no Scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week."-Rev. Edward T. Hiscox, D. D., author of "Baptist Manual," in a paper read before a New York Ministers' Conference, held Nov. 13, 1898.

Church of England-"And where are we told in Scripture that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day.... The reason why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the church, has enjoined it."-"Plain Sermons on the Catechism," Rev. Isaac Williams, D. D., Vol. I, PP. 334-36. London: Rivingtons, 1882.

Protestant Episcopal-"Is there any command in the.-New Testament to change the day of weekly rest from Saturday to Sunday? None."-"Manual of Christian Doctrine," p. 127.

Presbyterian-"A change of the day to be observed from the last day of the week to the first. There is no record, no express command, authorizing this change."-"The Christian Sabbath," N. L. Rice, D.D., p. 60.

Congregational-"It must be confessed that there is no law in the New Testament concerning the first day."-"Buck's Theological Dictionary," p. 403.

Congregational-"There is no command in the Bible requiring us to observe the first day of the week in the Christian Sabbath."-"Mode and Subjects of Baptism," by Rev. Orin Fowler, A. M.

Congregational-"The current notion that Christ and His apostles authoritatively substituted the first day for the seventh, is absolutely without any authority in the New Testament."-Dr. Lyman Abbott in "Christian Union," Jan. 19, 1882.

Lutheran-"The observance of the Lord's day [Sunday] is founded not on any command of God, but on the authority of the church." - The "Augsburg Confession," quoted in "Catholic Sabbath Manual," part 2, chap. 1, sec. 10.

Confronted with a volume of such candid and convincing testimony, why should anyone remain undecided or indifferent concerning this sacred precept? As our divine pattern, Christ kept the seventh-day Sabbath, and without exception or qualification, declared that "the Sabbath was made for man," yes, designed as a transcendent gift of His love to those of every nation, tongue, and people. The records witness that all of the apostles and all of the early churches in Asia and Europe observed it; and so long as the truth remains that the Son of God is Creator and Redeemer, so long will the Sabbath stand as an eternal monument to His matchless power.

Shall we not yield anew to Him our pledge of loyalty? Shall we not esteem and honor His "holy day," and within its peaceful portals find heavenly refreshment and delight?



## **9. The Origin of Sunday Observance**

AS THE curtain of history rises upon the dim and distant past, a majority of ancient peoples were practicing some form of sun worship. This idolatry was a perversion of the truth that God is the creator of all things, and in ancient times it existed as the great rival to the worship of Jehovah

In Egypt where the children of Israel sojourned for more than two centuries, the sun deity was venerated as Ra, Osiris, and Apis. The historian Gibbon narrates the rapid rise and spread of sun worship among the nations of the ancient world, which religion was widely known as "Mithraism." He also describes an altar in the grotto at Spoleto bearing the significant inscription, "Soli invicto Mitrae sacrum [sacred to the invincible sun, Mithra]." See "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," chap. 8, par. 6, Note.

Another authority defines Mithras: "In Perso-Iranic divinity, first the god of the heavenly light and the lord of all countries, afterward the sun, or the genius of the sun, which was worshiped as a deity by the Persians, and at a later period also in Rome."-"Encyclopedia Americana," edition of 1938, art. "Mithras."

In the mythology of ancient Greece and Rome, the deities of sun and light were adored under the titles of Apollo, Hercules, and Jupiter. While throughout Phoenicia, Syria, Babylon, and other lands adjacent to old Palestine, the sun-god was known as Baal, Baaltis, Bel, Tammuz, etc. "The universality of this form of idolatry," declares Doctor Talbot W. Chambers in "Old Testament Student," "is something remarkable. It seems to have prevailed everywhere."

Against this degrading idolatry, God emphatically warned His ancient people. (Deuteronomy 4:19; Numbers 25:1-5; Ezekiel 8: 16; Romans 1: 25) The patriarch Job considered sun worship as treason against the Most High; and his testimony indicates that at the time he lived, this form of paganism was already popular:

"If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth bath kissed my hand: this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above." Job 31:26-28.

Ancient heathenism with its gods many and lords many bestowed upon each day of the week the name of a god. In Old Chaldea the days of the weekly cycle were christened respectively with the names of celestial deities-the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn. The Anglo-Saxons followed the same general arrangement with certain exceptions. Tuesday was dedicated to Tuisco, Wednesday to Woden, Thursday to Thor, and Friday to Frigga.

The sun appearing as the most powerful and prominent object in the heavens, as the source of light and heat, was naturally accorded first rank among the celestial deities; while the day set apart to its worship was accordingly honored. Says the historian: "Sunday was the first day of the week in the East from all antiquity." -Selden, Sac. An., Vol. I, p. 221. Other authorities testify:

"Sunday ... so called because this day was anciently dedicated to the sun, or to its worship."-"Webster's International Dictionary," 1929 edition.

"Sunday, so called because it was dedicated to the worship of the sun."-"McClintock and Strong's Biblical and Theological Encyclopedia," Art. "Sunday."

"Sunday (Dies Solis of the Roman calendar, 'day of the sun,' because dedicated to the sun), the first day of the week." -"Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia," Art. "Sunday."

"The day which the heathens in general consecrated to the worship and honor of their chief god, the sun, which, according to our computation, was the first day of the week."-Jennings's "Antiquities," book 3, chap. 8.

"The most ancient Germans being pagans, and having appropriated their first day of the week to the peculiar adoration of the sun, whereof that day does yet in our English tongue retain the name Sunday." "Verstegan's Antiquities," p. 10.

Of our own Saxon ancestors the same author relates:

"Unto the day dedicated unto the special adoration of the idol of the sun, they gave the name of Sunday, as much as to say the sun's day, or the day of the sun. This idol was placed in a temple, and there adored and sacrificed unto, for that they believed that the sun in the firmament did with or in this idol correspond and co-operate."-Id., p. 68.

At the beginning of the Christian era Sunday was popularly observed throughout the Roman world by public services in which hymns were chanted and prayers offered. As Christianity made its first impact upon the peoples of that age, it was violently opposed by paganism. But scarcely had a century elapsed before semi-Christian philosophers became teachers in the church. Many of them professed to recognize good in all systems of religion, and advocated the adoption of various rites and practices.

For example, the peoples of the East had long been accustomed to worship with their faces toward the rising sun. And although this custom was vigorously condemned by Old Testament prophets (Ezekiel 8:15,16), the Dew teachers encouraged Christians to face the east in prayer, "as the type of Christ the Sun of Righteousness." -See Tertullian, Oxford, 1842, Vol. I, p. 88.

Church leaders who desired to win the pagans to Christianity endeavored to minimize the differences and multiply the points of resemblance between the two systems. And since Sunday was the day "in which God set Himself to work upon the dark void in order to make the world, and in which Jesus Christ our Savior rose again from the dead," ingenious teachers suggested that Christians might appropriately worship upon the first day of the week. See Justin Martyr's "First Apology," (William Reeves' translation, p. 127, sects. 87-89).

Regarding this compromise and transformation, many writers and historians bear witness. The following paragraphs are notable examples of their testimony:

"That very (lay 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.... Opportunity and common expediency are surely argument enough for so ceremonial a change as the mere day of the week."-"North British Review," Vol. 18, p. 409.

"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."-"Six Dialogues on the Lord's Day," pp. 22, 23.

"Sunday was celebrated as the weekly festival of the resurrection. But perhaps the Roman sun-day (dies solis) has aided in bringing this about on the basis of Christ Himself being the light of the world. It was celebrated as a day of joy, without any regard whatever to the Sabbath rest of the Jews."-K. Hase, "Kirchengeschichte," Leipzig, 1885, Th. 1, par. 88.

"The day was all right, and when the Sun of Righteousness displaced the solar sun, the idolater became a Christian and worshiped God in the beauty of holiness."-"Christian Sabbath," D. B. Byers, p. 99.

"The exact date of the substitution of the first for the seventh day of the week, as the day for the proper observance of the Sabbath, is not known. At first the Christians observed both the seventh and the first day of the week."-"Standard American Encyclopedia," Art. "Sabbath."

"Ecclesiastical history also tells us that this is just what they did for a time, keeping one day as a rest day, and the other as a memorial day. History is equally positive that the seventh day was soon laid aside, and only the first day kept; so that, after a comparatively brief period. . . the Christian world were agreed in observing only the first-day Sabbath."-"The Christian Sabbath," E. P. Woodward, pp. 21, 22.

Near the close of his life the Apostle Paul issued an appeal against the inroads of "science falsely so-called," and in his farewell address to the elders of Ephesus, sounded the prophetic warning:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts 20: 28-30.

How tragic! Less than a century after these earnest words were written, half-converted Philosophers were teaching strange heresies in the church, and leading multitudes of professed Christians into a new paganism. In place of the clearest and most explicit precepts of the Bible, human laws and traditions were being substituted; and the "wild solar holiday" was stealthily creeping into the church as a rival to the true Sabbath of God.

Priests and people seemed strangely deaf to the words of the Master:

"Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? . . . In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15: 3, 9.

## **10. A Tainted Ancestry**

A FEW years ago a friend of the writer addressed a letter to an eminent American clergyman asking him why he did not observe the Bible Sabbath. In a brief reply which contained no argument and made no reference to the Scriptures, he affirmed his reverence for Sunday as a rest day merely "because of its beautiful background in history." Great is our astonishment that one who acclaims himself as a sturdy Bible fundamentalist should make such an acknowledgment.

Instead of establishing his belief and practice upon the "impregnable rock of Holy Scripture," he adores a historic tradition, a religious counterfeit. He clearly repudiates the blood-bought Protestantism of the Reformation and compromises with ancient paganism.

"There is no sure doctrine," declares the famous Protest of Spire, "but such as is conformable to the Word of God. . . . We are resolved, with the grace of God, to maintain the pure and exclusive preaching of His only Word, such as it is contained in the Biblical books of the Old and New Testament, without adding anything thereto that may be contrary to it. This Word is the only truth; it is the sure rule of all doctrine and of all life, and can never fail or deceive us."-"History of the Reformation," by D'Aubigne, book 13, chap. 6.

In sharp contrast to this, observe these statements from eminent Roman Catholic authorities:

"The Tridentine Fathers knew well that there are certain articles of faith which rest on tradition alone; they sanctioned tradition as a rule and foundation of faith wholly distinct from Scripture."-Cited from Perrone in "Letters to M. Gordon," p. 131.

"Like two sacred rivers flowing from Paradise, the Bible and divine tradition contain the Word of God, the precious gems of revealed truths. Though these two divine streams are in themselves, on account of their divine origin, of equal sacredness, and are both full of revealed truths, still, of the two, tradition is to us more clear and safe."-'Catholic Belief,' Joseph Faa di Bruno, D.D. (R.C.), p. 45. New York: Benziger Brothers, 1884.

"Tradition, not Scripture, is the rock upon which the church of Jesus Christ is built."-"Catholic Doctrine," p. 157.

The term "tradition," as here employed, refers to that which has been handed down through the so-called "Apostolic Fathers" of the early Christian centuries. According to the celebrated historian Neander, the writings of these men were so "counterfeited" and "adulterated" that no confidence can be placed in them. See Rose's Neander, p. 407. Likewise affirms Archdeacon Farrar:

"There are but few of them [the Fathers] whose pages are not rife with errors, errors of method, errors of fact, errors of history, of grammar, and even of doctrine. This is the language of simple truth, not of slighting disparagement."-"The History of Interpretation," pp. 162, 163. London: Macmillan and Co., 1886.

"Yes, my brother," declared Dr. Wayland to a young minister sorely pressed for Scriptural proof, "the Fathers are your stronghold. They are heaven's best gift to the man who has a cause that cannot be sustained in any other way." Dr. Adam Clarke also remarks that the Fathers "blow hot and cold," and asserts that there is not "a heresy that has disgraced the Roman church, that may not challenge them as its abettors." -Notes on Proverbs 8.

All along the centuries many Christians have had a subconscious impression that the New Testament somehow places its signet of approval upon Sunday observance. However, in this popular notion, there is not an iota of truth; and is it not most extraordinary that in civilized lands a religious fallacy should persist for well-nigh two millenniums, when a little careful investigation would dispel error and reveal the truth!

Said Cardinal Gibbons:

"You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify."-"The Faith of Our Fathers," p. 111. Baltimore: John Murphy and Co., 1893.

On numerous occasions during a period of many years, President Enright of Redemptorist College, Kansas City, Missouri, issued the challenge:

"The Bible commands you to keep the Sabbath day. Sunday is not the Sabbath day; no man dare assert that it is; for the Bible says as plainly as words can make it, that 'the seventh day is the Sabbath,' i.e., Saturday; for we know Sunday to be the first day of the week. Besides, the Jews have been keeping the Sabbath unto the present day. I am not a rich man, but I will give \$1,000 to any man who will prove by the Bible alone that Sunday is the day we are bound to keep." No one ever came to claim the money.

Since no word or syllable can be found in the New Testament sanctioning first-day observance, why, we inquire, has Sunday become the rest day of millions of professed Christians? In reply, let four groups of accredited witnesses testify: Bible prophecy, authentic history, Protestant scholars, and Roman Catholic spokesmen.

A careful study of the four great monarchies of Daniel's prophecy convinces the earnest Bible student that the following language designates the Papacy:

"He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law." Daniel 7:25, A. R. V.

Human times and laws have ever been subject to change and revision; but here is a power that would attempt to change the times and the law of the Most High. The Apostle Paul, writing by divine inspiration, predicted the same anti-Christian movement, and sounded the warning:

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.... For the mystery of iniquity does already work." 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4,7.

In fulfillment of this startling forecast, consider the apostasy that ravished the church from the second to the sixth centuries of our era. Idolatry and image worship were introduced, the doctrine of purgatory was invented to terrify the credulous. Infant baptism and sprinkling took the place of Christian baptism. A man seated upon his ecclesiastical throne by the Tiber exalted himself to the place of God, while the first day of the week was borrowed from paganism and established as the counterfeit and successor to the Sabbath of the Lord. Let history now testify:

Neander-"The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions 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."-Rose's Translation, p. 186.

Chamber's Encyclopedia-"By none of the Fathers before the fourth century is it [Sunday] identified with the Sabbath, nor is the duty of observing it grounded by them, either on the fourth commandment, or on the precept of Christ or His apostles."-Article, "Sabbath."

Sir William Domville-"Centuries of the Christian era passed away before the Sunday was observed by the Christian church 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 A. D. 321."-"The Sabbath: or An Examination of the Six Texts, by a Layman," p. 291. London: Chapman and Hall, 1849.

Constantine's Sunday Law-"On the venerable day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost."-"History of the Christian Church," by Schaff, Vol. 3, p. 880, footnote.

Our next witnesses are from eminent Protestant sources:

Dr. Robert Cox.-"The early fathers gave no support, direct or indirect, to the notion that the Sabbath had been transferred at all; but it is not surprising that those who wrote after the enactment by Constantine that Sunday should be kept as a Sabbath, were more apt to discover the reasons for such an observance of it."--"Literature," Vol. 1, p. 257, note.

Bishop Seymour (Episcopal).-"We have made the change from the seventh day to the first day, from Saturday to Sunday, on the authority of the one holy Catholic and apostolic church of Christ." - "Why We Keep Sunday," p. 28.

Henry Ward Beecher.-" There is no direct command on the subject. The only obligation resting upon us to observe Sunday is that which comes up through our nature." - "Bible Studies," p. 242.

Bishop Jeremy Taylor - "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." - "Ductor Dubitantium," Bishop Jeremy Taylor, part 1, book 2, chap. 2, rule 6, sec. 51.

Dr. A. N. Arnold, D. D.-"It is not pretended that we have any positive and express precept for such a change [from the Bible Sabbath to Sunday]. . . . This change was not effected, in general, by formal, positive, explicit, abrupt enactments, but silently and gradually, by the spirit of the new dispensation and the example of Christians."-"Baptist Quarterly," Vol. 2, pp. 182, 183.

Dr. E. T. Hixcox, D. D.-"Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism. And christened with the name of the sun god, when adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism."-Paper read before a New York Ministers' Conference, held Nov. 18, 1893.

Who then changed the Sabbath? Let us call the Papacy to the confessional. Church of Rome, did you substitute Sunday for the Bible Sabbath?

"Catholic Mirror."-"The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday. . . . The Christian Sabbath [Sunday] is therefore to this day the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church."-Editorial, September 23, 1893.

Eusebius.-"All things whatsoever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day [Sunday]."Quoted in Cox's "Sabbath Laws," Vol. 1, p. 361.

"Doctrinal Catechism."-"Question.-Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?

"Answer.-Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with Her, she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority."-"A Doctrinal Catechism," Rev. Stephen Keenan, p. 174. New York: Edward Dunigan and Brothers, 1851.

A volume of similar evidence could be presented, but this will suffice. Bible prophecy, history, Protestant and Catholic testimony are all in complete accord. Under the leadership of Roman bishops and so-called Christian emperors, the change from Saturday to Sunday was gradually effected.

It will be remembered that the Jewish nation was destroyed in A. D. 70, and throughout the Roman Empire the Jews were held in contempt; hence the Christians sought to be clearly distinguished from the Jews, and to appear as little like them as possible. Also, as narrated in the preceding chapter, the desire to conciliate their heathen neighbors and win them to Christianity tended toward compromise. Hence, little by little the seventh-day Sabbath, held in esteem by Christ, the apostles, and the early church, was displaced by the more popular pagan Sunday.

Mr. Chafie, a clergyman of the Church of England, states explicitly that the fear of "contempt, scorn, and derision" by the heathen, led the early Christians to discard the Bible Sabbath in favor of the Sunday festival. Historians likewise inform us that Emperor Constantine exerted his powerful influence to promote a transfer of allegiance from Sabbath to Sunday by urging: "Let us then have nothing in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews."

These indisputable facts reveal the tainted ancestry of Sunday observance. To those who revere the Bible as the word of God, they constitute, not "a beautiful background," but a sad and sorry picture of compromise and apostasy. Truly, friends, this is not a mere question of days, but a vital issue involving loyalty to God, confidence in His Inspired Book, and obedience to His law.

Ancient Jerusalem was destroyed because its people profaned the Sabbath of the Lord. (Jeremiah 17:20,27; 2 Chronicles 36:14-21) Likewise it is written: "He that turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." Proverbs 28: 9. To those who honor His commands and reverence His Sabbath, the promise reads, " Even unto them will I give in Mine house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters. I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be out off." Isaiah 56: 5.

Whatever the sacrifice, let us "buy the truth, and sell it not." It was a neglect of the Holy Book that paved the way for a popular Sabbath with a tainted ancestry.

## **11. Sabbath Keeping Along The Centuries**

IN EVERY age there have been loyal witnesses for the Bible Sabbath. During the early centuries of our era, history gives abundant evidence that the rest day of the fourth commandment was universally observed by the Christian church.

As already stated, Sunday-keeping was gradually introduced and for a time both Saturday and Sunday, sometimes termed "a beautiful span," and "brethren," were held in more or less esteem by many Christians. Constantine, the so-called "first Christian emperor of Rome," desired uniformity of worship, and following his famous "day of the sun" edict (321 AD.), Sabbath-keeping became less and less popular.

Forty-three years later at the Council of Laodicea, the church sought to abolish the observance of the Bible Sabbath by the following ordinance:

" Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday [Sabbath, original], but shall work on that day; but the Lord's day they shall especially honor, and, as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out from Christ."-"A History of The Church Councils," Rev. Charles Joseph Hefele, D. D. (R.C.), from 326 to 429 (Vol. II, p. 816). Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1896.

From that time onward, Christians who conscientiously kept the seventh day were regarded as heretics, and became the victims of bitter persecution. Yet in spite of strenuous opposition, history reveals that the true Sabbath was still observed and honored by faithful preachers and laymen in the city of Rome, even to the beginning of the seventh century. (See "Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers," Vol. 13, p. 336)

About 564 A. D., Iona a little isle off the northwest coast of Scotland, became the renowned center of Celtic Christianity, and sent its missionaries throughout the British Isles, the Netherlands, Germany, France, and other lands. In his "History of Scotland," Andrew Lang bears witness that these ardent messengers of Christ "worked on Sunday, but kept Saturday in a Sabbatical manner" (see Vol. 1, p. 96), and in the face of violent oppression from Rome, held fast to the Bible Sabbath until the time of Queen Margaret in the middle of the eleventh century.

During the Dark Ages there were numerous peoples in widely separated areas of Europe who continued to observe the seventh day, among whom may be mentioned the Nazarenes, Pasagii, Insabbati, Catharists, Waldenses, and Albigenses. They were reproached as "Antichrist"; and armies of crusaders with fire and sword were sent against them in "holy warfare" to destroy them from the face of the earth. (See "History of the Sabbath," by Andrews and Conradi, pp. 545-559.)

Among these, the Waldenses remained unconquered for nearly a thousand years; while from their rocky Alpine heights they defied the legions of Rome, and sang:

"For the strength of the hills we bless Thee,  
Our God, our fathers' God!  
Thou has made Thy children mighty,  
By the touch of the mountain sod.  
Thou has fixed our ark of refuge

Where the spoiler's feet ne'er trod;  
For the strength of the hills we bless Thee,  
Our God, our fathers' God!  
"We are watchers of a beacon  
Whose light must never die;  
We are guardians of an altar  
Midst the silence of the sky;  
Thy rocks yield founts of courage,  
Struck forth as by Thy rod;  
For the strength of the hills we bless Thee,  
Our God, our fathers' God!"

For many centuries the Nestorians, Maronites, Armenians, and other peoples of western Asia continued to revere the Sabbath of the Lord. While in distant China a large tablet unearthed at Si Gnan Fu affords unquestioned evidence that the "Illustrious Religion" (Christianity) was popular in China during the sixth and seventh centuries, and that the seventh day was especially devoted to religious worship.

A hundred years earlier the Thomas Christians of the East Indies obtained a translation of the Bible in their native tongue, and for a thousand years preserved the purity of the gospel to a remarkable degree. When Jesuit missionaries visited southern Asia and discovered many thousands of these native Christians, great was their surprise. Yet observing that they kept "Saturday holy," the Jesuits accused them of "Jewish wickedness"; and at length the Portuguese government assisted the Jesuits in establishing the Inquisition to stamp out this "heresy."

Soon after New Testament times the Ethiopians accepted Christianity, secured a translation of the Scriptures in their own language, and observed the seventh day as their weekly Sabbath. Although both Mohammedanism and Catholicism made strenuous attempts to conquer the country and convert its people, this African nation maintained its independence until subjugated by Italy in 1936; while down to the twentieth century Saturday has continued as the general day of worship in the church of Abyssinia.

During the days of the Protestant Reformation in Europe, Sabbatarians (observers of the seventh day) were to be found in Germany, Scandinavia, Hungary, and numerous other lands. They suffered persecution, imprisonment, confiscation of property, and death. In Russia large numbers suffered martyrdom, or were sent into Siberian exile.

Three centuries ago in England, virtuous men and women languished for long years in prison for the "crime" of keeping the seventh day. On Sabbath, Oct. 19, 1661, while preaching to his congregation in Whitechapel, London, Pastor John James, a pious Seventh Day Baptist preacher, was dragged from his pulpit, tried for his faith, and sentenced to be hung, drawn, and quartered. Following his execution as ordered by King Charles "his head was set upon a pole, opposite the meeting house in which he had preached the gospel." -"History of the Baptists," pp. 312-315.

In American colonial times, churches of Sabbath-keepers were established in Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The distinguished Moravian missionary, Count Zinzendorf, became pastor of the church at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and under his spiritual leadership the entire congregation began the observance of the seventh day. The church prospered and one of its members wrote to a friend: "I cannot describe to you how charming and lovely everything appears at Bethlehem. In my whole life I have not felt so happy as there."

Soon after, companies and churches of Sabbath-keepers were organized in various parts of that state; but their joy in religious freedom was short-lived, for ere long Pennsylvania enacted oppressive laws against the Sabbatarians. In Rhode Island, however, full liberty of worship was accorded, and Sabbath keepers multiplied.

About the middle of the nineteenth century a few devoted Christians in New England, possessing little of this world's goods, yet rich in faith and taking the Bible as their guide, clearly perceived that the prophecies of the word reveal that Christ's second coming is near at hand. These divine messages, it was seen, also call for a world wide proclamation of the good tidings combined with a vigorous appeal to obey the commandments of God and honor His Sabbath.

This movement developed into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which now has a membership of more than a half million, and whose missionaries are operating in more than four hundred countries and island groups.

But the times are ominous. Civilization drifts toward a new paganism. Christianity's temple of faith has been well nigh abandoned. Divine law has been disregarded and the moral standards of society crumble to decay. But God addresses His loyal workmen:

"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shall be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in!" Isaiah 58:12.

For ages multitudes have trampled upon the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, but today God's affectionate entreaty is sounding:

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable. And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words. Then shall thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Vs. 13, 14.

In true Sabbath-keeping, twice-born men and women find, not a burden, but a refreshing delight. "Rest" and "change" are the great medicines for overtaxed body, brain, and heart. The Christian life is not in bondage, for we enjoy the "glorious liberty of the sons of God." Yet this is not lawlessness; it is "liberty under law." And legions from many lands gladly testify that-

"A Sabbath well spent  
Brings a week of content,  
And strength for the toils of the morrow;  
But a Sabbath profaned,  
Whatsoever be gained,  
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow."

Reviewing also the history of the Sabbath along the centuries, what loyalty to God, what nobility of purpose, what sturdy, victorious faith-yes, what courage and sacrifice-characterized the lives of those who suffered and died rather than disobey God and trample upon His memorial of rest! The Sabbath is one of heaven's richest gifts to men. It has been preserved and honored for nearly six thousand years by a line of faithful witnesses, and comes to us as a priceless legacy, a sacred, blood-bought heritage.

In our personal experience, may the Sabbath of Creator and Redeemer ever continue as "a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable."

## **12. God's Seal and Its Counterfeit**

WHEN Joseph was elevated to become prime minister of Egypt, "Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand." When Mordecai the Jew was advanced to the premiership of ancient Persia, the monarch gave him the royal ring and said, "Write you also. . . as it likens you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring." When the long-lost prodigal son returned to his

own home, the overjoyed father exclaimed, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand." From a penniless outcast, the young man was suddenly restored to his sonship as a prince of the household; and according to Oriental custom, the ring placed upon his finger invested him with authority to buy, sell, and transact business in his father's name.

A government seal, employed to authenticate legal documents, contains three essentials: (1) the name of the lawgiver; (2) his position, or title; (3) and the territory over which he rules. For example, should you examine a treasured document to which was affixed a seal of gold containing the imprint, "George Washington, President of the United States of America," you would without question accept it as genuine.

In His messages and contacts with mankind, our heavenly Parent employs means that may be understood and appreciated. Men may despise and ridicule the Book of books, yet careful study clearly reveals the divine credentials in every part and portion. They may violate and reject the wonderful law spoken from Sinai's heights, yet close examination discovers "the great seal of Jehovah" stamped upon it. Careless, rebellious mankind has broken that law, and sought to destroy the sacred seal; yet God bids His people, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples." Isaiah 8:16. Then follows the significant statement, "And I will wait upon the Lord, that hides His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him." Verse 17.

At this time when Christ's followers are intelligently looking and preparing for the second coming of the Master, God calls upon every devout Christian to recognize His signet upon the royal law. He summons all to a careful examination and thorough reformation. The sacredness of the divine precepts is to be sensed anew; their authenticity is to be recognized; their claims are to be honored.

There is but one law of God in all the world, and but one precept of that code which bears "the seal of the living God." In the first three of "the immortal ten," the name of deity appears three times, but no reference is made to His official position or to the extent of His domain. In the last six, the name of God is found but once, while no hint is given concerning the authority of the Lawgiver, or the territory over which He presides. From the phraseology of these nine precepts, with the deity named but not identified, the Mohammedan could interpret Him as Allah, the Hindu as Brahma, the Chinese as Buddha. But in the fourth commandment which reposes in the very heart of the Decalogue, we discover the complete seal of authorship:

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. 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!" Exodus 20:8-11.

The remarkable document, the Decalogue, is the only portion of the Bible that God wrote with His own finger; and here in the fourth command is His signature, His seal. It reveals the name of the Lawgiver, His sovereign authority, and the extent of His infinite realm. The stupendous fact of creation is the monument to His divinity; and the seventh-day Sabbath is presented as the sign and symbol of His omnipotent power and universal authority. This precept reveals the sacred seal, GOD, THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE.

In the Bible, the words "sign .....seal," and "mark," are used synonymously. (Romans 4:11; Ezekiel 9: 4) Several times in Holy Writ the seventh-day Sabbath is explicitly termed God's sign, or signet.

"Verily My Sabbaths you shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that you may know that I am the Lord that does sanctify you." Exodus 31: 13.

"It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed." Exodus 31:17.

"Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Ezekiel 20:12.

"And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God." Ezekiel 20:20.

In all ages, the Sabbath of the fourth commandment has been a distinguishing sign between God and His loyal people; and by observing that command, they testify concerning their allegiance to Him as the rightful Ruler.

"The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King.... The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion." Jeremiah 10:10-12.

In the beginning, when the six days of creation's labor were ended, God established the Sabbath as a memorial of the great completed task. He rested upon the seventh day; He "blessed the seventh day and sanctified it"; and in this way "made His wonderful works to be remembered." Psalm 111: 4. "Thy name, O Lord, endures forever; and Thy memorial, O Lord, throughout all generations." Psalm 135: 13.

The sweet singer of Israel exclaimed: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork." Psalm 19:1.

"The beauty that clothes the earth is a token of God's love. We may behold it in the everlasting hills, in the lofty trees, in the opening buds and the delicate flowers. All speak to us of God. The Sabbath, ever pointing to Him who made them all, bids men open the great book of nature, and trace therein the wisdom, the power, and the love of the Creator." -"Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 48. "Had the Sabbath always been sacredly observed, there could never have been an atheist or an idolater." -Id., p. 336.

God tells His children that the Sabbath is "a sign between Me and you." These words signify intimate relationship. His loyal people, who honor His Sabbath and enjoy its sanctifying influence, look up with perfect peace and confidence, saying, "Our

Father which art in heaven." He, too, seeing the Sabbath sign, recognizes His own, and His smile is upon them. Like a golden clasp this day of rest unites the family on earth with the family above.

Again, the seal of God is not merely "Saturday" keeping; it is Sabbath keeping. Only a converted, holy man can keep a holy day. His life must be clothed with the Holy Spirit; and Christ must be enthroned in his heart.

From the days of our first parents in Eden, Satan has waged incessant warfare against truth and righteousness. For every divine truth he has devised a counterfeit. In the days of apostasy that led to the Dark Ages, apostate leaders exalted tradition instead of the Bible, idols for the unseen Deity. Mary for Christ, works for faith, penance for repentance, confession to the priest instead of confession to God. Purgatory for the true state of the dead, the idolatrous mass for the communion table, sprinkling for baptism, and Sunday for the Sabbath of the Lord.

Observe also this subtle and impressive parallel: as God gave His people the true Sabbath to be the divine sign of allegiance, so the Prince of Apostasy presents Sunday as the "mark" or "badge" of his order. Replying to a letter dated October 28, 1895, and addressed to Cardinal Gibbons, Chancellor C. F. Thomas said: "Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. . . . And the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters." In a Roman Catholic catechism, we read:

"Question. How prove you that the church hath power to command feasts and holy days?

"Answer. By the wry act [*italics ours*] of changing the Sabbath into Sunday which Protestants allow of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves, by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church.

"Question. How prove you that?

"Answer. Because by keeping Sunday, they acknowledge the church's power to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin."-"An Abridgement of the Christian Doctrine," Rev. Henry Tuberville D. D., p. 58. New York: Edward Dunigan and Brothers.

Do we grasp the far-reaching significance of all this? The Church of Rome has not only changed almost every vital principle of the gospel, but boastingly presents her "act" of changing the Sabbath and the well-nigh universal recognition of Sunday as the "mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters." This brings to us a crucial test of allegiance. Those who from the heart observe the seventh day as it was originally instituted, are thereby distinguished as bearing the seal of the living God; while those who keep the pagan-papal Sunday, bear the mark and label of apostasy.

If the Bible impresses one truth above another, it is this: Beware of counterfeits, for there is no substitute for obedience. The story is told of a king who placed an order for palace draperies, specifying that the background was to be of royal purple. But the perplexed weaver began reasoning: "The established custom is to use red for this groundwork, and it is so much more convenient. The king may not notice the difference, and if he does, he will like the red just as well." Imagine the poor man's consternation when the monarch utterly refused the expensive tapestry. "The stamp of royalty is lacking," he declared. "There is no suggestion of the imperial purple. Your red means nothing to me; thousands of other homes have the same; you have obeyed your own desires instead of me; your draperies are wholly unacceptable."

And what shall be said of the attempt to weave a man made Sabbath into the sacred law of God? It may appear as well as the other; it is according to custom; yet it bears, not the stamp of royalty, but the earmarks of disobedience and spiritual treason.

What shall we do? Shall we obey God and observe the Sabbath that He has ordained, or shall we disobey Him and bow at the shrine of the popular pagan-papal Sunday? Oh let us repudiate every vestige of error, and surrender our lives to Christ, that He may place upon our characters the divine signet of loyalty.

In the judgment there will be but two classes,-the multitudes who receive the mark of apostasy and go down to eternal destruction, and the victorious company who stand upon Mount Zion, without fault before God, and having the Father's name and seal upon their foreheads. (Revelation 14:9,10; 7:2,3; 14:1-5) Which shall it be-the signet of God, or the mark of apostasy? Life is uncertain. Do not procrastinate. "Choose you this day whom you will serve."

### **13. Without Excuse**

IN THE reception room of his spacious Shanghai residence, we awaited the arrival of Dr. Wu Ting Fang. Clad in a plain, silken gown, he entered with spritely step, shook hands cordially, then said, "Have a seat with me at the table." With but slight pause, the breezy seventy-three-year-old diplomat continued:

"So you observe the seventh-day Sabbath-let me see: if I mistake not, that is an arrangement for securing two rest days in a week."

"Not exactly," was the reply. "We endeavor to follow the Scripture command which says: 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work.'"

"But how do you manage?" he asked. "Do you not find it extremely inconvenient and very difficult to carry on with the business world?"

Many individuals in the varied walks of life ask similar questions. Yet in the pursuit of our numerous daily tasks, personal convenience is not always followed. We discharge many duties that are extremely inconvenient; and where right and wrong, honor and fidelity, are involved, convenience should never be the deciding factor. "To obey is better than sacrifice." 1 Samuel 15:22.

Other inquiries and objections may be briefly considered:



Is God really particular? If I keep the spirit of the Sabbath, is not that acceptable?

The spirit of obedience requires far more than merely obeying the letter of the law. Christ stated that he who hates his brother is a murderer, and that the very thought of impurity is sin. (Matthew 5:21-28) No one who deliberately steals from his neighbor can successfully maintain that he acts in the spirit of honesty.

The same is true of the fourth commandment that plainly declares, "The seventh day is the Sabbath." If one is directed to find his friend in the seventh house from the corner, would he be justified to infer that the first house would do just as well? If the pharmacist directs his clerk to pour medicine from the seventh bottle on the shelf, by what right could he substitute the contents of the first bottle?

If the Creator had simply ordained one day in seven to be kept holy, what hopeless confusion would have been the natural result! No, the entire story of sin and redemption reveals that God is particular, and does not sanction compromise. Who can change the date of his birth? Neither can man successfully change the fact of creation, or the memorial of creation, which is the "birthday of the world." God placed His blessing upon a specific day; and like the apostles of old let us resolutely affirm, "We ought to obey God rather than men."

Has lime been lost, or have there been calendar changes so that the seventh day cannot be definitely determined?

If at any time prior to the first advent the Israelites had lost the weekly reckoning, Christ would have certainly corrected the error; but there were no adjustments required, and when He lived among the Jews in New Testament times, His Sabbath was identical with their Sabbath. Since the beginning of the Christian era the authentic contemporary records of many nations and peoples preclude the possibility of any lost time.

It is true that Pope Gregory XIII issued an edict dropping ten days from the month of October, 1582. But this in no way affected the week, or the Sabbath. Says the "Catholic Encyclopedia": "It is to be noted that in the Christian period the order of days of the week has never been interrupted." Art. "Chronology, General." The "Encyclopedia Britannica" mentions the "unalterable uniformity" of the week that "has been employed from time immemorial." - Eleventh edition, art. "Calendar." The astronomer also confirms the fact that the weekly cycle has never been altered. How can the Sabbath be kept on a round world?

More than a century ago this question was conclusively answered in verse by William Stillman:

"And now to trace you round this rolling world, An eastern and a western route you've twirled, And made out nothing by the spacious travel, But what I call a wretched, foolish cavil. And now to make you clearly understand That Sabbath day may be in every land. At least those parts where mortal men reside (And nowhere else can precepts be applied). There was a place where first the orb of light Appeared to rise, and westward took its flight. That moment, in that place the day begun, And as he in his circuit westward ran, Or rather, as the earth did eastward spin. To parts more westward daylight did begin. And thus at different times, from place to place, The day began-this clearly was the case. . . . So that in foreign lands it does appear, There was a first day there as well as here. And if there was a first, the earth around, As sure as fate the seventh can be found. And thus you see it matters not a whit, On which meridian of earth we get, Since each distinctly had its dawn of light, And ever since, successive day and night; Thus while our antipodes in darkness sleep, We here the true, primeval Sabbath keep."

Yes, visit any country of earth, and it will be found that Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, infidels, and pagans are all in perfect accord concerning the days of the week. As another has said, this "objection to Sabbath-keeping comes, not from traveling far over this earth, but from wandering far from God."

Is Sabbath-keeping essential to salvation?

No individual is saved by keeping any precept of the law; but those who are truly saved by grace, delight to obey His commands. (John 14:15) Since ancient Israel was exiled from old Canaan because of Sabbath-breaking (Jeremiah 17: 1-27; Nehemiah 13: 17, 18), is it reasonable to infer that anyone will reach the heavenly Canaan who willfully disregards His holy day?

If the seventh day is actually the Sabbath, why was it not found out before, and why do so few distinguished leaders observe it?

In religious matters neither majorities nor eminent scholarship are a safe guide. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." 1 Corinthians 1: 26. The truth concerning the seventh day Sabbath has ever been available to those who humbly sought to know God's will. (John 7:17; James 1:5.)

If led by the Spirit, and the Spirit does not impress the individual to keep the Sabbath, is there any obligation?

The Scriptures instruct us to "try the spirits," for in the world there are both the false and the true. (1 John 4: 1.) Here is the test: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8: 20. Through the Holy Spirit the Bible was committed to men; and any voice that speaks contrary to its teachings and in opposition to the law of God, is a dangerous "lying spirit." The genuine Spirit of God always testifies in harmony with the truth given in His Word.

"But how can I keep the Sabbath and make a living for my family? I fear we shall all starve."

Friend, where is your faith in God? Did He forget Israel in the wilderness, Elijah in time of famine, or the hungry multitudes that followed Christ? In speaking of food and clothing, the Master Himself said: "Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. But seek you first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6: 32, 33.

Out of his rich experience King David declared: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Psalm 23: 1. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Psalm 37: 25.

Our Father sometimes tests his children by permitting them to face severe trial, nevertheless His promises are as sure as the sunrise: "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4: 19. God still lives, and His service pays a larger dividend than any business establishment upon earth. It would be far better to lose one's life than to disobey.

"Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all Thy commandments." Psalm 119: 6.

## **14. God's Appeal to Christians**

CHRISTIANITY traces its lineage back through nineteen centuries to the commanding figure of the divine-human Christ. There He stands, saying now as He did then, "Follow Me." His kindly, unselfish life became a great spiritual magnet charged with dynamic power to win men and women from sin and degradation to virtue and piety.

With the completion of His earthly mission, Christ's admiring followers "built a church about Him." Theirs was a noble purpose; yet with the passing years and centuries, icy creeds were formulated, and theologies were built that no one could fully understand. Pagan rites and superstitions crept into the church, and the gloomy clouds of the Dark Ages hung low over the earth.

At length a new day dawned, and in the fourteenth century, John Wycliffe, "the Morning Star of the Reformation," arose to give the English people the first translation of the Bible in their native tongue. Later came the spiritual succession of God's noblemen-Huss of Bohemia, Luther of Germany, Calvin of Switzerland, Knox of Scotland, Wesley of England. Together with hundreds of others who lifted their voices to dispel the long reign of error and superstition, and to turn the hearts of multitudes to the Holy Word. Those were days of conflict and peril; but with heaven-born courage and an undying love for Christ, the reformers labored on until the tidings of gospel truth triumphed in many lands.

Yet there is ever the tendency to become satisfied with a twilight vision of God and His word. While possessing only partial light, numerous religious groups again formulated their respective church creeds, then settled down at ease as though fullness of truth had been attained.

When the Pilgrim Fathers earnestly sought to return to the purity of the apostolic church, they were persecuted and driven out of England. At length the little ship "Mayflower" was in preparation for her epoch-making voyage to America, and Pastor John Robinson, preached his farewell sermon to the departing pioneers:

"Brethren, we are now erelong to part asunder, and the Lord knows whether I shall live ever to see your faces more. But whether the Lord hath appointed it or not, I charge you before God and His blessed angels to follow me no farther than I have followed Christ. If God should reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His, be an ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth of my ministry; for I am very confident the Lord hath more truth and light yet to break forth out of His Holy Word.

"For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no farther than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; and the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented; for though they were burning and shining light in their time, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God, but were they now living, would be an willing to embrace further light as that which they first received.... "Withal, take heed, I beseech you, what you receive for truth, and compare it and weigh it with other Scriptures of truth before you accept it. For it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick antichristian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once."-"History of the Puritans," D. Neal, Volume 1, Page 269.

These words breathe the spirit of genuine Christianity. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day." Proverbs 4: 18. When Protestantism ceases to protest against any creed or belief not in harmony with the Bible, it is no longer genuine Protestantism. When it ceases to be progressive and evangelical, decay and loss are inevitable; and the living fountain becomes a stagnant pool.

Today we axe face to face with just such a decline in vital religion. "The church of the hour," declares the influential Christian Century, "is undergoing a more fundamental change than that which occurred in Martin Luther's day." The splendid Reformation of the sixteenth century has been arrested; and with the reaction, the liberal, skeptical movement within the church has grown to appalling proportions; and a new "paganism" masquerades to despoil the holy places of Christianity.

But God is not taken by surprise. To meet the present religious crisis, He prepared a series of communications known as the three angels' messages. These prophetic announcements were specifically given for "the time of the end "; for immediately following their proclamation, the prophet describes the glorious Second Coming of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 14: 14, 16.)

The first of these world wide broadcasts is presented in these words:

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth. And to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Vs. 6, 7.

The term "angel," signifies "messenger." In every age God has employed human messengers to proclaim His truth to others. The "everlasting gospel" is the same "good tidings" that brought joy and good tidings to Abraham, Daniel, Peter, Luther, and Wesley, and is now given with "a loud voice" to those of "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." At this time when multitudes bow at the false shrines of evolution, modernism, materialism, pantheism, atheism, and pagan ideals, the clear, definite message peals forth, "Worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

In the beginning Jehovah designed that His wondrous works should be remembered, and established the Sabbath as an eternal monument to the miracle of creation. The opening words of the fourth commandment are, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Why? "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." Exodus 20:8, 11.

Multitudes have now forgotten the Creator and the Creator's memorial; but here, coupled with the solemn announcement, "The hour of His judgment is come," He sends out the universal appeal to acknowledge the Author of all things and revere the Sabbath established in Eden. In this gospel message true Sabbath-keeping is presented as God's great antidote for modernism, infidelity, and every other false "ism."

The second angel's announcement, "Babylon is fallen," depicts the tragedy and chaos of present-day religious belief. Then follows the third angel's message, God's final appeal to a world drifting toward apostasy and chaos:

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation." Revelation 14: 9, 10.

The Bible presents the seventh-day Sabbath as the distinguishing sign, or seal, of loyalty to our Maker. (Ezekiel 20:12,20) In opposition to this, Roman Catholicism has exalted the day of ancient sun worship as the "badge" or "mark" of her ecclesiastical authority in religious matters. Papal leaders openly assert their acceptance of tradition and the authority of the church as superior to the Bible: and in a catechism commended by Pope Leo XIII, and bearing the "imprimatur" of Cardinal Farley, these significant words appear: "If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian then the Seventh-day Adventist is right in observing Saturday." The Question Box, by Bertrand L. Conway, Edition of 1920, p. 179.

Friends, no matter how or when error originated, or how strongly it is entrenched, the God of heaven now calls upon men and women everywhere to repudiate all that is false and counterfeit in religious belief and practice. He warns of the inevitable results of disobedience. He also points to the rewards awaiting those who accept the Bible and the Bible only as their guide, and who humbly, fearlessly follow Jesus all the way. Concerning such, the word of commendation is spoken: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. When this spiritual task has been accomplished, the next great event in the divine drama will be the appearance of the "white cloud," and the coming of the Son of man with a sharp sickle to reap earth's harvest.

For almost a century these gospel messages declaring "the hour of His judgment is come," have been proclaimed. Heralds of the coming King have crossed the oceans and penetrated all continents. Today they are found in more than four hundred countries and island groups. They are preaching and teaching the good tidings in more than eight hundred languages, publishing gospel literature, conducting schools of Christian education, and operating an extended chain of sanitariums, hospitals, and dispensaries.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24: 14.

Earth's crisis hour approaches. The condition of a bruised, battered, and suffering world presses home the appeal to heaven-born devotion and enthusiasm. God Himself issues the summons to arise and tell all peoples of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Savior. In this final reform movement, every truth that has been lost or perverted is to be restored. Errors and deceptions are to be rooted out, and the grand old gospel in all its fullness and simplicity is to be heralded in the "spirit and power of Elijah."

This gospel message presents the Bible as the inerrant Book of books, and acclaims God as the creator of, the universe. It exalts Christ as "the way, the truth, and the life," as the compassionate, divine-human Savior of mankind, the only hope of lost, sinful men and women.

This gospel message calls for obedience to the precepts spoken by the audible voice of Jehovah from the heights of Sinai, that law which is the eternal, unchanging moral standard for the universe. It is a mighty summons to honor the rest day enjoined in the Ten Commandments, observed by Christ and His apostles during New Testament times, discarded during times of apostasy, but now recognized anew as the abiding, unchanging Sabbath of earth and heaven.

This divine message publishes the good tidings that Christ's second coming-personal, visible, glorious, and premillennial is near at hand; that subsequent to the annihilation of Satan, sin, and sinners, our Father will re-establish a cleansed universe in which the victorious company of the redeemed will spend a glorious, happy eternity. And what wondrous Sabbath privileges will then be enjoyed!

"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. 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." Isaiah 66:22,23.

Today the opportunity is extended to all to unite in a weekly Sabbath celebration that will continue on and on throughout the eternal years. Commencing that observance now, the child of God will then find himself in complete harmony with the heavenly family as they meet from one Sabbath to another in the undefiled Homeland.

If we would share in the peerless privileges of that country, all sin must be eradicated from our lives. Passports to that realm are issued only upon unconditional obedience, and absolute devotion to the divine precepts. In the closing paragraphs of Scripture it is written:

"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." Revelation 22: 14.

The beauty, truth, and power of this consistent gospel message challenge your study and acceptance. Its pillars are founded upon the "impregnable rock of Holy Scripture." The fast-fulfilling prophecies of the word speak in trumpet tone that this is earth's sunset hour; and to those of every nation and tongue the call is sounded, "Prepare to meet thy God." Shall we not welcome every returning Sabbath laden with holy, fragrant influence, and recognize in each prelude and prophecy of the "rest" that remains for the people of God?

#### DAY OF REST AND GLADNESS

"O day of rest and gladness,  
O day of joy and light,  
O balm of care and sadness,  
Most beautiful, most bright;

On thee, the high and lowly,  
Who bend before the throne,  
Sing, Holy, holy, holy,  
To the Eternal One.

"Thou art a port protected  
From storms that round us rise,  
A garden intersected  
With streams of paradise;

Thou art a cooling fountain  
In life's dry, dreary sand;  
From thee, like Pisgah's mountain,  
We view our promised land.

"A day of sweet reflection  
Thou art, a day of love;  
A day to raise affection  
From earth to things above,

New graces ever gaining  
From this our day of rest,  
We seek the rest remaining  
In mansions of the blest."

Wordsworth.

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