

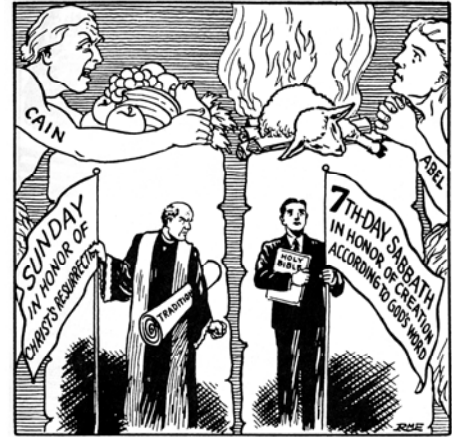
# The SABBATH FROM A Better Perspective: Sola Scriptura

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## CHAPTER ONE

### The Source of Truth: Sola Scriptura

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." John 17:17.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15.

Many books and articles have been written over the years on the subject of the Sabbath. In some cases the Sabbath is upheld as a Christian institution, in others it is not. Some authors have attempted to abolish the law of God while others have defended it. The majority seem to have taken a position that the Ten Commandments are still binding upon the Christian, but when faced with the fourth command—the Sabbath—they either nullify that single precept or attempt to transfer the solemnity of the seventh day to the first day of the week.

In the midst of all this confusion of contradictory conclusions there stands the truth of God's Word. "Sola Scriptura" (the Bible only) was the battle cry of the Reformation. The Reformers of the sixteenth century, and onward, were settled on the fact that the Word of God was to be the standard for doctrine and practice among Christians. This bedrock tenet separated the Reformers from the Roman Catholic Church. Two questions every inquiring student of the Scriptures had to come to grips with during that turbulent time were: 1) **Am I willing to accept the truth even if it means persecution, prison, or perhaps my life, by doing so?** 2) **Is the truth of more value to me than friends, family, Church affiliation or any position I hold?** The Reformers had to count the cost! To contradict the papacy and the established structure often resulted in imprisonment, torture, and oftentimes death.

Today we live in a much more tolerant society, at least for now. Few people in the western world ever face such drastic consequences, and yet the same two questions must still be answered by every Christian in this present age. If the answer to these questions, after serious reflection, is no, then there is no profit in investing your time in search of the truth. Truth is of no value to you unless you choose to walk in that truth. Truth is rarely popular, for it is too often inconvenient and divisive, therefore it is sacrificed on the altar of opinion and tradition. Those who have no love for the truth are subject to strong delusion. "... **Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.**" II Thessalonians 2:10, 11.

If, on the other hand, you want the truth at all costs, and are willing to do the will of God regardless of the consequences, you are destined to be blessed, "**for the truth shall set you free.**" Jesus said, "**But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.**" John 3:21.

Real and lasting freedom is found in accepting and doing the will of God. It is false freedom, in fact bondage, to merely hold to a set of beliefs which are not thoroughly rooted and grounded in the Scriptures. Even if an individual possesses the truth, if he does not have the conviction from his own personal study of the Bible, he cannot really be said to enjoy freedom in the truth.

It's time to do a study such as never done before,  
The end of time is upon us, even at the very door.

A test will come to everyone who dwells upon the land,  
And only by the Word of God will anybody stand.

It's what the Bible says that really matters now,  
It's what the Bible says that counts,

It's what the Bible says that really matters now,  
So teach me what the Bible says.

It may be different from what I've always thought,  
It may not go along with what my parents always taught,

But if the Bible says it, who am I to disagree,  
God's Word is the standard, and the test for every creed.

It's what the Bible says that really matters now,  
It's what the Bible says that counts,

It's what the Bible says that really matters now,  
So teach me what the Bible says.

Ken LeBrun

In the pages of this booklet the seeker for truth will find what is believed to be a truly biblical approach to the subject of the Sabbath and the law of God. It is not intended to be an exhaustive exegesis of Scripture. It is left to the reader to either accept or reject this approach in his study on the topic at hand. The approach is critical, however. A traveler going from Pennsylvania to Florida must take the right approach to the Interstate highway or he will find himself in New York. He may have been sincere in his approach, but the end result would be that he is farther from his destination than when he first departed on the journey. The reader is asked to pull out his roadmap—the Bible—and see if this author's approach is correct.

*What will stand out as unique in this study is that the Bible will be the only source of truth, for all other supposed sources are inferior. Some writers lean heavily upon the "Ante-Nicene Fathers" (ANF) in an attempt to arrive at truth or to support what they have presented as truth, but this is contrary to the principles of the Reformation. The Roman Catholic Church may use these writers all they please, but any Christian who has an appreciation for the Reformation needs to understand that the Scriptures alone should be the rule of faith and conduct. "Sola Scriptura" was the cry of the Reformers who recognized that the Bible alone should be used to establish truth.*

Suffice it to say that the Catholic priests were not allowed to study the Bible, but were made to study the "Fathers." In his book, FIFTY YEARS IN THE CHURCH OF ROME, Charles Chiniquy, a former Catholic priest, explains how he was bold enough to remonstrate with his superiors over the use of these so-called "Fathers" when they very often contradicted one another as well as contradict the Scriptures. Said he, "I know enough of the Holy Fathers to assure your lordship that the oath we take of accepting the Word of God according to their unanimous consent is a miserable blunder, if not a blasphemous perjury. It is evident that Pius IV, who imposed the obligation of that oath upon us, never read a single volume of the Holy Fathers. He would not have been guilty of such an incredible blunder if he had known that the Holy Fathers are unanimous in only one thing, which is to differ with each other on almost everything." (pp.186, 187)

For over 1,200 years the Roman Catholic Church burned and destroyed nearly everything that was opposed to her teachings and traditions. Shall we be so naive as to believe that those writers that she insists her priests should become familiar with were the expositors of the truth? Does it not seem more likely that they were a part of the great "falling away" predicted by Paul that would commence upon his death and eventually lead to the supremacy of the pope and false doctrines of the Catholic Church? **"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 opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? ... For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." II Thessalonians 2:3-5, 7. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." Acts 20:29.** History has revealed that Rome and Alexandria were the fountainheads of much of the early apostasy, and several of the ANF writers were from those very cities or greatly influenced by them.

In sticking with our *Sola Scriptura* platform, there will also be no historians quoted. There certainly is an abundance of historical studies available on the subject of the Sabbath, some very good, and some questionable. Because of the subjective element, which can easily find its way into the works of historians, it has been decided not to include them. The same applies to Bible commentaries. No comments will be taken from commentators or famous Bible teachers. The only reference work that will be employed from time to time, but on a very limited basis, is Strong's Concordance and Bullinger's Concordance and Lexicon.

The only exception to the rule of using the Bible only will be found in the last section of the book. A few quotes will appear there, simply out of necessity, for the material covered will not be found in the Bible, as the preceding chapters will have shown.

The author pleads with the reader to open the sacred Book, the Holy Bible, and with humble prayer search the Scriptures as a "noble Berean" to see if that which is taught herein is the truth, and nothing but the truth. For the reader's convenience, all Bible texts are in bold. The King James Version is used throughout unless otherwise stated.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Divine or Human

**"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward." Psalm 19:7 -11.**

Laws may vary from place to place, especially from one country to another. Laws enacted in Germany may or may not be found here in America, and vice versa. Each country's laws are developed by that country's legislators, men who have been voted into office or appointed by kings or other authorities. In most cases the laws of the land are good, enacted and enforced for the welfare of the constituents of that country. Unfortunately, many times bad laws are passed. **"Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?" Psalm 94:20.** We have seen that happen here in the United States on more than one occasion. Two prime examples are: 1) the law that prohibits the teaching of creation science in the public schools, leaving only the ungodly theory of evolution for the origin of life and the universe, and 2) the law allowing abortion, which amounts to legalized murder.

The problem with nations and their lawmakers is that the human race is fallen. Mankind, as a whole, does not want to be restricted by the laws of the Creator, thus nothing is stable that comes from the halls of legislation. Governments rise and fall, lawmakers come and go. **"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." Psalm 2:1-4.**

Daniel the prophet was shown kingdom after kingdom rising and falling. The entire future of planet earth is open to God's divine survey. Such infinite wisdom is more than our finite minds can even begin to comprehend, but through his prophet, the Lord allowed mankind a glimpse at the unrolling scroll of human history, its nations and governments. O how frail and fragile they are! In contrast, the government of God is sure, eternal, immovable. **"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." I Timothy 1:17.**

Unlike human laws and statutes, the law of the LORD is perfect, made for a perfect government. The Creator of heaven and earth is forever stable, dependable, just and righteous. Briefly stated, God is perfect and thus his law is perfect. **"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7. "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good." Romans 7:12.** Because it is perfect, it is suited for all mankind. Jesus said, **"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Mark 2:27.**

The LORD is not arbitrary in his governing, but rather, He is without **"variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17.** He knows what is best for mankind and expresses His will in all His commandments. The Psalmist was prophetically speaking of Jesus when he stated, **"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Psalm 40:8.** Jesus kept his Father's commandments because He delighted in the will of his Father. Righteousness and truth are unchangeable characteristics of the very nature of God. **"Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth." Psalm 119:142.**

The law and the testimony of Jesus become the great measuring rod against which all enactments and teachings of men are measured. **"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. Satan hates this fact, for those who firmly believe it not only escape his snares, but expose his deceptions to others, thereby thwarting many of his designs. **"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."** Revelation 12:17.

Our God is a God of perfect order and not an author of confusion. Consider the billions of stars and heavenly bodies that rotate and revolve with such precision that astronomers can tell exactly where a star will be on any given night in the far distant future. We can tell the very date that eclipses of the sun and moon will occur because of the exactness of their course; all this because of an all-wise Creator who is precise and systematic with his works. Even evolutionary scientists are forced to admit that such design and order is incredible. If it were not for their hard hearts, they would quickly acknowledge that only a Master Designer could have brought this universe together, but they choose not to retain God in their knowledge (Romans 1:28).

The stars, planets and other bodies of the heavens are mere matter, and have no choice but to obey the laws of nature established by the Creator. Man, however, was given the gift of choice, a free will, to employ in the service of his Maker, or to invest upon himself. This was the incredible act of love in creation. Rather than create robotic creatures programmed to do the will of God, He made man capable of rendering true love and obedience, or to rebel, a decision each individual could make based upon his own will and initiative. In his infinite wisdom and foreknowledge, this God of perfect love and order gave mankind a memorial of his wonderful creation.

This memorial was not a visible monument, something that could wear away in the weather, or be destroyed by fire or flood, but a sacred piece of time that would continually come to every soul throughout endless ages. This perfect memorial He placed in the very heart of His perfect law.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Sabbath Memorial

**"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Genesis 2:1-3.**

With each day of this creation week we find the words **"And the evening and the morning were the first day ... And the evening and the morning were the second day ... And the evening and the morning were the third day,"** etc., right on down to the seventh day. All Bible believing Christians agree that God created the world in six literal days and rested on the seventh.

**"The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein ... He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered." Psalm 111:2, 4.**

The greatest physical work on record is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and God has provided a way whereby this wonderful work is to be remembered. He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. We are told that it was Jesus who created all things. **"For by him 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." "God, who at sundry times and in**

**divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:1, 2.**

Therefore, it was Jesus who rested with the Father on that first Sabbath day, and it was Jesus who blessed it and sanctified it. Christ could rightfully claim to be "**Lord also of the Sabbath.**" **Mark 2:28.**

He did not rest because of weariness, for the Creator cannot be wearied (Isaiah 40:28). He made the seventh day His rest day in order that He might establish an everlasting memorial of His creation. He did not bless the day that He was about to rest upon, but rather, He blessed the day because He had rested on it, thereby showing that it was not just that first seventh day that was blessed, but every seventh day from that time forward. Further, He did not sanctify (set apart for holy use) that first seventh day before he rested on it, but after He had rested on it. Now it is clearly seen that it makes no sense to sanctify something that is finished and gone, therefore it only follows that the seventh day of every successive week was thus sanctified. It should also be noted that there is nothing "shadowy" in this great memorial as it draws the mind back to God's wonderful creative work. Sabbath comes from the Hebrew word *shabbath*, which means rest, for God rested that day and calls on mankind to follow his example.

Many who oppose the Sabbath raise the objection that the commandment for its observance was not given until Sinai. They would have us believe that God blessed and sanctified the day, but then waited nearly 2,500 years before giving it to anyone. Everything God made was in full function and operation from the day He made it. The sun and moon ruled the day and night, stars and planets shined in the firmament. Herbs reproduced from seed after their own kind and provided food for all living creatures. Trees bore fruit, birds were winging through the air, the waters were teeming with fish reproducing after their own kind, and Adam and Eve were enjoying the pleasant task of keeping the garden. All this from the very time of creation. Are we to believe that God would make the Sabbath, establish it as a memorial of creation, but unlike everything else that was made, not reveal it to Adam and all those generations of people who lived before Moses?

Is a specific command needed prior to Sinai in order to believe the Sabbath was observed before that time? If this is true, we should also look for specific commands regarding the other nine commandments before Sinai. While it is evident that the people were aware that killing, stealing, adultery and dishonoring parents were wrong, there was no specific commandment given in writing that we can find.

When Jesus was asked about divorce, what did He say? "**Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.**" **Matthew 19:8.** There was no written law expressed in the beginning, but the law was understood by the very creation of the institution of marriage. Using the same principle of going back to the beginning to establish truth, Jesus pointed to the origin of the Sabbath. "**And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.**" **Mark 2:27.** The Sabbath institution followed the marriage institution by only one day, marriage coming on the sixth day of creation and the Sabbath on the seventh.

The lack of a written code does not mean that there was no law. Had there been no law there could have been no sin, "**for by the law is the knowledge of sin**" (**Romans 3:20**), and sin is defined as "**transgression of the law**" (I John 3:4). Furthermore, death is a result of sin (Rom. 6:23, Ezek. 18:4), and death reigned from Adam to Moses, "**for that all have sinned**" (Rom. 5:12,14).

Let us consider the patriarch Abraham. In Genesis 26:4 we read the wonderful blessing God pronounced upon this great man of faith. "And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Now why did God honor Abraham this way? The next verse tells us. "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." That sounds pretty detailed, doesn't

it? Abraham knew the law of God down to specific commandments and statutes, and yet there is no record of those laws in the Genesis account.

It would be absolute negligence on the part of any parents to bring children into the world and not give them rules to abide by. Every parent, regardless how thorough, does teach his children to abide by laws in the home. Very seldom are these laws written down, but they are communicated directly to the children. Yet some would actually believe that our heavenly Father never gave to mankind laws to live by prior to the giving of the law at Sinai.

Surely God made known to Adam his law. Now Adam lived 930 years. His good son Seth lived 912 years, Enos 905 years, Cainan 910 years, Mahalaleel 895 years, Jared 962 years, Enoch 365 years before he was translated, and Methuselah 969 years. Each of these men and their families overlapped each other's lifespan by several hundred years. Surely the law of God was known to each generation, if by no other means than word of mouth.

After the flood, Noah was able to communicate the law of God to his descendants. Abraham was alive before Noah passed off the scene, and thus Abraham could have learned the commandments, statutes and laws of God directly from him or one of Noah's sons. In addition, God spoke directly to Abraham as He had probably spoken to many of the patriarchs.

There is clear evidence that the children of Israel were not ignorant of the law of God, including the Sabbath, prior to Sinai. A month before arriving at Sinai, God tested the Hebrews to see if they would obey his law. This is recorded in Exodus 16. God provided a double portion of manna on the sixth day and none on the seventh. The people were told not to go out to gather manna on the seventh day, but some did not listen and ventured out anyway. Then God responds by asking, "**How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" Verse 28.** This tells us that for some time before Sinai, and before the falling of manna, they were aware of the law and the Sabbath. It would not be until Sinai, however, that the Ten Commandments would be given in tables of stone, with the addition of the ceremonial and civil laws, which would be documented in a book.

Some will point to Nehemiah 9:14, where it is stated that God made known unto Israel the Sabbath at Sinai, and conclude that only at that point did they observe it. As we have seen from the previous paragraph, this was not the case, but let us look at Nehemiah 9:14 which states, "**And madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant.**" This text surely cannot be introduced as proof that the Sabbath and the law did not exist prior to this, for we read the same about God himself. "**In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am the LORD your God.**" Ezekiel 20:5.

That was not the beginning of God's existence, neither was it the beginning of the Sabbath's existence. The children of Israel had lost much of their faith and knowledge while in Egypt, and now these called out people were being re-instructed in the ways of Jehovah, the true God. They were slow learners, as we see from their worship of the golden calf, but God bore very patiently with His people then, just as He does with us today.

It has been argued that the Sabbath was given to Israel as a memorial of their deliverance from Egypt. Deuteronomy 5:15 is cited which reads: "**And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.**" Please take note that Moses spoke these words forty years after the law was proclaimed at Sinai, during which time the children of Israel had been in almost constant rebellion.

When God Himself spoke the commandment on Sinai, He did not establish a memorial of deliverance from Egypt, but a definite memorial of creation. **"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy ... 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.

Moses was appealing to their sense of gratitude as extra incentive to keep the Sabbath holy, for while in Egypt as slaves, they could not have easily kept the Sabbath. It is believed by many that Exodus 5:5 refers to the Sabbath, and while we cannot be absolutely certain from the text, it does make it clear that Pharaoh would not have tolerated a Sabbath rest. **"And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens."** He then commanded extra work be given them.

On more than one occasion the Lord appealed to their sense of gratitude to encourage obedience. In Deuteronomy 24:17-18 we read, **"Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge: But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing."** Certainly no one would argue that the commandment to care for the widows, orphans and strangers was merely a memorial of Egyptian deliverance, and neither should we believe that about the Sabbath.

As we consider the account in Genesis, when God rested from His work of creation, and as we consider the commandment as expressed by the Creator (Jesus) at Sinai, with His own voice and with His own handwriting, we find that the single most important aspect of the Sabbath is its function as a memorial. As we shall see, there are more dimensions of the Sabbath, but it was originally blessed and sanctified on the grounds that it was the Creator's rest. Thus, the commandment to keep holy the day is a mandate to honor the Creator.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Morality of the Sabbath

Israel's worship of the golden calf is a prime example of a problem we find all through the Bible. Idolatry was a continual source of trouble, not merely for the heathen, but for God's people as well. It was so bad in Egypt that God finally plagued the Egyptians with the very things they worshipped—flies, frogs, cattle, hail, etc. It was out of this environment that the Hebrews were being called. Unfortunately, they came out physically, but not altogether spiritually.

When people take their eyes off of the Creator, they eventually wind up in some form of idolatry. The apostle Paul stated, **"Who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator."** Romans 1:25. God blessed and sanctified the seventh day as a memorial of creation so that on a continual weekly basis the people's minds would be brought back to their Creator. The Sabbath was no guarantee, of course, that mankind would remain faithful to God, but it did serve as a reminder every week that there was a Creator to whom man owed his very existence and was accountable. Over the centuries the carnal hearts of men may have drifted from the truth to serve false gods, but even then the great memorial was still there to prick the conscience, and thus the Sabbath takes on a wonderful moral significance.

Isn't it remarkable that every nation, kindred, tongue and people observe a seven-day week? There is no reason for this whatsoever, except that God made it that way. Unlike days, months and years, no heavenly bodies tell us when a week has expired, thus the seventh day comes to every soul as a reminder of the Creator. In many languages all over the world, the seventh day is still called the Sabbath to this present time. In Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, French, German, Swahili, Russian, Polish, and hundreds of



other languages, ancient and modern, the seventh day is called the Sabbath. In most cases where the seventh day is not called the Sabbath, an idolatrous name has been given—Saturn's day (from which we get Saturday)—the day devoted to one of the planetary gods.

Perhaps at no other time in the history of the world has atheism and pantheism been such a threat to the morality of the people around the globe. The theory of evolution has been adopted as fact even though it has never been proven nor ever will be. Look at the current generation of youth. They have been taught all through their school years (in public schools) that man evolved from some primitive life form. This communicates to them that there is no God, no superior being, no Creator to whom we owe any accountability. The next step is to do away with all absolutes—especially the Ten Commandments. Moral relativism is introduced whereby there is no standard of right and wrong. Everyone is left to his own opinion as to what is right. This concept has taken such deep root today that educators are told not to correct students for misspelling words, but just commend them for trying. Can you imagine that? Nothing is absolute anymore, not even the spelling of words. Can anyone wonder why homosexuality, adultery, lying, cheating, etc. has become so widespread today?

The seventh day Sabbath stands as a rebuke to the advocates of evolution and "Theistic evolution." The latter theory allows for evolution to take place under the guiding hand of the Creator. Such thinking ignores the facts of the creation week account in Genesis, for it states plainly in the sacred record that God saw all that He had made and **"it was good."** What God made needed no improvement by means of evolution. The work was finished, and thus God rested with satisfaction. **"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."** Genesis 2:1- 3.

In the New Age Movement, which has practically taken over the world, pantheism and eastern religions have been adopted at an alarming rate. People are literally worshipping the creature more than the Creator. Our heavenly Father well knew what was in the heart of man and, that left without a memorial of creation, people would quickly turn to idolatry. God's great bulwark against atheism and pantheism was never needed more than at the present day, but the very commandment that starts with "Remember," we have almost completely forgotten.

Repeatedly in Scripture we find God distinguishing Himself from all false gods by pointing to His creatorship. For example, **"For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens."** Psalm 96:5. **"Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. 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 10:11, 12. When the first angel of Revelation 14 goes forth to proclaim the everlasting gospel to a world on the brink of worshipping the beast and his image, we find: **"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."** Revelation 14:7. These words are practically lifted right out of the fourth commandment. Notice: **"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy ... 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. When we get to the close of the third angel's warning about receiving the mark of the beast, he describes the remnant who will escape: **"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they which keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."** Revelation 14:12. Thus we see that the Sabbath fits neatly into God's end-time message.

Not only is the Sabbath a moral commandment because it safeguards against idolatry, but it is moral in that it provides a time to rest and commune with God. Some may object that we should do that daily, and certainly we should, but good quality time for spiritual refreshment and worship, as well as fellowship, requires that we be free from all secular affairs. We need that blessed day, those 24 hours of sanctified time to give wholeheartedly to the Lord. In this age of extreme stress, the Sabbath also provides a wonderful refuge by relieving the mind of the cares of this life that we may focus attention on the Lord unreservedly. The Sabbath is healing, both mentally and physically.

Many will argue that Sunday provides them with that needed time. While there is certainly nothing wrong with worshipping the Lord on Sunday, it will never take the place of the Sabbath for three reasons. 1) It does not come with the blessing pronounced upon it, as does the Sabbath. 2) It is not the day sanctified by God. The Lord set apart one specific day of each week for the Sabbath, and that is the seventh day. 3) The first day of the week has no commandment connected with it.

Obedience to God's commandments brings blessings to God's people, not the least of which is right to the tree of life. **"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.** This does not mean that salvation comes by the works of the law, but it describes those who are truly born again and living a fruitful life of obedience.

It should be remembered, however, that there is a difference between keeping Saturday and keeping the Sabbath. One who merely refrains from work and goes through the rituals of worship, attending Church and abstaining from business, has not necessarily kept the Sabbath. The Sabbath is to be a delight (Isaiah 58:13, 14) to the Christian. It is a time for special communion with God and Christ. The real purpose of the Sabbath is to get to know the Lord of the Sabbath better, to assimilate Christ's character by beholding Him (II Cor. 3: 18). The physical rest is a wonderful blessing, but the spiritual rest, which is far better, is only found in Christ, and the Sabbath is designed to better allow for that relationship to grow. In fact, if one fails to enter into rest with Christ it is impossible to keep the Sabbath holy. As with any of the commandments, the fulfilling of the fourth commandment is only possible in Christ. **"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 8:3, 4.**

Those who advocate laws to protect Sunday from desecration obviously find no difficulty in recognizing the morality in a day of rest and worship. In fact, they blame the prevailing and ever increasing evil in our country on the lack of Sunday observance. For some strange reason though, when the Sabbath is mentioned, these same Sunday advocates will often argue that the Sabbath is ceremonial and not moral. As we have already seen, there is a moral basis behind God's memorial of creation. Yet we have further, undeniable evidence that the Sabbath is a part of God's moral law—*The Sabbath commandment is found right in the heart of the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments).*

This is very significant for a number of reasons.

1) Of all the laws given to Israel, only the Ten Commandments were spoken to the people by God Himself. Moses, while recounting what the LORD had spoken to them at Sinai, emphasized this point when he repeated the Ten Commandments and said, **"These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and He added no more, and he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me."** Deuteronomy 5:22. The rest of the law was communicated to the people through Moses.

2) Only the Decalogue was written by the finger of God, the rest being written by Moses.

3) Only the Decalogue was engraven in stone, showing its permanence as opposed to that written on parchment.

4) The Ten Commandments reveal what sin is. Paul stated, **"I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said Thou shalt not covet."** Romans 7:7. **"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law."** James 2:10, 11.

5) The Decalogue was the only law placed inside the ark. This last point is very significant. Only three items were placed inside the ark. They were the Ten Commandments, Aaron's rod that budded, and the golden pot of manna. These all represented Christ. Aaron's rod represented God's appointed High Priest who was to ultimately be Jesus Himself. **"Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."** Hebrews 8:1, 2. The golden pot of manna represented Christ, the Bread of life. Jesus said, **"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."** John 6:33. These first two items did not remain permanently in the ark (see II Chronicles 5:10).

The moral law, on the other hand, is a transcript of His character, which He desires to reproduce in each of us. This is the essence of the New Covenant. So, under this New Covenant, or Testament, we have our faithful High Priest (not a Levite) as our advocate in the heavenly sanctuary, now ministering His own blood in the Most Holy Place before the mercy seat. The mercy seat is over the ark wherein is the original moral law, of which the two tables of stone were merely a copy. **"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament."** Revelation 11:19. Those who teach that the law is done away need to explain why Christ is mediating before that ark. If there is no law, there is no transgression to mediate about.

It has been argued that the Sabbath is not moral on the basis that it is not inherently recognized in the conscience, as are laws of love. True, without a written law, man still knows in his conscience that killing and stealing are wrong. The same can generally be said of adultery, fornication, dishonoring parents and perhaps covetousness. It is not too difficult to understand these principles involving man's relationship to man. We can recognize what must injure others, for the same things would injure ourselves. Humans can relate to humans pretty well, but even here we fall short. Even the apostle Paul acknowledged, **"for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."** Romans 7:7. When it comes to man's relationship to God, the moral obligations are even more unclear. The second commandment, which forbids the making and worshipping of images, may not readily be felt in the conscience. You will remember that Aaron, at the instigation of the people, made a molten image in the form of a calf to represent God. By this time they were well aware that Jehovah had brought them out of Egypt, but the carnal mind longs for something tangible to worship.

The problem is that man, in his fallen condition, has only a marred copy of the moral law in his conscience. Thank God that it is still clear enough in most people's conscience to keep them from doing such wicked deeds as killing and stealing, even though they may not be Christians. As evil intensifies, however, the copy of the law becomes more and more marred and obscured. We hear of acts committed today that were unheard of twenty or thirty years ago. In contrast, the partakers of the New Covenant become more sensitive to right and wrong. This is not only due to the fact that the law is being restored supernaturally in the believer while he is not even aware of it, but also by the instruction in righteousness that comes from the study of God's word, both Old and New Testaments. **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in**

righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Timothy 3:16.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### The New Covenant and His Will

"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." Hebrews 10: 16.

Here is evidence that the moral law is a transcript of His character. We find in God's eternal law His unchanging will based upon His unchanging love. **"Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God. Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second."** Hebrews 10:5-9.

The *first* was the sacrifices and offerings. The *second* was the will of God. What is the will of God that Christ came to establish? Surely all will agree that it is a sanctified life. **"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification."** I Thessalonians 4:3. But let us go back to the source from which the writer of Hebrews was quoting, for there we will discover just what the will of God is. We will find it in Psalm 40:7-8, which reads, **"Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."**

God's moral law is His will for all mankind. Jesus can write His law in our hearts because He had it written in His own heart. As we abide in Him and He in us, He reproduces His own mind and will within us. Until we are "born again" by the Spirit of God, we cannot have the necessary appreciation of the law or the needed power to fulfill it. **"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."** Romans 8:7. Those who claim that while under grace they are not subject to the law of God certainly place themselves in bad company.

While it is futile to think that the law can save us (for Paul makes it clear that no man is justified by the law), it is just as futile to try to escape subjection to the law. Paul wrote, **"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."** Romans 3:31. In order to establish the law, we must work in harmony with Christ as He is writing that moral law in our minds and hearts. Those who wish to be free from the moral law, or any part of it, are working counter to the works of Jesus. God forbid that we should attempt to erase what Christ is writing, for to do this is to acknowledge that we are yet carnally minded, for it is the carnal mind that is not subject to the law of God. Some people are repeatedly trying to erase the Sabbath from their minds, but God bears patiently with them. The danger lies in erasing too many times until the heart becomes hardened and the Spirit can no longer impress the truth upon the soul.

Let us compare the two covenants, old and new, and see what the difference is. It is important to understand that a covenant is a contract or agreement between two parties. Thus we see that when Israel entered into that first covenant, the Lord gave them three opportunities to accept or reject the contract before it was made official. In Exodus 19 we find the first negotiations. The Lord is speaking to Moses in verse 5, **"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children**

of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD." Exodus 19:5-8.

Three days later God spoke directly to the people the Ten Commandments. Afterward, He had Moses present the rest of the law to the people. "**And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.**" Exodus 24:3. Twice have they made the same promise in confirming the covenant.

Now Moses writes the entire law in a book and prepares for the final confirmation of the covenant by having sacrifices prepared. Now watch what happens: "**And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.**" Verses 6, 7. Here is their third promise to obey all that God had commanded. Finally, we read, "**And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.**" Verse 8.

While it is true that the Ten Commandments were the principle part of the contract and the conditions upon which God's blessing depended, it is clear that the covenant itself was the agreement made between God and the Hebrews. Having established that fact, we can now examine the faultiness of the Old Covenant. "**For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them [the children of Israel], he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.**" Hebrews 8:7-9.

Note that the fault was with the people, not the Law. They were stiff-necked and rebellious throughout the contract time. Their promises of obedience were like ropes of sand. It was therefore necessary that a New Covenant be made – one based on better promises. "**But now hath He [Jesus] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises ... For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.**" Verses 6, 10. That certainly is a far better covenant than the first one. In the place of flimsy promises on the part of the people to obey, Jesus promises to fulfill the law from within the heart of the believer. "**Christ in you, the hope of glory.**" Colossians 1:27. **Instead of the law being carved in stone where it became a "ministration of death" (II Cor. 3:7), it is written in the fleshy tables of the heart where it becomes a living principle. That which was external to us now becomes internalized by the Spirit. There still remains a choice, a willingness to cooperate with Christ, but the power to obey will come not from us, but from Christ Himself And so we read, "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 8:3, 4.

It would be well here to point out that God was not restricting the Israelites from these promises while under the Old Covenant. In Hebrews 4:2 we read, "**For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.**" In other words, by faith, the Hebrews could have experienced the blessings and promises of the New

Covenant even at the time they entered into Canaan. The law could have been internalized for every Jew, not just engraven in stone, but they were given to unbelief. They failed to see the Messiah in all the types and shadows. They did not realize the love of God toward them, and His willingness to abide in them. Although called the New Covenant, it is actually the *Everlasting Covenant*.

**"Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant." I Chronicles 16:15-17.**

It was not until "**the fulness of the time was come**" (Galatians 4:4) that Jesus came and fulfilled all the types and shadows of the ceremonial system. Unfortunately, even then only a remnant of Israel believed and experienced the New, or Everlasting Covenant. The majority wanted to cling to their forms and ceremonies, trusting in them and in their own righteousness to save them. They failed to "**cast out the bondwoman and her son**" (Galatians 4:30).

In that fourth chapter of Galatians, Paul likens the two covenants to Isaac and Ishmael. Ishmael was the result of Abraham's works of the flesh, substituting his way rather than trusting in the promise. Isaac was the result of God fulfilling His promise to Abraham. He was born through the working of the Spirit in Sarah, a creative and supernatural work that was beyond the reach and power of the flesh. In the same way, the New Covenant promise provides for creative, supernatural works of the Spirit to take place in the believer. Substituting or changing God's commandments is the work of the flesh just as trying to keep the law in our own strength would be. Trusting Christ to fulfill His commandments in us is the very core of the New Covenant. It is important that we understand this wonderful relationship between law and grace.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Law and Grace

**"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law ... Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:28, 31.**

To understand the gospel it is necessary that we understand the relation of the law and grace to the gospel. Gospel means "good news" or "glad tidings." Just what is that good news? Perhaps it is fair to say that many are floundering around in Christendom, drunken with the wine of Babylon, believing they have received the good news of salvation, but in actuality are enemies of the cross of Christ. We can say this on the authority of Holy Scripture and its prophetic warning that "**all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornications.**" **Revelation 18:3.**

We must often be reminded that Jesus came to abolish sin, and that it is essential that we cooperate with Him in this work. "**Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.**" I John 3:7, 8. He was sent to "**destroy the works of the devil.**" He did not come to destroy the law. "**Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.**" **Matthew 5:17.** The Greek word for fulfill is *pleroo*, which literally means, "fully perform." In other words Christ fully performed the law. He was never guilty of a single transgression.

The Bible defines sin as "**the transgression of the law.**" **1 John 3:4.** And since "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," "therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Romans 3:23, 20. By faith we are justified by Christ, and by faith we are empowered by the indwelling of Christ to overcome sin and have "the righteousness of the law fulfilled [fully performed] in us." Romans

8:4. The law we are speaking of is the moral law of Ten Commandments. As we have already seen, it is transgression of this law that constitutes sin. **"I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Romans 7:7.**

A man may serve a ten-year sentence in prison and satisfy the claims of the civil law of the land, but **"the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23)**. There was no other way out of this death sentence for all mankind than the substitutionary death of Jesus. He would have set aside the law if it were possible, and thus pardoned us all without shedding his blood, but He could not do that. **"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Romans 7:12.** The very fact that Jesus had to give His life on the cross proves that the law is immutable.

Paul anticipated that some would want to dispense with the law now that they were under grace. For this reason he asked, **"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:31.** What law do we establish? Let's consider the ceremonial law. Through faith, do we establish sacrifices of lambs, bullocks, doves, etc.? Do we build a temple like the one shown to Moses and furnish it with candlesticks, shewbread, and an ark? Do we practice circumcision? Do we appoint only Levites to the priesthood? Obviously, we do not establish any of those things. What we do establish is the moral law.

Many of the statutes and judgments of God will also be established in our hearts, as they are safeguards for the moral law. Included in these would be rules pertaining to health, modesty, public safety, property rights, etc. These things spring from love for one another. **"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine." I Timothy 1 :8-11.**

To illustrate this principle, there is a law in probably every state for fathers to support their families. How many of you fathers who are reading this book right now, support your wife and children in order to comply with that law? You take care of your family out of love, not because the law said so. This is something you want to do. If you are a Christian, your desire for caring for the household is all the more increased. Should you, however, fail to love and care for your family (as many sadly do), the law is there to convict you.

And again Paul questioned, **"Shall we continue in sin [transgressing the law], that grace may abound? God forbid." Romans 6:1-2.**

Let us illustrate this principle, also. Suppose a man is sentenced to death in the electric chair and there is nothing he can do to save himself. He is under the law. The Governor, however, in his mercy, decides to pardon the man and release him. Now that he is under grace, is he at liberty to go out and break the law again without facing the consequences? Shall he make void the law? Of course not! The law is just as binding upon the man as ever. Out of gratitude, however, the pardoned prisoner should become a law abiding citizen.

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. The curse of the law is death to the transgressor. The law itself is not the curse. Consider the woman who was caught in adultery and brought to Jesus for judgment. Jesus pardoned her and released her from the curse of being stoned to death. She was then under grace, but she was not released from the commandment forbidding adultery, for Jesus said to her **"Go, and sin no more." John 8:11.** The same charge is given to each of us today.

The law is like a mirror. Just as a person looks into the bathroom mirror and sees dirt on his face, when we look into that perfect law we see ourselves as we are—sinful, in need of cleansing. The mirror itself is powerless to cleanse the man's face. He must apply soap and water to cleanse away the filth. Neither can the law cleanse us

from our spiritual filth. Only the blood of Jesus can cleanse us from any of our unrighteousness. No one would think of destroying his mirror because it could do no more than reveal his uncleanness, so who would want to do away with the Ten Commandments except those who do not desire righteousness?

Far from doing away with the law, Jesus actually came to **"magnify the law and make it honorable."** **Isaiah 42:21.** Christ carries us far beyond the mere letter of the law, to the height of its spiritual application. This was the reality Paul had to face. Consider his words in Romans 7:9. **"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died."** When was Paul ever without the law? He was raised in it from a child in a Pharisee's home. His problem was that he only knew the letter of the law. It was the work of Jesus magnifying the law in Paul's own heart that brought him to his knees. That was when the law really came to him and slew him.

Some have thought that we are not to worry about the letter of the law, but rather the spirit of it. True, if we keep the spirit of the law, then the letter will be fulfilled; *but it is impossible to keep the spirit of the law while breaking the letter.* For example, how could one keep the spirit of the law forbidding adultery while he is engaged in the violation of the letter? Obviously, that is not possible. It is the desire of Christ to take us well beyond the letter, bringing our very thoughts into captivity unto obedience to Him.

In unison with the law, the Holy Spirit is sent to **"reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."** **John 16:8.** But thanks be unto God that we are not left in that hopeless state of sinfulness. So long as we are willing, Jesus fulfills the new covenant promise by writing the law in our hearts and in our minds. **"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."** **Hebrews 10:16.** Thus the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us. We become doers of God's will because He is working in us **"both to will and to do of His good pleasure."** **Philippians 2:13.** This is sanctification—the Lord working in us to do His will. Sabbath keeping is therefore a fitting sign that we are cooperating with Christ in the work of sanctification, as it is written, **"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.**

Such a converted soul will cease from sin. The work of grace in the heart, the abiding presence of Christ, leads the soul to obedience and away from transgressions. **"God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away everyone of you from his iniquities."** **Acts 3:26.** What a blessing indeed!

When this gospel is rightly understood, the significance of Jesus' words comes clearer to us. When the rich young ruler came to Jesus, he inquired, **"What must I do to be saved?"** **Jesus answered: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."** **Matthew 19:17.** The young man then asked a question which many are still asking today, "Which?" Then Jesus specifically pointed out the Ten Commandment law. Again we read in John 14:15, **"If you love me, keep my commandments."**

What the rich young ruler failed to comprehend was that his own righteousness was as filthy rags. Apart from Christ he could do nothing. This is why John identified the true remnant as **"those who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."** **Revelation 14:12.** Obedience and faith—the two go together; in fact, it is impossible to separate them. No one can possibly keep the commandments of God perfectly without Christ, and no one really has the faith of Jesus who is not keeping the commandments. **"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."** **1 John 2:4.**

How many of the Ten Commandments does one have to break in order to be guilty of sin? **"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art**



**become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:10-12.**

Every individual will be judged at last by the mighty moral code of the commandments of God. A willful transgressor of any of the Ten Commandments will not find entrance into the kingdom. The Bible specifically declares that thieves, liars, adulterers, idolaters, and covetous men will not inherit eternal life. Why? Because the Ten Commandments forbid those things. The Decalogue is the constitution of God's government, and any that rebel against His government will never be admitted into the eternal city. This does not mean that all who have failed to keep the Sabbath holy are lost. Many have been in ignorance of the true Sabbath. Once clear light has been shown on the commandment, however, one can no longer plead ignorance. Paul expressed this principle when addressing the idolaters in Athens. **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Acts 17:30.**

Lucifer was cast out of heaven on account of his rebellion against God. Since that time he has been working furiously to further his rebellion. Especially in these last days is he diligently working to overthrow God's authority. **"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Revelation 12:12.** And where is his greatest attack? **"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17.** (For this reason, do not be surprised if many tares are seen among the wheat. Satan, the enemy, is sowing tares in an attempt to destroy the remnant.)

The good news is, that to the truly converted soul who has Christ abiding in him by faith, the commandments become a promise rather than a stern prohibition. Because Jesus is at work in you, writing the law in your heart and in your mind, you will not kill (hate), you will not commit adultery (even look lustfully), you will not steal, you will have no other gods before Him, and you will keep the Sabbath holy. This is the promise of righteousness by faith. **"Christ in you, the hope of glory." Colossians 1:27.**

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### The Covenants Were Made With Israel

As we look back across the ages we see that God always had a few faithful souls who would keep the truth alive in the midst of this rebellious planet. After the wicked Cain slew his righteous brother Abel, God blessed our first parents with another godly seed, Seth. In the bloodline of Seth we find a few faithful souls such as Enoch. By the time of the flood, only Noah and his family were faithful to God. Shortly after the flood, the rebellious generation that followed attempted to build the Tower of Babel, but God confounded their language and scattered them abroad. It appeared that wickedness would triumph again in the world, but God found a "friend" in Abraham. As he was dwelling in the land of Shinar (Babylon), God spoke to him, calling him out to be a father of the faithful. Thus we find the first call out of Babylon.

To Abraham it was promised that he would be the father of many nations, and that the holy seed (Jesus) would be born in his lineage. It was necessary that Abraham's descendants should have a knowledge of the Lord and of His law that they might be the light bearers to the world, ready to proclaim the Messiah when He should appear. Thus these people were entrusted with the oracles of God.

**"What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." Romans 3:1, 2.** The Hebrews were the depositaries of truth in the world.

What a marvelous privilege! Unfortunately, the Jews did not mix all this wonderful truth with faith. Trusting in themselves and their elevated position and standing with God, they were ignorant of the plan of salvation, which was by faith in the Messiah. When Jesus was born and walked among them, they should have known from the law and the prophets that He was the Christ. Further, they should have recognized that the work of the Messiah was to redeem mankind from sin, not to merely free the Jews from Roman oppression. Their strong nationalism proved to be a snare to them. What is worse, that nationalistic zeal caused the Gentiles to despise them as much as they despised the Gentiles. To this day, there remains a certain animosity between Jew and Gentile, and unfortunately, we often see this within the Church.

Before we attempt to pass anything off as Jewish in an attempt to escape its obligation upon us, we would do well to consider the following passage. **"Who are the Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen." Romans 9:4, 5.**

It is certain that no converted Gentile would want to write off the adoption as "Jewish." It is equally certain that we all want to be partakers of God's glory. When it comes to the New Covenant (or Testament), we boast of being under it, but it was first given to the Jews. Listen to what Paul says to the Ephesians:

**"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Un circumcised by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Ephesians 2:11, 12.**

What Christian would deny the promises of God on account of them being "Jewish"? And we see that as long as we were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, we were without Christ. In other words, we must be brought into the commonwealth of Israel and no longer consider ourselves Gentiles. **"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Ephesians 2:19.**

Paul referred to Israel as an olive tree into which the believing Gentiles are "grafted (grafted) in." He was expounding on the words of Jeremiah the prophet who said, **"The LORD called thy name, A green olive tree, fair and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken." Jeremiah 11:16.** Paul writes, **"And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches." Romans 11:17, 18a.** Certainly we who come from among the Gentiles have nothing to boast. We are privileged to be grafted into the olive tree, adopted into the true Israel of God. We become partakers of the promises, the law, and the New Covenant whereby that law is written in our hearts and minds. When the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, and all the believing Jews are grafted back into their original tree, then all Israel shall be saved (see Romans 11:22–26).

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### What Was Abolished at the Cross?

**"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." Ephesians 2:14, 15.**

Let us understand what is meant by "**the law of commandments contained in ordinances.**" The Greek word for ordinances is *dogma*. According to Strong's Concordance this word means "a law (civil, ceremonial or ecclesiastical):— decree, ordinance." Bullinger's Lexicon and Concordance defines it as "that which seems true to one, an opinion, *esp. of philosophic dogmas*; a public resolution, decree."

Can we find such enmity in ordinances that separated Jews and Gentiles? Obviously we can. There were ordinances forbidding Gentiles to go into the temple. Paul faced this charge as he stood before the Jews: "**This is the man, that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.**" Acts 21:28. There were ordinances forbidding Jews to go into Gentile homes and buildings. You will probably recall that the Jewish leaders would not go in unto Pilate for fear of being defiled (John 18:28). Pilate had to go out to meet them. To remove this obstacle, God gave Peter a vision on the rooftop in the form of unclean beasts in a sheet let down from heaven (Acts 10). Peter learned from that vision that he was no longer to call Gentiles unclean. This paved the way for Peter to enter the house of Cornelius, a Gentile, and preach to him and his household.

Circumcision was also a partition wall between Jew and Gentile. One thing is abundantly clear from the New Testament—circumcision was not imposed upon the Gentiles. There is so much evidence of this fact that no one need be in doubt on the question. We find this explained in Acts, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, I Corinthians, and Colossians. It is also clear that circumcision was ceremonial and not moral. Paul differentiated between the two, showing that circumcision is no longer obligatory while the commandments of God are. "**Is any man called being circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? Let him not become circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.**" I Corinthians 7:19. Lest anyone be confused by the old English rendering of the King James Version in this passage, we should mention that in every modern translation at this writer's disposal (8 by count), the text clearly indicates that the keeping of the commandments is what matters, or what counts, or is important. For example, here is the NASB rendering: "**Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.**"

Those who try to equate circumcision with the Sabbath are clearly in error. Circumcision was not introduced at creation, it is not found in the Decalogue, and it is clearly done away in the New Testament. The Sabbath was made at creation, it is in the very heart of the Ten Commandments, and is not abolished in the New Testament.

Imagine the ruckus that would have occurred in the first century had the disciples abolished the Sabbath. Stop and consider how much controversy existed between Christ and the Jewish leaders over the subject of proper Sabbath observance. They were ready to kill Him for supposedly breaking the Sabbath, which, of course, He never did. If anyone knew how to properly keep the Sabbath, it was the Creator and Lord of the Sabbath. The problem stemmed from the multitude of man-made rules and regulations imposed on the people by the leaders.

Just as an example of the ridiculous constraints that were heaped on the day, there was a written rule that a person could only take a certain amount of steps with food in his mouth lest he should bear a burden on the Sabbath. If a person wished to take a drink from a jar that had a stone for a lid, the jar must be tilted over so the stone would slide off. To lift the stone would be considered work. The disciples were accused of Sabbath breaking when they snacked on corn in the field, but they were obviously not involved in harvest work. Now you may better understand why Jesus was accused of breaking the Sabbath when He healed on that day. While He never hinted that the Sabbath would be done away, Jesus did try to show the people what true Sabbath observance did and did not entail. He freed the Sabbath from the

legalistic restrictions. Legalism can rob the Sabbath of its blessing when people take too narrow a view of what Sabbath rest involves.

Such legalistic thinking may be seen in modern day opposers of the Sabbath who say that God restricted the Hebrews to their dwellings on that day (Exodus 16:29) and prohibited fires on the Sabbath (Exodus 35:3), and thus it should be observed that way today by those who keep the Sabbath. The former was the case of people gathering manna on the Sabbath. God did not intend for the people to stay cooped up all day long in their little tents. Such a restriction would have caused the people to disdain the Sabbath when the purpose of God was to get them to delight in it (Isaiah 58:13). They were simply not to leave their tents to gather manna, as the context readily indicates. Early each morning the Hebrews were all out gathering their day's supply of manna before it would melt away in the heat of the sun. **"And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted."** Exodus 16:21. To be seen walking about early Sabbath morning could give the appearance of looking for manna. Actually, the Sabbath was always a day of corporate worship, which proves that they were not restricted to their tents.

The latter was a command given them while they were under the **"pillar of fire by night."** Exodus 13:21. Cooking would have been wrong, for they were to prepare meals the day before the Sabbath. They needed no light or warmth from a fire by night because God gave them a pillar of fire over them. In other words, there was absolutely no need to kindle a fire upon the Sabbath day as long as they were under the pillar of fire. To do so would have been a form of outright rebellion and a display of distrust in God. Our loving Father does not require His children today to endure the hardship of cold winter days with no fire in their homes for warmth. It is, however, in keeping with the spirit of the law, best to have the wood gathered and ready ahead of time so that unnecessary work is not required on the Sabbath. Meals should be prepared the day before so that the Sabbath hours may be free from such cares, and the time better employed in spiritual concerns.

Now with all the controversy over the Sabbath in Christ's day, wouldn't it seem only logical that if the disciples of Jesus did away with the Sabbath, there would have been some tremendous conflicts recorded in Acts, or in the Epistles of Paul? Circumcision was often a controversy, but never the Sabbath. Since circumcision was dealt with on so many occasions and in so many books of the New Testament, making the issue so clear that none need doubt, surely the Sabbath would have been just as clearly dealt with, if not more so, if it also had been abrogated. This is evidence that, just as the other nine commandments, the Sabbath was still observed by the disciples of Jesus. In addition, the Gospel writers, who wrote several years after the resurrection, never referred to the Sabbath as a thing of the past, nor distinguished it as being Jewish. They unanimously continued to reverently refer to the seventh day as the Sabbath.

Returning to the subject of ordinances, Paul speaks of them again to the Colossians. **"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the 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 2:13, 14. The first thing that stands out here is that these ordinances were **"contrary to us."** It is certain that this cannot be the Ten Commandments. The only reason the Decalogue would be contrary to us would be if we were yet carnally minded, **"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."** Romans 8:7. Paul is writing to the believers, those who have been born of the Spirit and no longer carnally minded (at least, not supposed to be). To the church at Ephesus, primarily made up of Gentiles (Eph. 2:11), he wrote, **"Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."** Ephesians 6:2. That certainly does not sound contrary to us. Note that Paul did not refer to the commandment in the past tense, but the present—**"which is the first commandment with promise."** As

for the Sabbath, something made for man's benefit cannot be classed with ordinances that were contrary to us. Jesus said, "**The Sabbath was made for man.**" **Mark 2:27.** The Sabbath is to be a delight (Isaiah 58:13).

It is obvious that these ordinances must have included the ones already mentioned, those which designated Gentiles as unclean and kept a separating wall between them and the Jews. In addition to that, some other ordinances are introduced here, for we read in **Colossians 2:16, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days."**

Here we find something else that was done away with at the death and resurrection of Christ, namely, the ceremonial laws. These laws were given as types and shadows to point to Christ. The entire sanctuary service, including the sacrifices, the priesthood, the sanctuary with its various furniture, and the special yearly feasts and holy days, were all to meet their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. His sacrifice put an end to the sacrificial system; His priesthood ended the Levitical priesthood; the ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary fulfills the earthly sanctuary and its ministries (Hebrews 8); and the Passover, Pentecost, etc., with their associated sabbaths are also fulfilled in Christ. For example, Jesus was the actual Passover lamb that was merely typified by the yearly Passover. He fulfilled the wave sheaf offering on the third day. Fifty days after the wave sheaf, Pentecost took place. That feast was fulfilled when the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost. You can read about these special yearly feasts in Leviticus 23. Paul says in regard to these, "**Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.**"

The Greek word for "holyday" is *heorte*, which means feast or festival. It is found in 26 places other than Colossians 2:16. In every case it refers to one of the special feast days such as Passover or Pentecost. There are those today who still choose to observe these days. According to Colossians 2:16, we should not judge them in these things, neither should they judge those who choose not to observe these feast days. It would definitely be wrong, however, to offer the sacrifices that were associated with the feasts, for to do that would be to deny the sacrifice of Christ who offered his body "once for all" (Heb. 10:10). Romans 14:5 says, "**One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.**" Paul was emphasizing religious liberty and freedom of conscience in such matters as special days, and although the seventh day Sabbath was not the subject of this verse, it would be well to apply the same principle of liberty of conscience. The Sabbath, Sunday, or any other day should not be legislated and forced upon anyone.

There are those who wish to include the weekly Sabbath with the yearly sabbaths, but the context as well as the differentiation made by God will show to the contrary. Note the following verses: "**These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye 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 ye give unto the LORD.**" **Leviticus 23:37, 38.**

The seventh day Sabbath stands on an entirely different plane than the yearly sabbaths. (We choose to capitalize the Sabbath, as it is a definite title of the seventh day. The yearly sabbaths we leave small case because they are contextually descriptive as opposed to a title.) The Sabbath of the LORD was given at creation as a memorial of God's creative work. The special sabbaths were not introduced until the ceremonial law was given at Sinai. The Sabbath of the LORD is found in the Ten Commandments, while the ceremonial sabbaths are not. The seventh day Sabbath was instituted before sin entered while the ceremonial law was introduced to point to the remedy for sin.

It has been attempted to use the article "the," as used in Colossians 2:16, to prove that the seventh day Sabbath is the object of consideration. Normally the article "the" is associated with the seventh day

Sabbath as opposed to the ceremonial sabbaths which are generally referred to as "a sabbath." However, the plural form of the word necessitates the use of "the" rather than "a". It would not be grammatically correct to say "a sabbath days." Such desperate attempts only show the weakness of the argument against the Sabbath of the LORD. Had the word been in the singular, "the Sabbath," then a case could possibly be made against the weekly Sabbath, but the context would still make the case weak. The Greek word is clearly in the plural form, however.

The ceremonial law came under discussion at Jerusalem among the disciples and apostles when a dispute arose over the matter of Gentile observance of circumcision and the Mosaic law. **"But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter." Acts 15:5, 6.**

Peter, Barnabas, and Paul stood up and bore witness how the Gentiles had been visited by God and responded to the Gospel. It was finally decided that they should not be burdened with the law of Moses, save for a few *necessary things*. **"For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." Acts 15:28, 29.**

It cannot be assumed that the Ten Commandments were a part of this discussion. If the moral law of God had been a part of this debate, then the apostles and elders gave license to the Gentiles to steal, covet, lie, etc., which we know these Church leaders certainly would not give them. Note that the intent was not to lay upon them a *burden*. Paul expressed these burdens as **"handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us"** (Colossians 2:14). The Ten Commandments are not a burden, but a joy to the renewed heart. James called the moral law **"the royal law"** and **"the law of liberty."** (James 1:25; 2:8, 12.) Now it is certain that circumcision, especially for any man other than an infant, would be a burden. It would also be a burden for the Gentile believers to have to learn and adhere to all the ceremonial customs and practices of the Hebrews in order to be accepted. They would be under obligation to cease from sin, however, so observance of the moral law would be expected of them as it is of all believers.

One interesting side note appears in this discussion by the elders. After James makes his recommendation as far as what should be observed by the Gentiles, he states, **"For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." Acts 15:21.**

This indicates that the Gentile believers were joining the Jews on the Sabbath for religious instruction. We will see more of this in a later discussion of the Sabbath in the New Testament.

## CHAPTER NINE

### The Heritage of Jacob

In Isaiah 58 we read about a Sabbath revival and reformation that would take place among God's people. **"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. 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, honourable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." Isaiah 58:12-14.**

Just what is this heritage of Jacob? Is this something that God promised exclusively to Jews? Let us examine what the Bible teaches on the subject. We first find this heritage of Jacob in Genesis 28:1-4. "And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people. And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham."

So far this appears to be rather exclusive, but let us see what this blessing of Abraham is all about. **"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."** Genesis 12:1- 3.

We see that the heritage of Jacob is the blessing of Abraham. In other words, the blessing of Abraham was to pass on to his posterity as an inheritance. This inheritance, or heritage, was repeated to Jacob, as already noted. Now let us turn to the New Testament to learn more about the blessing of Abraham. **"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."** Galatians 3:14. Wonderful promise! God said that all families of the earth would be blessed, and we find the fulfillment in the Gentiles receiving the blessing of Abraham, which is the heritage of Jacob.

You see, this heritage was not merely the real estate in the Middle East. The writer of Hebrews makes this very clear. **"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God ... These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth ... But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." Hebrews 11:8-10, 13, 16. The obedient saints will enter that city. **"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.**

This city, the New Jerusalem, will come down as a part of the new heavens and new earth. Even then will the Sabbath be observed, **"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith 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, saith the LORD."** Isaiah 66:22, 23.

Perhaps you are wondering why the Lord mentioned *new moons* in this passage. We shall let John provide the answer in Revelation 22:2. Speaking of the holy city in the earth made new, he says, **"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."** Every month (new moon) and every Sabbath, the saints will go to worship God and partake of the tree of life.

The writer of Hebrews anticipated this keeping of the Sabbath in the fourth chapter, verse nine. **"There remaineth therefore a rest [Greek: *sabbatismos*.ot a Sabbath-keeping] to the people of God."** Actually, there is a three-fold *sabbatismos* alluded to here. First, the seventh day Sabbath (verse 4). Second,

spiritual rest in Christ. Third, the future Sabbath in the earth made new. This verse in no way implies that the seventh day Sabbath is done away, but rather that it remains. The Lamsa Bible, a translation from the ancient Aramaic text (possibly the language that Hebrews was originally written in), renders the verse thus: **"It is therefore the duty of the people of God to keep the Sabbath."**

Sabbath revival and reform pertains just as much to the Gentiles as it does to the Jews. Isaiah referred to the "repairers of the breach." There has definitely been a breach in the law of God, for the Sabbath has well-nigh been forgotten by God's professed people. The remnant described in Revelation are characterized as commandment keepers. They keep all the moral law, not just half or nine-tenths of it. In consequence, they feel the wrath of the devil. **"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."** Revelation 12:17. These persecuted saints are described in chapter 11 as having seen, by faith, the temple of God opened in heaven, and having seen the ark of his testament in which is found the Ten Commandments. These "repairers of the breach" are noted in Revelation 14:6–12 as the last day messengers who are calling the world to come out of Babylon (as Abraham once was) and escape the mark of the beast. **"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."** Revelation 14:12.

The word *keep* in the original Greek means to "guard from loss or injury, to keep an eye upon," according to Strong's Concordance. Please, don't find fault with the watchdog if his warning bark should become annoying. The proper thing to do is investigate what the dog is barking about, for he may be revealing an unseen trespasser and thief. There has been loss and harm done to the law of God, but the faithful watchers are making it known, repairing the breach as foretold in Isaiah 58. Two chapters earlier we find words of admonition for both Jew and Gentile whose watchmen are failing. **"His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber."** Isaiah 56:10.

Now, just what is the subject of the 56<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah? Why, it is none other than the Gentiles who take hold of the Sabbath and the Covenant. **"Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. .. 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, everyone that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh 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 a house of prayer for all people. The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him."** Isaiah 56:2-8. We can see that those who claim the Sabbath was exclusively given to the Jews are in error.

Even though there is mention here of burnt offerings and sacrifices, which were offered under the Old Covenant, it is obvious that the New Covenant, or shall we say the Everlasting Covenant, is the real focus of the chapter. Now our sacrifices are spiritual, as it is written, **"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."** I Peter 2:5. If your Bible has marginal references, you will notice that Isaiah 56 is loaded with New Testament passages, including all four Gospels, Acts, Romans, Ephesians, I and II Timothy, I Peter, Hebrews, I John and Revelation. For example, verse 5 is an obvious allusion to the New Testament: "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." Note the following passage: **"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."** Revelation



**3:12.** These promises given to the Church of Philadelphia are none other than that which is contained in the *blessing of Abraham, or the heritage of Jacob.*

## CHAPTER TEN

### Gentiles and the Sabbath in the New Testament

Turning to the New Testament, we can find sufficient evidence that the Sabbath and the Covenant were being embraced by the Gentiles. At Antioch, Paul preached Christ in the synagogue on the Sabbath. **"And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath ... And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God."** Acts 13:42, 44. Two things stand out here that we should mention. First, the Gentiles acknowledged the Sabbath; they showed respect for it by asking that Paul and the disciples preach to them the following Sabbath. Second, there is absolutely no mention of the first day of the week. This took place approximately 14 years after the resurrection of Christ. If Sunday had become the day for Christian gatherings, why did not these Gentiles meet with the Christians on the very next day rather than wait until the following Sabbath? If the first day of the week was the Gentile Christian day, as so many suppose now, why did not Paul invite them to come on that day? The answer is simple—it would be many years before Sunday would be instituted as a tradition by Rome.

Jesus had some very pointed words for those who would accept tradition over the commandments. **"But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother [one of the Ten Commandments] ... But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me: And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition ... But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."** Matthew 15:3-6, 9.

Oftentimes our good intentions lead us to do the wrong thing. In the above case, the priests must have reasoned that if the people gave to the temple, to the work of the Lord, then they would be excused from the duty they owed their parents. Likewise, Saul reasoned that the sheep and oxen that were spared, when Israel defeated the Amalekites, would be acceptable to God, for they were to be offered as a sacrifice unto the Lord. Saul said to Samuel, **"I have performed the commandment of the LORD."** I Samuel 15:13. In reality, Saul had transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and it cost him dearly.

It has been claimed by some critics of the Sabbath that the disciples often met on the Sabbath in order to witness to the Jews. That claim is washed away with the account in Antioch, but let us establish the truth with further clear evidence.

When Paul arrived at Philippi, he and his companions found at least one Gentile who worshipped God, setting aside her business to pray with other women on the Sabbath day. The others may have been Gentiles also, but that cannot be discerned from the text. **"And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul."** Acts 16:13, 14.

We find the same thing on a larger scale in Thessalonica. **"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout**

**Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." Acts 17:2-4.** This occurred approximately 22 years after the resurrection, and there is no mention of Sunday, but a continued respect for the Sabbath by both Jew and Greek. And yet, there is still more evidence.

When Paul went to Corinth he took up with Aquila and Priscilla, making tents with them to meet his needs, for he was of the same craft. Then we read, "**And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.**" Acts 18:4. This event took place in 54 A.D., 23 years after the resurrection, and once again we find a similar situation as that in Antioch and Thessalonica. Just as in the other two cases, we find Gentiles coming on the Sabbath, not just once, but again and again, with absolutely no mention of the first day of the week. Bear in mind that Luke, the writer of Acts, was very detailed in his accounts and a strict reporter of the facts at hand. For the honest seeker of truth, there is ample evidence that the Sabbath continued on in the New Testament and that Sunday observance was not a practice of the early Church.

The objection is raised that because these meetings were taking place in the synagogue, these were not considered Christian meetings. Again, we must note that Sunday did not even get hinted at many of these cases. Surely, Luke would have made some comment on first day meetings if they were having such. And as already pointed out, the Gentiles surely would have been invited to come on Sunday if the disciples were so meeting on that day.

As for Christians meeting in the synagogues, it is apparent that the disciples had no real intention, at first, of starting worship services apart from the existing Jewish worship centers. We have already seen that Gentile believers are grafted into the stock of Israel. Just as Martin Luther had no intention of leaving the Roman Church in Reformation times, neither did the first Christians plan to leave the temple in Jerusalem, or the various synagogues, until that separation became necessary. The disciples considered their acknowledgement of the Messiah as the natural process of the Jewish faith. They found in Christ the fulfillment of all the types and shadows of their religion. Israel was the "**church in the wilderness**" (Acts 7:38), the *ekklesia*, or called out people. Christ was their leader even through their wilderness wanderings, as it is written, "**For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.**" I Corinthians 10:4. Unfortunately, the unbelieving Jews did not allow for the truth. It may come as a surprise to some, but the early Church continued to meet in the temple for a period of time. "**And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.**" Acts 2:46.

The temple was still their gathering place. In every city it was hoped that the synagogues would continue on as houses of worship and that the worshippers would all come to a knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Lord had predicted, however, that this would not be the case, for the most part. "**These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.**" John 16:1, 2. When that time came, the disciples resorted to gathering in homes, but there is no indication that the day they gathered had changed.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### Sunday in the New Testament

The name Sunday is not found in the Bible. That name was given to the first day of the week as that was the day the pagans, such as Mithras and other sun-worshippers, set aside as their holy day. The first day of the week is mentioned only eight times in the entire New Testament. Six of those are found in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The first text is found in **Matthew 28:1. "In the end of the**

**Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.**" Mark 16:1–2 and Luke 24:1 are parallel texts which record the same event. Here we find no evidence of Sunday sacredness. In fact, Luke 23:56 informs us that the disciples still kept the Sabbath, the seventh day. The women, after resting "**according to the commandment,**" went out on the first day of the week to do the work of anointing the body of Jesus. Note that Luke, some thirty years after the resurrection, still calls the seventh day the Sabbath, but gives no title to the first day. We also see from this account that Jesus did not teach the disciples to stop observing the Sabbath, a significant point, for after the death of the Testator, no man can change His testament (see Galatians 3:15). Just as footwashing, the Lord's Supper, and baptism were all instituted by Jesus before His death, Sunday observance also would have been introduced by Christ before His death, if it were to be a part of the New Covenant. What we find, however, is continued observance of the seventh day Sabbath.

Mark 16:9 records that Jesus rose early on the first day of the week. This is repeating the same event. When we take into consideration that days were always observed from sunset to sunset in the Bible, we are actually left uncertain as to precisely when Jesus arose, for at sunrise He was already risen. Early the first day of the week may have actually been what we consider today to be Saturday night. According to religious historians, Easter sunrise services were probably adopted from the sun-worshippers and commanded by the Catholic Church. **Note Ezekiel 8: 15-16, "Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east."** The sun is in the east at its rising. In other words, these sunrise services, which were an abomination to the Lord, made their way into Christendom via the Roman Church. This is not surprising when one considers the amount of pagan practices that Rome adopted. But the important thing to note in Mark 16:9 is the absence of any command to observe Sunday.

The next text is found in John 20:1. Again we find the same account as before. Keep in mind that all four of the gospel books were written anywhere from 15 to 55 years after the resurrection. Not one of the gospel writers says anything about Sunday being a holyday or the Lord's day. And not one of them refers to the Sabbath as being the "old Jewish Sabbath" or the "old covenant Sabbath." The only thing designated as being particularly Jewish was the Passover and the preparation for the feast.

In verse 19 of the same chapter, John informs us that the disciples were gathered together on the first day. But what was the reason? They were clearly not meeting for worship, for John says they were "assembled for fear of the Jews." Jesus then appeared to them, but there is absolutely no hint that the day was to be afterward observed. Verse 26 mentions the next meeting with Jesus "after eight days," which would fall on the second day of the week (Monday).

We have looked at the first six texts of the eight which mention the first day of the week. So far, we have seen no sacredness ascribed to the day. We must find a command to keep Sunday in the remaining two texts, or honestly admit that there is no setting apart of the day in the Scriptures. Sunday advocates will milk these two passages for all they possibly can, knowing that all hope of setting aside the first day of the week, from a scriptural standpoint, rests on these. As we shall see, they are building on sand.

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together." Acts 20:7, 8. Here we find the only recorded church meeting on the first day of the week. Let us look closely at the occasion. Paul was preaching a long sermon in the evening, and on into the night. Remember that in the Bible the days were considered from sunset to sunset, not midnight to midnight as we do today. **"And the evening and the**

**morning were the first day." Genesis 1:5.** It was what we would call Saturday night when this meeting was taking place. (Some translations even call it Saturday night.)

Luke, the writer of Acts, was there with Paul and the disciples. Read closely the account and you will see that Luke and the other disciples left on the ship that night before the midnight episode with Eutychus. When Luke was present he wrote "we," but when he was not present he wrote "they." Why would Luke and the others leave on the ship that night if the first day of the week was a holy convocation? And why would Paul leave on foot Sunday morning for a twenty mile hike across the isthmus to meet the boat at Assos? The only logical conclusion that can be drawn from this account is that Paul had preached to them on the Sabbath, sent the others on ahead to Assos at the close of the Sabbath, continued sharing with them on into the evening (the beginning of the first day of the week), preaching and sharing one last meal with them before leaving, himself, to catch up with the ship at Assos on Sunday morning.

Sunday advocates will place great emphasis on the breaking of bread, but we find in Acts 2:46 that this was done daily. "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." It is quite clear upon examination of this text that no Sunday sacredness is found.

We come now to the final text, the last hope of finding a command to keep Sunday. In I Corinthians 16:1-2, Paul writes: "**Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.**" Many have supposed this to mean that an offering was taken on Sunday in church. Let us reconsider the passage.

Paul was concerned for the poor saints in the probably dearth stricken city of Jerusalem. Persecution was also taking its toll on the saints of Judaea. Food and provisions were needed (see Acts 11 and Romans 15). The "gatherings" for the saints surely consisted of much more than money. Paul was admonishing them to "lay by him in store" or "store up at home" (as some translations read), food and supplies to relieve their distressed brethren. The expression "lay by him in store" does not sound at all like a passing of the plate in church, but very much like storing up provisions at home.

Paul's letter would most likely have been read to the congregation when they were all assembled together. We can see from Acts 18:4 that the Corinthians, "both Jews and Greeks," met on the Sabbath while no mention is made of Sunday. Putting the evidence together, the text becomes more clear. Paul's letter was probably read to the congregation on the Sabbath, admonishing them to get out the very next day, the first day of the week, and begin gathering from their fields and gardens as God had prospered them. In many churches today, we find a "Dorcas room" where clothing, food, and other essentials are laid up in store for worthy needy people. They may have had such a ministry there in Corinth. Whatever could be gathered together would be done in advance so that when Paul arrived, there would be no time lost in gathering these provisions. A passing of the plate or basket in church would not take any time at all, but gathering and storing food and clothing would definitely take time, which Paul did not wish to waste. No Sunday sacredness can be found here.

The only authority we have for Sunday observance is tradition. Again we quote the Master, "**Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition ... But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**" **Matthew 15:6, 9.**

Often it is argued that since Pentecost took place on the first day of the week, that is evidence that Sunday should be observed. Those who put forth this argument fail to realize that Pentecost was not established upon any certain day of the week, but upon the 50th day after the wave sheaf offering. This reduces the argument down to a single day of the year, not a weekly observance.

Some have asked, "Should we not consider the resurrection a greater event than creation?" Even if we did, where do we find any permission in the Bible to change what God has written with His own finger, and declared with His own voice? It is the work of the "little horn," the blasphemous power fulfilled in the papacy, to **"attempt to change the times and laws."** **Daniel 7:25.**

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### The Lord's Day

**"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." Revelation 1:10.** Since John did not specify which day, just what day is the Lord's day? We will examine three possibilities: 1) Sunday, 2) The "great day of the Lord" spoken of by the prophets, and 3) the seventh day Sabbath.

Sunday—Tradition has it that the Lord's day is the first day of the week. As we have already observed, there is not a single passage in the Bible which distinguishes the first day as anything but the first day. As we stated at the outset of this book, we shall use no authority other than the Bible to arrive at truth. The only way that Sunday advocates can defend the idea of Sunday being the Lord's day is to appeal to history and the uninspired writings of men.

It should not be necessary to discuss the incredible danger involved in going outside of the Bible to establish doctrine. It only takes a short time for major shifts to occur in doctrine and practice. In just the past 50 years there have been so many changes in the Christian world that conservative Christians are sighing and crying over what they see. Homosexuality is being accepted in many churches, women are being ordained to the ministry, and the Ecumenical movement has successfully brought many Protestant leaders to the point of accepting the pope as the spiritual head of the sisterhood of churches around the world. (Ironically, the pope does not consider Protestant Churches as sisters, but wayward daughters of the Catholic Church.) These same Protestants once identified the Roman Catholic Church as the harlot of Revelation 17 and the papacy as the antichrist.

Knowing full well that a departure from the truth took place soon after the death of the apostles, it is certainly precarious to appeal to the writings of men in the second century and onward to arrive at truth. Even should it be argued that some of these men died as martyrs, it is no proof that they were always correct in their theology. Certainly not every martyr believed alike on all doctrine.

Even should we have writings from the first century other than the Bible, could we trust them? We could argue that documents from a first century church must reflect the teachings of the apostles—but would they? Suppose you had in your possession a document written by believers in Corinth? Reading Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians is warning enough that error existed even in that first century church. If you wished to know the Christian's duty in regards to circumcision, would you trust a letter written from an elder in Galatia? Of course not! We must conclude that the Bible only should be our authority. If we cannot confirm our doctrine from the sacred Scriptures, then we must acknowledge that it is merely a doctrine of men or a tradition of men.

The "great day of the Lord"—Often we read in the Bible about the **"day of the Lord."** **"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come."** Acts 2:20. (See also Joel 2:11, 31; Zeph. 1:14; Malachi 4:5; II Thes. 2:2, 3.) The prophets were obviously speaking of the return of Christ in glory, a day of joy for the saved, but of terror to the unsaved.

Although this possibility is much more plausible than the Sunday theory, it still has its shortcomings. John stated, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." If he meant by this that he was taken in vision to "the great

day of the Lord," how do we account for the fact that the majority of his vision spanned over the entire Church age? Jesus bade him, **"Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter."** Revelation 1:19. He is then commissioned to write letters to the seven churches. When the final letter is drafted, John is then taken in vision to heaven where he is shown **"things which must be hereafter."** (4:1) He is then shown future events that would take place over hundreds (if not thousands) of years. This makes it difficult to accept the **"great day of the Lord"** theory.

The seventh day Sabbath—Using only the Bible, it will not take long to establish that this is the most sensible application. **"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 2:3. **"But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God."** Exodus 20:10. **"But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God."** Deuteronomy 5:14. **"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day."** Isaiah 58:13. **"And hallow my Sabbaths."** Ezekiel 20:20. **"Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath."** Mark 2:28.

It was John who penned the words "Lord's day." It is commonly held that he wrote the Gospel of John between 80 and 90 A.D. The Revelation was probably written before that time. If the first day of the week was commonly known as the Lord's day, he certainly did not identify it as such in his gospel. On the other hand, John had spent 3 1/2 years with Jesus and learned much about proper Sabbath observance and the respect which Jesus had for the day He created, blessed, and sanctified. He heard Jesus declare that He was Lord of the Sabbath. The weight of evidence surely falls on the side of the Sabbath. Had God intended for Sunday to be distinguished as the Lord's day, would He not have made that plain from the Scriptures? Using the Bible only, we can settle the issue of what day the Lord's day was and is—the seventh day Sabbath.

Someone once said, "Error may become hoary [grey] with age, but that does not make it truth." Sunday may have been called the Lord's day for centuries, but that does not change the truth of God's Word.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### Concluding Thoughts

As we have seen from our study, the Bible introduces the Sabbath at the creation of the world. God rested on that day and then, after resting, He pronounced a blessing on the seventh day and sanctified it. Since it does little good to sanctify and bless something that is history, finished and gone, it is clear that the seventh day from that point forward was established as a Sabbath for mankind. It, along with the rest of the moral law, was spoken by God himself, and written with His own finger in tables of stone.

The ceremonial law was introduced as a shadow to point forward to the remedy for sin—Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. The shadows ceased when Christ died and rose and ascended to heaven where He assumed His role as our faithful High Priest in the sanctuary in heaven. It is there that He mediates for us before the true ark of the covenant in which is found the moral law of God, the transcript of God's character, which under the New Covenant He promises to write in our hearts and minds. So simple! So marvelous!

We have examined the subject of the law and the Sabbath from the Bible only. In order to find where the observance of Sunday supplanted the Sabbath, it is necessary to go outside of Scripture, save for the warning given in Daniel 7:25, where the antichrist is described. **"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws."**

The Protestant Reformation was built upon the understanding that the Roman Catholic Church was the "little horn" of Daniel's vision and the great harlot of Revelation 17, and that the papacy was the

antichrist. To fully document that fact is beyond the scope and purpose of this book. (You may order some of the materials listed on the last page for further study of this.)

To briefly show the fulfillment of Daniel 7:25, we quote from *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, by Peter Geiermann, C.S.S.R., published by the Roman Catholic Church. Bear in mind that the Catholic Church has omitted the second commandment, which forbids the worship of idols, thus the fourth commandment becomes their third. To make up the difference, the tenth commandment is split to make numbers nine and ten. Here is what they say in question and answer format:

Q. What is the Third Commandment?

A. The Third Commandment is: Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

Which is the Sabbath day?

A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.

It has been widely acknowledged by Sundaykeepers that the Bible offers no support for its observance. Catholic Cardinal James Gibbon wrote, "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." Gibbons, *Faith of Our Fathers*, pp. 111, 112.

In the fifth century, the historian Socrates wrote, "Almost all the churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this." Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, book 5, chap. 22, trans. in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> series, vol. 2, p. 132.

Sozomen, another historian of that period, recorded the same thing. "The people of Constantinople, and almost everywhere, assemble together on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week, which custom is never observed at Rome or at Alexandria." *Ecclesiastical History*, book 7, chap. 19, trans. In *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> series, vol. 2, p. 390.

Constantine was supposedly converted to Christianity from Mithraism, the worship of the sun. Sunday was the "holy day" of the pagan sun worshipers. It was Constantine's hope to unite the empire under one religion. To accommodate all the pagans in his realm, Constantine, as self-appointed head of the Church, issued the first Sunday law decree in which he commanded all to rest on "the Venerable Day of the Sun." Yes, he even used this common pagan title for Sunday.

Fifteen years later, 336 A.D., the Council of Laodicea was held at which another Sunday Law was issued: "Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Sabbato [Sabbath], but shall work on that day; but the Lord's day they shall especially honour ...If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out [anathema, or excommunicated] from Christ." A HISTORY OF THE COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH, *Council of Laodicea*, Canon 29, C.J. Hefele.

Historians know that Sylvester I, bishop of Rome from 314–335 A.D., and Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea from 260–340 A.D., were two of the principle church leaders who worked closely with Emperor Constantine on the Sunday laws. Eusebius wrote: "All things whatsoever it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day." Eusebius Pamphili, *Commentary on the Psalms*, in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. 23, col. 1171.

This is the work of the papacy—using the state powers to enforce her dogmas upon all people. One of her primary dogmas is Sunday observance, and it is this very thing that Rome claims to be her own act.

Further, the papacy sees the institution of Sunday as its mark of authority. C.F. Thomas, Chancellor of Cardinal Gibbons, stated emphatically, "Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. And the act is the mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters." The mark of the beast! She claims to be above God by changing His law, and then watches the world follow her authority.

In contrast to this Babylonish mark of authority, we have the words, "**Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**" **Exodus 20:8**. The word *remember* comes from the Hebrew word *zakar*, which is defined by Stong's Concordance, "to mark (so as to be recognized)." Which mark shall we accept? What is the penalty for accepting the wrong mark?

**"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; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the lamb." Revelation 14:9, 10.**

At the Council of Trent, the great church council called by the Pope at the height of the Reformation in the 16th century, the Catholic Church formulated her strategy to counteract the work of the Protestants and bring the Reformation to a halt. An interesting thing happened at the outset of the Council. The priesthood had become divided, a great many believing that the Protestants were right in insisting upon "Sola Scriptura." For many days the battle raged among the priests and leaders of the Catholics, for Rome had insisted that the Bible and tradition were to determine faith and conduct. It appeared that the Council might never get on to the business of fighting the Reformation.

Finally, something happened which united the priesthood. It was pointed out by the archbishop of Reggio that the Protestants were hypocrites, for they were still observing the first day of the week rather than the seventh. To be consistent with the cry of the Bible only, the Protestants needed to reject the Roman tradition of Sunday observance in favor of the clear command of God to keep the seventh day holy. It was concluded that the Bible and tradition were authoritative, with tradition taking precedence where the two conflicted.

Read now Rome's challenge to Protestants: "It was the Holy Catholic Church that changed the day of rest from Saturday to Sunday, the first day of the week. And it not only compelled all to keep Sunday, but urged all persons to labor on the seventh day under pain of anathema. Protestants ... profess great reverence for the Bible, and yet by their solemn act of keeping Sunday, they acknowledge the power of the Catholic Church. The Bible says, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,' but the Catholic Church says, 'NO, keep the first day of the week', and lo the entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the Holy Catholic Church." Father Enright, *American Sentinel*.

Friends, what does the Word of God say about obedience and worship? **"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Romans 6: 16.** The choice is clearly presented before us—either we keep the mark of authority of the papacy, or we keep the sign that the LORD sanctifies us (Ezek. 20:12). Revelation 14:12 identifies those who escape the mark of the beast. **"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."**

God is calling his faithful children out of Babylon today as Abraham was called out of Babylon in his day and the Jews were called out of Babylon in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. No one has received the actual mark of the beast, yet, for God is allowing time for His end-time messengers, noted in Revelation 14:6-12 and 18: 1-4, to warn the inhabitants of the world before the mark is enforced. It is time to heed the call, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:4.



In closing, let us look at one final objection that has been raised. It has been asked many times if it is possible to know what the seventh day really is since there have been some calendar changes over the centuries. First, let us realize that if there was a problem locating the true Sabbath, there would also be a problem determining the first day of the week as well. The fact is however, that no calendar change throughout history has ever changed the weekly cycle. The Jews have no difficulty locating the Sabbath, even though they are scattered all over the globe. They still keep the seventh day of every week just as they have throughout their history.

The seventh day today is just the same in the weekly cycle as it was when Jesus observed it when He was walking this earth. We have switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar, but without disruption of the weekly cycle. In 1582, Gregory made a change in order to line up the calendar with the solar system. Ten days had to be dropped out due to the fact that our years are actually eleven minutes longer than 365 1/4 days. Over the centuries those minutes added up to ten full days. The correction was accomplished by simply having Thursday, October 4 followed by Friday, October 15.

Our Lord Jesus is in control. He created the week and He created the Sabbath. He is not going to allow His holy day to be lost. Even though centuries of tradition have obscured the truth, He has always had faithful souls who would not deviate from the plain commandments of God. He is calling a people to repair the breach in these last days before He returns in judgment. That breach is the fourth commandment which has nearly been forgotten, though it is the only one which begins with the word "Remember."

Dear reader, will you choose to stand on the Bible only, or will you follow the crowd in accepting tradition over the Scriptures? Won't you remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy? There is a blessing in it for you. **"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."** Ecclesiastes 12:13.

