

# THE FORGOTTEN DAY

By

DESMOND FORD

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NEWCASTLE Ca. 95658

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Printed in the United States of America

## **DEDICATION**

This book is dedicated to Noel Mason, a true yoke-fellow and preacher of the gospel, who often disagrees with me and who is frequently right.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

For some things of worth in this manuscript that I would have missed, I owe a debt to my friend, Noel Mason. With his usual courtesy, but none the less with obvious concern, he has time and again intimated that I must not skimp this task. He is in no way responsible for the blemishes of the finished work, but he is to be thanked for drawing invaluable materials to my attention.

As ever, I am indebted to my long-suffering wife Gill. An author and a home-spun theologian in her own right, she has yet been content to forego creativity and perform the hack work of preparing this manuscript for photo-printing. This is the fifth lengthy book she has typed for me, and with no housework in return from her debtor. She has tolerated a continuing whirlwind of books and papers and an absent-minded, all absorbed consort, whoever thinks that home is a place for unremitting toil. I know no other woman who would stand it. Occasionally her typing style may seem to strangely falter or change. All such blemishes are her husband's fault. His temperament is so perverse that he ever demands of today's work that it be finished yesterday, if not sooner. Because of this, when the real master (mistress) of the work has had her back turned, and left the typewriter unguarded, he has typed some of the pages. The results are here and there perceivable, and the blame is his alone.

## PREFACE

The following papers on the Sabbath, prepared at different times over the last twenty years, are not written in the style of my Daniel commentary, or university thesis, The Abomination of Desolation in Biblical Eschatology. They are prepared for the wayfaring man on a topic of practical duty--should one, or should one not, be concerned with the fourth commandment? This is no esoteric matter requiring the jargon of professionals, but an issue of such importance that God has made the weight of evidence plain enough for all who really wish to know what is truth, regardless of the extent of their formal education.

I trust that none will mistake simplicity for superficiality. Every Bible passage on the Sabbath has been closely studied by the author for many years. The original languages and the chief commentators have been consulted, as well as practically every work of note on the Sabbath (in English), for the last century and a half.

May I point out that none should be discouraged because this vital question is surrounded by controversy. Such is the hallmark of a significant issue. The existence of God, the divinity of Christ, the truthfulness of Scripture, justification by faith, and a thousand other key topics of vast importance, are all clothed in debate and have been so for millennia. Nevertheless, God's promise is sure. "If a man chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own (John 7:17)." In a sense, every such topic is a test, because those who wish to believe otherwise can always find excuses for so doing. Christ Himself, Who, to outward appearance, was just another Jew, was such a test. Only those hungering for God found Him in His Son. It is even so today.

Nothing in this little book should be understood as teaching that Sabbath-keeping earns the favor of God. It is true that we are saved by the works of perfect law-keeping, but they are Christ's works, not ours. They were accomplished in the first century of our era. Only our Substitute and Surety kept the Sabbath perfectly, and He did so for the whole human race. Those who believe in the Saviour's atonement on the Cross have that perfect Sabbath-keeping imputed to them, and all other obedience required by the eternal law of God. Our imperfect attempts at obedience are a response to the undeserved mercy of the great Judge. "Theology is grace, and ethics is gratitude." As regards salvation, the Sabbath is not primary. But neither is it unnecessary for those who learn of it.

Too often, the form of Sabbath observance has been made to eclipse the substance of rest in Christ. This is tragic, but unnecessary. The reality to which the fourth commandment points no more dispenses with that commandment than the reality of feeding on Christ's merits dispenses with the Lord's Supper.

It is no part of the purpose of this little work to drive a wedge between believers in Christ. Only those who can disagree without being disagreeable should claim the name Christian. The intention of the writer is rather to draw the attention of many of God's children to the fact that they have not claimed all of their inheritance. The Sabbath is a "luxury," according to Isa. 58:13 (original), a gift "for" all men, says Christ in Mk. 2: 27. Only those who observe it as a festival of rejoicing in view of God's gracious works of creation and redemption discover with glad surprise its hidden wealth. Eden once a week, fifty-two Spring days in the year, nerve the spirit for the conflict and service of Christian living. One can say of this day what David said of Goliath's sword: "There is none like it." And like that sword, when in the hand of a true believer, it may be used to fell every giant met on the way to the Celestial city.

On the topic of the eschatological Sabbath-test, the reader may also wish to read my forthcoming commentary on Revelation, called Crisis. But may I take the liberty of insisting that the importance of this issue belongs not primarily to the future but to the now, as with all privileges of duty? The gambler who promises to give up his gambling tomorrow will never give it up. Deciding, loving, sharing, serving -- all belong to the existential moment, the only part of time we ever possess. And it is even so with worship. Because of the Fall we are all eccentric -- i.e. off center, and God is our center. Worship comes from worth-ship, and means the appropriate acknowledgment of true worth. But we have been so "crazed" by sin that worship never seems of vital importance. We relegate it to the minor duties of life, all unaware that according to our attitude to worship all else proceeds.

William James was undeniably right when he wrote:

All natural goods perish. Riches take wings; fame is a breath, love is a cheat; youth and health and pleasure vanish. Can things whose end is always dust and disappointment be the real goods which our souls require? .... We need a life not correlated with death... a kind of good that will not perish, a good in fact that flies beyond the goods of nature. (VRE, 136-137).

"Sometimes a light surprises..." sang one of the poets. Let us once catch a glimpse of the truth that we were made for God, that He is our chief good, that He either matters tremendously or not at all, that He is all-important or not important at all, that to be fully dependent upon Him is to be independent of all else, to once sense this is to realize the supremacy of worship. Then the fourth commandment receives a new luminescence. We perceive that if worship is the acknowledgment that only God can fit the throne of our hearts then there is nothing in life to be given precedence over our adoration of Him, and a regular appointed time for worship must have been provided by our Maker. It is because men are so blind regarding God that the importance of the fourth word in the Decalogue has not been recognized. Once grant with William James that all other "goods" are dependent upon Him and useless apart from Him -- then sanity returns, and we shall only ask concerning time -- life's staple what has God decreed concerning its ordering? Gen. 1:1-2:3 & Ex. 20:8-11 tell us.

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## THE FORGOTTEN DAY

It is the one thing that cannot be evaded by either James the genius or Max the moron. Rich man, poor man, butcher, baker, or candlestick maker--all must face it continually. It leaps upon us; the second awareness dawns each day while we are yet lying in bed, and only the insane can contemplate without trembling this aspect of existence--the constant, inevitable demand for decision.

What philosophers call "the terrible choice" is forced upon us moment by moment with all that it subsequently entails of joy and sorrow. To give vent to love or hate, to give or to take, to seek for first place or last, to add or detract from the burdens of others, to worship God or to bow low at the shrine of things, to indulge in the passions of mind and body, or to deny oneself for the sake of service are typical instances.

Right now the world is dying because of wrong human choices, and most mortals are unhappy for the same reason. Is there a magic formula--a formula of truth which if applied in every choice would reverse the tide of misery and loss? Many with Pilate of long ago ask either jeeringly or in despair, "What is truth?" Such questions are the most relevant that could be asked. Is there something which can unerringly guide us in behavior? Can basic truth be found in such a simple form as to unerringly indicate the way we ought to turn in every fork of life? What do we most need to know in order to choose aright? Furthermore, is there any way of riveting such truth that it be not obliterated by the multiplicity of other impressions pouring in upon heart and mind daily?

Our problem is therefore twofold--first, discovering truth's hub (rather than its billion peripheries) so that our conduct can be made to radiate therefrom, creating a balanced wheel of progress; and second, somehow guaranteeing the constant pre-eminence in the mind of such truth, remembering it despite the ebb and flow of experience and feeling.

Evangelist Billy Graham summed up the convictions of most Christian thinkers when at a recent rally he declared that the two things man needs most to know are (1) the nature of the One who created and orders the universe, and (2) the nature of man himself. This is truth's hub. This is the guide and the magic formula we seek. A person drowning just a few yards away from a life belt is not concerned with infinitesimal calculus or even primarily with the science of hydraulics as such. How to lay hold on life is the primary need. The hungry do not need instruction in weather cycles and the causes of lessening tillage so much as they need food. When our souls ask bread, dare we offer them serpents?

That is why when God came down to earth four thousand years ago and spoke from Sinai, His revelation concerned the hub of truth. The keys to the ever-present problem of choosing aright were then handed down. The Lawgiver spoke of Himself as Creator and Redeemer, a God who personified that righteousness which the Ten Commandments describe. He sketched man's nature by revealing him as a dependent creature prone to evil in the various ways elaborated by the respective enactments, yet one who, by divine grace, could come to know the prohibitions as promises of a holy life available to him.

Right in the bosom of that law God placed a unique commandment, one enshrining in symbol and parable the main essentials of knowledge for created beings and commemorating forever the towering pillars of existence, namely creation and redemption. This commandment is one which man would never have thought out for himself, a commandment which if observed would guarantee right human behavior by steering aright every choice of life. It is one which answers all of man's primary questions and simultaneously points the way to happiness here and hereafter. No wonder the Scripture refers to it as holy, blessed, and honorable. And because of its supreme importance, to this section only of the divine code the word "remember" was appended.

Note the words of God:

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20:8-11.

How tragic that the one commandment that God specifically asked man to remember he has forgotten most of all!! Years ago when mules were used in the mines of Pennsylvania, a gentleman passing by noticed the animals in the field nearby and inquired the reason. "These mules are worked in the mines through the week, and they are brought up into the light on the Sabbath to keep them from going blind," he was told. The application is apparent. The stubborn addiction of man to earthly things and his neglect of the Sabbath requirement which God placed in the bosom of His law have led to spiritual blindness and sorrow.

Here, then, is a law that reveals the things man needs most to know--that he has an all-loving, all-powerful heavenly Father, and that he as the creature needs regularly to cease from the engrossment with things that he might direct his thoughts above. Is it not strange that today men can regularly violate God's express rule in this regard and still be accepted everywhere as men of character and esteem? How appropriate, how farseeing, was God's introductory word in His fourth commandment--"Remember"!

The Lord Himself has told us that Sabbath observance and the correct ordering of the rest of life go together. Note the words entrusted to the gospel prophet: "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" (Isa. 56:2).

Consider also the declaration of God to Ezekiel: "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" (Eze. 20:12). Thus Scripture declares that a sanctified life inevitably springs from true Sabbath observance. Many theologians have commented upon this relationship. Robert Haldane wrote as follows:

The fourth commandment is closely connected with the other commandments; but so far from having any Jewish origin, it is the first and only commandment announced in the opening of the sacred record, and was imposed on our first parents in their state of uprightness and innocence. It thus stands in a peculiar manner at the head of all the commandments, and involves in its breach the abandonment equally of the first and second tables of the decalogue. It is placed at the end of the first table, as the tenth is at the end of the second, as the safeguard of all the rest. It stands between the two tables of our duty to God and our duty to man, as the

great foundation and cornerstone binding both together--its observance supporting and conducing to our obedience to the whole.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the world's misery may be attributed to the fact that humanity has forgotten that commandment which above all the rest would have proved of infinite blessing to the race. To quote Justin Edwards: "Had all men properly kept the Sabbath all would have known Jehovah, and worshipped from the creation of the world to the present time, and idolatry would never have been practised on the earth." Think of it--a world without heathenism, idolatry, or atheism! A world without any "dark Africas" or superstitious Easts. Instead of over fifteen hundred million inhabitants of earth being without the gospel, God could have been acknowledged from "sun to sun."

Universal Sabbath observance, by preserving a knowledge of God and truth, would have made war impossible and crime almost unknown. It would have made every home akin to the first home of Eden and life on earth a mirror of the heaven above. God, in love for our souls, commanded, "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy," because He knew that our greatest need would be to remember daily, hourly, moment by moment, what He is and what we are--that all power is His, and that we are dependent upon Him for life, physical and spiritual.

It is impossible to forget the Sabbath without gradually swinging toward either the pride of Lucifer or the grossness of the beast. This fact explains the bestiality of our modern world. Men and women behave as those who have forgotten their divine origin. They act indeed as the descendants of mollusks and anthropoids. To forget the Sabbath is to make God hazy--a sort of oblong blur instead of a towering reality, giving perspective to all else and marking out the abyss between right and wrong in daily behavior. Men and women are trying to fill the God-shaped blank in their hearts by all sorts of substitutes--the very experience the Sabbath was ordained to prevent. Our sad, chaotic era is the result of forgetting God, a tragedy that observance of the fourth commandment could have averted.

All primary human questionings find their answer in the Sabbath. The late philosopher Edward G. Spaulding said there are only three main questions that every age must ask: (1) "From what source do we come?" (2) "Toward what goal do we rightly move?" (3) "Why?" The Sabbath answers all three. It declares (1) that we come from a loving heavenly Father who wishes to share His joy, (2) that ultimately our world will become like the sinless Eden which the holy memorial commemorates, and (3) that the reason for our existence is that we might become like our Maker in righteous character, even as it was a man in the image of God who first enjoyed Sabbath communion with Him.

How well adapted to man's nature is this benevolent gift of a holy day! Its chief importance is not that it meets man's physical needs for rest, but that it meets his needs as a spiritual creature.

A busy editorial writer, whose eyes began to trouble her, was obliged to visit a specialist. She told him she thought she needed a new pair of glasses, but the specialist replied that her real need was not new spectacles but rest for the eyes. The woman responded that such was impossible, for her work compelled her to sit all day bending over a desk reading and writing. Upon enquiring where she lived and finding that it was in full sight of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the Alleghenies, the specialist advised her, "Go home and do your work as usual, but every hour or so leave your desk and go stand on your porch and look at the mountains. The far-away look will rest your eyes after the long strain of reading manuscripts and proofsheets." This is exactly what Sabbaths are for--they are the faraway looks that rest, sustain, and inspire the soul.

D. M. Canright once wrote:

Deprive society wholly of this weekly rest-day; abolish your Sabbath-schools, prayer meetings, and regular sermons; let work of all kinds and classes go on seven days in the week, and what would society be? If you want to know, go to heathen lands where they have entirely forgotten the Sabbath, and behold their ignorance, superstition, degradation, and crime. That is just what would follow, in any nation, the abolition of the weekly rest-day.<sup>2</sup>

The Sabbath, by putting all things in true perspective, meets that need of the soul to worship and adore the highest good. Worship comes from "worthship." The distinction between Creator and creature is marked out by creation's memorial, and weekly the reminder is afforded that none of the things made are adequate to satisfy the human spirit, and therefore they should never receive first place in the soul's adoration.

It is as though God had said to Adam after his creation on the sixth day, "Adam, behold this wonderful world--full of objects animate and inanimate which call for admiration; but beware--none of them, nor all of them, can satisfy you, not even Eve. You were made for Me, your heart can find rest only in Me, its source; therefore let us spend your first whole day together as a pattern for your life hereafter."

At that juncture God ushered in sacred time with the glory of the first sunset Adam had ever seen (Lev. 23:32). What a wonderful time that first whole day of existence must have been for Adam and Eve! They walked and talked with their Maker and found in Him their fountain of joy and their source of truth and strength. That first Sabbath was God's acted-out invitation to all men to find their rest in Him.

We have no excuse for forgetting God's holy day. It is the very first institution recorded in Scripture. Nothing precedes it in the Bible except the description of the six days' work of creation. As soon as God had made man, He made provision that man should never forget the basic knowledge he needed for making decisions--that knowledge that pertains to God's nature as the all-loving, all-powerful Creator and the knowledge of the creature as finite and dependent.

The New Testament indicates that God's holy day is a memorial not only of creation but also of redemption. Jesus on the sixth day of His last week of redemption cried, "It is finished," and then rested. He could have risen the next day, but He chose to rest in death that Sabbath, as He had rested each Sabbath of His life. Henceforth, every Sabbath would be a reminder of the finished work of redemption--a memorial of the Creator's love manifested in the re-creation of redemption.

The Sabbath thus becomes an emblem of our peace in Christ through His completed work of atonement, a seal of righteousness by faith, for the essence of faith is the looking away to Another in acknowledgement of one's creaturely dependence.

Throughout His ministry Christ risked His life and work in order to rescue the Sabbath from its Pharisaic ceremonies. Seven miracles of His on the Sabbath are recorded. To quote Henry Law:

As "Lord of the Sabbath" He is supreme but He puts forth no abrogating power when He states its purport to be the good of man. "The sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. This is a mighty word. It looks backward--onward. It seems to say, it always has been, for man always had need. It always shall be, for man will always need. Thus Jesus decks the Sabbath with undying freshness.<sup>3</sup>

It is of great interest for the student of Christ's life to note that the Edenic institutions of the Sabbath and marriage Christ labored untiringly to redeem from human perversion. Thus He condemned Pharisaical Sabbath-keeping and traditions which made light of the family relationships. (See Mt. 12, 15, 19; Mark 2.) Our Lord did nothing like this for any of the ceremonial requirements which were soon to vanish away, but He recognized in the Sabbath and marriage the twin legacies of Eden and the foundations of society and morality.

It is significant indeed that Christ's last reference to the Sabbath is similar in spirit to the emphasis He had given in Eden and at Sinai regarding remembering that holy institution. In His sermon regarding the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world, Jesus bade His followers to pray regularly concerning their observance of the Sabbath. "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day," said Jesus (Mt. 24:20). Winter flight would be arduous for the body, but Sabbath flight would be bitter to the soul, as being contrary to the design of that holy day.

In the same sermon Christ says, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lu. 21:34). These statements are complementary. Christ is warning those who live amid the worldliness of time's last hour that in order to be ready for His appearing, in order to avoid the snare of engrossment with earthly matters, they need regularly to pray that their Sabbath-keeping might be all that God intended it should be.

To us who live on the eve of the fulfillment of this great second advent prophecy Christ's words should come home with challenge. Do we now hallow that sacred day which our Creator and Redeemer sanctified for all men for all time? Do we daily experience the blessing of the Sabbath, the rest of spirit through faith in Christ that the physical Sabbath rest symbolizes? Are all our decisions motivated by the knowledge of God's goodness and holiness and our own creaturely dependence upon Him? Can we be numbered among His disciples who "remember" Him and His law of love and His holy memorial, or do we like the Egyptian butler forget the One who has saved us from death?

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, p. 699.
2. The Morality of the Sabbath, pp. 26, 27.
3. Christ is All, p. 101.

## THREE SECRETS OF HAPPY LIVING

It has often been said that the person who never makes a mistake never makes anything. This being true, many of us have wondered why two lives have not been granted to us--one life to learn how to live, and the other to live. Reviewing our past, we seem to have taken years to learn a lesson which if learned earlier could have saved us tears and woe, sadness and confusion. Why does it have to be this way? Why must we learn the hard way through our mistakes? Why hasn't God done something about this problem--or has He?

Suppose someone were to broadcast that tonight at eight o'clock God Himself would appear over your city to give a two-minute message. What word would you hope He might give? How to cure cancer? How to prevent World War III? Or ... But, do you remember, there was a time when God did come down to earth and give a two-minute message. There was a time when He came down in the midst of the assembled multitudes and spoke audibly to mankind. Upon what subject did He choose to speak? As our Maker He would surely know the best news to convey, the information that you and I need most.

Listen! He speaks, saying, "I am the Lord Thy God."

"Oh, yes," you say, "the old Ten Commandments."

No, God did not just give ten commands. When God came down before the multitude, He gave to sinful man some of the most important truths he could ever comprehend. He revealed some of the basic secrets of the universe. When God came down, He gave to mankind a blueprint for living, which, if you and I had understood earlier, would have saved us most of our mistakes and sorrows. It would not have been necessary for us to blunder as we have through life, because on that occasion God came to tell us how to live. Let us notice a few of the secrets that God unveiled when He spoke at Sinai.

First of all, He revealed the greatest secret of the universe. It may seem commonplace, yet it is possibly the most fundamental fact of all and the most vital truth for human beings to understand. What is it? That this universe, this whole universe, is run by law, not luck, and that the person who obeys these laws will endure for as long as the universe endures. This is lesson number one, secret number one, that God gave when He came down on Mount Sinai--that the whole universe is run by law, not chance. Chance is atheism. There is no chance. Life is not casual. Life is causal. Our condition today and tomorrow is inevitably tied up with our obedience or disobedience to natural law.

All life has a cause-and-effect relationship, a sowing and a reaping consequence, and happiness depends on obedience to law. Sorrow comes through transgressing that law, whether we know the law or not. It is like traveling through a new city, or perhaps a new country, and breaking a traffic regulation without knowing it. As a stranger there, I appear before the court and say, "Well, I didn't know anything about the law. I am a stranger." Does the judge say, "You're pardoned"? No. He says, "Ignorance of the law is no excuse. Fined fifty dollars!" Because you and I have been ignorant of so many laws of the universe, we have made many blunders, and we are still paying the fines.

When the Apostle Paul says, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," he means that life is run by law. Pharaoh caused the boys among the Israelites to be drowned, and he was drowned himself when the Red Sea rolled back on those chariots pursuing the Israelites. Jacob deceived his father about his father's favorite son. The years rolled by, and Jacob was deceived about his favorite son by his boys. Jacob showed a crafty spirit when he conspired to get the birthright, but in time crafty old Laban put it all over him. Jacob deceived by putting upon himself the skins of a goat to deceive his father; he, in turn, was deceived by his boys, who took the coat of his son and dipped it in the blood of a goat.

Haman prepared a gallows for Mordecai, but he swung from it himself. King Asa put a prophet in the stocks, but Asa died of a disease in the feet. Sowing and reaping, cause and effect--the breaking of a law brings an immediate reaction. This is the teaching of Scripture and of life. This is the first thing God told the world at Sinai--that the universe is run by law. What does it mean? It means that all men ought to be concerned about two things: (1) to find out the laws of God, and (2) to obey them.

The second secret God revealed was that to be happy for time and eternity, we must put first first. Notice--not first things first. Things come last. The second secret of the happy life and successful living is to put first first. How did God tell us that? By His introduction. What did He say first at Sinai? "I am the Lord thy God." What commandments did He give first? The ones that pertain to Him. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." "Remember the sabbath... of the Lord thy God."

What did God put first? Worship--relationship to Him. The Bible begins with God: "In the beginning God." The Lord's Prayer begins this way: "Our Father." The Ten Commandments begin this way. God is trying to teach us to put first first--not first things first, but to put God first. He comes before things. Most people turn the tables around. They put things first, and then if there is a little time left over, that is for God.

The greatest fact of our life is God. The real environment we live in is the unseen environment. The greater part of the universe is unseen. The Bible says that what we see when we look up in the heavens and sight Orion and all the other great constellations are but the outskirts of His ways (Job 26:14). The real universe is unseen. It consists of millions upon millions of angelic hosts, of myriads upon myriads of sinless beings, and most of all--of God. And so the next secret to be learned after the discovery that the universe is run by law is that we must put first first, and the unseen is first--the unseen God.

We find it difficult to trust God because we put things first and God last. We put the feasible and the tangible first, and we put the invisible last. We have been breaking this law ever since we have been breathing, and this is why we have so many troubles. We put the seen first and the unseen last. But secret number two in learning to live is to put first first, and God is first. He is the only One to whom we are answerable.

God is going to say to many in the judgment, "You were a good parent. You did all you could for your children in material ways; you gave them food and clothing and sent them to the best schools. You were good citizens, good husbands, and good wives, but Me--the Author of your being, who gave you life, who sustained you moment by moment, who covered your head in the hour of battle, who protected you

from dangers you knew not of--Me, the Author of your being, your Creator and Sustainer--you never asked My counsel. You never thanked Me for blessings; you never even bowed your head to say thanks for your daily food. Me you have neglected. Me you have not gotten to know. And seeing you have not gotten to know Me in time, you cannot live with Me in eternity, because you are not ready."

God will say that to many a person who outwardly is a person of excellent reputation.

God is our real environment. He must come first. Worship is primary in life. It should be primary in every Christian's day. There is no such thing as a Christian family that neglects family worship, that neglects the turning of the heart to God first thing in the day, and the directing of the children's minds to God first thing in the day.

God is to be first--first with our time, first with our energy, first with our talents. If we give Him the chips instead of the logwood, if we give Him seconds instead of hours and days, can we expect that He will give us back eternity? If we give Him leftover nickels and dimes, can we expect that He will give us the true riches? If His main business is saving sinners, and we are not active in His business, would we be comfortable with Him in eternity?

Then the third great secret that God gave at Sinai was that people are more important than things. This is a hard truth to learn. It is very hard for a housewife to learn this, even more difficult perhaps than for the husband of the home, because the housewife has to deal with so many things. The house must be just right. "Yes, so-and-so is ill and should be visited, but I couldn't leave my house like this!" It is hard to put people ahead of things. Yet this we must do. God did.

Notice where things are mentioned in the Ten Commandments--last. "Thou shalt not covet... any thing that is thy neighbour's." This is the last commandment. This is where things come in--last. The law begins with God, then it moves on to our relationship with our fellow beings, and at the end it puts things. Do you know why the rich fool was a fool? Because he was engrossed in things. Now, it must be admitted that things are a lot easier to handle than people. It is far easier to handle wood, or stone, or soil, than to deal with a cantankerous human being. But the easiest course is often the wrong one, and it is so in this instance.

Then let us underline the third truth that God desires to tell us: that people are more important than things, more important than houses and money, more important than cars, more important than possessions. We will be like the rich fool if we put things ahead of people. Would it not be a good idea for us to do some stocktaking? Where, for example, does my time go? How much to things? How much to people? How much to God? Where does my energy go? So much to things, so much to people. The outcome might be a revelation. Perhaps it would save our souls at last if we were to do some stocktaking such as this.

In His mercy, God has put in the heart of the Decalogue an ordinance calculated to help us remember the three secrets of happiness. The Sabbath is God's gift to His people. It is called a "delight" (or as the original means, a "luxury"). Isa. 58:13. What a tremendous blessing to have the incursions of the world, or otherwise incessant labor, warded off! All who keep the Sabbath are reminded continually of heaven's secrets of, abiding joy. As we acknowledge the Creator and think of the marvels of His work, we perceive everywhere the interweaving of law. Because the holy day provides time for rewarding relationships with other people, beginning with the members of our own family, we are also regularly reminded that people are more important than things. But most of all, the Sabbath is a challenge to make God ever first in our planning and doing. Those who spend weekly an entire day in remembrance of Him are thus enabled to give God His right place all week long. Sabbath-keepers should be the happiest people on earth.

Let no one ever convince you that God gave only commandments on Sinai, or that His revelation there was intended merely for the Jews till the cross. No! In love to us, God unveiled the fundamental secrets of the universe--He gave instructions for all men for all time regarding how to live so as to secure the greatest unalloyed happiness.

In the message from Sinai, God has taught us (1) that our happiness depends upon obedience to law, (2) that such obedience necessitates a hierarchy of values, the placing of God before all else, and (3) that we must place people before things. No wonder the psalmist exclaimed, "Oh, how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day." "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver" (Psa. 119:97, 72).

# GOD'S ALL-EMBRACING SIGN AND ITS PARTICULAR RELEVANCE FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

W. E. Sangster wrote:

He who would abolish symbols altogether must never again shake hands with a friend, or kiss his child, or raise his hat to a lady, or revere and salute his country's flag. Lift all this to a divine level! Think of a Cross, and Bread and Wine... and all impulses to a cavalier dismissal of ritual will die.

Sangster has rightly perceived the necessity of symbols to mirror truth, and the first references in Scripture to "sign" agree with his conviction. Gen. 1:14; 4:15; 9:12; 17:11; Ex. 4:8; 8:23; 12:13; 13:9; 31:17 speak of the sun and moon, the mark placed upon Cain, the rainbow, circumcision, the wonders Moses was enabled to work before Israel and Pharaoh, the law of the Passover, and the Sabbath. The signs of God warn (Gen. 1:14); protect (Gen. 4:15); symbolize. They are declared to have a voice (Ex. 4:8); to distinguish a person or thing from other people or things (Ex. 8:23); to memorialize the gracious works of God (Ex. 13:9).

Christ Himself is called a "sign" (Lu. 2: 34), and he fulfills all the purposes of other Scriptural signs. He, as the Living Word, symbolizes and embodies the truth of God. He warns as with a voice from heaven. He separates or distinguishes the true followers of God from all others and protects them. We are reminded that even the new covenant age has its signs which include first of all our Saviour, but then the minor signs of the Lord's Supper, Baptism, and the Sabbath. Mt. 26:26ff.; 28:19; Mk. 2:27, 28; Lu. 23:56.

Some have questioned whether the Sabbath remains a sign in this era and to that important issue we now turn.

The Lord then gave these further instructions to Moses: "Tell the people of Israel to rest on my Sabbath day, for the Sabbath is a reminder of the covenant between me and you forever; it helps you to remember that I am Jehovah who makes you holy. Yes, rest on the Sabbath, for it is holy. Anyone who does not obey this command must die; anyone who does any work on that day shall be killed. Work six days only, for the seventh day is a special day of solemn rest, holy to the Lord. This law is a perpetual covenant and obligation for the people of Israel. It is an eternal symbol of the covenant between me and the people of Israel, For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and rested on the seventh day, and was refreshed." Ex. 31:12-17 (Living Bible)

And I gave them the Sabbath--a day of rest every seventh day--as a symbol between them and me, to remind them that it is I, the Lord, who sanctifies them, that they are truly my people.

...hallow my sabbaths; for they are a symbol of the contract between us to help you remember that I am the Lord your God. Eze. 20:12, 20 (Living Bible)

But the Sabbath was made to benefit man, and not man to benefit the Sabbath. Mk. 2:27 (Living Bible)

So there is a full complete rest still waiting for the people of God. Heb. 4:9 (Living Bible)

None can doubt that the Sabbath was the first religious sign entrusted to the human race. Man's first whole day was the Sabbath, and Karl Barth is unquestionably correct when he says that Genesis teaches that mankind kept the holy day from the hour of God's Edenic blessing upon it--a blessing which applied to all future Sabbath days inasmuch as the original Sabbath rest was already in the past when God proclaimed His hallowing benediction. "To bless," in the Genesis context (as Lange's commentary tells us) "means to wish for, and to promise one infinite multiplications in the same course of life." The blessed day becomes "an inexhaustible fountain of re-creation." (Delitzsch)

As many scholars, both Jewish and Christian have seen, the chief purpose of the opening narrative of creation is to point to the holy day of communion between God and man. The unhurried deliberate mode of creation wove the sabbath into the fabric of the universe and brought forth a man who like the earth itself was made on the seven-day principle. As lord over the earth, the steward of the Almighty with entrusted dominion, the son of man would reflect the earth from which he was taken and the Creator Himself by adherence to a work-rest cycle akin to the One who gave Him both life and home. Kissed awake by God on the sixth day, the first day of which men saw the evening and the dawn was the special day which symbolized all the main truths he needed to know. All of which together constitutes too broad a platform than only for the Jewish race alone. Because the Sabbath was born at Creation, it is of perpetual obligation for all who inhabit that manufactured globe. To no other event does Scripture ever trace this hallowed institution.

It should never be forgotten that it was the Son of God who rested on that primeval Sabbath. Seven times the N.T. tells us that Christ created all things. So nothing can ever change the fact that the testimony of Scripture is that Christ's Sabbath day is that seventh day on which He ceased from His work of creating the world. It can no more cease to be true or be subject to change than our own birthday. The seventh day was, is, and ever will be, the day on which Christ rested.

The seventh day is not introduced like the others. There is no "let..." With majestic cadence the record tells of God's acted out invitation to His children to ever find their rest and satisfaction in Him alone. The Almighty according to Isa. 40:28 never wearies. His rest is for the sake of His creatures and it is spiritual. Time not space is hallowed as a test for all who thereafter might claim to belong to the Eternal. Time is intangible and invisible and is therefore suitable as a test of spiritual sight.

L. F. Ware has summed up this truth beautifully:

The Sabbath was not intended to be confined to Palestine, but being a spiritual institution, it is for all time, and for all people. See Mk. 2:27, 28; Isa. 66:22, 23. By its very nature it must be as universal, and as enduring as the unseen things, which are eternal. 2 Cor. 4:18. Time is both intangible and universal. The seventh day, continually recurring in our material existence, lifts our minds beyond the things of sense, to the invisible Creator of all. This invisible memorial of the Creator's power and goodness appeals to our spirituality. It is presented as the crucial test of obedience to the spiritual. By observing the Sabbath, we subordinate the demands of the material world to those of the invisible and spiritual.

Grasping after material things will not satisfy the craving for the spiritual which God, the infinite Spirit, has placed within us. While there is a fever for material things, there will be unrest of heart and mind. The Israelites established their hopes upon material things, and could not enter God's "rest." In Hebrews 3 and 4 Paul shows the relationship between Sabbath observance, present spiritual rest, and eternal rest. Journeying to the promised land, the Israelites looked forward to a physical rest from the toils of the pilgrimage and the trials of the desert. Many were materially minded, and lived for the things of sense and, consequently, did not enjoy rest of spirit, while looking forward to the rest of body to come. After all their anxious expectancy, most of the pilgrims, because of unbelief or disobedience, did not enter the promised land.

Through faith and obedience we obtain present rest of heart and mind, while looking forward to eternal rest. This "rest" is illustrated by Sabbath-keeping: physical toil is laid aside, and the heart and mind commune with God, being lifted beyond earthly things to contemplate the invisible, and the eternal. The Sabbath is the trysting time of the spirit of man with his Creator. The Sabbath rest is the consummation of that spiritual rest enjoyed throughout the week

The Israelites' pilgrimage across the desert is employed in the New Testament to picture the saints' pilgrimage across life's desert to the promised land. 1 Pet. 2:10, 11. The Sabbath rest, which is the weekly entering into "that rest" of God by both body and spirit, foreshadows the eternal rest awaiting the tired pilgrims at the end of the journey. What the Sabbath is to the week, so eternity is to a life's journey. The certainty of eternal rest is assured by the rest of spirit which comes through faith and a life of obedience. "Rest" begins the moment we believe. Matt. 11:28, 29. As spiritual rest must precede the physical rest of Sabbath-keeping, so must there be spiritual rest on earth before the eternal rest of body, soul and spirit in the future kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

This first seventh day was the proper complement of creation. It was the seal of heaven placed upon its beauty and perfection. As the primeval religious ordinance, it becomes the sign of God's everlasting covenant to bless men, and is repeatedly called His sign hereafter. Unlike circumcision and the rainbow, this sign antedates the Fall, and therefore knows no end. Thus there is no "evening" recorded for this original Sabbath as it points to the everlasting rest, and the continuing significance of the Sabbath even in the earth made new. Isa. 66:22, 23; Heb. 4:9.

Thus before a single page of human history is recorded, or a single act of Adam chronicled, Scripture sets before us the ordinance of the Sabbath. Its primacy and importance is clearly taught. In this record, the Creator is called Elohim. The name relates God to the universal world (Gen. 1:1), not just to Israel. In the record of the Decalogue similarly, we are told that "God" (Elohim) spake all these words--not Yahweh (the name by which He was known to Israel alone).

So in the very opening of Scripture we have the Sabbath brought to view as a sign for all mankind in all ages. Consider how impressive even to heavenly beings, to see by anticipation the fulfillment of God's intention in the whole rational creation emptying its hands every seventh day, standing still as it were looking up to God! What better sign could there be, or acknowledgement that all human beings have a common Lord and Master above.

Theology is the study of the nature of God, the nature of man, and the relations between the two. Think then how intensely theological is this Edenic symbolism! But for the Sabbath seal of creation, how would man have known what God was, or himself? Was God some strange hovering bird with a flashing eye in His forehead? No, he was a loving heavenly Father who had made all things for His children, and Who longed for fellowship with those made in His image.

And as for man--the Sabbath tells us who he is. He alone of all creatures can worship. He is surrounded by beautiful things, but by the Sabbath he is reminded that while "without things man cannot live, he who lives for things alone is not a man." All man's primary questions are answered by the Sabbath institution.-- "Who am I?" "From whence did I come?" "Where am I going?" "How do I get there?" find their answer in this Edenic ordinance. Man is the child of God, made in the image of God. Like God, he is to work and then find satisfaction in his work, and refreshment. Every rest day will witness to something worthwhile accomplished. Man's work will always tend towards perfection, like the creative work of God. But he is to learn to stop, and find fellowship with his Maker long before his ultimate ideal is realized. Thus God becomes his God indeed, instead of some "thing" secured or accomplished. As the first face man saw was that of God, and his first whole day the Sabbath, so the vision of God is the end of life. The Sabbath reminds the creature of his chief characteristic--dependence upon the Life-giver. Worship is thus made primary for those in the image of God. The very first conflict on earth is over worship (Gen. 4) and the last (Rev. 13). Worship means worship--giving priority to God in all matters.

When all the biblical testimony regarding the Sabbath is considered one begins to glimpse the many-faceted nature of its symbolism. These fifty-two Spring days in the year which "afford a shelter to grow ripe and a leisure to grow wise," testify to all the main truths man needs to know for effective living. When this is understood it will also be seen that to be without the Sabbath would be like a homestead without a garden and a man without a smile.

Since the Fall, the holy day symbolizes also the gospel. As man's first whole day was one of rest, so his constant attitude must be one of resting in God, not in his own achievements.

In thy strong Hand, I lay me down,  
So shall the work be done,  
For who can work so wondrously,  
As the Almighty One.  
(Hudson Taylor)

Each recurring Sabbath since sin has reminded the forgetful sinner of the things he needs most to know--who he is, who God is, the origin of all things, the objective of all things, the way to all things--worship. And all those truths challenged by the scepticism of a technological age find their embodiment in Sabbath-keeping. The reality of the supernatural, the supreme calling of worship, the imago dei in man, the gracious invitation of the Creator to rest in Him alone, the necessity for a hierarchy of values, the inadequacy of all material things for the human heart, the certainty of the ultimate restoration of Eden, the stewardship of man and the inevitability of duty, the divine pattern of work and rest as the guide for behavior, the necessity of resisting with persistent regularity (by means of worship) the encroachment of worldliness, covetousness, greed and selfish ambition.

Abraham Heschel has beautifully expressed some of the meaning of the Sabbath sign thus.

Exodus 20:8 says, 'and do all thy work.' Is it possible for a human being to do all his work in six days? Does not our work always remain incomplete? What the verse means to convey is: "rest on the Sabbath as if all your work were done."

This then is the answer to the problem of civilization; not to flee from the realm of space; to work with things of space, but to be in love with eternity. Things are our tools; eternity, the Sabbath is our mate.

At the beginning time was one, eternal. But time undivided, and time eternal, would be unrelated to the world of space, so time was divided into seven days. Every day of the week was given a mate, but for the Sabbath, Israel was to be its mate. The Hebrew word "sanctify" means, in the language of the Talmud, to consecrate a woman or to betroth.

The Sabbath comes like a caress, wiping away fear, sorrow, sombre memories. That the Sabbath and eternity are one is an ancient idea. It is an example of the world to come. Unless one learns how to relish the taste of Sabbath while still in this world, ... one will be unable to enjoy the taste of eternity in the world to come. The good is the base, the holy is the summit. Things created in six days God considered good, the seventh day he made holy.

The Sabbath is not for the sake of the week days--the week days are for the sake of the Sabbath. It is not an interlude but a climax of living.

\* \* \* \*

The Sabbath is an opportunity to mend our tattered lives; to collect rather than to dissipate time. Labour without dignity is the cause of misery; rest without spirit is a source of depravity....

The Sabbath preceded creation and the Sabbath completed creation; it is all of the spirit that the world can bear....

What was created on the seventh day? Tranquillity, serenity, peace, and repose. For the seventh day is the armistice in man's cruel struggle for existence, a truce in all conflicts, personal and social, peace between man and man, man and nature, peace within man. The seventh day is the Exodus from tension, the liberation of man from his own muddiness, the installation of man as a sovereign in the world of time.<sup>2</sup>

While animals live only in the present without regrets for the past, or aspirations for the future, man like God Himself, lives in the whole realm of time--the past, the present, the future. And the Sabbath is relevant for each of these. It points backwards to God's original grace in creation. It has present relevance for man's regular work, rest, and worship, and it also prefigures the restoration of Eden--the eschatological goal legally achieved at the Cross but consummated by the second Advent of Christ.

Geerhardus Vos writes as follows on this subject:

Before all other important things, therefore, the Sabbath is an expression of the eschatological principle on which the life of humanity has been constructed. There is to be to the world-process a finale, as there was an overture, and these two belong inseparably together. To give up the one means to give up the other, and to give up either means to abandon the fundamental scheme of Biblical history. Even among Jewish teachers this profound meaning of the Sabbath was not entirely unknown. One of them, being asked what the world to come would be like, answered that it would resemble the Sabbath.... The Epistle to the Hebrews has given us a philosophy of the Sabbath on the largest of scales, partly in dependence on Ps. 95 (Heb. 3, 4).

The Sabbath brings this principle of the eschatological structure of history to bear upon the mind of man after a symbolical and a typical fashion. It teaches its lesson through the rhythmical succession of six days of labour and one ensuing day of rest in each successive week. Man is reminded in this way that life is not an aimless existence, that a goal lies beyond. This was true before, and apart from, redemption. The eschatological is an older strand in revelation than the soteric. The so-called 'Covenant of Works' was nothing but an embodiment of the Sabbatical principle. Had its probation been successful, then the sacramental Sabbath would have passed over into the reality it typified, and the entire subsequent course of the history of the race would have been radically different. What now is to be expected at the end of this world would have formed the beginning of the world-course instead.

The connection of the Sabbath with Eschatology should not be passed over lightly. The seventh day prefigures the ultimate perfection of all things as well as the primeval perfection of creation. The Hebrew root for seven signifies fullness, perfection, completeness, and the Bible opens with a seven as a token that the first creation was very good, but it closes with about fifty sevens to indicate that a new creation which will be perfect is coming.

The man who kept the first Sabbath beamed from his brow the holiness of God. Gen. 1:26. This holiness was reflected in the miter of Israel's high-priest (Ex. 28:36; Zech. 3:5) and becomes inherent in the redeemed at glorification. In the eschatological conflict over worship the righteous are sealed with the divine seal of protection as were the remnant of Israel and their priestly representatives, before the fall of apostate Jerusalem. Compare Rev. 14:1 and Eze. 9:4. The wicked are marked also for they reflect the character of Satan (Rev. 13:16--mark=charagma; cf. Heb. 1:8, character or image), as surely as those with the seal in their foreheads reflect the holiness of the Creator. In Eze. 9, the word for mark is the Hebrew tau, the last sign of the alphabet, and the symbol of the Cross. Like the number seven, tau signifies completeness and the end.

It should be observed that the eschatological conflict, like the first dispute among worldlings, is over worship. The issue is whether the creature (the beast and his image) or the Creator is to have man's obedience. The righteous "keep the commandments of God" as well as "the faith of Jesus" and they "worship Him that made heaven and earth and the sea." They have by perfect imputation and by the beginnings of sanctification the original imago dei of the first Sabbath-keeper.

This passage of Scripture on the final conflict is modelled on what happened in the days of the O.T. Antichrist--Antiochus Epiphanes--when apostates who broke the Sabbath and refused to read the Torah were compelled to wear the ivy-wreath as the symbol of a false god. See 2 Macc. 6:7.

As the Sabbath is the keystone of the Decalogue, so its truth supports and interlocks all other doctrine. To understand eschatology one must ever have recourse to protology. Creation is the basis of worship, and the Sabbath is the sign that creation for its stewards runs by law. Broken law invokes judgment at the end of all things.

Every life-view depends upon a world-view and both have implicit within them a view of the original beginning and the final end. As Carl Henry says: "Every life-view has implicit within it some concept of the end; the choice narrows to one or another species of apocalyptic morality."<sup>4</sup> He goes on to show that this even applies to the saying: "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." The words of Robert Mackintosh are also significant. "The infinite gulf between right and wrong would be hidden if we ceased to think of the infinite contrast between heaven and outer darkness."<sup>5</sup> Because the Sabbath points to both the beginning and end of time, it has relevance for both eschatology and ethics.

But more yet. The Sabbath undergirds faith for the present. Langdon Gilkey rightly reminds us that men feel that their fortunes and lives are subject to His will. "Only a Creator of all can be the guardian of man's destiny."<sup>6</sup> Then Gilkey appends this beautiful quotation from Luther:

If God can, from a small drop of water, create the sun and the moon;--can He not defend my poor body against all enemies and against Satan himself?--Can He not, after that poor body is laid in the tomb, raise it again to another and a new life?--Wherefore we are to learn from this book of Genesis, the power of God; that we may accustom ourselves to doubt nothing of those things which God promises in His word! For in this glorious and marvelous creation work is there laid a confirmation of our faith in all the promises of God:--that there is nothing so difficult, nothing so seemingly impossible which God cannot do and perfect by His word. For all this is here proved by God's creation of the heaven, of the earth, and of the sea, and of all they contain.<sup>7</sup>

Gilkey also speaks to the modern disease of meaninglessness which has resulted from the loss of God the Creator. He rightly asserts that when meaning disappears, so does hope and the capacity to endure misfortune. Note his words:

... Clearly in certain circumstances men can lose all hope for immediate physical comfort, loving relations, and even security of life, and still retain a magnificent sense of meaning in their work. In a war situation people can endure a great deal of immediate privation and pain without a sense of despair. In fact, many men have felt more "meaning" in their uncomfortable and hazardous life as soldiers than they do in their comfortable but often pointless life in suburbia. Why is this? The answer is that the misfortunes of war, with all its privation, pain, and suffering, were enclosed within a larger intelligible purpose which those who suffered from them could affirm. These misfortunes were seen as necessary steps toward a goal which their victims could understand and value. Almost any amount of privation and suffering becomes bearable, that is, it brings no threats to the fundamental meaning of life, whenever we can see that they take their place within an intelligible order of events leading to a goal. Whenever man can discern such an intelligible order within the historical events in which they participate, there the meaning of their life lies beyond the reach of immediate tragedy.

On the other hand, whenever no such intelligible order is apparent, then any amount of misfortune is almost unbearable.... Tyche, the blind goddess of chance and fate, was feared and worshiped, not because Hellenistic man was afraid merely of the discomforts of cold and hunger. Rather it was because he was terrified of the blindness of the fate that seemed to rule his life. It was the unconditional abyss of meaninglessness, not the restricted misfortunes of life, that threatened him.... The contingency of finite man in the face of fortune calls for the Providence of God if life is to have meaning....

An intelligible and purposive order in which our life can participate is, however, required not only by the external buffeting of fortune; it is also required by the danger of inner emptiness. As we have seen, our contemporary experience of meaninglessness in the West is in many cases not caused by the malevolence and blindness of events. Rather it seems to stem largely from an emptiness and indifference in our own reaction to them....

The immensely popular novels of the French authoress, Françoise Sagan, reflect this aspect of meaninglessness. She portrays life threatened by no loss of essential necessities, nor buffeted by any cruel external fate; all the characters live comfortable, secure lives. Nevertheless, existence is joyless and therefore pointless. The reason is that these people are unable to respond deeply to anything, to value anything, to be ultimately concerned about anything. What this sort of person lacks is not the means to ends he values, as with the victim of bad fortune; he suffers from the more serious loss of significant ends in life which give direction, purpose and value to his activities. Hence every experience is reduced to the level of tasting: momentary, distracting, but unmoving and unexhilarating.... Meaning in life, therefore, involves committed and personal participation in deeper purposes which can capture the concern and loyalty of the self, and give value to its experience.<sup>8</sup>

Older writers such as James Orr and Thomas Hamilton, believed that the fourth commandment illuminated the whole Decalogue giving meaning to life and worth to the individual. They held that when the Sabbath was lost, and worship had become negotiable then self-worth evaporated, and with it, a regard for the worth of others. This is a view that we need to recover for an age where meaning and value have for multitudes been dissipated.

We would be wiser if we joined our forebears who were fond of saying that the central commandments safeguarded institutions upon which society rested--the Sabbath and the family. These twin sisters of Eden are both called honorable in Scripture and described as made "for man." H. St. John has set forth the following parallel:

#### BORN IN BEAUTIFUL EDEN, OF HEAVENLY PARENTAGE

They come to us with the Sweet and Hallowed Perfume of Paradise

#### MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

God gave to man all his wonderful powers of mind, and heart, and body, then took from his side a rib, from which he formed woman, and with his blessing upon her, God then returned her to him, not to tyrannize over him, nor to be dishonored or trampled down by him, but to be a helpmeet, a blessed companion, whose purity, sweetness, and loveliness would perfect the charms of Holy Eden. "Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord." 1 Cor. 11:11. Therefore shall a man leave all other persons and cleave unto his wife given him of God--a particular woman--and they twain shall be one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together let no man, church, or government, by unrighteous divorce laws, or otherwise, attempt to divorce or put asunder.

#### SABBATH INSTITUTION

God gave to man the whole week, then took from its side the Seventh day upon which he rested from creation, made it into a holy Sabbath by blessing and sanctifying it, then returned it to man, not to tyrannize over him, nor to be dishonored or trampled down by him, but for him to ever gladly embrace as a spiritual helpmeet--a blessed companion whose very moments are ever perfumed with the sweet fragrance of Holy Eden. "The Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. Therefore shall a man leave all human institutions, and cleave unto the Holy Sabbath given him of God--a particular day--and they twain shall be of one spirit. What, therefore, God hath joined together--a loyal man and a God-given sabbath, let no man, church, or government, by unrighteous Sunday laws, or otherwise, attempt to divorce or put asunder.<sup>9</sup>

What have we found? We have discovered that the Sabbath is indeed a sign or symbol of the truths most needed--the nature of God (a loving Creator in whose image man was made); the nature of man (a dependent child who can find only in God lasting joy); the nature of righteousness (looking to God to rest in Him by faith with empty hands); the nature of sin (negation of dependence upon God); the truth about creation, redemption, and the world to come, the relationship between ethics and the beginning and end of time; the insufficiency of things; the superiority of time over space; the absolute priority of worship, the basis of hope, the pattern for living, etc., etc.

The Sabbath as a sign points to Christ our Redeemer who gives us rest through His atoning sorrows. But as with the Lord's Supper, the reality does not displace the sign.

Sangster was right. Men have seen this truth in all ages:

We live by signs. A frown or a smile is index to the unseen mind and mood. A wedding ring is token of a pledged troth. Earth and sky are the hieroglyphs of a Presence. The man who pretends that he needs no symbols is trying to live as a disembodied spirit. Reduce religion to its ultimate simplicity, and it has still its signs: the silence, the handshake, the kiss of peace, the vocabulary. George A. Buttrick

In summary, consider the following on the symbolism implicit in man's oldest sacred sign.

## THE SABBATH

A Sign of the Gospel (Heb. 4).

That is--a sign of the true divine-human encounter, the true I-Thou relationship. (Tells man that he was not made merely for things).

The sign of Righteousness by Faith--for faith is not the doing of something--it is the receiving of something, such as man's first rest in Eden.

A sign of the Everlasting Covenant (Ex. 31:13-17; Isa. 56:2, 4).

A sign of Justification (Mt. 11:28-30; Deut. 5:15).

A sign of Sanctification (Eze. 20:12, 20).

A sign of God's Creative and Redeeming power (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11) (compare Christ's 7 miracles on the Sabbath and the record of Luke 23:56--24:1) .

A sign of Belief in the Supernatural. Thus a sign of true worship and the ultimate seal of God. (Compare Rev. 13 with Ex. 28:36-38; Zech. 3).

Thus the Sabbath is a test for all professed worshippers of God (Ex. 16:4, 28-29; 20:8-11; Num. 15:32f.; Isa. 56:2-4; Eze. 20; Neh. 13; Mt. 12, etc., Rev. 13).

Patrick Fairbairn's comments on Eze. 20 are most appropriate:

... requiring for its proper observance the general ascendancy of religious principles, it [the Sabbath] was specially fitted to serve as a sign of the people's faithfulness to the covenant of God. If they kept the Sabbaths of the Lord, whether in their weekly recurrence, or as connected with the annual feasts, as he required them to be kept, it would be a living and palpable proof of their having entered into the spirit of the dispensation they were under, while their neglect and profanation of the Sabbath would equally serve as a proof of their unfaithfulness. Hence the observance of the Sabbath is here so expressly mentioned in connection with their sanctification: "a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am Jehovah who sanctifies them." It was, in truth, their sanctification, or their holiness in heart and conduct, which was the grand sign and evidence of Israel's being the chosen people of God. In so far as they complied with the exhortation, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," they possessed the mark of his children. And the proper observance of the Sabbatical rest being so specially designated a sign in this respect, could only have arisen from its singular importance to the interests of religion and morality. These, it was virtually said, would thrive and flourish if the Sabbath was duly observed, but would languish and die if it fell into desuetude. And for this reason the prophet Isaiah, at the close of a long expostulation with the people regarding sin, presses the dutiful observance of the Sabbath as sure to carry along with it the remedy of the evil: .... (Isa. lviii. 13, 14). This passage may justly be taken as explanation of the sense in which the Lord meant the people to regard his Sabbaths as a sign between them and him. Such paramount importance could never have been attached by the prophet to this sacred institution, nor could it have been so peculiarly connected with the blessing of the covenant, if the mere outward rest had been all that the institution contemplated. This is what those who hold mistaken views on this subject almost uniformly take for granted, as if the people should have been properly sanctified by simply resting every Sabbath from their usual labours. The command must have had a far deeper import, and required a great deal more at the hands of the people, in order to prove an adequate sign between them and God. It must have been, and it was, intended not only to separate them from their worldly employments, but also to callout their hearts in suitable exercises of faith and love to God, and in brotherly acts of kindness and good-will toward those around them. On no other account could its faithful observance be represented as indicative of a sound and healthful state of religion generally. And we might ask, without the least fear of contradiction, if the same practical value is not attached to the careful observance of the Lord's day now by those who have an enlightened regard to the interests of religion? When this day ceases to be devoutly observed, all experience and observation testify that there never fails to ensue a corresponding decline in the life and actings of religion.<sup>10</sup>

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. Louis F. Were, The Certainty of the Third Angel's Message, pp. 73-4.
2. Abraham Heschel, extracts from The Sabbath.
3. Geerhardus Vos, Biblical Theology, Old and New Testaments, p. 140.
4. Carl F. Henry, Christian Personal Ethics, p. 565.
5. Christian Ethics, cited by Carl F. Henry, op. cit., p. 567.
6. Langdon Gilkey, Maker of Heaven and Earth, p. 279
7. Luther's Commentary on Galatians on Gen 1:20, cited by Langdon Gilkey, op. cit., p. 279.
8. Ibid., pp. 173-76.
9. H. L. St. John, Our Banquet, p. 180.
10. Patrick Fairbairn, An Exposition of Ezekiel, pp. 218-19.

## ETHICS, CHAOS, AND COSMOS

The study of ethics has never been as important as in the 1980's. While in the past, twisted or denied ethical standards on the part of some have closely affected only those within the immediate vicinity of such deviates, this is no longer the case. The world has so shrunk that it is in the power of mortals living in several parts of this contracted sphere to shrivel and waste the home of all mankind.

Our real problem, of course, is not the controlling of the atom but the controlling of the man behind the atom. It is man's personal code of ethics upon which all depends, rather than the laws governing atomic fission. The naive faith of the nineteenth century in man's essential goodness and inevitable progress has been shattered by the cataclysms of our age. As a result, the study of ethics is no longer the "dull hobby of a duller academician."<sup>1</sup> It has become crucial for survival.

Ethics have ever been recognized as based upon a Weltanschauung. One's personal world-view predetermines his conduct, and thus the inevitability of philosophy or theology for all. Now, as never before, the rightness or wrongness of prevailing world-views is pivotal for human existence.

The literature of an age is a reliable mirror of the current attitudes and philosophies of that period. One need but scan modern literature to become aware that a major shift in the realms of ethics, theology, and philosophy, has taken place in the twentieth century. To browse through Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Dickens, Scott, and their like is to be aware that their ages possessed cultures of vital unity wherein ethical agreement existed for the main part. In contrast the modern writer must invent for himself a system of values to interpret his world, and he has no assurance that his system will parallel that of any of his readers.

It was on July 31, 1914, that the existentialist experience ceased to belong to a sensitive few and became the dominant experience of the era, transforming our culture. Thinkers such as Berdyaev, Shestov, Heidegger, Jaspers, Sartre, Marcel, represent the feelings of moderns. At another level, writers like Tennessee Williams reflect the attitude of those typified by his following. This playwright said concerning himself "I am a definition of hysteria," and his regular use of stimulant and depressant pills testified to the truthfulness of his claim.<sup>2</sup>

Another example is the well-known play Waiting for Godot which cleverly expresses the hollowness of the life experience of many. This production was sent to Brussels Fair in 1958 as representative of American cultural life. Samuel Beckett's story has neither plot nor climax. Its characters fill in time on a bare stage waiting for one who never comes, representing mankind whose Messiah never eventuates.

The ontological crisis appears to preoccupy every great writer of our time. Literary scholars have suggested that the dominant conceptual myths found in literature today are (1) Voyage, (2) Hell, (3) Isolation, (4) Doubt. All of these emphases, for example, are found in the following lines of Conrad Aiken:

We need a theme? then let that be our theme:  
that we, poor grovellers between faith and doubt,  
the sun and north star lost, and compass out,  
the heart's weak engine all but stopped, the time  
timeless in this chaos of our wills--  
that we must ask a theme; something to think,  
something to say, between dawn and dark,  
something to hold to, something to love.<sup>3</sup>

This poem summarises much of modern literature. It describes moderns as "poor grovellers between faith and doubt," and thousands upon thousands of current works reveal that authors and readers fit into this category. When Aitken refers to "the sun and north star lost, and compass out" he indicates the prevailing loss of direction and absolutes.

Karl Mannheim in his Diagnosis of Our Time has pointed out that the despiritualization of our age is explicable only on the basis that true "paradigmatic experience" has almost ceased.<sup>4</sup> He is referring to the archetypal events which men have ever regarded as of supreme importance and which have enabled them to organize a hierarchy of values whereby basic matters are accorded more significance than others. Without such a hierarchy men cherish only a kaleidoscopic concept of life which, "in giving an equal significance to everything, does, in effect, attribute radical significance to nothing at all."<sup>5</sup>

According to Mannheim, the loss of an ontological hierarchy means that

... no consistent conduct, no character formation and no real human coexistence and cooperation are possible... our universe of discourse loses its articulation, conduct falls to pieces, and only disconnected bits of successful behaviour patterns and fragments of adjustment to an ever changing environment remain.<sup>6</sup>

About a century ago another author predicted the crisis referred to by Mannheim and Scott. The dream described by Dostoyevsky in the Epilogue of Crime and Punishment seems to be a parable concerning this age as foreseen by the author. Dostoyevsky pictures the whole world under process of disintegration because of a terrible and strange plague. New kinds of microbes possessing intelligence and will attacked the bodies of men. Those who were infected became mad and furious. But "never had men considered themselves so intellectual and so completely in possession of the truth as these sufferers, never had they considered their decisions, their scientific conclusions, their moral convictions so infallible." Entire towns, cities, and nations went insane because of the infection. In their fury they could no longer understand one another. "Each thought that he alone had the truth and was wretched looking at the others... They did not know how to judge and could not agree what to consider evil and what good."<sup>8</sup> In senseless rage they killed one another with their armies. All day long, alarms rang in the towns and cities, but when men rushed together they were unable to find why or by whom they had been summoned. Trades were abandoned, and the land was permitted to lie fallow. "Men met in groups, agreed on something, swore to keep together, but at once began on something quite different from what they had proposed. They accused one another, fought and killed each other."<sup>9</sup> Conflagrations and famine spread over the world until "all men and all things were involved in destruction."<sup>10</sup> Dostoyevsky concludes his description by saying:

Only a few men could be saved in the whole world. They were a pure chosen people, destined to found a new race and a new life, to renew and purify the earth, but no one had seen these men, no one had heard their words and their voices.<sup>11</sup>

This remarkable narrative portrays many aspects of the tragedy of this mid-twentieth century and suggests what may yet lie ahead. It is most significant that Dostoyevsky points out that a distinguishing characteristic of the crisis which he pictures was the fact that the people "did not know how to judge and could not agree what to consider evil and what good." That is to say, they possessed no agreed-upon ethical values. It is this characteristic, according to many diagnosticians of our times, which particularly marks the present human dilemma.

Passing from current literature to a formal discipline we find in Educational theory a similar "fuzziness" of ethics. Despite Dewey's insistence that education is life, most modern educators agree that education is a preparatory process of a sort, but disagree regarding for what education is a preparation. Should education prepare men for making a living, or for making a life? for survival in this world only, or for survival in eternity? for harmonious relations with fellow men through faithful conformity to group processes and practices, or for peace with God? Schools are agreed that virtue is to be taught, but what is virtue? what is the summum bonum? Is it the development of physical strength? genius? character? And if character, what is good character? It has been suggested that modern education is much like a man who rises early, packs his case, taxis to the aerodrome, but knows not for what destination he should secure a ticket. An article in Life magazine<sup>12</sup> entitled "The Voice of the Negro" dramatized the present situation. This article referred to "the deep pessimism prevalent among boys at some of America's finest prep schools." Youth from Lawrenceville, Andover, The Hill, Exeter are cited expressing their sole conviction--that it was impossible to have convictions any more. Declares one "This is a world of madness--absurd, stupid. Nothing's solid. There are no values to depend upon." Says another: "I have no values because there is no basis for them. I haven't any goals because I don't know what to aim for."

The writer, Barbara Cumiskey, suggests that key figures responsible for this attitude include Freud, Darwin, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Arthur Miller, J. D. Salinger, Robert Penn Warren and Herman Melville "all of whose angry or searching observations on the human condition appeal to the negro." Whatever modern education is achieving, it is apparently not solving the existential vacuum in the hearts of our youth. The failure of our modern education to prepare young people to grapple successfully with life's essentials is further underlined by the results of the Communist brain washing techniques in the Korean concentration camps. Only five per cent of the young men from democratic countries successfully survived attempted indoctrination.<sup>13</sup> It seems to be an illustration of the adage that if one does not stand for something he will fall for anything.

What is the cause of the chaos of aims, and the uncertainty of values in education today? Why are educators not agreed on the nature of the experience for which formal education should be a preparation? Here again we must look to the parent world-views of pedagogical philosophy,

Basic to all educational procedure, as to all of life, is the answer to the question "What is man?", A typical recent work on the philosophy of education declared: "Man is an animal; he is the product of evolutionary forces working, we know not how."<sup>14</sup> In a \$2500 award for educators only, some years ago the prize went to Professor Stace, author of The Destiny of Western Man. A prominent member of the committee who selected the winner was Carl Van Doren, who affirmed that this book was one of "world-wide significance, sure to clarify and fortify contemporary opinion and to leave its mark on years to come." Declared Stace in his book:

The Greeks, therefore, had in general no right to their belief that man is superior to the other animals... And therefore we can not admit the validity of that argument in favor of the primacy of reason which bases itself upon man's superiority to the rest of creation.<sup>15</sup>

Many educators today believe this doctrine that man is the illegitimate child of nature. To them the universe is an irrational asylum, and man an intruding by-product, a "fuss in the mud, a stir in the slime." The implications for ethics of such philosophy is obvious. Humanity, thus viewed, is a mere planetary eczema, and should not be perturbed about such ethereal matters as morals. In the words of Edward J. Carnell:

... why strive at all, if the end of man is but a square meal for lower animals? Shall their welfare stimulate us to live honestly rather than dishonestly? Will it affect their diet any if we commit fornication or if we refrain from it? Will the maggots complain about their menu if we are plunged into an atom war?<sup>16</sup>

It is this viewpoint of the nature of man spearheaded in the late nineteenth century that gives us the explanation for the drastic revamping of world-views in our own age. The support of ethics is ever a Weltanschauung, but undergirding the Weltanschauung is a concept of origins, a belief regarding the nature of man derived from a supposed insight into the manner of his arrival.

Some thinkers have asserted that science is responsible for the change of mental and ethical climates in our world, but this is questionable. Many of the greatest scientists have been Christian in their philosophy. As already intimated, that suggestion is much nearer the mark which asserts that materialistic theories of man's origin rather than pure science is responsible for the change. To test this submission, let us note some interpretations of the significance of Darwin's Origin of Species, the work which probably did more to revolutionize the concept of origins than any other volume in recent centuries. A thought-provoking chapter written by Raymond F. Surburg on this subject is to be found in Darwin, Evolution, and Creation edited by Paul A. Zimmerman. The following quotations appear among those presented by Surburg:

There is not a single field of scientific and academic study which has not been greatly modified by the concept of evolution. It provided a new approach to astronomy, geology, philosophy, ethics, religion, and the history of social institutions.<sup>18</sup>

It may well be that for posterity his [Darwin's] name will stand as a turning point in the intellectual development of our western civilization... If he was right, men will have to date from 1859 the beginning of modern thought.<sup>19</sup>

Not only sociologists, philosophers, and educators, but historians also have marked the tremendous impact upon society of the evolutionary view of man, for example Gertrude Himmelfarb's Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution includes such chapters as "Darwinism, Religion and Morality," and "Darwinism, Politics and Society." The evidence presented by Himmelfarb goes far towards supporting the views of Surburg and those he cites.

Biography, as well as general history, affords us many illustrations of how clearly many in the past have seen the logical relationship between the Darwinian view of the arrival of man and type of conduct therefore to be expected from him. Karl Marx was so enthusiastic

over the Origin that he wished to dedicate the English translation of his Capital to Darwin.<sup>20</sup> It was four years after Darwin wrote his first sketch on evolution, and eleven years before the published volume, that Marx and Engels in their Manifesto of the Communist Party wrote the well-known dictum that "law, morality, religion, are... so many bourgeois interests."

Another giant of the nineteenth century, Friedrich Nietzsche, declared by Will Durant<sup>21</sup> to be Darwin's spiritual son, hailed the passing of God and the enthronement of the power-motivated "superman" in His place. Adolf Hitler certainly imbibed much of his personal philosophy from this source.

"Lord's of the Earth" is a familiar expression in Mein Kampf. "That in the end Hitler considered himself the superman of Nietzsche's prophecy can not be doubted."<sup>22</sup> "In Hitler's utterances there runs the theme that the supreme leader is above the morals of ordinary man. Hegel and Nietzsche thought so too."<sup>23</sup> In support of this allusion to Nietzsche Shirer refers to the following lines from this philosopher:

The strong men, the masters, regain the pure conscience of a beast of prey; monsters filled with joy, they can return from a fearful succession of murder, arson, rape and torture with the same joy in their hearts, the same contentment in their souls as if they had indulged in some student's rag... When a man is capable of commanding, when he is by nature a "Master," when he is violent in act and gesture, of what importance are treaties to him?... To judge morality properly, it must be replaced by two concepts borrowed from zoology: the taming of a beast and the breeding of a specific species.<sup>24</sup>

An illustration from this century of the relationship between the concepts of origins and behavior can be found in Clarence Darrow's skilful defence of two youths in 1924 who had cruelly murdered a fourteen-year-old boy in Chicago. Declared Darrow:

I will guarantee that you can go down to the University of Chicago to-day--into its big library--and find over a thousand volumes on Nietzsche, and I am sure I speak moderately. If this boy is to blame for this, where did he get it? Is there any blame attached because somebody took Nietzsche's philosophy seriously and fashioned his life on it? And there is no question in this case but what it is true. Then who is to blame? The University would be more to blame than he is. The scholars of the world would be more to blame than he is. The publishers of the world--and Nietzsche's books are published by one of the biggest publishers of the world--are more to blame than he. Your Honour, it is hardly fair to hang a nineteen-year-old boy for the philosophy that was taught him at the University.<sup>25</sup>

It should ever be remembered that the philosophy of Nietzsche was the direct outgrowth of his commitment to the theory of organic evolution.

Certainly logic alone is sufficient to show the definite relationship between a belief regarding life's origin and the pattern of behavior followed by the holder of that belief. He who believes that life began by a fortuitous concourse of atoms will not hold that life to be sacred. Once one accepts the idea that our world was spawned by chance it becomes obvious that chance will also write finish to the play on the human stage. Therefore the foreshortening of the course would not be significant in view of the eternities stretching each side of the human interlude. Amoral, rather than immoral, is the child of a credo of chance. On the other hand, one who still clings to the traditional belief in creation of man by a personal God must also hold to the sacredness of life, and the necessity of responsible stewardship in what is considered to be probationary time prior to the Great Judgment Day.

In Christianity Today at the commencement of 1962, there appeared a thought-provoking article entitled "An Anchor for the Lonely Crowd." The writer declared that "Creation means that God is the true home of man's spirit" and that when the knowledge of this doctrine is lost, man himself becomes lost. "Not knowing of whom he is the son, he knows not who he is." Then appear these apt appraisals of the significance of God's Creatorship and man's awareness or unawareness of this fundamental reality.

By creating the world, God reveals that he is fatherly, an outgoing, self-giving God, who willed that there be another alongside him, with whom he wills to share his divine existence and life, his divine joy and beatitude. Knowing that he was created to participate in the life of God, man regards existence as an expression of the mercy of God. Existence is no longer a curse, the universe unfriendly. The child knowing his origin declares, "This is my Father's world," and sings, "It is good to be here, it is great to be alive, and the best is yet to be!"

Ever since Western man accepted the evolutionistic contention that man has no father save a biological process, or accepted the contention of existentialism that man's only father is a Nothingness which, quite without any ascertainable reason, hurled him into existence, the mood of Western man has changed. He became a stranger to himself, nameless (as Kafka's Mr. K), without relatives. He has lost God as Father, the universe as something friendly, life as meaningful.<sup>26</sup>

The conclusion of this article asserts that "the doctrine of creation is so basic as to be the indispensable foundation for any tolerable, viable, human existence."

The writer of "An Anchor for the Lonely Crowd" has hereby reminded us all that while theologians and expositors have long seen the importance of the doctrine of creation, it is the twentieth century which has vindicated such convictions. The twentieth century with its nihilistic creeds, and its abandonment of long-held ethical standards cries aloud for a renewed emphasis on the Christian world-view which has Christ as Creator, as well as Redeemer, for its foundation.

Recent decades have witnessed a revived stress on eschatological thought. The subject matter of inspired prophecy regarding the second advent and its preceding events has preoccupied many commentators and evangelists. But the emphasis is unbalanced without a corresponding stress on the other extreme of human history--the time of Creation. It is not coincidental that the great eschatological book of the New Testament places stress on the doctrine of origins. In Rev. 14:6, 7 we read:

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

These verses assure us that--only the man who recognizes God as Creator will so order his conduct as to prepare himself for the Judgment.

Many in our world will not listen to pronouncements regarding the Biblical outline of final events because they have long since discarded the Biblical view of beginnings. The first article of the "Apostles'" Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," has been forgotten. Do not these facts constitute a challenge for the man who believes that God has spoken in Genesis as surely as

in Revelation? Our Lord Himself when involved in discussion regarding ethics pointed back to creation.<sup>27</sup> His views of right and wrong rested upon His belief in the Mosaic narrative concerning the "first things." At least sixty-six times the Bible writers, following His example, refer to the Divine Creatorship as an incentive for holiness. Should not Christians today follow such examples, and glance afresh at the opening statements of God's Word to man?

Is it not clear that the further in time from Creation the world grows, the greater its need of creation's memorial--the seventh-day Sabbath? That ancient seal of the divine law now becomes a banner emblazoned with the truths most needed by this chaotic 20th century culture. Many of our existential sicknesses have been spawned by our careless forgetting of what God from Sinai told us to "Remember."

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. Carl Henry, Christian Personal Ethics, p. 13.
2. "A Voice in the Wilderness of Modern Life and Despair," Christianity Today, March 30, 1962, p. 27.
3. Conrad Aiken, Time in the Rock, cited by Nathan A. Scott Jr., The Broken Center (New York, 1959), p. 1.
4. Cited by Scott, Ibid., p. 6.
5. Scott, Ibid., p. 7.
6. Ibid.
7. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Crime and Punishment, p. 528.
8. Ibid., p. 528 (emphasis ours).
9. Ibid., p. 529.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Barbara Cummiskey, "The Voice of the Negro," Life, July 16, 1962.
13. Ronald C. Doll, "A New Crisis in Adolescence," Christianity Today, May 11, 1962, p. 13.
14. Stella Henderson, Introduction to Philosophy of Education (Chicago, 1947), p. 23.
15. Stace, The Destiny of Western Man, cited by Ana O'Neill, Ethics for the Atomic Age.
16. Edward John Carnell, An Introduction to Christian Apologetics, p. 333.
17. Vergilius Ferm, First Adventures in Philosophy, cited in Darwin, Evolution, and Creation, p. 169.
18. E. G. Bewkes, Experience, Reason, and Faith, cited in Ibid.
19. Will Durant, Great Men of Literature, cited in Ibid., p. 170.
20. Gertrude Himmelfarb, Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution, p. 347.
21. Durant, The Story of Philosophy, p. 435.
22. William L. Shirer, Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, p. 101.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. A Medical Scientist, Evolution, p. 87, citing Darrow, Classified Speech Models, by William N. Brigance.
26. "An Anchor for the Lonely Crowd," Christianity Today, January, 1962, p. 3.
27. Mt. 19:3-8.

# SHOULD I, OR SHOULDN'T I? HOW CAN I CHOOSE? HOW RELEVANT ARE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS TODAY?

The chief agony of life is decision-making. "Should I or shouldn't I?" is our frequent question, and it is one wrapped around with intense emotional involvement. Our crown and chain is this distinctive characteristic of human beings--the power of choice. Neither galaxies nor motes in the sunbeam, neither diamonds nor dust, neither elephants nor ants, have the capacity of asking, "Is it right?" But this special privilege of man is also an awesome responsibility.

C. S. Lewis was unquestionably correct in saying that two facts have to be clearly recognized before significant living is possible. One, that there is such a thing as right and wrong, and two, that none of us have entirely fulfilled the right and avoided the wrong.

These two facts apply not just to believers but to unbelievers. All literature of value has revolved around issues of good and evil, right and wrong, reward and punishment. Even Hollywoods' money-making extravaganzas have never been able to avoid the moral issue. Whether the film be a Western, a comedy, or modern life in its ordinary or bizarre forms--its matrix has been compounded out of moral components. The "good" guy and the "bad" guy will ever be with novel readers or movie-goers. Art reflects life, and all except psychopaths recognize that certain forms of conduct are preferable to others on grounds not essentially selfish.

When we speak of accountability, decision-making, right and wrong, etc., another term is never far away--law. That which defines right and wrong is law. Once we grant moral values, we also grant the fact and inviolability of law. In support of our innate convictions about law (even the heathen share these convictions), human experience, even in non-moral areas, multiplies supportive evidence. Whether our study be of astronomy, physics, chemistry, medicine, or any other of a thousand fields, including the aesthetic realms of art and music, we quickly become aware that we are actually studying the reign of law. It is a universe we live in, and not a multiverse. That universe was made to order, and the atoms march in tune. If entropy were the only or the supreme law, there would now be no one around to discuss decision-making.

Thus in every field, success is dependent upon obedience to law--whether we speak of science, sport, health, or the arts. Obedience to law is liberty, while disobedience brings inevitable failure and bondage.

For these reasons, the heresy of antinomianism has never dominated the Christian scene. Human experience at every turn confirms the Scripture emphases on law and obedience. Legalism has always been the more serious threat.

But if we grant that human conduct should be within the confines of divine moral law, where is that law to be found? Is it to be found within human conscience, or the consensus of groups, or the statements of institutions, or from revelation alone?

Neither general revelation, nor conscience provide "specifics" for behavior. The questions, "How many Gods are there?" "How many wives should I have?" are not settled by the physical world, and therefore most Christians have settled for the last option, but even at that point our questions do not cease. If the law to guide us is to be found in the revelation verbalized in Scripture, is not that source rather too vast to grant us ready help for the thousands of situations demanding prompt choices daily?

Shall we settle for the recorded words of the Son of God when He came in the flesh? Or for those of Paul the apostle to the Gentiles? In both of these, the ground may still be too wide. How easy it is even to misunderstand these, the world's greatest teachers. Take Paul's words, for example, "All things are yours," "all things are lawful," "you are not under law," "greet one another with a holy kiss." If we literally embraced the dictum of 1 Cor. 7:1, that "it is good for a man not to touch a woman," the church would soon die out, and the world too. And even Christ can be misunderstood. He spoke about plucking out our eyes, cutting off our right hands, becoming eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake, never inviting friends to a party, etc., etc. Surely a law would have to be as far from ambiguity as possible. And did the world have to wait for millennia before God set forth the code needed for right decision-making (through Christ or Paul)? Obviously not.

At the beginning of Scripture we find two institutions launched as soon as man is made--the Sabbath and marriage (the family). The first told man he was a creature dependent on God for all things, and that therefore he should ever let God be God, and not worship any other besides Him, and worship Him without idolatrous, finite images, for God being Creator, is greater than all mere things. Furthermore, the attitude of worship should be one of becoming reverence. These duties sprang automatically out of the experience of Sabbath-keeping.

With the family came the marvel of life, which, while transmitted through man, was not created by man, and therefore had to be treated with reverence and respect as sacred. Because God had made life in two forms, the right relationship between these forms had to be safeguarded. And because the plurality of persons caused by marriage meant varying stewardships of space and things, property, as well as purity, would need to be respected. This same plurality involved communication, and stewardship demanded that such interaction should be safeguarded by truthfulness. In order that all these responsibilities might be fulfilled in act, they must first be fulfilled in the mind by right-thinking, rather than by yielding to covetousness, etc.

Each reader has seen that we have deduced the Ten Commandments from the primeval institutions of Sabbath and marriage. Has our reasoning been legitimate? Does the book of Genesis indicate that such laws were indeed known from the beginning of time and observed by the faithful?

Genesis is, of course, a book of history, not of legislation. It covers millennia sometimes by just a few chapters--for example, the time from Creation to the Flood. Nevertheless, there is abundant evidence to answer our question.

The law, and the sins it condemns, were known from Eden (Ro. 5:12-17; 7: 7; Gen. 3: 7-21; 26:1-5):

Commandment 1: Gen. 11:1-19; Ro. 1:20-26.

Commandment 2: Gen. 31:19; 35:2-4.

Commandment 3: Gen. 27:1-41; with Hb. 12:16.

Commandment 4: Ex. 16:27, 28.  
 Commandment 5: Gen. 9:20-27.  
 Commandment 6: Gen. 4:8-15.  
 Commandment 7: Gen. 34:1-7; 39:7-9.  
 Commandment 8: Gen. 31:29-37.  
 Commandment 9: Gen. 26:6-11; 27:1-45.  
 Commandment 10: Gen. 13:10, 11.<sup>1</sup>

The first place in the Bible where we find divine laws set forth as a body is the very next book of Scripture. The legislation here is somewhat like a tadpole--with a very impressive head and then a long tail. We find the Ten Commandments spoken (and later written) by the Creator Himself amid the scenes of grandeur and solemnity obviously typical of the great Judgment Day. Then the principles thus enunciated are spelled out in great detail in the following "judgments." These in turn, after the sealing of the covenant by blood (Ex. 24:1-8), are succeeded by laws connected with the ritual of the sanctuary parable--laws which continue into Leviticus and Numbers, and which would never have been necessary but for the primary law of the Ten residing in the Most Holy Place.

The "head" of this three-fold system of law is obviously the Decalogue, and we should observe that at the heart of it lie the only two positive laws among the ten--the two "thou shalt" (rather than "thou shalt not") among the Sinaitic precepts. These two have to do with the original Edenic institutions prior to sin--the Sabbath and the family. They are so placed as to be seen as the hinges of the two tables--the institutions which automatically made the rest necessary.

Let it be noted that both the Sabbath, and the family relationship springing out of marriage, specifically demand divine revelation for man's guidance. No man of himself would know how much time to ordain for purposes of rest and worship. And neither does nature make it clear to a man that he should take only one wife. Both these duties which epitomize man's privileges and responsibilities as God's steward, demand special revelation in order that duty might be known and fulfilled. And, as the sign of man's real identity (man, the created image of God and the transmitter of life), the Sabbath and marriage become central to all his behavior. Any community which does not recognize with clarity its responsibility in these areas goes rapidly to seed. The Sabbath and the family constitute the great schools of behavior education. Those who recognize also the sacredness of life, purity, property, and reputation, in their growing-up years--these will serve God aright all their years of maturity. But those who have not learned of the Creator and of their family-stewardship duties will please themselves, and act according to desire rather than in harmony with the divine law.

Did Christ act and teach as though these things were indeed so? The four Gospels answer, "Yes," for they record His deliberate reformation of both Sabbath-keeping and marriage practises. And in both cases, He looks back to Eden for the divine paradigm of behavior. "And he said to them, 'The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; so the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath'" (Mk. 2:27, 28).

He answered, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder." They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" He said to them, "For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery."  
 Mt. 19:4-9 RSV.

Do we have instances which clearly show Christ's attitude to the Decalogue even apart from the accounts concerning His endorsement of the fourth and fifth commandments? Yes, consider the following passages--Mt. 5:17-48; 19:16-19; 21:35-40; Mk. 7:6-13; Lu. 10:25-28.

The fact that both Christ and Paul allude to the commandments of the second table rather than the first should not be misunderstood. Obedience to the second table is the evidence of heart-fidelity to the first. Ungodliness ever precedes unrighteousness. See Ro. 1:18, and note also 1 Jn. 4:7-21 and Jas. 1:26 to 2:26. The first four commandments are frequently alluded to in the New Testament though not quoted.

On the other hand, should we not enquire whether Christ merely endorsed the Decalogue because the Jewish age prior to the Cross was still in process? We think the answer is No, because at no time did Christ deliberately reform any institution intended to fall into desuetude after His death. He was not given to discoursing on the significance of circumcision, sacrifice, or feast days, or the civil laws of Israel. Rather, He distinctly affirmed the temporary nature of that system of religion which centered at Jerusalem. See Jn. 4:21 (the ceremonial system could only be practised at Jerusalem's temple. It was illegal to sacrifice elsewhere). So it is apparent that Christ foresaw that the ceremonial and civil elements of the Mosaic code would soon fall away, but without detracting from the Decalogue which summarized the eternal moral law.

We should never forget that the Great Commission is a mandate to proclaim to the heathen world all that Christ had taught and commanded in the days of His flesh. Mt. 28:18, 19 reads, "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.'"

In this matter of the content of the witness of Jesus in relation to ἐντολῇ religion, we should first note His unconditional acceptance of the demands of the Decalogue. He tells the rich man (Mk. 10:17ff.; Mt. 19:20 κενήσκεις; Lk. 18:18 ἀρχών) that to enter into life (Mt. 19:17) he must keep the commandments, which are obviously a well-known norm....

We may also refer to Mt. 5: 19. Here even the smallest commandments are endorsed. They must be kept and taught. One's place in the kingdom of heaven is dependent on their fulfilment. Since the Rabbis speak of light and heavy or less and more important commandments rather than of smallest and greatest, the reference here is to the Ten Commandments as those which occupy least

space in the scroll of Scripture.

Once again Jesus endorses the two tables as an elementary basis. If we compare this with the antitheses which follow in Mt. 5:21ff., we shall see that the only righteousness which counts is one which does not sink below the Decalogue but which transcends this nationally accepted Law in fulfilment of the authoritative Messianic demands of Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

The problem of the whole passage is that of the Law and sin. Paul has shown that these are related, and that Christ brings liberation from the Law. He has now to show that this repudiation of the Law does not imply antinomianism, that the Law itself is not at fault, that it is not itself sin. He ends his exposition with a rejection of sin and an affirmation of the Law.

\* \* \* \*

It can thus be concluded in v. 12 that the Law as a whole, and the **ἐντολή** as the individual commandment, is holy, just, and good. The command as a just requirement of God retains its goodness and majesty. It does not itself constitute the deceptive and wicked adversary. Evil is characteristic only of **ἁμαρτία**. There is, however, an overriding divine teleology (**ἵνα**, v. 13).

Through the **ἐντολή** (the good), this seeks to make sin sinful. By means of the command, the divine overruling brings sin out of its obscurity into the light. The unmasking of sin is a necessary prelude to the redemption of the justified. Paul can bring the **ἐντολή** and **ἁμαρτία** into this close association only because he no longer expects salvation from the **νόμος (ἐντολή)**. If he had not found the complete solution in justifying faith, his exposition would have been fatal for all his ethical care in analysis. It would have led ineluctably to antinomianism.

\* \* \* \*

If the transitory nature of the **ἐντολή** is thus pitilessly revealed in Paulinism, the **τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ** is still required in relation to the Christian life. In 1 C. 7:19, of course, this denotes the permanent element when the distinction with the material parallels in Gl. 5:6; 6:15, we may fill out from Paul himself the content of this **τήρησις**, namely, the fulfilment in the new being of the spirit, on the basis of faith, of the law of love (Gl. 5:6), which is not grounded in nature but is given as a new creation through Christ (Gl. 6:15). This is wholly in line with the meaning of the **καινὴ ἐντολή** according to the Johannine view. All else that Paul says concerning **ἐντολή** is in full agreement with the Synoptic evaluation of the concept....<sup>3</sup>

... Hence **ἐντολή** is always used of OT commandments in the Pauline corpus, except in 1 Tm. 6:14.<sup>4</sup>

The full significance of the teaching ministry of Christ is not to be found in His words alone, but also in His life and death. The record is clear that Christ kept His Father's commandments in life, but it is also clear that His death was made necessary because of the sacred, eternal nature of those commandments, and the debt man had contracted by violating them. This is the essence of the argument on the atonement found in Ro. 5:12-21.

Christ repeatedly affirmed that His death was a sacrifice as a ransom for guilty man. He showed Himself the true Passover Lamb, as well as the antitype of all the other sacrificial types. He "died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3), and all sin has to do with a wrong relationship to law. 1 Cor. 15:56; Ro. 4:15; Ro. 3:19-20; 1 Jn. 3:4; Jas. 2:10-12.

In the typical era, the Ten Commandments were placed in the ark of the Most Holy Place.<sup>5</sup> Over it was the mercy-seat which received the blood drops of the sacrifices on the great Day of Atonement. Had there been no law, there would have been neither sin nor sacrifice. The whole of the religious service in Israel revolved around the fact that the nation had fallen short of the demands of that law in the heart of the sanctuary which also symbolized the righteous throne and administration of Israel's heavenly King. To this, Paul alludes in Ro. 3:25, in that key N.T. passage on the atonement which has been called the Acropolis of the Christian faith.

This centrality of the Decalogue in God's government of the world, and its centrality in the plan of redemption, is further shown by the imagery of the Bible's concluding book. Here the ark of the covenant is shown as central in heaven, and the ever present witness of the intercessions of our High Priest. Note Rev. 11:19 and 15:5.

The centrality of the Decalogue in O.T. times had been shown by its names. It was called "the covenant" and "the testimony." The New Testament endorses the use of this terminology sixty years after the cross. See Rev. 11:19; 15:5, and our appendix.

But some may remind us that the Decalogue by no means rebukes all evil and endorses all good. When we remember that this series of commandments names only the worst violation of each principle, and that negatives imply the duty of their opposites, this objection falls to the ground. See Lu. 6:9. The greatest sin against life is to kill, but Christ showed that this commandment called for forgiving love. The greatest sin against purity is adultery, but Christ showed the commandment extends even to impure thoughts. The tenth commandment, by specifically referring to desire indicates the depth of all the others as well. Even the duty to believe on Christ is implied by the first commandment.

Another objection sometimes made to Christian use of the Decalogue is its obviously Jewish terminology. But God had to meet people where they were. This same objection, if consistently applied, would wipe out the prescriptive use of the entire Bible including the Sermon on the Mount, the Great Commission, as well as the phenomenon of the Incarnation. That truth came in Jewish clothing is no excuse for rejecting it. "Salvation is of the Jews," said our Lord (In. 4:22). He Himself was Jewish.

But does not Paul make it clear that the Decalogue is no longer mandatory for Christians? The following texts are often invoked to support this contention. Gal. 3:23-25; 2:19; 2 Cor. 3; Ro. 7:1-4; 10:4; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14, etc. Not one of these passages rejects the moral law of God as a standard. They do tell us that the Mosaic system should not now be used as a method of salvation, but Paul certainly was not denying the eternal validity of the moral principles in that system. See 1 Cor. 7:19. For example, 1 Cor. 5 assumes that the Mosaic laws against incest are still binding. No such laws are found in the New Testament. When dealing with the moral precepts as standards, Paul speaks as in Ro. 7:12, 14--such precepts are "spiritual," "holy, just and good." Christians "fulfill" them by walking in the Spirit. Ro. 3:31; 8:4; 6:15, 18, 19. Only when we are "married" to the law (instead of to Christ) in an effort to bring forth fruit, do we need the "anti-law"

warnings of Paul. Gal. 4 assures us that Hagar (the symbol of the law) was in her right place as servant, but in a wrong place when in Abraham's bed. Some of Paul's statements, particularly in 2 Cor. 3 and Gal. 3 and 4, have to do with the dispensational limits of the Mosaic system in contrast to the fullness of life and light now available through the atonement. He is saying, among other things, that love rather than law is the Christian's motivation. Thus Ro. 6:14.

We believe Patrick Fairbairn to be correct when he writes:

I should reckon it next to impossible for anyone of unbiassed mind--with no peculiar theory to support--with no desire of any kind but that of giving a fair and natural explanation to the teaching of Scripture--to weigh calmly the series of statements now adduced, and to derive from them any other impression than this--that the moral law, as revealed in the Old Testament, had with the apostles of our Lord a recognized place in the Christian church, and was plainly set forth by them as the grand test of excellence, and the authoritative rule of life.

They recognized and appealed to it thus simply as it had stood in the written revelation of God, and because so written--knowing nothing apparently, of the refined explanations of modern thought, which would hold the morality of the law, indeed, to be binding on Christians, but not as commanded in the law--that while the substance or principles of the law may be said to be still living, in its outward and commanding form it is dead--or that, as formally expressed law, it is no longer obligatory whether with reference to justification, or as a rule of life.<sup>6</sup>

And note the warning of Warner Elert's Law and Gospel:

... we today would be unable to understand Paul's testimony without the report of the Gospels. In fact Paul's testimony must stand the test of the evangelists' reports. The evangelists also see the cross and resurrection of Christ as an essential component of their witness. Yet it is only from them that we really learn to know him who was crucified and raised again. It is only from them that we encounter the crucified and risen Christ also as the speaking and acting Christ.

This is crucially important precisely for the question of the relationship of law and gospel. What we have been criticizing as an erroneous understanding of this relationship is usually supported by passages from St. Paul. But these passages, strictly speaking, are husks without the kernel if for one moment we lose sight of the concreteness of Christ's person in the evangelist's witness.<sup>7</sup>

It is vital to distinguish between N.T. allusions to law as a method and law as a standard. For centuries most Protestants have seen what standard writers have expressed as follows:

Christ, then, does not free us, as the Antinomian believes, from the law as rule of life. But he does free us (1) from the law as a system of curse and penalty. This he does by bearing the curse and penalty himself. Just as law can do nothing with a man after it has executed its death-penalty upon him, so law can do nothing with us, now that its death-penalty has been executed upon Christ. There are some insects that expire in the act of planting their sting; and so, when the law gathered itself up and planted its sting in the heart of Christ, it expended all its power as a judge and avenger over us who believe. In the Cross, the law as a system of curse and penalty exhausted itself; so we were set free.

Christ frees us (2) from the law with its claims as a method of salvation: in other words, he frees us from the necessity of trusting our salvation to an impossible future obedience. As the sufferings of Christ, apart from any sufferings of ours, deliver us from eternal death, so the merits of Christ, apart from any merits of ours, give us a title to eternal life. By faith in what Christ has done and simple acceptance of his work for us, we secure a right to heaven. Obedience on our part is no longer rendered painfully, as if our salvation depended on it, but freely and gladly, in gratitude for what Christ has done for us. Illustrate by the English nobleman's invitation to his park, and the regulations he causes to be posted up.

Christ frees us (3) from the law as an outward and foreign compulsion. In putting an end to legalism, he provides against license. This he does by giving the spirit of obedience and sonship. He puts love in the place of fear; and this secures an obedience more intelligent, more thorough, and more hearty, than could have been secured by mere law. So he frees us from the burden and compulsion of the law, by realizing the law within us by his Spirit. The freedom of the Christian is freedom in the law, such as the musician experiences when the scales and exercises have become easy, and work has turned to play.<sup>8</sup>

Certain it is that we must not interpret Paul as contending for something contrary to the teachings of Christ. Paul viewed himself as an agent for conveying our Lord's teachings, not as a competing authority. See 1 Cor. 3:11; 7:10.

A prominent objection to the binding authority of the Decalogue is the affirmation that the N.T. nowhere reenacts that law. In answer, the role of the New Testament must be correctly appraised. From its very first verse it assumes the valid enduring foundation of the O.T. See Mt. 1:1 and 2 Tim. 3:15. Nowhere does it set out to give a novel religion or a new law. Christians are grafted into Israel, and Old and New Testaments are man-made titles dividing what God has put together.

There has been a good deal of well-meant but loosely expressed statement about the reenactment of more or less of the Decalogue in the New Testament. For instance, a prominent pastor, studious and devout (Sunday School Times, of Philadelphia, January 14, 1882), says of the fourth: "It happens to be the only one of the ten which is not repeated nor reenacted in set terms in the New Testament." Now repetition is one thing, reenactment is another. There are plain enough reasons why the fourth was not repeated. But when were any of them reenacted? Reenactment means an explicit, formal restatement of the binding authority of a law as such. Our Lord never made such a statement. He and his hearers alike took it for granted that every one of the ten was a living law. He expanded and applied them. He never professed to add to their authority. He never rehearsed them as a whole. He never catalogued them. He never repeated nine, omitting one. There is not one line in the New Testament which implies that the Decalogue is not a unit, whole, inseparable.<sup>9</sup>

... the truth is that none of the first four commandments, setting forth our duty to God, is quoted--only the last six, setting forth our duty to man. Are we then to infer that our duty to God (to love whom is the first commandment of all) is less important than our duty to man? Or that Christ and his apostles do not care if we have other gods than one (despite Mark 12:19; Rom. 3:30; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; Gal. 3:20; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Jas. 2:19; 4:12)? or if we commit idolatry (despite Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:22-25; 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9f.; 10:7, 14; 2 Cor. 6:16; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 Pet. 4:3; 1 John 5:21; Rev. 9:20; 21:8; 22:15)? or if we take God's name in vain (despite Matt. 6:9; Luke 1:49; Rom. 2:24; 1 Tim. 6:1; Rev. 11:18; 15:4; 16:9)? But if the last six commandments are

repeated in the New Testament, both in word and in substance, and the first three are repeated in substance, it is certainly strange if the fourth does not have equal status. The presumption surely is that it does, and indications are not lacking in the New Testament.

The substance, but not the actual wording of the last six commandments is reproduced and endorsed in the following places: the fifth commandment in Rom. 1:30; Col. 3:20; 1 Tim. 5:4; 2 Tim. 3:2; the sixth commandment in Mark 3:4; 7:22; John 8:44; Rom. 1:29; Jas. 4:2; 1 Pet. 4:15; 1 John 3:15; Rev. 9:21; 21:8; 22:15; the seventh commandment in Mark 7:22; 10:11f.; 1 Cor. 6:9; Heb. 13:4; 2 Pet. 2:14; the eighth commandment in Mark 7:22; 11:17; 1 Cor. 6:10; Eph. 4:28; 1 Pet. 4:15; Rev. 9:21; the ninth commandment in Matt. 15:19; 1 Cor. 15:15; 1 Tim. 3:11; 2 Tim. 3:3; Titus 2:3; 1 Pet. 3:16; and the tenth commandment in Mark 7:22; Luke 12:15; Rom. 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:10; Eph. 5:3,5; Col. 3:5; 1 Tim. 3:3; 6:10; 2 Tim. 3:2; Heb. 13:5; 2 Pet. 2:3,14.

Actually, the fourth commandment comes nearer to being quoted than the first three. The statement in the latter part of it that 'the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them' (Exod. 20:11) is echoed in the NT four times (Acts 4:24; 14:15; Rev. 10:6; 14:7).<sup>10</sup>

Those who wish to repudiate the fourth commandment should first find the N.T. law forbidding the making of graven images which is a distinct sin from the idolatry forbidden by the first commandment.

Nevertheless, it is entirely true, as 2 Cor. 3:6 and Ro. 7:6 declare, that Christians do not depend upon the letter of the Decalogue as a complete revelation of conduct. Life is so complex, so multi-faceted, that no written code could cover every exigency. The Christian who has been informed of the principles of right and wrong through the Scripture (especially through the guiding words of the Decalogue as interpreted and applied by Christ and Paul) strives to live so close to Christ that the Holy Spirit can guide him. "Thou shalt hear a voice behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." Ever before the believer is the pattern of Christ's self-abnegation in life and death. The Cross itself becomes a paradigm of the self-sacrifice that should characterize all Christian conduct.

But having said that, what shall we say of guidance for one who is not yet a mature believer, one who may still be a child in the faith, or again, even one who is trying to think God's thoughts after Him by enacting laws for institutions, families, communities, nations, etc. Is there something specific to guide the Justinians, the Alfred the Greats, the Charlemagnes, the writers of all Declarations of human rights, as well as for the lambs of the flock?

Is there not something simple and comprehensive but also comprehensible--recognized for the most part intuitively as authoritative? Such a guiding summary must needs touch upon worship, the family, respect for life, purity, property, and reputation. To be ideal it should not only deal with God, people, and things, but also thoughts. Such a summary we find in the set of commandments we have been considering. It covers every major area of human responsibility and the least intellectual have no difficulty in understanding them. Furthermore, there is something within most people that responds to the challenges made by that law. In short, it is self-authenticating. It is the only law ever published to mankind which even legislates regarding thoughts and desires. See Ro. 7:7. And it should be noted that there is nothing else in Scripture similarly compact and comprehensive-- not even the Sermon on the Mount. Ex. 20 fulfills all the requirements of an enduring code of conduct for needy sinners of all shapes and sizes (mentally as well as culturally).

One who wishes to serve God aright usually begins with the Decalogue or its N.T. expositions, then with spiritual growth the believer comes to see in the life and death of Christ the depths of that law. To serve in the spirit is not to forget the letter, but it is to refuse to be pharisaical by mere outward perfunctory obedience. Spiritual obedience seeks divine aid to fulfil the law by genuine love and faith, yet recognizing that the demands of love are perpetual and infinite.

Some have said that the purpose of all law systems in Scripture is to create faith and love. What should be said about such a position? We should applaud it. But we should also add the warning that faith and love offer motivation more than content for behavior. If the Spirit-filled Adam and Eve before the Fall needed specific commands, how much more do fallen beings require such. John Murray writes:

The writing of the law upon the heart in the renewing operations of grace is parallel and similar to that which must have been true in Adam's state of integrity. Adam was created in the image of God in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. The analogy of Scripture teaching would indicate that this implied the inscription of the law of God upon his heart. But it is abundantly clear that this inscription did not obviate the necessity of giving to Adam positive directions respecting the activity which was to engage interest, occupation, and life in this world. We must not focus our attention upon the specific prohibition of Eden respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to such an extent that we overlook the other commandments given to Adam, commandments germane to the most basic interests of life in this world (cf. Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:2, 3, 15, 24). All of these commandments bear closely upon our question; but some of them are more directly pertinent. The procreative mandate, for example, had respect to the exercise of one of his fundamental instincts. Adam as created must have been endowed with the sex impulse which would have sought satisfaction and outlet in the sex act. But he was not left to the dictates of the sex impulse and of the procreative instinct; these were not a sufficient index to God's will for him. The exercise of this instinct was expressly commanded and its exercise directed to the achievement of a well-defined purpose. Furthermore, there was the marital ordinance within which alone the sex act was legitimate.

These original mandates are germane to our present inquiry precisely because they are so closely related to the powers and instincts with which man is naturally endowed, and they show unmistakably that native endowment or instinct is not sufficient for man's direction even in the state of original integrity. The exercise of native instincts, the institutions within which they are to be exercised, and the ends to be promoted by their exercise are prescribed by specially revealed commandments. If all this is true in a state of sinless integrity, when there was no sin to blind vision or depravity to pervert desire, how much more must expressly prescribed directions be necessary in a state of sin in which intelligence is blinded, feeling depraved, conscience defiled, and will perverted!

The conclusion to which we are driven, therefore, is that the notion we are controverting, namely, that love is its own law and the renewed consciousness its own monitor, is a fantasy which has no warrant from Scripture and runs counter to the witness of the biblical teaching.<sup>11</sup>

In summary, we would suggest that the N.T. endorses the Decalogue as a standard for Christians, but denies that it is a method of salvation. This divine law is declared "spiritual," "holy, just, and good." Many years after the Cross, Paul declared that "the sting of death is sin, and

the power of sin is the law" (Ro. 7:12, 14; 1 Cor. 15:56). "The law is good if a man use it lawfully," and through the Spirit, "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us" (1 Tim. 1:8; Ro. 8:4). But the more the Christian dwells upon Christ in His life and death, the more spontaneously does his or her conduct reflect the principles of the law, for Christ was the law incarnate. He alone worshipped altogether in spirit and in truth. He only was the perfect Son, Neighbor, and Friend. He only had such perfect stewardship over His mind that thoughts of covetousness, hate, impurity, lying, etc., were never permitted to hold His attention. When abiding in Christ, the saint finds that the prohibitions of the Decalogue become promises -- "Thou shalt not kill," rather than "Thou shalt not kill." Christ promises to keep His children from evil, and these promises come from One who is both "Lord," and "God," as the introduction to the Decalogue declares. The Hebrew Yahweh (Lord) is God's covenant name--the name associated with His redeeming work, whereas Elohim (God, the only name for the Creator found in Gen. 1) represents God as King over all men because He is their Maker. Thus we could paraphrase the opening words from Sinai thus, "I am thy Redeemer and Creator. I have brought you out of the old, sinful way of life, and from henceforth as my redeemed child you shall have no other gods before me, etc., for I will keep, guide and empower you all the way to the heavenly Canaan."

Thus the gospel is to be found within the Law. It is here also that we read of One who is merciful to thousands of generations of those who love Him, and who offers as an infinite gift to obedient children the eternal Canaan. See Ex. 20:6, 12. The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation," and that power is imaged in the fourth commandment where we are told of the divine omnipotence at work in forming earth and sea and sky. Only by trust in that Omnipotent One who has both created and recreated can any find the rest imaged by the repose of the seventh-day. "We who have believed enter that rest." "For whoever enters God's rest also ceases from his labors as God did from his" (Heb. 4:3, 10 RSV).

The Ten Commandments begin and end with warnings against idolatry. (Covetousness in the N.T. is called idolatry--see Col. 3:5.) The problem of choice is mainly solved, once we see God in Christ, and seeing Him, resolve to endeavor to please and glorify Him in all things. We let God be God, and as the great God is thus welcomed into the heart, the little gods troop out, the little gods of hate, lust, dishonesty, untruthfulness, discontent, etc. We then recognize that all outward, temporary forms, such as circumcision, are in the light of the Cross "nothing" (1 Cor. 7: 19); but also that in the light of that same Cross "obedience to the commandments of God is everything" (1 Cor. 7:19). For religion is indeed grace, and ethics gratitude.

Now let it be emphasized--the chief problem of those who reject the Ten Commandment code as binding on Christians is that they have eviscerated God's pungent, sharp, comprehensive, and compact "rule-of-thumb" for decision-making. What remains? The answer usually given to that enquiry is a half-truth. Christ remains, and what could be better than He? Faith and love remain, and how could these be transcended?

The plain fact is that the majority of simple people are quite incapable of applying lofty abstractions in emergency situations. Amorphous, open-ended ideals on their own court disaster.

It is true that Christ is the supreme Guide for conduct. And it is true that faith and love are the supreme motivations, but it is not true that there can be found therein immediate help, accurate help, for a vast number of recurring temptations in life, temptations great and small. This is particularly true for the majority of the Christian flock who are neither learned, nor intellectual nor spiritual giants.

Is it not significant that neither Christ nor Paul set about the business of enacting a conduct-code? Is it not significant that both continually take for granted the binding obligation of principles found in the Decalogue?

The apparently lofty position of those we here criticize is both impractical and dangerous--because even the best of Christians still have a sinful nature, which demands the clarity and the restraints of divine commitments. In rejecting the Ten Commandment code, and appealing to guidance which is sometimes ambiguous and lacking specificity, such believers leave the flock in a highly vulnerable place. To treat lambs as though they were as strong as lions and as wise as owls or elephants is a risky business. Indeed, such a position is a relapse into mysticism.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6).

"For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation" (Gal. 6:15).

"For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God" (1 Cor. 7: 19).

## FOOTNOTES

1. Frank Yost, "The Doctrine of Sabbath and Sunday," p. 7.
2. G. Shrenk, TDNT, II, p. 548.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 553.
5. Ex. 25:16, 21; 40:20.
6. The Revelation of Law in Scripture, pp. 274-275. He continues:

"A marked distinction is made in various places between the position which Israel occupied toward the law, and that now occupied by believers in Christ; such, that there is a sense in which Israel was placed under it, and in which Christians are not; that it had a purpose to serve till the fulfilment of the covenant of promise in Christ, for which it is no longer specifically required; Gal. ii. 19-25, iv. 1-6 that somehow it is done away or abolished, 2 Cor. iii. 11; Eph. ii. 15; Col. ii. 14 or, as it is again put, that we are done away from it, that is, set free, in regard to its right to lord it over us; Rom. vii. 6 that we are even dead to it, or are no longer under it; Rom. vi. 14, vii. 4 and that the scope or end for which the law was given is accomplished, and alone can be accomplished, in Christ for those who are spiritually united to Him. Rom. viii. 3, 4, x. 4

These are certainly very strong, at first sight even startling statements, and if looked at superficially, or taken up and pressed in an isolated manner, might easily be made to teach a doctrine which would conflict with the passages previously quoted, or with the use of the law actually made in them with reference to the Christian life. That there must be a mode of harmonizing them, we may rest perfectly assured--though it can only be satisfactorily made out by a careful examination of the particular passages, viewed in their proper connection, and with due regard to the feelings and practices of the time....

In respect to form, Scripture no doubt represents the covenant of law, the old covenant, as in some sense done away, or abolished.... That covenant of law, as actually proposed and settled by God, did not stand opposed to grace, but in subordination to grace, as revealed in a prior covenant, whose spiritual ends it was designed to promote; therefore, though made to take the form of a covenant, its object still was not to give, but to guide life; in other words, to shew distinctly to the people, and take them bound to consider, how it behoved them to act toward God, and toward each other as an elect generation, God's seed of blessing in the earth. But this, in the language of theology, does not materially differ from the use of the law as a rule of life; whereas to be under the law as a covenant, means in theology to be bound by it as a covenant of works, to make good, through obedience to its precepts, a title to life. In such a sense the Israelites were not placed under it any more than ourselves.... the law had a function to perform for Israel, and through them for the world, which is not needed in the same manner or to the same extent now. Wherein does this difference lie? There is here evidently room for more careful and discriminating explanations. And, in endeavouring to make them, we must distinguish between what was common to Israel with the people of God generally, and what was peculiar to them as belonging to a particular stage in the Divine plan, living under a still imperfectly developed form of the Divine dispensations.

Viewed in the former of these aspects, the Israelites were strictly a representative people; they were chosen from among mankind, as in the name of mankind, to hear that law of God, which revealed His righteousness for their direction and obedience; and though this came in connection with another revelation, a covenant of promise through which life and blessing were to be obtained, yet, considered by itself, it brought out before them, and charged upon their consciences, the sum of all moral obligation--whatever is due from men as men, as moral and responsible beings, to God Himself, and to their fellow-men. In this the law demanded only what was right and good--what therefore should have been willingly rendered by all to whom it came--what, the more it was considered, men could not but the more feel must be rendered, if matters were to be put on a solid footing between them and God, and they were to have a free access to His presence and glory. But the law could only demand the right, could not secure the performance of it; it could condemn sin, but not prevent its commission, which, by reason of the weakness of flesh, and the heart's innate tendency to alienation from God, continued still to proceed in the face of the commands and threatenings of law:--so that the law, in its practical working, necessarily came to stand over against men as a righteous creditor with claims of justice which had not been satisfied, and deserved retributions of judgment which were ready to be executed. In this respect, it had to be taken out of the way, got rid of or abolished, in a manner consistent with the moral government of God--its curse for committed sin borne--and its right to lord it over men to condemnation and death brought to an end. It is this great question--a question which only primarily concerned the Jews, as having been the direct recipients of the revelation of law, but in which all men as sinners were alike really interested--that the apostle chiefly treats in the larger proportion of the passages recently referred to. It is of the law in this point of view, that he speaks of it as a minister of death--of believers being no longer married to it or under it--yea, of their being dead to it, dead through the law itself to the law--and of the law being consequently removed as a barrier between them and the favour and blessing of God. And he was led to do so the rather because of the deep-rooted and prevailing tendency of the time to look at the law by itself--apart from the covenant of promise--and to find in obedience to its commands a title to life and blessing. This, the apostle argues, is utterly to mistake its meaning and pervert its design. Taken so, the law works wrath, not peace; instead of delivering from sin, it is itself the very sting of sin; hence brings not blessing, but a curse; not life, but condemnation; and never till men renounce confidence in their deeds of law, and lay hold of the hope set before them in Him who for sinners has satisfied its just demands, and made reconciliation for iniquity, can they obtain deliverance from fear and guilty, and enter into life. Thus Christ becomes 'the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth:' Rom. x. 4. In Him alone it reaches its proper aim as regards the interests of righteousness, for He has perfectly fulfilled its commands, in death as well as life has honoured its claims: and this not for Himself properly, but for those who through faith join themselves to Him, and become partakers, both in the work of righteousness He has accomplished, and the spirit of righteousness He puts into their hearts.

Such, briefly, is the import of that class of statements in St. Paul's writings; and in this sense only do they warrant us to speak of the moral law being done away, or of our having been set free from it--a sense which really enhances the importance of the law, most strikingly exhibits its eternal validity, because shewing us to be delivered from it, only that we may be brought into conformity to its spirit and requirements. And, in this respect, as we have said, there is no difference between the believer under the old covenant, and the believer

under the new--except that what was little more than hope before is realization now, what was then but dimly apprehended, and received only as by way of provisional forestallments, is now disclosed in all its fulness, and made the common heritage of believers in Christ. But there was another respect in which the position of Israel is to be considered, one in which it was peculiar, since, according to it, they occupied a particular, and that a comparatively early, place in the history of the Divine dispensations. In this respect, the revelation of law had a prominence given to it which was also peculiar, which was adapted only to the immature stage to which it belonged, and was destined to undergo a change when the more perfect state of things had come. Considered in this point of view, the law must be taken in its entire compass, with the Decalogue, indeed, as its basis, yet with this not in its naked elements and standing alone, but, for the sake of greater prominence and stringency, made the terms of a covenant; and not only so, but, even while linked to a prior covenant of grace, associated with pains and penalties which, in the case of deliberate transgression, admitted of no suspension and repeal--associated, moreover, with a complicated system of rites and ordinances which were partly designed to teach and enforce upon men's minds its great principles and obligations of moral duty, and partly to provide the means of escape from the guilt incurred by their imperfect fulfilment or their occasional violation. It was in this complex form that the law was imposed upon Israel, and interwoven with the economical arrangements under which, as a people, they were placed. It is in that form that it was appointed to serve the design of an educational or pedagogical institute, preparatory to the introduction of Gospel times; and in the same form only that St. Paul, in various places--especially in the Epistle to the Galatians, also in Eph. ii. 14-17; Col. ii. 14:23--contended for its having been displaced or taken out of the way by the work of Christ. In all the passages the moral law is certainly included in the system of enactment spoken of, but still always in the connection now mentioned--as part and parcel of a disciplinary yoke, a pedagogy suited only to the season of comparative childhood, therefore falling into abeyance with the arrival of a manhood condition. And the necessity of this change, it will be observed, he presses with special reference, not to the strictly moral part of the law, but to the subsidiary rules and observances with which it was associated--the value of which, as to their original design, ceased with the introduction of the Gospel. His view was, not that men were disposed to make more of the Decalogue, or of the two great commandments of love, than he thought altogether proper--precisely the reverse: it was, because they were allowing the mere temporary adjuncts, and ritualistic accompaniments of these fundamental requirements, to overshadow their importance, and pave the way for substituting a formal and fictitious pietism for true godliness and virtue. And hence to prevent, as far as possible, any misunderstanding of his meaning, he does not close the epistles in question without pointing in the most explicit terms to the simply moral demands of the law as now, not less than formerly, binding on the consciences of men. Gal. v. 13-22; Eph. vi. 1-9; Col. iii. 14, seq.

In short, the question handled by the apostle in this part of his writings upon the law, was not whether the holiness and love it enjoined were to be practised, but how the practice was to be secured. The utterance of the law's precepts in the most peremptory and solemn form could not do it. The converting of those precepts into the terms of a covenant, and taking men bound under the weightiest penalties to observe them, could not do it. Nor could it be done by a regulated machinery of means of instruction and ordinances of service, intended to minister subsidiary help and encouragement to such as were willing to follow the course of obedience. All these had been tried, but never with more than partial success--not because the holiness required was defective, but because the moral power was wanting to have it realized. And now there came the more excellent way of the Gospel--the revelation of that love which is the fulfilling of the law, in the person of the New Head of humanity, the Lord from heaven--the revelation of it in full-orbed completeness, even rising to the highest point of sacrifice, and making provision for as many as would in faith receive it, that the spirit of this noble, pure, self-sacrificing love should dwell as a new life, an absorbing and controlling power, also in their bosom. So that, '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.' He who is replenished with this spirit of life and love, no longer has the law standing over him, but, as with Christ in His work on earth, it lives in him, and he lives in it; the work of the law is written on his heart, and its spirit is transfused into his life. 'The man (it has been justly said) who is truly possessor of "the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," cannot have any other gods but his Father in heaven; cannot commit adultery; cannot bear false witness; cannot kill; cannot steal. Such a man comes down upon all the exercises and avocations of life from a high altitude of wise and loving homage to the Son of God, and expounds practically the saying of the apostle, "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." .... Christ's cross, then, delivers Christians from what may be termed moral drudgery; they are not oppressed and pined serfs, but freemen and fellow-heirs, serving the Lord Christ with all gladness of heart. It magnifies the law and makes it honourable, yet delivers those who accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour from the bondage of the letter. Instead of throwing the commandments into contempt, it gave them a higher moral status, and even Sinai itself becomes shorn of its greatest terrors when viewed from the elevation of the cross. Love was really the reason of the law, though the law looked like an expression of anger. We see this, now that we love more; love is the best interpreter of God, for God is love.' 'Ecce Deus,' chap. xvi.

Thus it is that the Gospel secures liberty, and, at the same time, guards against licentiousness. To look only, or even principally, to the demands of law, constituted as human nature now is, cramps and deadens the energies of the soul, generates a spirit of bondage, which, ever vacillating between the fear of doing too little, and the desire of not doing more than is strictly required, can know nothing of the higher walks of excellence and worth. On the other hand, to look to the grace and liberty of the Gospel away from the law of eternal rectitude, with which they stand inseparably connected, is to give a perilous licence to the desires and emotions of the heart, nurses a spirit of individualism, which, spurning the restraints of authority, is apt to become the victim of its own caprice, or the pliant slave of vanity and lust; for true liberty, in the spiritual as well as in the civil sphere, is a regulated freedom; it moves within the bonds of law, in a spirit of rational obedience, and the moment these are set aside, self-will rises to the ascendant, bringing with it the witchery and dominion of sin. Rom. vi. 16. It is only, therefore, the combined operation of the two which can secure the proper result; and with whom is that to be found except with those who have received the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus? To be replenished with this Spirit, is to be brought within the sphere of Divine love, which, so far from recoiling from the law's demands, can give expression even to its noblest enthusiasm in a cordial response to the obligations they impose, and a faithful obedience to the course of action they prescribe.

Besides, by thus calling into play the higher elements of a Divine life, there is necessarily set to work a spring or principle of goodness in the heart, which in aim is one with the law, but which in its modes of operation no law can exactly define." Ibid., pp. 275-85.

7. P. 18. Note also the following:

"Paul, confronted as he was by his own Pharisaic past and by his Jewish and Jewish Christian opponents, developed a theology of the law that is connected historically with the promise and on a personal level with Christ. In doing so, however, he is far from regarding himself as a second teacher of Christianity either in addition to, or in place of Jesus. His teaching remains within the limits previously laid down by

Jesus; he merely brings out the basic significance of Christ's work, now completed in the → cross and → resurrection." H. H. Esser.

8. A. H. Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 876.

9. Anonymous, Eight Sermons on the Lord's Day, p. 223.

10. Roger T. Beckwith, W. Stott, This is the Day.

11. Principles of Conduct, pp. 25-26.

EXCURSUS  
THE DECALOGUE--ITS NATURE AND TITLES

It is plain enough that there is a wide difference between the Decalogue and the whole body of Mosaic legislation. The Decalogue is unique. There is nothing like it in the history of man. Nothing that can be compared with it has ever been imagined by man. The external circumstances, that which we may call the framing of the Decalogue, were themselves unique. Such were the physical isolation of the whole nation from all other peoples, they were gathered into the large yet limited amphitheatre, walled by towering granite, facing Sinai; the display of natural phenomena, such as in their ordinary occurrence have always appalled the human race; the three days' preparation, special, personal, prolonged; and the utterance of words which it strained human endurance to hear, as they rose above the trumpet of the whirlwind, out of the central invisibility of the burning retinue overwhelmed all consciousness of mortal potency, and excluded all impressions except that of the presence and personal address of God.

The explicitness of these words was no less unique. God's thought may be read in all nature, and equally in his moral government, but only a little at a time. It is as if each letter were composed of innumerable strokes, and each word of numberless letters, so that while the scroll stretched from dawn to dusk, the whole of a sentence was never in view at once. We catch glimpses of the meaning, but we cannot grasp it entirely. These words are ten. They are as simple as short.

God's thought may likewise be read in all the institutions which He, through his servant Moses, ordained, but only very partially and imperfectly in these alone. Their meaning depends upon that which is before and after them. By themselves they present a great complex enigma, insoluble until the antecedent promise to Abraham was fulfilled in Christ. These ten words are complete and independent. For their comprehension, be it most reverently said, neither Abraham nor Christ was needed. No man does or can fail to understand who hears them. From beginning to end, each separate one of the ten addresses something in the consciousness of all sorts and conditions of men in every age, and every clime, and every grade.

The treatment of these words was equally singular. Engraved by the special exertion of Omnipotence on slabs of rock, they were designed to be imperishable. Placed by divine command in the centre of the most sacred of all symbolic objects, in the most reverend and awful situation, within the purview of divine worship, beneath the mercy-seat, within the ark, in the Holy of Holies, they were thus certified by God, through his ritual and symbolism and object lessons, as the very centre and foundation of all that relates to the bond between man and his Maker, which we call religion.

In the light of all these facts, the titles given to the Decalogue by God, in the various passages in which reference is made to it in the general legislation, are very important. Taken together they also are unique. Nothing else in all the circle of symbol, or service, or prophecy, bears these two titles. They are "covenant" and "testimony."<sup>1</sup> Both words are not uncommon. But to only one thing are both applied in common. The Decalogue is both covenant and testimony.<sup>2</sup>

Scripture is always to be compared with Scripture. There is nothing accidental in the Word of God. These two names for the Decalogue must be taken to illustrate and explain each other. The testimony was a declaration from God of something on which his covenant must rest. The covenant was an assurance from God to that which answered his testimony. The substance or matter of the Decalogue, as between God and mankind, was God's testimony--his most emphatic, solemn, and unique declaration. As between God and those who reciprocate his declaration and conform to its substance,<sup>3</sup> it was his covenant. What, then, does the testimony testify? What does the covenant pledge? It testifies the divine ideal of perfect human living. It pledges divine communion with such an ideal in practice. "I am the Lord thy God."

It is true that various opinions concerning it have been expressed by some Christian scholars. But that fact is of very slight importance compared with the great controlling fact that the Church has attested it. Unique and alone in the external circumstances of its utterance, in the explicitness of its language, in the manner and place of its record, in the significance of its twofold title, and in its correspondence to the Promise, the Decalogue is equally alone among all the words of the Pentateuch, or even of the Old Testament, in its use by the Church.

What, then, has the Church meant by her solemn repetition of the Fourth Commandment through all these centuries? or rather since the Holy Spirit, during all these centuries, has influenced and educated the Church,--what has He intended to effect by this age long rehearsal of "Remember the Sabbath day?".... The Scriptures speak of the covenant and the testimony as enduring. With all the diversities of interpretation which believers have applied to the Book of Revelation, there are none who do not see in it a representation of the whole or a part of the Christian dispensation. It begins with the Lamb who unseals the Book of God. Down into the Christian dispensation, therefore, the old covenant and testimony go, according to this Scripture. It would seem, perhaps, to be implied that through this development the relation of the covenant to the ark, and of the testimony to its temple, would become more and more manifest to the inhabitants of heaven itself. The other passages, which refer to the whole or a part of the Decalogue, take for granted that its authority remains. This is especially noticeable in the passages where our Lord declares its complement or summary,<sup>4</sup> and where the Apostle Paul refers<sup>5</sup> to his utterance. If the law were not a living law, neither of these passages could have any meaning."

1. "It is true that there is some question among scholars as to the best translation of "eduth" rendered in our version "testimony." But the matter in dispute is really insignificant. There is no question that the word means something strongly repeated, earnestly affirmed, call it precept, protest, testimony, or declaration. Deut. xxxi. 26, 27, harmonizes with the translation "testimony," but does not necessarily confirm it, because there was a difference between the offices of the "Book of the Law" (the Pentateuch probably) and the two tables. But for every scholar who is content to interpret Scripture by Scripture, the question is settled in Rev. xv. 5. The word μαρτύριον there used is the very word used by the Septuagint to translate 'eduth' when referring to the Ten Commandments."

2. "Ex. xix. 5, the people were commanded to prepare for the "covenant" to be given on the third day. Ex. xxxiv. 27, 28, and Deut. iv. 13, the "ten words" are specifically described as "the covenant." In the first passage a reason is given. Deut. ix. 9, 11, the two tables of stone are described as the covenant. Numb. x. 33; Deut. x. 8; xxxi. 7, 25, 26, the ark is "the ark of the covenant."

Ex. xxv. 16, 21, command to put "the testimony" into the ark; neither the ark nor the stone tables were yet in existence. In view of this purpose the ark was called then (xxv. 22) "the ark of the testimony." The same again, before its construction, in Ex. xxxi. 7. Ex. xxxi. 18;

xxxii. 15, the tables first given to Moses are called the "tables of testimony;" and xxxiv. 29, the second set are called the same. Ex. xxxviii. 21; Numb. i. 50, 53, the tabernacle is called the tabernacle of testimony.

Heb. ix. 4. "The ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant."

3. "None." With insignificant exceptions.

4. "Summary." Matt. xxii. 26-29; Mark xii. 28-31.

5. "Refers." Rom. xiii. 10.

(Extracts from Eight Lectures on the Lord's Day, Anon., pp. 218-225 passim.)

"Next to the revelation of Divine Love in Palestine, the declaration of Divine Will in Egypt is the greatest event which the world has seen, the most powerful moral force in history. The lightning of the Law of Sinai is second only to the "Light of the world", and "the Light of Life", for the comfort, guidance and inspiration of humanity. No moral system ever humanly formulated before or since,--and there have been many, including the outstanding systems of Egypt, India, China, and Greece,--can approach, much less equal, or excel, these Ten Words of God. For all time, humanity is condensed and declared with an Authority which, in its Divinity, can be neither surpassed nor superseded."

(From Burr's Studies on the Ten Commandments, p. 1.)

## THE EDENIC ORIGIN OF THE SABBATH

To be able to convince honest inquirers of the Edenic origin of the Sabbath is vital for every Sabbatarian believer. If the Sabbath was instituted by God for the first man, then it was probably also intended for the last man, and for all in between; whereas, if the world could do without the Sabbath for the millenniums before Sinai, there is no reason why it could not again do without it in the era after the cross.

The opponents of the binding obligation of the Sabbath have clearly seen the importance of this question. William Paley, archdeacon of Carlisle, wrote as follows:

If the Divine command was actually delivered at the creation, it was addressed, no doubt, to the whole human species alike, and continues, unless repealed by some subsequent revelation, binding upon all who come to the knowledge of it. If the command was published for the first time in the wilderness, then it was immediately directed to the Jewish people alone; and something further, either in the subject or circumstances of the command, will be necessary to show that it was designed for any other. It is on this account that the question concerning the date of the institution was first to be considered. The former opinion precludes all debate about the extent of the obligation: the latter admits, and, prima facie induces a belief that the Sabbath ought to be considered as part of the peculiar law of the Jewish policy.<sup>1</sup>

At first sight, Genesis 2:1-3 would seem to so conclusively settle the matter that further study into the question seems unnecessary. However, it should be recognized that many Bible exegetes consider this passage of Scripture to be proleptic in nature--written in the time of Moses after Sinai, and therefore anticipating in the Genesis record what is later to be told in detail in Exodus. What shall we say of this exposition, which is universally held by all who oppose the Seventh-day Sabbath?

It should be noted that this exposition of prolepsis had its modern revival in the work of the skeptical higher critics of the nineteenth century.

The origin of the Sabbath is usually referred to Moses by the German critics... on the ground that Gen. ii. 1 cannot be accepted as a testimony to its earlier institution, since this whole account of the creation, whole date and author are unknown, is plainly designed for the very purpose of presenting the Sabbath to us as an immediate divine ordinance.<sup>2</sup>

This quotation assures us that it was men who believed in the Wellhausen hypothesis regarding the origin of the Pentateuch who endorsed the interpretation under discussion at the time when the claims of the fourth commandment were being urged upon the world in the mid-19th century.

Often the early Church Fathers are quoted as saying that the patriarchs observed no Sabbath, and that they also believed that Genesis 2:1-3 applied by way of anticipation only. The probable meaning of most of such quotations is that given by Blunt in his Undesigned Coincidences. He says for example, concerning one of the Fathers, "that Justin Martyr's meaning was by no means that the Patriarchs kept no Sabbath at all, but that they did not observe them according to the peculiar rites of the Jewish law." This is cited approvingly by Wordsworth's Commentary, and the position is there further elaborated by references from the early Fathers.

While the number of authorities does not prove a disputed point, it should be remembered that the great majority of evangelical scholars through the centuries have believed that the proleptic interpretation of Genesis 2:1-3 is forced and unnatural. Says the learned Fairbairn:

The leading divines of the Reformation, and the immediately subsequent period, were of one mind regarding the appointment of a primeval Sabbath. The idea that the Sabbath was first given to the Israelites in the wilderness, and that the words in Gen. ii. only proleptically refer to that future circumstance, is an after-thought, originating in the fond conceit of some Jewish Rabbis, who sought thereby to magnify their nation, and was adopted openly by such Christian divines as had already made up their minds on the temporary obligation of the Sabbath.<sup>3</sup>

The orthodox viewpoint has perhaps never been better expressed than as presented by a writer in the Bibliotheca Sacra in 1856. Because the arguments employed are pertinent, we quote at length:

Who that had no such theory to defend, would imagine the sacred writer here to describe a transaction, which, according to the supposition, had not occurred for two thousand five hundred years afterward? It would not be asserted by him, or any of those who occupy the same side in this controversy, that the interpretation thus given to this passage is the one which would naturally present itself to anyone of ordinary intelligence upon the first perusal of it. We will not allege, indeed, that the obvious, or seemingly obvious, import of the passage is always the true one. But if there be no dispute respecting the terms employed (and there is none here), and if the subject matter be of easy comprehension (as in the present instance), then the onus probandi rests upon those who would reject the obvious for the more recondite construction.

Here is a historical statement: and the only question is, Does Moses, after describing the work of six days, suddenly, and without intimation, alter his style when he comes to describe the procedure of the seventh day? and using a highly rhetorical figure, does he set down in connection with the record of this procedure an event which did not take place until twenty-five centuries had elapsed? We have said, without intimation, but it should be added also, in the face of the fact that the whole, being a plain narrative, would inevitably be differently understood by all who might read it apart from the light of such an hypothesis as the one now under examination. This, assuredly, is not what we might have expected to discover in any book, written beneath the guidance of the divine Spirit, and intended for the instruction of the unsophisticated in all ages.

We utterly deny, then, that "it was natural in the historian, when he had related the history of the creation and of God's ceasing from it upon the seventh day, to add" the words in question, unless they are expressive of an event which actually occurred at the creation. And to state in the way of argument that Moses does "not assert that God then blessed and sanctified the seventh day," but simply that he did so for a certain reason, is to be guilty of a species of sophistry very unworthy the gravity which becomes the discussion of such a theme. How could he have conveyed more lucidly the idea that this was done then, than by recording it, as he does other things, in the past tense, and also in immediate connection with that very cessation from work on the part of God which

it was designed to commemorate? True, he assigns the reason for this consecration; but he does this in such a manner as to imply that as the reason existed from the beginning, so also did the consecration. And it is but natural to ask, What ground could exist for the appointment of such a memorial in after ages, which did not operate "from the foundation of the world"?

On the whole it does appear to us that until all the principles of sound criticism are abandoned, and we are at liberty, by a dexterous and convenient application of the figure prolepsis to convert history into prophecy at our pleasure, we cannot adopt the interpretation which this writer has so strenuously advocated. We can understand what is meant by the total rejection of this inspired record, or by the reduction of it to the rank of a mere myth; but we are at an utter loss to understand the position which accepts its divine authority, and acknowledges the opening portion of Genesis to be the narrative of real transactions, and yet, to serve the purpose of a theory, would mutilate and distort its obvious meaning, and that in gross violation of all the laws which guide the historian and chronologist's pen.<sup>4</sup>

Let us now elaborate the basic reasons for interpreting this key passage of Scripture as applying to the Sabbath's Edenic origin.

1. Such an interpretation is obviously the most natural. There seems to be no evident reason for separating the blessing and the sanctifying referred to from the resting recorded in the same passage. All admit that the resting did transpire on the first seventh day, and the blessing and sanctifying seem to issue naturally from that event. Says Wardlaw on this point:

It is the language of history. And what the historian relates about the seventh day, he relates as done at the time, with the very same simplicity with which he relates the associated transactions of creation as done at the time. There is no hint, no change of construction, nothing whatsoever in the slightest degree indicative of its being a mere allusion to something that took place at a future and distant age.<sup>5</sup>

2. In Genesis 1:20, 22, 24-26, 28 we have mention of God's immediate blessing of the work of earlier days in that first week. Genesis 2:2, 3 seems an obvious parallel to these verses, and if so, the blessing of the Sabbath must have taken place on that very day.

3. In the fourth commandment itself we have another parallel between what took place on the first six days and the events of the seventh day. Note the tenses employed in Exodus 20:11: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth.... and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." All four verbs are in the past tense. No one disputes that the first two apply to Creation week. The correlation of divine acts as here portrayed clearly indicates that the blessing and the hallowing took place at the same time as the resting. If the alternative interpretation be the correct one, the fourth commandment would have been more correctly worded in this section as follows: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord now blesses the sabbath day and now hallows it." The very first word of the commandment suggests that the natural understanding of this extract from the Decalogue is the true one, and the last phrase "and hallowed it" has no significance unless the Sabbath was proclaimed at Creation.

4. It should also be noted that the fourth commandment affirms that the seventh day was already the Sabbath at the time God hallowed it. "God blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it." It did not become the Sabbath 2,500 years later.

5. A close study of the Creation story suggests, as even higher critics have perceived, that the record regarding the Sabbath is the seal on the entire account of Creation. The preceding daily steps led to this crowning one, and Genesis 2:1-3, far from being proleptic, is the planned climax to which the earlier verses move. Indeed it is hard to suggest any reason for Creation taking six days other than that of paving the way for the divine example of Sabbath-keeping. Thus the Sabbath of Genesis is woven into the very fabric of the universe. The Almighty, who could have spoken all into existence in a split second, condescended to attenuate His processes in order to give His endorsement to the keeping sacred of each seventh day.

6. Genesis 2:3 by its reference to the blessing and sanctifying of the day on which God had already rested, indicates that the day blessed was not merely that first seventh day but each one yet to come, and the meaning of the Hebrew verb translated "sanctified" (kadesh) supports such a conclusion. According to lexicons this word means not only "to pronounce holy" but also "to institute any holy thing, to appoint." (see Genesis.) In such passages as Joel 1:14; 2:15; Joshua 20:9; and Exodus 19:12, 23 the word applies to a public proclamation. Says Lange's Commentary:

If we had no other passage than this of Gen. ii. 3, there would be no difficulty in deducing from it a precept for the universal observance of a sabbath, or seventh day, to be devoted to God, as holy time, by all of that race for whom the earth and its nature were specially prepared. The first men must have known it. The words "He hallowed it," can have no meaning otherwise. They would be a blank unless in reference to some who were required to keep it holy.<sup>6</sup>

7. The information given us in Genesis chapters 2-4, establishes the fact that man was both a worker and a worshiper. On both counts, the need existed for a special time for rest and adoration of the Creator. Why should this need be denied until Sinai?

Considering Adam was restored to favor through a Mediator, and a religious service instituted which man was required to observe, in testimony not only of his dependence on the Creator, but also of his faith and hope in the promise, it seems reasonable that an institution so grand and solemn, and so necessary to the observance of this service, should be then existent.<sup>7</sup>

8. There is no instance in Scripture of a memorial being instituted millenniums after the event it is to memorialize. Exodus 20:8-11 clearly declares that the Sabbath is a commemoration of God's work of Creation, and the logical time for the memorial to begin to function would be with the event to which it would ever point back. The Passover, for example, began at the time of the deliverance it symbolized, and the twelve memorial stones in Jordan and the twelve on the bank were erected on the occasion of the miraculous crossing. The situation is the same with the Lord's Supper. Imagine that the beginning of the communion service had been planned by God to be postponed for as long as opponents of the Sabbath say that this memorial was postponed--the Christian church would not begin to observe the memorial supper until nearly six more centuries had rolled by!

9. Our Lord Himself has spoken on this matter of the time of the appointing of the Sabbath. He declared: "The sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2:27). He is referring back to Creation, the time when things were "made," and He declares that at the time the Sabbath was instituted for the benefit of all men. The Greek has "made for the man," and the article in such cases refers either to a specific individual or to a species. Christ here has in mind Adam as an individual, or as the representative of all mankind.

This seems to teach that the Sabbath was made for man not as a Jew or as a Christian, but as man, and therefore entitled to his

regard in all conditions and through all ages.... When Christ, then, declares that the Sabbath was made for man, we can only understand him as teaching that it was intended and instituted for our common humanity, and that it is to be so employed as to conduce to man's highest or spiritual good.<sup>8</sup>

10. The account of the Sabbath in Exodus 16 further supports the Edenic origin of this holy day. The reference is far too casual to represent the introduction then for the first time of such an important institution. A study of the chapter shows that its main theme is the provision of the manna rather than Sabbath observance, and the latter comes in only incidentally. Notice that in verse 23 Moses does not say that the Lord had commanded that every seventh day henceforth should be kept holy. He merely states: "Tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord." Certainly this was not the enunciation of a new law, even though the record implies that Israel had become careless in all her religious observances. It is clear that the fourth commandment does not assign the falling of the manna as the reason for Sabbath observance.

11. In Hebrews 4:1-11 the inspired writer distinguishes between the "rest" of Canaan, and a sabbatical rest "entered into" from the time when "the works were finished," that is, from Creation. The argument of this section of the chapter is that "from the foundation of the world" there has been a spiritual experience of rest offered to believers. Both the rest of the first Sabbath and the rest from pilgrimage in Canaan are symbols of the blessing offered to those who cease to rely on their own works and trust in the finished work of Christ. Thus this chapter not only assures us of the primeval origin of the Sabbath but also of the spiritual import of that holy memorial inviting man from his very creation to find rest through fellowship with his Maker.

12. It should be stressed that the moral nature of the Sabbath command indicates its Edenic origin. All agree that the other commandments of the ten were binding on all men from the time of Creation. We might therefore say in this regard what Jesus said in another: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mark 10:9). Did the Omniscient One err by slipping a temporary command into the heart of a set of eternal laws?

The test of an eternal moral law is whether it grows out of original relationships between God and man. Certainly this one does. The fact that we are the work of God's hand is the foundation of all worship and morality. The reason assigned in the fourth commandment for the Sabbath is not Jewish, but one universally applicable, and therefore one would expect the command to be in force for all men so long as there is an earth beneath their feet and a Creator in heaven above. (The reason given in Deuteronomy 5, where the commandments are paraphrased, is an additional reason why redeemed beings should be Sabbath-keepers.) In the words of Fairbairn:

It seems, indeed, as if God, in the appointment of this law, had taken special precautions against the attempts which He foresaw would be made to get rid of the institution, and that on this account He laid its foundations first in the original framework and constitution of nature.... The Lord has thus honored the fourth commandment above the others, by laying for it a foundation so singularly broad and deep.<sup>9</sup>

In conclusion, two popular objections to the primeval Sabbath should be considered. First, that Genesis contains neither precept nor example of Sabbath observance among the patriarchs, and second, that Nehemiah 9:13, 14 declares that God first made known the Sabbath at Sinai.

In answer to the first objection, it is obvious that Genesis is neither a book of legislature, nor a detailed history. No law for sacrifice or tithing is found therein, yet both were practiced by Abraham and others. Nowhere is it recorded in Genesis that men were commanded to love God with all their hearts and their neighbor as themselves, and no laws can be found forbidding idolatry, blasphemy, disobedience to parents, adultery, theft, lying, or covetousness. Yet such references as Genesis 4:7; 18:20; 26:5; 39:9; et cetera, indicate the existence of these precepts. As regards the omission of Sabbath-keeping examples in Genesis, Fairbairn says:

Even in the later and fuller accounts, it is usual, through very long periods of time, to omit any reference to institutions which were known to have been stately observed. There is no notice, for example, of circumcision from the time of Joshua to the Babylonish exile; but how fallacious would be the conclusion from such silence that the rite itself had fallen into desuetude! Even the Sabbath, notwithstanding the prominent place it holds in the decalogue and the institutions of Moses, is never mentioned again till the days of Elisha (nearly seven hundred years later), when we meet with an incidental passing allusion to it. Need we wonder, then, that in such peculiarly brief compends of history as are given of antediluvian and patriarchal times, there should be a similar silence?<sup>10</sup>

Nowhere does the Old Testament record the observance of either the Jubilee or the Day of Atonement, and yet both were prescribed for Israel more than one thousand years before the close of the Old Testament canon, and were undoubtedly observed. It is interesting also to notice that the Sabbath is not mentioned in the books of Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon, and yet no one contends that the Sabbath was ignored during the period when these books were written.

The argument based on the phrase "madest known" in Nehemiah 9:14 if applied to Ezekiel 20:9 would prove that not only the Sabbath but God Himself did not exist prior to the Exodus. The Hebrew word yada sometimes has the sense of bringing back to mind something known before (see also Eze. 39:7).

As one distills the Biblical argument for the Edenic origin of the Sabbath, the conviction grows that in this matter the evidence, while not demonstrative, is abundant. Thus the belief in the primeval Sabbath is akin to other disputed theological positions such as the existence of God and the truthfulness of His Word. For the honest in heart, the light, while not blinding, is yet sufficiently illuminative for guidance.

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. William Paley, Paley's Whole Works, in one volume (London, T. Nelson & Sons, 1852), p. 92.
2. Art. "Sabbath, Jewish," McClintock & Strong's Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1880), vol. 9, p. 192.
3. Patrick Fairbairn, The Typology of Scripture (London, Oliphants Ltd., 1953), vol. 2, p. 110.
4. Cited from Facts for the Times (Michigan: Review and Herald Publishing Co., 1893), pp. 111, 112.
5. R. Wardlaw, cited from The Christian Sabbath (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1856), p. 13.
6. John P. Lange, A Commentary of the Holy Scriptures (New York: Charles Scribner and Co., 1868), on Gen. 2:3, p. 197.
7. McClintock & Strong, op. cit., p. 194.
8. Ibid., pp. 195, 196.
9. Fairbairn, op. cit., p. 109.
10. Ibid., p. 114.

## GOD'S BULWARK AGAINST APOSTASY FROM EDEN TO EDEN

When the Sabbath goes, the church goes. When the Church goes, the family goes. When the family goes, the nation goes.

- D. L. Moody

... if it [the rest day] were abolished, the Church would be in imminent danger of immediate convulsion and ruin.

- John Calvin, Institutes, II:viii

God has given to this world His Son, the Gospel, the Scriptures, the Church, the Ministry, and the Ordinances. But the testimony of history is that where the Sabbath is not cherished, all these are ultimately forgotten or perverted.

True observance of sabbatical time has ever proved the bulwark of the Christian faith, for it best promotes worship, piety, and the spirit which gladly recognizes in all men the purchase of Christ. By providing man with time to gaze into His Maker's heart and mind, the fourth commandment gives man the opportunity to learn the depths of the other nine commandments also, and the motives for fulfilling them. It guarantees that the truths of creation and redemption have opportunity to trace again some of the image of God upon the worshipper. For where there is no Sabbath, ultimately there is no Christianity.

Such is the testimony of both Scripture history, and Church history. After God "sanctified" (set apart--hallowed for man's use, Ex. 20:11) the seventh day by His own observance of it, its remembrance after the Fall became as tattered as man's depraved nature. Thus we find only rare allusions to its observance by a remnant. See Gen. 4:3 (margin); Ex. 16:4, 28-30. The majority of men raced towards hell via such gross behavior as caused the Flood, the destruction of Babel, and even for Israel the Egyptian captivity. Such spiritual deterioration could never have happened had the Sabbath been properly observed.

After the redemption from Egypt, the continual forgetting of God's holy day by the rescued hosts almost led to their Deliverer wiping them out in the wilderness. See Eze. 20:13, 14. Ultimately, Sabbath desecration brought about the Babylonian captivity, the rejection of Christ, the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and a renewed dispersion of God's ancient people. (See Jer. 17:24-27; Neh. 13:15-18.) In Christ's day, the Sabbath by legalistic perversion had become a burden rather than a "delight" and "honorable" as God intended, and this perversion was as bad as the previous neglect. Note well that had the Jews rightly observed the Sabbath, they would have recognized and embraced the Messiah. The catastrophe of A.D. 70, and the prolonged delay of the Second Advent, would never have taken place.

Both Christ's appeal to Israel, and that of the apostles, were rejected by a nation which had not in heart turned from the worship of the creature to that of the Creator, and thus the fulfillment of Acts 3:19-20 intended for that generation (cf. Mt. 24:34) never transpired.

Following the apostles, the Sabbath was gradually lost by a church determined to separate itself from all things labelled as Jewish. This loss paved the way for the Dark Ages. After the Reformation giants passed away, because they had found the Sabbath institution buried (like Saul) "under the stuff" of a multitude of fast and saint days, and had failed to restore it, spirituality in European Protestantism steadily declined, instead of marching on to possess the world. (See Fairbairn's discussion of this tragedy in his Typology of Scripture.)

We repeat--the experience of the ages has shown that Sabbath-keeping is the natural and necessary means essential to religious welfare, and if there is no stated sacred day, there will soon be no religion. As worship wanes, so does piety, and as piety wanes, so does orthodoxy. When truth dies, man's sun sets and he acts in harmony with the darkness enveloping him. How sad that man perpetually forgets what God asks him specifically to "remember" (Ex. 20:8).

The only words of Scripture actually spoken and written by our Creator, Redeemer, and Judge, are those of the Ten Commandments. Though here a salvific stream flowing through Jewish banks, (true also of Scripture as a whole. Jesus, and salvation itself--Jn. 4:22), these commands are not Jewish. Given in the wilderness rather than in Canaan, they were thus shown to be for all men. They deal, not with circumcision, or the Passover, unclean meats, or sacrifices, but with the basic fundamental principles required for the welfare of all men--even (and we give them in order), loyalty, worship, reverence, holiness, respect for authority, love, purity, honesty, truthfulness, contentment. What is purely Jewish about these? With which can we dispense?

At the heart of this code are the only two positive commandments of the ten, enshrining counsel for Sabbath and family preservation. These two positive laws refer all men back to the twin sisters of Eden--Sabbath and marriage. When the Sabbath was instituted, man automatically was obliged to observe the duties later listed on the first table. With the first marriage, the duties of the second table became obligatory. By placing these two commandments at the center of His law, God showed that all the Ten sprang out of man's original relationships with the Creator and his own kind, and were permanent, not temporary, responsibilities.

The Sabbath occupies approximately one third of the Sinaitic law (the middle words of the message from Sinai are "the seventh day is the Sabbath"). While God forbids murder in two Hebrew words, He spends about one hundred and two on the duty of Sabbath-keeping. By releasing man from the encroachment of work, materialism, and greed, his eternal well-being is made possible.

In terms of space, more than half of the Ten Commandments have reference to our duty of worship--Who to worship, How to worship, the Approach of worship, and the Time for worship. All unrighteousness grows out of ungodliness. See Ro. 1:18. When man lost his connection with God (Gen. 3), he murdered his brother (Gen. 4). Like the spokes of a wheel, the nearer we are to the hub of reality (God), the nearer we are to each other. When we are right with God, we are right with each other. The evidence of the former is the latter. 1 Jn. 3:14; 4:20.

Thus the worship of God is our primary duty. When this is right, all else will be right. If this is not right, neither can anything else be. Because mankind is so naturally worldly-minded, the thought of the primacy of worship comes as a shock and is resented. But if we are indeed the creatures of God's hand, dependent upon Him for life, breath, and all things, it is obvious that our relationship to Him, and our acknowledgement of Him, should be our first concern.

Similarly, if worship was intended to be the primary staple of the life of the creature, and a permanent continuous obligation for all men,

we would expect God to provide regular time for this private and public adoration of Him. Because we are social beings and creatures of habit, a specific time is called for, and unless God provided such a time, all human devisings would lack authority and fail in their intent. If each chose his own time, social worship would be impossible and the church would disintegrate.

How much time should be thus set aside? Only our Maker knows, and we must accept His word for it. Experience confirms what the divine revelation teaches, that "after six days we need something. After six days toil and weariness, exhausted in strength, cast down in spirit, and struck by a thousand crossing darts, we require protection, security, recovery, uplifting, an experience and gladness of other worlds." (Joseph Parker)

As Dr. Dabney has written, "If the great duty of worship is essentially and morally binding, this necessary provision for compliance [the Sabbath] is also essentially and morally binding." And there the case for the perpetuity of the obligation of the fourth commandment might be rested. But there is yet more to say.

God, in the fourth commandment, set His seal on the whole law, as only this precept shows who it is that presumes to order man's conduct. Thus, Karl Barth, Haldane, and others have referred to it as the chief and most important of the Ten. In its bosom was rest through fellowship with God, reminding man of past Eden and thus answering his fundamental questions as to who he was, where he came from, where he was going to, and how he should get there. It pledged also the restoration of Eden in the future, and mirrored the messianic rest achieved by the "finishing" of the work of redemption on another sixth day. It taught man that the end of life was fellowship with God, and that He who gave guiding laws was One who longed for communion with him.

The reason given for the Sabbath is not a Jewish reason but one that applies to all men, and if intended to be good for the future must also have been good in all the past. No biblical memorial is ever begun long ages after the event commemorated. As the blessings of the fifth and sixth days came on those days, so with the blessing of the seventh. The Sabbath began in Eden, and as "made for man" (Mk. 2:27) belonged not only to the first man, but the last and all in between. No evening is mentioned for it, as it symbolizes perpetual rest of heart for the creature rightly related to the Creator, and mirrors eternity itself.

Hodge has chronicled the sevenfold significance of the Sabbath.

(1) To commemorate the work of creation. The people were commanded to remember the Sabbath-day and to keep it holy, because in six days God had made the heavens and the earth.

(2) To preserve alive the knowledge of the only living and true God.... So long, therefore, as men believe in creation, they must believe in God. This accounts for the fact that so much stress is laid upon the right observance of the Sabbath. Far more importance is attributed to that observance than to any merely ceremonial institution.

(3) This command was designed to arrest the current of the outward life of the people and to turn their thoughts to the unseen and spiritual. Men are so prone to be engrossed by the things of this world that it was, and is, of the highest importance that there should be one day of frequent recurrence on which they were forbidden to think of the things of the world, and forced to think of the things unseen and eternal.

(4) It was intended to afford time for the instruction of the people, and for the public and special worship of God.

(5) By the prohibition of all servile labour, whether of man or beast, it was designed to secure recuperative rest for those on whom the primeval curse had fallen: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

(6) As a day of rest and as set apart for intercourse with God, it was designed to be a type of that rest which remains for the people of God, as we learn from Psalms xcv. 11, as expounded by the Apostle in Hebrews iv. 1-10.

(7) As the observance of the Sabbath had died out among the nations, it was solemnly reenacted under the Mosaic dispensation to be a sign of the covenant between God and the children of Israel.<sup>1</sup>

God, while intending that significant moral decisions should be made from sufficient rather than blinding light in order to test man, has yet made duty sufficiently plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. Now, none doubt the ever-binding nature of the commandments on the right and the left of the fourth commandment, and words spoken on another topic here apply in principle, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. . . "

Strangely, the one most invoked to "axe" the Sabbath is the mighty missionary to the Gentiles who forever saw himself as passing on the teachings of his Lord. Paul was no innovator. He built on a foundation already laid before his conversion. Time and again he refers back to the words of the Lord, and we should follow his example in the issue regarding the day of rest and worship. According to Peter, there are in Paul many things liable to be misunderstood, but the vital issues of Christian conduct are already simply stated in the words of our incarnate Lord. Listening to Paul, one could almost think that baptism was unnecessary, for he tells us he was not sent to baptize but to preach. 1 Cor. 1:17. He does not bother to speak of the virgin birth. Indeed, he tells us practically nothing about the incidents of our Lord's life prior to the Cross. If we had only the writings of Paul, Christ's life would be almost a blank.

Paul takes many things for granted without referring to them. There is no attempt in the Paulines to lay down a new law, though he well knows that it is not sufficient to tell poor fallen human nature just about faith and love. Even unfallen man needed specific directives. See Gen. 1:28, 29; 2:15-17. Nowhere in Paul do we find a law, for example, against incest. For it, we must go to the Old Testament. But Paul considers that Old Testament law as still binding. See 1 Cor. 5:1.

Paul is silent about the duty of Sabbath-keeping also, but his silence is no more significant than the silence of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon on the same topic, and the latter books constitute more chapters than the whole New Testament. After the Exodus generation, the Sabbath is not mentioned for more than six times as many years as the New Testament spans. As for the Day of Atonement, never once do we have a record of its observance, though it was undoubtedly kept for many centuries.

Concerning Paul's three warnings against the legalistic observance of days, none of them are in the context of a discussion over the continuing obligation of the Ten Commandments. The Gal. 4:10 reference does not name the Sabbath, but refers to certain "days" to which again these former pagans had reverted. Ro. 14 speaks of an ascetic group which refused flesh foods and wine and probably fasted on certain special days. The Sabbath is not named here either. Col. 2:14 does indeed include the seventh-day Sabbath, but as a Jewish (not

Edenic) ordinance with its sacrificial shadows and, in this instance, man-made regulations, prostituted to the worshipping of angels. This text no more wipes out all Sabbath-keeping than it does all eating and drinking (mentioned in the same verse). Commentators, such as Lohse, have pointed out that incipient gnosticism is the issue in Colossians. This heresy perverted certain Jewish ritual by human ascetic regulations connected with angel-worship and astrology. The fourth commandment is not challenged by this or any other biblical passage.

Paul is quite clear that the Mosaic system, as a system, has ceased to be God's administrator of religion, but obviously this did not mean that the eternal principles of faith, love, obedience, holiness, humility, etc., there inculcated were no longer the standard for Christians. Wherever Paul appears to speak negatively of the moral requirements of law, it is of their legalistic use (law as a method) that he speaks. Elsewhere he acknowledges that sin is only perceived through the law, and that the law is the strength of sin, yet spiritual, holy, just, and good, and fulfilled through that love shed into the believer's heart by the Holy Spirit. Ro. 7:7; 4:15; 8:4; 7:12, 14; 1 Cor. 15:56. The law is good, provided a man use it lawfully. 1 Tim. 1:8. The gospel does not abolish the law but establishes it. Ro. 3:31. It was that very law which demanded the life of all of Adam's race (or that of a divine Substitute), and the Cross testifies to its perpetuity more than the punishment of an entire world could have done.

While Paul nowhere uses such terminology as moral and ceremonial law, he yet fully believed in the reality such more recent terminology conveys. Compare Gal. 5:6; 6:15; and 1 Cor. 7:19.

Now, inasmuch as the Great Commission is not "Go ye into all the world.... teaching all things whatsoever Paul has commanded you," we should inquire briefly regarding Christ's teaching about the Sabbath.

At the risk of His mission and life, Christ restored the Sabbath to honor, brushing away the burdensome tradition of the Jews. Seven Sabbath miracles of healing are recorded in the Gospels, where at least one chapter in every eight refers to the Sabbath and often at great length. In support of what is "lawful" to do on the Sabbath, Christ argued from the Pentateuch, both the early and the later prophets, the Divine example, human custom, conscience and reason, and strengthened His conclusions by reference to Himself as Lord of the Sabbath. It is in connection with a major Sabbatical controversy that we hear his invitation, "Come unto Me and I will give you rest." Not only did His best friends join Him in Sabbath observance on His last earthly Sabbath, but for forty years they prayed at His request that their flight from Jerusalem might not fall on the holy day. Neither Christ or they knew anything of a cessation of holy time. Our Lord observed the Sabbath in life and in death.

Some things should be said in summary. The only religious institution named prior to the Fall is the sanctified seventh day. To this "beginning" our Lord referred when endeavoring to restore the Sabbath and marriage to their original purity. Mk. 2:27; Mt. 19:8. He who foretold that Jerusalem and her system of worship was soon to cease (Jn. 4:21) made it clear that the original arrangements of human duty in Eden would ever remain binding. See also Mt. 5:17-48.

The most precious promises and the most awful warnings of Scripture are associated with the Sabbath and these become more pronounced the further along in Scripture we read. For example, see Isa. 56:3-7; 58:13, 14; Jer. 17:24-27; Mt. 11:28-12:13; Mk. 2:27, 28; Heb. 4:1-9.

The Sabbath is linked with enduring moral laws made for all men of all time. Thus the Gentile could keep it, though without circumcision he could observe no other part of Jewish ritual. There was a death-decree against the violation of the Sabbath in Old Testament times, though not against the violation of Jewish distinctives such as circumcision, or the Passover. Predictions of the Messianic age, particularly refer to Gentile observance of the Sabbath. (See Isa. 56:3-7).

Throughout the approximately 150 references to the Sabbath in Scripture (more proportionately in the New Testament than in the Old), we find it always elevated as the sign and the seal of the divine covenant with man, and a specific test in all ages. For the Sabbath as a test at the beginning and end of the patriarchal age, see Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 16:4, 28-30; as a test during the Levitical age, see Ex. 20:8-11; Eze. 20:12-24; 22:7-8; Jer. 17:24-27; Neh. 13; as a test in the Christian era, see the Sabbath controversies in Mt. 12; Mk. 2, 3; Lu. 6, 13, 14; Jn. 5, 9. Apocalyptic is characterized by tests over the fidelity to the law. See Dn. 1, 3, 6 and 7:25. Rev. 13 is based on Dn. 3 and warns against violation of the first commandment (vs. 3), the second commandment (v. 14), the third commandment (v. 6), and the fourth (vv. 15-18; cf. 14:8-17, which emphasizes the eschatological climax over worship of the creature rather than the Creator).

The N.T., in at least 59 instances out of its 60 usages honors the Sabbath, and the sixtieth instance is one in the context of human perversions of Jewish Sabbath-keeping for purposes of astrological worship. The gospel record is careful to tell us that Christ finished His work of recreation on the sixth day, and as the second naked Adam, He had His side opened on that day that He might have a bride also. Even a garden is mentioned in connection with this finished work on the sixth day of redemption week. Christ rests in death as in life on the Sabbath, and thus consecrates it as a symbol of redemption (compare Deut. 5:15). Heb. 4 by its repeated reference to entering God's rest points to the Christian's privilege of entering the most holy place by faith in the sacrificial efficacy of Christ's torn side (the veil before the divine presence--Heb. 10:19, 20 NIV; cf. Heb. 9:12, 24 for further uses of "enter").

At the end of Scripture, we read of the Lord's Day still (Rev. 1:10). It is not the Day of the Lord; (observe the logical series: writer of Apocalypse--"I, John...."; place of writing--"was in the isle that is called Patmos"; condition of writer--"in the spirit"; time of writing on Patmos--"on the Lord's day." Three times in Ex. 20:8-11, the Sabbath is called the Lord's, and compare Mk. 2:28 and Isa. 58:13).

So God still has a day. It is not just "the Lord's hour," but that day which is the sign that mirrors the past (Eden), the present (our rest of conscience through faith in Christ's finished work), and the future (the restoration of Eden--see Isa. 66:22, 23)--the sign of the creative, redeeming, and sanctifying power of God (Ex. 31:13-17; Deut. 5:15; Eze. 20:12, 20), the emblem of the everlasting covenant (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 31:13-17; Jn. 19:28-41; Heb. 13:21), the "test" for all ages (Ex. 16:4, 28-30).

It is clear from Scripture and common sense that, if worship is to be social and regular, God Himself must name the time. Otherwise each man would choose his own, and treat human proposed times with scant regard. If man needs rest from the incursions of the world, how much should he take? Only God could tell us and He did. He told us by act as well as word, by Creation (weaving the Sabbath into the fabric of the universe) and re-creation (linking it forever with the second Adam finishing His work on the sixth day in a garden). It is ever true that "the Sabbath was made for man" and that those joining with Christ in deeds of piety, mercy, or necessity, are "guiltless" doing that which is "lawful... on the Sabbath." That much is clear--what remains very much unclear is that it could ever be "guiltless" and "lawful" to knowingly tread on God's holy day. A law proclaimed on the cosmic and majestic scale of the theophanies at Creation and Sinai would need to be repealed as grandly, not by involved reasoning on obscure passages of Scripture. The latter to be sufficient evidence for change would have to clearly affirm that the blessing and sanctification of Eden have been revoked, and that what was necessary for unfallen man

in Eden, is no longer necessary in this crazy nihilistic age when sinners know nothing of creation and about as much concerning "the rest which remains."

The observance of the Sabbath, when attempted apart from humble, grateful faith in the grace and redemption of God, becomes a fetish and a curse. But for those who have found in Christ and His gospel the Sabbath's reality, it remains like the Lord's Supper and Baptism, a precious emblem of that which is beyond all price. Such Sabbath-keepers will not try to pin an eschatological mark of the beast upon dissenters, nor shall they make the form primary, but it will be their desire to be faithful, not only in much but also in that which to many others may seem only the least. Had our first parents given God the benefit of the doubt about something which seemed identical with others of its kind and distinguished only by the command of God, how different the story of history would have been!

Says the One who rested on Eden's Sabbath, and redemption's Sabbath, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.... if a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him" (Jn. 14:15, 23).

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology, vol. 3, pp. 321-322.

## THE SABBATH AND COLOSSIANS 2:16

There can be no denying that Col. 2:16 speaks in a negative manner about Sabbath-keeping. Let us observe the verse. "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat and drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration, or a Sabbath day." (RSV)

To rightly interpret this passage, it is vital to remember that, while it is unique in its apparent attitude to the Sabbath, it is not at all unique among Pauline statements on the law. Ro. 7:1-4; 10:4; 2 Cor. 3; Gal. chs. 2, 3, 4, 5; Eph. 2:14ff. are other key verses where Paul seems opposed to law. Antinomians have ever used these Scriptures to prove that the ancient O.T. code has no relevance for us today.

But there is another side to Paul, and another set of passages on law which speak positively of it rather than negatively. In this category are such references as Ro. 3:31; 7:12, 14; 8:4, 7; 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 7:19; 9:21; 15:56; Eph. 6:1, 2. Surely the clue is found in 1 Tim. 1:8 where we read that "the law is good if a man uses it properly." If the law is both "abolished" (Eph. 2: 15) and "established" (Ro. 3:31); a "ministration of death" (2 Cor. 3:7), and "living oracles" (Acts 7:38), it is obvious that Paul must be looking at two different sides of the one shield. Both sets of statements are correct, but in a different regard. When we add our Lord's categorical statements on the law in Mt. 5:17-19; 19:17-18; 22:36-40; Lu. 10:25-28, this conviction is confirmed.

Not only literary context, but historical context, is vital for the right understanding of any passage of Scripture. Let us invoke the milieu of Paul's day in order to understand his messages. He lived in an age that made much of outward forms and external obedience. In Judaism, the Pharisees ruled in matters of religion, and these men had long made the law an instrument of self-righteousness. But with the coming of God the Son, and at Pentecost, God the Holy Spirit, basic religious truths became clear as never before. A man was not accepted before God on the basis of his law-keeping, but rather on the basis of the merits of Christ. The new faith was one of the heart and the inner man, rather than of external forms. Now all were to worship God in spirit and in truth rather than at set places by set procedures. Furthermore, the new age was distinguished by the enlivening agency of the Holy Spirit operating at a level beyond all His activities in other ages. Again, the new era was characterized by universalism rather than localism--the Christian faith was for all nations, and Israel as a nation, because of default, was to come to its end. Christ had foretold the end of the system of Judaism (Mk. 13:2; In. 4:21-23), and the writer of Hebrews spelled out in detail the significance of the Cross in rendering obsolete the Jewish way of worship.

With these things in mind, it becomes clear that Paul often equates law with Judaism, as the characteristic feature of a religion which had failed, and which was soon to pass away from its place of privilege. Paul sees in law that which has been tragically misused resulting in human pride rather than humility and faith. As he compares the former written code of Israel with the blessings now available through Christ, the former loses much of its luster though originally glorious.

Thus Paul writes many things downgrading Israel's Torah. (We must ever keep in mind that the terms translated "law" in both testaments include much more than what we moderns think of when we hear the term. "Law" in both the O.T. and N.T. means the entire written revelation, though certainly giving emphasis to the requirements of God.) Paul thereby affirms:

1. The law as a means of righteousness is inadequate because of sinful human nature. Ro. 8:3.
2. Similarly, the law as a method of obtaining acceptance is completely rejected by God. Ro. 10:4.
3. The law, as our enemy, indicting us because of our failures, has been destroyed by the Cross of Christ. Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14.
4. The law as a system of religion has had its day. Its tutelage of God's people is over. Gal. 3:24.
5. Law, as a prime motivator of obedience, has been shown to be a failure. Ro. 7:1-6.
6. Israel's system of law has now been succeeded by a better system, even one characterized not only by written objective guidance but by the accompanying powerful, enlivening presence of the Spirit, in quality and quantity never before known. 2 Cor. 3.

In view of these affirmations, Paul can advise every Christian:

1. If you depend on your loyalty to the Torah, and your obedience to God's requirements, you will inevitably fall.
2. If a mere written code rather than a Person dominates your thinking and practise, you will continually fall short.
3. If you forget that the ancient system of Israel's religion was a kindergarten affair, imposed until true religion came of age, you will be forever backsliding.
4. If you do not see in Calvary the antitype of the types and symbols of the O.T., you may err by perpetuating in hope of merit things no longer required of those who have found in Christ the substance of all the shadows.
5. If you are not guided and controlled continually by the living Spirit, rather than mere codified rules, you can never mature in Christ.

But, on the other hand, when we take into account the positive things Paul says about the law, it is clear that he is condemning law as a method rather than as a standard. He is rejecting its authority to bring condemnation, but not its authority in expressing ideals. He is insisting on the law's inadequacy when used as though Bethlehem, Calvary, and Pentecost had never happened. Simultaneously, he holds that Calvary has exalted the law, that the believer sees its moral precepts as spiritual, holy, just, and good, and that through the Spirit it is now fulfilled in the Christian's daily walk. Ro. 3:31; 7:12, 14; 8:4; 13:8-10.

Lest any consider that we are tailoring the evidence to fit our own religious prejudices, we quote in an excursus at the close of this chapter from well-known scholars and leaders in the field of exegesis on this topic.

We return now to Col. 2:16, the only text in all Scripture which, on the face of it, is antagonistic to the fourth commandment. Col. 2:16, strictly translated, warns against human legislation detailing behavior with reference to "a festival, a new moon, or Sabbath." The word "day" is not present, neither is there an article before any of the key terms. The plural Greek term for sabbaths probably has a singular meaning, as elsewhere in the N.T., though not necessarily. Certain of the festival days were also known as sabbaths, as Lev. 23:11, 32 testifies, but these are probably included under the first term of our text, namely "festivals." The weight of evidence indicates that yearly,

monthly, and weekly sacred times are intended, though it is not possible to prove that point absolutely. Parallel passages from the O.T. would support the suggested sequence, but again not prove it. Were the article present before "sabbaths," the case would be more certain. But what is clear is the fact that the Sabbath observance in the apostle's mind is that connected with a perversion, not the fulfillment of the fourth commandment.

In considering this evidence let us also remember that in view of our study of Paul's attitude to the law as a whole, we might expect a similarly ambivalent attitude on his part to any separate section of the law. Inasmuch as Col. 2:14 and its parallel in Eph. 2:14, 15 have to do with Christ's victory over the damning power of the law, and the abolition of barriers not only between God and man but also Jew and Gentile, we might expect that Col. 2:16 is a conclusion from these facts. If the law itself can no longer judge us, we are not to let humans do so, particularly those infected with heretical notions about asceticism and the worshipping of angels. If the divinely given laws of the Torah are no longer to hold sway over us, obviously the human precepts of v. 22 must not be given even a "look in." If the Cross alone supremely motivates the believer in subduing the flesh, all other methods suggested by the false teachers of Colosse ("touch not," "taste not," "handle not") should be shunned. And if the barriers between Jews and Gentiles have now gone, none of the Jewish ritual is binding upon the conscience. If Christ has fulfilled the shadows of the cultic system of Israel, there is no necessity to be concerned over punctilious performance of them, or other human regulations posing as the prelude to spiritual achievement. Certainly, the Sabbath, as practised by the Jews with its special ceremonial elements and minute rules, no longer binds anyone.

But to keep our exegesis in proportion, we must note that, as Paul's strong language about the law in general has to be balanced with his passages of approval, so in the present passage we must not settle for a one-sided interpretative view. In the very next chapter of Colossians, we find the principles of the Decalogue invoked again and again. Most of the Decalogue laws are referred to in this epistle, and therefore to jump to the conclusion that the Edenic Sabbath referred to in the heart of the Decalogue was the object of Paul's attack, would be premature and inaccurate. That Sabbath has no ceremonial elements or minute behavioral rules. Paul is not opposed to all eating and drinking, though he says in 2:16, "Let no one judge you in eating and drinking." Neither is he against all Sabbath-keeping. It is eating and drinking and Sabbath-keeping within a certain context that he is repudiating--a context of legalistic ceremonialism connected with asceticism and the worshipping of angels according to rules of mere human devising.

It should not go without notice that Paul's warning is somewhat milder than we might have expected. He does not directly assert that all forms of festival and Sabbath-observances are abolished. Rather he contents himself with stating that other people should not be allowed to legislate for us regarding our observance of these things. Others are not to make rules for us, or condemn us, if we observe these days in a way different to their own. Again we would point out that the Gospels give us many instances of Christ's following just such a course as here suggested by Paul. He refused to conform to traditional rules regarding Sabbath-keeping. In support of this point we would remind readers that Paul and other believers were indeed keeping festivals at this time and Sabbaths also. See Acts 18:21; 13:14, 42, 44; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4; 20:16; 27:9.

The passage is clear that, in Christ, fulfillment has taken the place of Jewish cultic shadows, and that even all pagan aspirations pointed unknowingly to Him. As regards the seventh-day Sabbath, the verse must refer to its special Jewish ceremonial elements, and human accretions. There is, however, another sense in which Christ fulfilled the Sabbath of Eden. He alone fully kept and magnified that institution. He offered the rest of conscience prefigured by the physical rest of the sacred day. Such a fulfillment as this however does not necessarily bring abrogation any more than our feeding on the merits of Christ's broken body and shed blood leads us to dispense with the Lord's Supper, which points to that reality. (According to Heb. chapter 4, the seventh-day Sabbath points us to the eternal rest to be ushered in at the second Advent, and therefore it will have relevance at least until then.)

Baptism, which was practised long before the death of Christ, was also fulfilled in Him, but not thereby abolished. As already intimated, the wine and bread eaten at the Passover supper for centuries pointed to Christ's sacrifice, but nevertheless the symbols have been perpetuated by Christ Himself in the Lord's supper. Marriage, according to Paul, from the time of Adam has been a symbol of the relationship between Christ and His people, and when the second Adam had His side opened after falling into a deep sleep (compare Jn. 19:34 with Gen. 2:21-24), the symbolism of the creation of the first bride was fulfilled. But marriage was not thereby abolished. See Eph. 5:28-33.

Furthermore, not only does Col. 2:16 fail to specifically state that the Sabbath has been abolished, but it also does not say that nobody should henceforth observe it. (We have pointed out that in the same text eating and drinking are referred to, and it is obvious to all that Paul was not abolishing eating and drinking, or expecting that none should eat and drink thereafter. Neither is Paul referring at this point to clean and unclean foods, but rather to ascetic fasting. See vv. 20-23.) As Ralph Martin writes:

The holy days, whether annual, monthly or weekly, were also the subject of controversy at Colossae. Again the root principle needs to be noted. Paul is not condemning the use of sacred days and seasons. The evidence of Acts shows his own interest in observing them (Acts 20:16; 27:9). What moves him here is the wrong motive involved when the observance of holy festivals is made a badge of separation and an attempted means of securing salvation out of fear and superstition. It is bad religion that Paul attacks.<sup>1</sup>

Col. 2:16 is saying, "Let no one make rules about what you eat or drink or about holy days or the new moon festival or the Sabbath." (TEV) The Greek verb krino means to decree, judge, decide, criticize, or condemn. The RSV translates it, "Let no one pass judgment on you." The eighteenth verse begins with a similar admonition, "Let no one disqualify you" ("condemn you" TEV), and in vv. 20-21, the Colossians are warned against submitting to regulations as to handling, tasting, touching--regulations which are only "human precepts and doctrines" with a show of wisdom in their ascetic severity, but which actually are "Of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh" (v. 23). Observe that the TEV uses "rules" in vv. 16, 20, 22, 23. The issue of Col. 2:16 is whether believers should permit others to dictate to them petty rules in connection with their worship and dietary habits. Chapters in all four gospels illustrate this very point as they trace Christ's refusal to permit Pharisaic rules to govern His Sabbath-keeping. See Mt. 12 particularly. The context of v. 16 goes back to Col. 2:11 and onward to 3:1ff. When we consider the whole, the message might be paraphrased as follows:

In Christ your Representative you have died and risen again. This sets you free from your enemies of sin and law and all national barriers. Even the evil principalities and powers, which other pagans worship, no longer have any power over you. Therefore, rejoice in your freedom, and refuse to have any man-made traditions and regulations dictate the way you live and worship. Even the highest elements of the worship of typical Israel have been fulfilled in Christ's death and resurrection. Henceforth, there is

neither Jew nor Gentile, circumcised nor uncircumcised, but Christ is all and in all. (See 3:11 particularly, and compare the whole passage from 2:11ff. with Eph. 2:1ff.)

The key to the whole is the stress on the power of Christ's atoning death which has shattered all barriers between God and man, as typified by the barriers between Jews and Gentiles. Or to put it another way, the Cross, in cancelling our bond of indebtedness to God, simultaneously removed those symbols of that indebtedness which as part of Jewish ceremonialism separated Jewry from the rest of the world. Thus, as Ephesians (the twin epistle to Colossians, written at the same time by the same writer from the same geographical location declares, Christ has become our peace, making not only God and man at one, but also Jew and Gentile. And because of this marvelous achievement by Christ, believers must not permit human heresies to dictate to them regarding petty paraphernalia of religion such as details of observance in ceremonial worship, or in personal disciplines such as fasting.

The International Critical Commentary paraphrases Col. 2:16-23 as follows (after the summary statement, "Practical application of these principles to the ascetic precepts and the angel-worship of the false-teachers"):

With their precepts about eating and drinking and observance of days, they would have you attach yourselves to the shadow, whereas you are in possession of the reality. The cult of angels is inculcated as a becoming exercise of humility, but this is a false humility, and is really the fruit of carnal pride, vaunting itself in the pretended knowledge of their angelic powers, and is derogatory to Christ the Head, on whom alone we depend for spiritual health and growth.

"The bond which stood against us with its legal demands" is according to the older commentators the Mosaic law, and Paul is affirming that that law has now been fulfilled. As a barrier between God and man, and between man and man, it has been erased by the Cross. The International Critical Commentary in its notes on the parallel passage of Eph. 2:15, says:

The moral law retains its obligation not, however, because the Jewish law is only partially annulled, but because its obligation was independent of the law and universal (Ro. 2:14). If a Mohammedan becomes a Christian, we do not say that the Koran retains its obligation for him in its moral part, although he still acknowledges the obligation of many moral precepts contained in it.

And the recent Anchor Bible on Ephesians comments:

Christ has abrogated the divisive function of the law--and therefore not God's holy law itself.

The translation "the law, [that is, only] the commandments [expressed] in the statutes," brings out the manifold aspects of division just described, and yet shows that the law itself, along with its study and fulfillment, has not been annulled by Jesus Christ. As a barrier between Jews and Gentiles it is no longer valid. Only its divisiveness was terminated when Jesus Christ died on the cross.<sup>2</sup>

Along with the ICC and the Anchor Bible we should see that Paul is, above all, proclaiming the achievement of Christ's cross which in dissolving the wall between God and man also broke down the divisions between Jews and Gentiles. Therefore, Paul is saying, "Do not get caught up in any heresy that now tries to force you into 'buying' a salvation which cannot be bought, particularly through petty human innovations attached to certain forms of Gentile and Jewish worship systems--forms now at their best fulfilled in Christ."

This brings us to an essential observation. As first class exegetes (such as represented by ICC and the Anchor Bible), have recognized in Col. 2:14ff., and Eph. 2:14ff., allusions to the fulfillment of the Jewish code, including the moral requirements and their penalty, yet without disturbing the independent and universal moral code of Eden--so Col. 2:16 speaks of the fulfillment of the Jewish Sabbath with its burden of ceremonies and rules--but leaves the Sabbath of Eden untouched. None of the minute regulations peculiar to Judaism remain binding in the Christian era, but the moral principles which antedate Israel, being the issue of creation ordinances, offer continuing guidance for all believers in Christ. A number of commentators have seen this. See, for example, Patrick Fairbairn's discussion of Col. 2:16.

For help in comprehending this issue, we have the parallel case of marriage, earlier referred to. Marriage, like the Sabbath, was an Edenic ordinance. As with the Sabbath, Christ referred His hearers back to the beginning for God's intention, not to Mosaic laws. See Mt. 19:4-8, and compare Mk. 2:27. Paul nowhere reinstitutes the marriage ordinance, but he takes it for granted. He argues from the Edenic state in 1 Cor. 11:7-9; 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:11-14. But marriage in the Jewish age was attended with a multiplicity of regulations which went beyond those of Eden. Furthermore, a death penalty was attached to the Jewish code regarding marriage and the family. An unfaithful marriage partner or disobedient child could be stoned. These extra laws and penalty peculiar to Judaism have no continuing obligation for Christians, but the marriage and family institutions set up by God in Eden remain binding upon all who profess faith in Christ. The situation is identical with the Sabbath. Christ endorsed none of the Jewish minutia on the Sabbath, but He did emphasize the broad principles to be drawn from the fact that the Sabbath was made in Eden for man's benefit. See Mt. 12 and Mk. 2.

But does not Paul refer to the Sabbath as a "shadow"? Col. 2:17 seems to say so, although in view of the context, the apostle may have in mind the sacrificial features of that day, or be quoting the claims of the gnostic heretics for their institutions. But grant the strongest case, and it is still no more detrimental to the continual Sabbath than similar language in Eph. 5:25-32 regarding marriage. The Edenic union between Adam and Eve is spoken of as a "mystery," or figure of the relationship between Christ and His church, yet that symbolic relationship in no way dissolves the present sanctity of marriage. The Edenic Sabbath was not a shadow in the strictest sense because it first existed before the Fall. As a creation ordinance, it was made for the first man, and the last, and all in between. The case is similar with marriage. Notice the comment by Beckwith on Col. 2:16:

Does Paul then do what we saw Christ did not do, and simply abolish the sabbath day? Certainly he abolishes it in the form in which it had existed from the time of Moses: he abolishes its special sacrifices and its involvement in even the abstract possibility of justification by works. He abolishes also the detailed restrictions as to permissible and impermissible acts, with which it had been compassed not simply by the rabbis but by the Mosaic Law itself (see p. 15f. above); for the primary commandment of love does not necessarily involve the literal observance of all these, and Paul's principle in such cases is 'Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind' (Rom. 14:5).<sup>3</sup>

In the foregoing pages I have presented the subject of the law in Galatians in a manner with which most traditional exegetes would agree, regardless of their position on the Sabbath of 2:16. But to do justice to all the facts and acknowledge the progress made in recent decades in interpreting Colossians, one must present an alternative position--one rapidly gaining ground in scholarship.

Typical expressions of this alternative view are the following quotations from different exegetes:

... There is no question that the background for the use of cheirographon is to be gained from its use in the apocalyptic literature. Exalcipto points to books for the remembrance of sin. It is precisely this memory of sin that keeps alive a bad conscience and negates the effectiveness of God's forgiveness. And the possession of a bad conscience is most definitely against its owner. But the instrument for the remembrance of sin, the cheirographon, God, the One who abundantly pardons, has taken away from the middle. Notice that the cheirographon is not the instrument for the establishing of sin, or the determination of sin. It keeps a record of sin, and in that sense keeps sin alive. But for those who have died and have been made alive with Christ sin is no longer alive. They have been transferred by God to a new aeon where redemption and forgiveness reign.... There is no question that the dogmata of 12:14 have to be understood as the regulations advocated by false teachers at Colossae. To equate these regulations with the ordinances of the Mosaic law is not a legitimate procedure when the author of the epistle, who undoubtedly could have done so to advantage, purposefully refrained from doing so. He recognized the syncretistic nature of the teachings being propounded. This does not mean, of course, that among the prescriptions being advocated at Colossae there were none from the Mosaic law. The opposite is clearly the case. The point is that the Mosaic law is no longer functioning as a recognizable entity. In fact the letter moves in an environment quite removed from that of the Pauline epistles where at every juncture there is likely to be a confrontation between Jewish and Gentile Christianity over the question of the Mosaic law.<sup>4</sup>

... there is good reason to understand the σκιά τῶν μελλόντων [shadows of things to come] in 2:17 as a byword of the errorists. The relative ἃ finds its antecedent in vs. 16 which in turn points beyond itself: judgment in matters of food and drink cannot be understood apart from the prohibition against tasting in vs. 21 which is characteristic of the humility of vs. 18; judgment with regard to festival, new moon, and sabbath cannot be separated from the regulations of vss. 14 and 20 and the precepts and teachings of men in vs. 22, and in vs. 23 these are seen to be integral to the question as issue in vs. 18. Thus the whole of 2:16-23 is a subtle, unified argument. From this standpoint it is inconceivable that the writer would volunteer the judgment that these things to which his readers had died with Christ (2:20-22) bore the very impress of Christ! On the contrary, they are not "according to Christ;" they have the appearance of wisdom but actually serve the flesh. As in his references to τῆς κεφαλῆς in vss. 18 and 23, so here the writer employs his opponents' terminology. Philo is quite helpful in illuminating the Colossian errorists' use of σκιά.<sup>5</sup>

There is evidence, drawn from the Old Testament and Jewish literature, to show that the idea of a book of works kept by God and recording all men's sins was familiar. The actual term cheirographon is used of this book in an anonymous Jewish apocalyptic writing, dated in first century B.C. Here the book is held by the accusing Angel who notes down all the seer's sins. The seer asks that they may be wiped out. There is another book containing the seer's good deeds; and Paul's addition of "which was against us" may serve as identification of the book of evil works.

If this notion of a book of indictment presented by a grand inquisitor at the heavenly court lies in the background of our text, it paves the way for the view that the bond was not a certificate of debt signed by men but one presented by malevolent spirits. Then the "legal demands" may have nothing to do with the Mosaic law, but may stand for the ordinances (Greek dogmata) which form the basis of the angelic indictment, viz. that man is fleshly and unspiritual and out of harmony with the divine, a typical gnostic indictment of mankind.<sup>6</sup>

Those teachers want to burden men with something that in reality is nothing but man-made commandments and teachings. The correspondence of this polemical phrase with LXX Is 29:13 should not be overlooked: "In vain do they worship me teaching the commandments and doctrines of men".... This Scripture passage is also cited in Mk. 7:7 (par. Mt. 15:9) in the argument against the legalism of the Pharisees and was obviously quoted often in disputes with proponents of a legalistic type piety. The author of God takes this argument from the tradition without introducing it as a quotation from Scripture and brings it to bear against the legalistic praxis as taught and enjoined by that "philosophy." Although the opponents claim that they are passing on traditions hallowed by antiquity, what they really offer are regulations and doctrines fabricated by men (2:8: "according to the tradition of men").<sup>7</sup>

All these--the argument now turns on the "regulations" (δόγματα) which had been represented as a sine qua non for salvation--are only the "shadow of what is to come" (σκιά τῶν μελλόντων), not the reality itself. The opposition between outer appearance and the real essence, as it was taught in Platonic philosophy, was a theme repeatedly considered and described in Hellenistic times. True being belongs to ideas and not to the shadows they cast in this world, which are perceived by our senses. The concepts most frequently used to describe this contrast are: σκιά (shadow) and εἰκὼν (form, image). At times, however, "body" (σῶμα) is used instead of "form" (εἰκὼν) to describe the true reality as distinguished from mere appearance. Philo, for example, discussing the allegorical method of interpretation, explains that the words of the divine oracle are like "the shadows of the bodies"....

This relationship between copy and original probably also played a role in the teaching of the Colossian "philosophy." It is possible that the proponents of the philosophy reasoned something like this: the "worship of angels"

(θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων) and observance of the "regulations" (δόγματα) represent the copy; the "fulness" (πλήρωμα) is the original. A person can gain access to the pleroma only via the copy which implies obedience to the "elements of the universe."<sup>8</sup>

What are the strengths of this more recent pattern of exegesis?

1. The word "law" (nomos) is nowhere found in Colossians, though in Romans it appears over seventy times, and in Galatians over thirty times.
2. The word "commandment" (entolē) is never found in Colossians in association with any Old Testament precepts.
3. The cardinal hinge of Paul's polemic is the warning against regulations from "philosophy" and "vain deceit" connected with the

worshipping of angels, "the elemental spirits"--a worship characterized by asceticism in eating and drinking linked with the observance of holy times. As Lohse says:

In the context of Colossians, however, the command to keep festival, new moon, and sabbath is not based on the Torah according to which Israel received the sabbath as a sign of her election from among the nations. Rather the sacred days must be kept for the sake of "the elements of the universe," who direct the course of the stars and thus also prescribe minutely the order of the calendar.<sup>9</sup>

To understand Col. 2:16 aright one must observe that the passage in which it appears begins with the note of warning in verse 4 "that no one may delude you with beguiling speech"--a warning that is repeated in verse 8--"See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ." Thus "human traditions" are in the eye of this doctrinal storm--not the commandments of Sinai or even the Mosaic code as a whole.

The repetition of key terms or related concepts should be carefully noted:

v. 4 that no one may delude you....

v. 8 that no one makes a prey of you....

v. 16 let no one pass judgment on you....

v. 8 human tradition v. 22 human precepts and doctrines

v. 8 elemental spirits of the universe

v. 15 principalities and powers

v. 18 worship of angels

v. 20 elemental spirits of the universe

v. 16 questions of food and drink

v. 21 do not taste

v. 23 severity to the body

v. 8 human tradition according to the elemental spirits of the universe and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily....

v.17 only a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

v. 18 worship of angels... not holding fast to the Head.

In view of these parallels it is obvious that v. 16 must be explained by its related verses. The "therefore" which begins it is linked with the statements of vv. 14, 15 that all "regulations" "against us" were taken away when Christ "disarmed the principalities and power"--even the regulations of human traditions (v. 8), human precepts (v. 22), concerning "questions of food and drink" and observance of holy days in connection with the "worship of angels." The admonition "let no one pass judgment on you" in v. 16 parallels verses 4, 8, 18, where we have repeatedly "let no one, etc." The series of issues in v. 16 applies to those who "still belong to the world" which is equated with "submitting to regulations" which are "human precepts and doctrines" of "no value."

The issue at Colosse was whether Christians could become more complete by practising human precepts of asceticism in connection with times observed in honour of angels. Paul is saying that all such human regulations are to be ignored and that no one should be judged prejudicially because he ignored such man-made rules about eating, drinking, and Jewish holy days. Just as surely as the first part of Col. 2:16 does not condemn all eating and drinking, neither does the last part of the verse condemn all Sabbath-keeping. Only when linked with uninspired regulations about asceticism and angel worship, or outdated Judaism, does such become unacceptable.

It should be carefully observed that this more recent approach to the exegesis of Col. 2 equates the "regulations" of v. 14 with those man-made traditional "regulations" of the context in v. 20. None can deny the legitimacy of such an approach. There is yet a third approach which sees in the "regulations" both those of the Jews and those of the Gentiles. In this instance, the whole point of vv. 14-16 is that expressed earlier in this chapter--namely that whatever transgressions our conscience accuses us of--these transgressions have been wiped out by the blood of Christ and there is therefore no necessity to try and earn the favor of God by meticulous observance of rules in a legalistic spirit. Thus the recent Cambridge Bible Commentary says:

These ordinances were for the Jews (as the N.E.B suggests) the Old Testament Law, described at Eph. 2:15. For the pagan Colossians they were the regulations required to keep the favour of their gods, e.g. the rules mentioned in 2:21. In both cases there was the sense of being in debt and never 'catching up with one's payments'. Such an approach to God and other divine powers, built on the keeping of minute regulations, necessarily led to a feeling that one was not carrying out all that was required, and so to fear and tension. God has, however, cancelled the bond of debt. First, he has shown in Jesus that the relationship of human beings to himself is based on love, and not on an idea that God is the creditor and we are the debtors. Secondly, God has shown that the 'cosmic powers and authorities' are not to be feared and therefore regulations to keep on the right side of them are idle (see verse 15).<sup>10</sup>

Whichever position we may finally accept leaves the fourth commandment untouched, as an authoritative word from our Maker concerning an ordinance of Eden. That Sabbath, free from all Jewish ceremonial additions and legalistic traditions of men, remains both God's gift and God's demand throughout all time to His glory and our joy.

Let us now enquire as to how Paul's first readers understood him. Did the early Christian church interpret Col. 2:16 as prohibiting Sabbath-keeping? The testimony of church-history is that it did not. For approximately three hundred years, Christians (except at Rome and Alexandria) observed the seventh-day Sabbath. Even when Sunday-keeping began, it did not eclipse Sabbath-keeping, but paralleled it, except that Sunday was not observed as a rest day but only as a time for worship. Notice the following testimonies on this matter (the first

five found in Questions on Doctrine, pp. 167-68).

Almost all Churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the sabbath [seventh day] of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, refuse to do this.  
Socrates, Ecclesiastical History, v. 22.

The people of Constantinople, and of several other cities, assemble together on the sabbath, as well as on the next day; which custom is never observed at Rome, or Alexandria.  
Sozoman, Ecclesiastical History, vii., 19.

The ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed by the Christians of the East Church, above three hundred years after our Saviour's death.  
Edward Brerewood, A Learned Treatise of the Sabbath, p. 77.

Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church, but with a rigour and solemnity gradually diminishing.  
Lyman Coleman, Ancient Christianity Exemplified, ch. 26, sec. 2.

Augustine, bishop of Hippo (died 430), stated that while the church of Rome fasted on the seventh day of each week in his time, the practice was not generally followed elsewhere in Italy, making special mention of Ambrose's refusal at Milan. He added that the vast majority of the Christian churches throughout the world, particularly in the East, had too much respect for the Sabbath to do that. He likewise stated that while some churches in North Africa followed Rome's example in fasting on Sabbath days, others under his care did not.  
Augustine, Epistle 36.14 to Casulanus; Epistle 54.2 to Januarius; and Epistle 82 to Jerome.

The Sabbath and the Lord's Day are to be kept as festivals. The Sabbath is to be kept in memorial of the creation. The Lord's day is to be kept in memorial of the resurrection. One Sabbath in the year is an exception to this law. This is the paschal Sabbath which commemorates the time when Jesus was buried in the earth. On this Sabbath men ought to fast and not feast.  
Apostolic Constitutions, Book 7, Section 2.

That the early Christian church endorsed the Decalogue strengthens this:

If we summarize the attitude of the church before Constantine, there is no doubt but that they were unanimous in treating the Decalogue as being still applicable to Christians. It is treated as natural law, which is equally binding on those under the Old Covenant and those under the New. Christ, while deepening its meaning,... by no means abolished it.<sup>11</sup>

From the account of Paul's missionary activities we have yet further evidence. Even though Acts records that the Apostle clashed with Jews everywhere He went on his missionary ventures, we never read that He was accused of breaking the Sabbath or teaching others so to do. We do have throughout the Epistles the continual clamor of Paul's conflict with believing Jews over the issue of circumcision, and had the Sabbath been a similar case in point, the inevitable storm must have cast more tempestuous and enduring shadows over the N.T. writings. The plain fact is that most of the Gentile churches (like the first at Philippi) sprang from Jewish proselytes who were already Sabbath-keepers. See Acts chapters 13, 16, 18.

It is not correct to say, as some do, that the issue over circumcision automatically involved the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for all men according to Gen. 2:1-3, but not so circumcision. Throughout the O.T. age, Gentiles were permitted to keep the Sabbath without being circumcised. The latter however was a prerequisite for adherence to the Jewish ceremonial law. Thus the distinction is clear, and for this reason (the Sabbath), but not circumcision, finds a place in the Decalogue.

We are prone as twentieth-century Westerners to think that Sabbath-keeping must have been a strange affair to first century Gentiles. In that we are wrong, as Josephus and Philo assure us. "There is no city, Greek or barbarian in which the custom of resting on the seventh day is not preserved."<sup>12</sup> "the festival not of a single city or country but of the universe...."<sup>13</sup> In view of the foregoing, we would greatly err if we so interpreted Col. 2:16 as to make it overshadow the other fifty-nine references to the Sabbath in the N.T. and the ninety or so in the O.T. Should a debatable passage in Paul so shout in our ears that the divine voice from Sinai shrinks to a mere whisper? And are we not warned three times in Holy Writ (in the first section--the Pentateuch, the middle section--the poetical writings, and the concluding Epistles), to accept nothing of importance except on the basis of two or three witnesses? It will not do to invoke Gal. 4 or Ro. 14, for neither of these name the Sabbath or refer to the fourth commandment.

But, some say, does not Paul always have the casting vote in scriptural exegesis? Do not the Epistles interpret the Gospels? These claims do have much truth when applied to the matter of interpreting the Cross, a work that could not have been done before the historical event had been consummated. But the bald claim that the Epistles are always the last word is erroneous. The thesis is based on the words of E. J. Carnell, who wrote that "We are assured, on very clear evidence, that the fullness of revelation came after the Gospels. 'I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all the truth (Jn. 16: 12, 13).'"<sup>14</sup>

But Carnell has erred. The promise of Christ was fulfilled at Pentecost which preceded the writing of the Gospels as well as the Epistles. In fact, the majority of scholars regard the Gospels as later theological work than the Epistles, inasmuch as Paul died about 67 A.D., whereas the Gospels have been considered by most to have originated after Paul's martyrdom. Thus, by the time the Gospel of John was written, the church was prone to overvalue the ordinances, and so we find that John mentions neither baptism nor the Lord's Supper, but gives the deep theological meaning of these in the third and sixth chapters of his book. Luke almost certainly outlived Paul, and wrote his Gospel to the Gentiles--a Gospel distinguished by its large amount of content regarding the Sabbath as an institution defended and reformed by Christ.

There are other reasons for being hesitant to grant Paul always the deciding vote. One, he is notoriously easy to be misunderstood. If we judged the value and meaning of baptism by just certain of his statements we would be in trouble, for he declares that people are baptized for the dead, and that Christ had not sent him (Paul) to baptize. The same Paul affirms that it is good for a man not to touch a woman and that it would be best if all Christians remained unmarried, even as he. See 1 Cor. 7. If we took Paul literally, Christians would quickly die out, leaving the world to unbelievers, and making impossible the accomplishment of the gospel commission. Not once does he call for devotional Bible-reading or church-going. Nor does he ever discuss the resurrection of the wicked for judgment.

Secondly, Paul never thought of himself as an innovator. He well knew that once the new covenant had been sealed by the death of Christ, "No man addeth thereto." His own argument in Gal. 3:17 about the law coming centuries after the promise, and therefore unable to negate the latter, applies to the collapse of the Mosaic code as authority, without imperilling the creation ordinances of Sabbath and marriage. Paul believed he was only building upon a foundation laid by another--even Christ. See 1 Cor. 3. It must never be forgotten that Christ's last words to His church had to do with the duty of believers till the end of time to make disciples through teaching all that He (Christ, not Paul) had commanded. See Mt. 28:18, 19.

For these reasons, most exegetes through the centuries have believed the fourth commandment to retain its relevance in all ages. Karl Barth, an earnest Sunday-keeper, in his comments on the fourth commandment says:

.... this is the most detailed of all the Ten Commandments. Again with the second, it outwardly characterised most clearly the attitude of Old Testament man, his obedience or disobedience. Understood and grasped in its new--or rather its true--form, in its first and final meaning, it was surprisingly quickly and self-evidently seen to be valid and authoritative in New Testament Christianity as a rule which must naturally apply forthwith to the old, the new, the one people of God.<sup>15</sup>

\* \* \* \*

In general, theological ethics has handled this command of God, or the one command of God in this particular application, with a casualness and feebleness which certainly do not match its importance in Holy Scripture or its decisive material significance....

What does the Sabbath commandment say? It speaks of a limiting of man's activity to the extent that this is, generally speaking, his own work, his own undertaking and achievement, the job he does for his livelihood and in the service of the community. It says that, in deference to God and to the heart and meaning of His work, there must be from time to time an interruption, a rest, a deliberate non-continuation, a temporal pause, to reflect on God and His work and to participate consciously in the salvation provided by Him and to be awaited from Him. It says that man's own work is to be performed as a work bounded by this continually recurring interruption. This interruption is the holy day....

On this day he is to celebrate, rejoice and be free to the glory of God. In this celebration, joy and freedom he will be obedient. To withdraw from it under any pretext would be disobedience. This is Sabbath commandment says.<sup>16</sup>

The Sabbath commandment explains all the other commandments, or all the other forms of the one commandment. It is thus to be placed at their head. By demanding man's abstention and resting from his own works, it explains that the commanding God who has created man and enabled and commissioned him to do his own work, is the God who is gracious to man in Jesus Christ. Thus it points him away from everything that he himself can will and achieve and back to what God is for him and will do for him. It reminds man of God's plan for him, of the fact that He has already carried it out, and that in His revelation He will execute both His will with him and His work for and toward him. It points him to the Yes which the Creator has spoken to him, His creature, and which He has continually and at last definitely acknowledged, which He has made true and proved true once and for all in Jesus Christ. It summons him to hold to this Yes and not to anything else. And that is why it commands him to keep holy the Sabbath day.<sup>17</sup>

If we link the significance of the holy day in salvation history and its eschatological significance, and if we remember that in both instances we are concerned with its relationship to the particularity of God's omnipotent grace, we shall understand at once, and not without a certain awe, the radical importance, the almost monstrous range of the Sabbath commandment. By the distinction of this day, by the summons to celebrate it according to its meaning, this command sets man and the human race in terribly concrete confrontation with their Creator and Lord, with His particular will and Word and work, and with the goal, determined and set by Him, of the being of all creatures, which means also the inexorable end of the form of their present existence. This commandment is total. It discovers and claims man in his depths and from his utmost bounds.<sup>18</sup>

Thus the Sabbath commandment in its particularity explains all the other forms of the one divine commandment. In relation to the One who commands, it explains what is always and in all cases commanded. It does not explain this abstractly but concretely, by indicating the seventh day and the succession of sevenths (and therefore no less than the seventh part of the time granted to man) as the special time of the gracious God which it expects man to keep free for the gracious God. The concern of this particular day is indirectly that of all other days as well. This particular thing is the meaning of all the divine commands.<sup>19</sup>

The Sabbath commandment requires of man that he understand and live his life on this basis. It thus demands of him that he believe in God as his Ruler and Judge, and that he let his self-understanding in every conceivable form be radically transcended, limited and relativised by this faith, or rather by the God in whom he believes. It demands that he know himself only in his faith in God, that he will and work and express himself only in this imposed and not selected renunciation, and that on the basis of this renunciation he actually dare in it all to be a new creature, a new man. This is the astonishing requirement of the Sabbath commandment.<sup>20</sup>

De Quervain is only too right in this respect: "Where the holy day becomes the day of man, society and humanity wither away and the demons rule...."<sup>21</sup>

The holy day is a sign, and keeping it holy an exercise, of man's freedom before God and of the special responsibility towards Him in which he is man, the human creature. As the regular observance of a definite portion of time, keeping the holy day is the most visible and, because of this day's special meaning, the most comprehensive form of this special responsibility.<sup>22</sup>

Similarly, the Imperial Bible Dictionary edited by Patrick Fairbairn says concerning Ro. 14:5 and Col. 2:16:

Although these passages had more difficulty than they present, two or three doubtful expressions, in relation to local circumstances and usages about which we have little information, are not to be balanced against the weighty and cumulative evidence which has been adduced for the morality of the Sabbath, and its consequent claims on the respect of all countries and ages.<sup>23</sup>

(This quotation reminds us that those who use Carnell's dictum about the Epistles interpreting the Gospels should also use along with that his other insight that "systematic passages interpret the incidental" p. 58. The dictionary writer quoted above has rightly seen that the

passages invoked from Gal. 4, Ro. 14, and Col. 2, are obscure and incidental compared with the plain statements of Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Mk. 2:27; Mt. 12, etc.)

Laws expire either by inherent limitation or by proclamation as distinct and authoritative as their original statement. Shadows cease when they meet their substance, as the shadow of a tree stops at the tree itself. National laws of Israel ceased with the dispersion of the nation. But laws growing out of the relationships between God the Creator and His original creature Adam, can never be repealed in this world. Similarly, the divinely spoken precepts from Sinai cannot be cancelled by anything less than that same voice.

Those moral elements exist without being reappointed. The Apostles never did so foolish a thing as to re-enact them. But admit for a little that the Fourth and all the Commandments are abrogated, as some assure us. When circumcision passed away, Paul did not appeal to it as in force any more. When laws become dead on our statute-books, abrogated by our lawmakers, our magistrates do not undertake to enforce them, do not appeal to them as authority. Surely the Apostle will not appeal to the abrogated Decalogue! He will let it slumber with the dead past. Look, now, over the pages of his Epistles to the churches. See them swept clean of all the Commandments! But what! has Paul gone back to legalism? Has his inspiration failed him? Fallen from grace is he, or fallen from doctrine? Some years after telling us that we are not under the law, he actually appeals to the law for authority and for the rule of righteousness: 'Honor thy father and thy mother; which is the first commandment with promise.' And in the same book where he tells us, 'We are delivered from the law,' he afterward appeals to that law again: 'Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal,' and on to the end. And this Pauline summons of Sinai is equalled by the Apostle James' like appeal (2:8-11). And, in the very Epistle where some claim that the law is abolished, Paul himself refutes them by affirming, 'The law is holy, just, and good.' 'Do we, then, make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.'<sup>24</sup>

The fourth commandment stood by previous enactment. It did not need recognition in order to its continuance. The question is, did Christ or his apostles ever reject it? 1. The apostles, so far as we learn, did not reject it. Both James and Paul directly appeal to the commandments; not naming all of them at any time, not rejecting any, not intimating that the fourth or any other was annulled. Had it been annulled, a fact so striking would have received attention.<sup>25</sup>

There are some who see in Paul's silence about the Sabbath more significance than God's thunderous speech, despite the fact that a section of the O.T. larger than the N.T. is silent on the Sabbath at a time when all acknowledge the Sabbath was kept. The Sabbath is not mentioned in Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon. Who would be so foolish to use this as evidence against the Sabbath? Buswell gives us a likely reason for the N.T. silence.

The reason for lack of emphasis on the Christian Sabbath in the New Testament is similar to Paul's lack of emphasis upon baptism (1 Cor. 1:14-17). The religion of the Jews had degenerated into legalistic ceremonialism, and pagan religion also consisted largely of the observation of festivals and ceremonies. Paul found it necessary to make it clear that salvation comes not by the observation of a day (Gal. 4:10, 11; Col. 2:16, 17; Ro. 14:5, 6).<sup>26</sup>

Some tell us that Paul does refer to the last six commandments of the Decalogue as Christian duty, but never the fourth. The truth is that none of the first four commandments are quoted in the New Testament, although the fourth comes the nearest to being so in several places. But Berkouwer has a word for us:

We may grant that all attention is frequently centered, in certain passages, on the second table of the law. The "whole" law is "fulfilled" in this "one word." But in the whole fabric of the New Testament this expression, or this "exclusive accent," is possible only because the second table of the law cannot be isolated from the first. The whole law must be seen in the unitary structure of love. Nowhere does the Scripture imply an autonomy or an independence of the second table. The fact is that Paul writes to believers that "you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another" (1 Thess. 4:9). When Christ gave his "new command" he did so by referring to the love which he had shown to his disciples: "... even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:34).

Within the purview of this "new" and unitary command, the entire law is now set forth under the heading of a love for our neighbors. If anywhere, certainly here it is evident that the relation of sin to God (all man's sin) by no means obscures but only intensifies the seriousness of sinning against our neighbors.<sup>27</sup>

Berkouwer has seen, with many others, that when Christ was asked concerning the standard associated with everlasting life, his reply, "Keep the commandments," certainly involved the entire ten.

The plain fact is that the N.T. nowhere poses as a new law. It never sets out to reinstitute the moral requirements of God. Rather, these are throughout its pages taken for granted. It is impossible, for example, to indict from the N.T. someone who fashions graven images in order to worship them. The N.T. does warn against idolatry in the sense of worshipping other gods, but the second commandment of the Decalogue is not a mere repetition of the first. It warns not against disloyalty in worship, but a wrong method of worship, and the N.T. does not specifically repeat the Sinaitic admonition, though it assumes its rightness. Similarly, there is no N.T. law against incest but Paul condemns one guilty in this regard. See 1 Cor. 5 and compare Lev. 18. It should never be forgotten that the consistent N.T. position is that the O.T. Scriptures are able to make one wise unto salvation. See 2 Tim. 3:15. And while those Scriptures do not use the terminology of moral and ceremonial law, the realities thereby indicated are taken for granted. Thus the later prophets are forever concentrating on the moral rather than the ceremonial as the test of Israel's fidelity. Compare Paul in 1 Cor. 7:19.

Christ should be our last word in all things. He created the Sabbath "for" man in the beginning. He sanctified and blessed that special day after resting upon it Himself. He proclaimed its hallowed nature from Sinai, and a millennium and a half later as the incarnate Saviour, He observed it in life and death. He has taught us what is "lawful" on the Sabbath--even deeds of piety, mercy, and necessity.

Many have used Col. 2:16 as an argument against the likelihood that the Sabbath will be a test in the last days. Another chapter in this volume has shown that the Sabbath has operated as a test in all ages. It concerns behavior man could never have thought out for himself, and the only reason any soul would wish to keep the seventh-day Sabbath is that God Himself has so commanded. Thus, the observance of this day indeed tests all who learn of it as to whether they will treat as sacred what God has separated from secular time. Self-will or God's will is the issue to be decided upon by all. The first test in Eden was of this nature also.

We close with a summary from Richard Watson's Theological Institutes:

The circumstance, that the observance of a sabbath is nowhere, in so many words, enjoined upon Christians, by our Lord and his apostles, has been assumed as the reason for so great a license of criticism and argument as that which has been often indulged in to unsettle the strictness of the obligation of this duty. Its obligation has been represented as standing upon the ground of inference only, and therefore, of human opinion; and thus the opinion against sabbatical institutions has been held up as equally weighty with the opinion in their favour; and the liberty which has been claimed has been too often hastily concluded to be Christian liberty. This, however, is travelling much too fast; for if the case were as much a matter of inference, as such persons would have it, it does not follow that every inference is alike good; or that the opposing inferences have an equal force of truth, any more than of piety.

The question respects the will of God as to this particular point,--Whether one day in seven is to be wholly devoted to religion exclusive of worldly business and worldly pleasures. Now, there are but two ways in which the will of God can be collected from his word: either by some explicit injunction upon all, or by incidental circumstances. Let us then allow for a moment, that we have no such explicit injunction; yet we have certainly none to the contrary; let us allow that we have only for our guidance, in inferring the will of God in this particular, certain circumstances declarative of his will; yet this important conclusion is inevitable, that all such indicative circumstances are in favour of a sabbatical institution, and that there is not one which exhibits anything contrary to it. The seventh day was hallowed at the close of creation: its sanctity was afterwards marked by the withholding of the manna on that day, and the provision of a double supply on the sixth, and that previous to the giving of the law from Sinai: it was then made a part of that great epitome of religious and moral duty, which God wrote with his own finger on tables of stone; it was a part of the public political law of the only people to whom Almighty God ever made himself a political Head and Ruler; its observance is connected throughout the prophetic age with the highest promises, its violations with the severest maledictions; it was among the Jews in our Lord's time a day of solemn religious assembling, and was so observed by him; [Watson also speaks here of the first day of the week as the new Sabbath but the reader should note our later chapter on that current topic] and we have inspired authority to say, that, both under the Old and New Testament dispensations, it is used as an expressive type of the heavenly and eternal rest. Now, against all these circumstances so strongly declarative of the will of God, as to the observance of a sabbatical institution, what circumstances or passage of Scripture can be opposed, as bearing upon it a contrary indication: Truly, not one; except those passages in St. Paul in which he speaks of Jewish sabbaths, with their Levitical rites, and of a distinction of days, both of which marked a weak or a criminal adherence to the abolished ceremonial dispensation; but which touch not the sabbath as a branch of the moral law.... If, then, we were left to determine the point by inference merely, how powerful is the inference as to what is the will of God with respect to the keeping of the sabbath on the one hand, and how totally unsupported is the opposite inference on the other!<sup>28</sup>

But stronger as this ground is, we quit it all for a still stronger. It is wholly a mistake, that the sabbath, because not re-enacted with the formality of the Decalogue, is not explicitly enjoined upon Christians, and that the testimony of Scripture to such an injunction is not unequivocal and irrefragable. We shall soon prove that the sabbath was appointed at the creation of the world, and, consequently, for all men, and, therefore, for Christians; since there was never any repeal of the original institution. To this we add, that if the moral law be the law of Christians, then is the sabbath as explicitly enjoined upon them as upon the Jews. But that the moral law is our law, as well as the law of the Jews, all but Antinomians must acknowledge: and few, we suppose, will be inclined to run into the fearful mazes of that error, in order to support lax notions as to the obligation of the sabbath; into which however, they must be plunged, if they deny the law of the Decalogue to be binding upon us.<sup>29</sup>

The words of the pious Archbishop Dawes may serve as a salutary admonition:

Dost thou require of me, O Lord, but one day in seven for thy more especial service, when as all my times, all my days, are thy due tribute, and shall I grudge thee that one day? Have I but one day in the week, a peculiar season of nurturing and training up my soul for heavenly happiness, and shall I think the whole of this too much, and judge my duties at an end when the public offices of the church are only ended? Ah! where, in such a case, is my zeal, my sincerity, my constancy, and perseverance of holy obedience? Where my love unto, my delight and relish in, pious performances? Would those that are thus but half Christians be content to be half saved? Would those who are thus not far from the kingdom of heaven, be willing to be utterly excluded thence for arriving no nearer to a due observance of the Lord's day? Am I so afraid of sabbatizing with the Jews, that I carelessly omit keeping the day as a good Christian? Where can be harm in overdoing in God's worship, suppose I could overdo? But when my Saviour has told me, after I have done all, I am still an unprofitable servant, where is the hazard, where the possibility, of doing too much? whereas in doing too little, in falling short of performing a due obedience on the sabbath, I may also fall short of eternal life.<sup>30</sup>

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. Ralph Martin, Colossians, p. 90 (emphasis ours).
2. Marcus Barth, The Anchor Bible on Ephesians, p. 291.
3. Roger T. Beckwith, John R. Stott, This is the Day: the Biblical Doctrine of the Christian Sunday, p. 27.
4. H. Weiss, The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 34, 1972, pp. 310-11.
5. Fred O. Francis, "Humility and Angel Worship in Col. 2:18," Conflict in Colossae (Sources for Biblical Study 4), p. 182.
6. Ralph P. Martin, Colossians: The Church's Lord and the Christian's Liberty, pp. 79-80.
7. Eduard Lohse, Colossians and Philemon, p. 124.
8. Ibid., p. 116.
9. Ibid., p. 115.
10. G. H. P. Thompson, The Cambridge Bible Commentary, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, p. 146.
11. Roger T. Beckwith, op. cit., p. 131.
12. Josephus, Treatise Against Apion, Book II.
13. Philo, De Opificio Mundi, p. 89.
14. The Case for Orthodox Theology, p. 57.
15. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, III:4, p. 49.
16. Ibid., p. 50.
17. Ibid., p. 53.
18. Ibid., p. 57.
19. Ibid., p. 55.
20. Ibid., p. 58.
21. Ibid., p. 70.
22. Ibid., p. 73.
23. Vol. VI, p. 52, col. 1
24. W. Crafts, The Sabbath for Man, p. 547. 127
25. Source Unknown.
26. Oliver Buswell, Jnr., A Systematic Theology, I, 371.
27. G. C. Berkouwer, Sin, p. 249.
28. Vol. IV, pp. 228-30.
29. Ibid., p. 231.
30. Ibid., p. 253.

## EXCURSUS

### QUOTATIONS ON THE LAW AS TREATED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE

To be sure, except when Paul has specific occasion to speak of the ritual law as in Galatians, in his statements about the Law he is thinking essentially of its ethical demands, in particular of the decalogue, as Rom. 2:1--3:20 proves (cf. especially 2:21f.); likewise, Rom. 13:8-10, Gal. 5:14 (cf. 5:23). This is also indicated by his assertion that for the heathen the demands of the Law are attested by their conscience (Rom. 2:14f.); for what their conscience hears is certainly not the cultic-ritual regulations of the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup>

... it is apparent from the matter-of-fact way in which he names the ethical demand of the decalogue (Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14) as the abiding content of the Law obligatory even for the Christian....

'Naturally, the Law had been given by God in order to be fulfilled.' According to Rom. 2:20, it is "the embodiment of knowledge and truth," and the "inward man" (man's "inmost self" RSV) approves of it (Rom. 7:14ff.). From the fact that the Law, being unable to lead to "righteousness" and leading, rather, only to death, is radically abolished for the man of faith (Rom. 1:18--7:6; Gal. 3:1--5:12) it is not to be inferred that it does not contain God's obligatory demand.<sup>2</sup>

Though the Christian in a certain sense is no longer "under Law" (Gal. 5:18; Rom. 6:14), that does not mean that the demands of the law are no longer valid for him; for the agape demanded of him is nothing else than the fulfilment of the Law (Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14). Having received the possibility of proving "what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" by the "renewing" of his "mind" (Rom. 12:2), he is able to know by himself what the Jew can know as one "instructed in the law": "know the will (of God) and approve what is excellent" (Rom. 2:18). The will of God revealed to the Christian is identical with the demand of the Law.<sup>3</sup>

It is clear that Christ is the end of the Law so far as it claimed to be the way to salvation or was understood by man as the means of establishing "his own righteousness" (#23, 1; #27, 2), for so far as it contains God's demand (#27, 2), it retains its validity. Of course, it is self-evident that so far as the νόμος, of God is represented to Paul's mind by the Old Testament Torah with all its cultic and ritual rules (#27, 1), it cannot be valid in its whole extent. Paul's struggle in Galatia against the Law as the way to salvation is simultaneously a struggle against the ritual and cultic rules, particularly against circumcision and the Jewish festivals (Gal. 4:10). Where Paul calls the Law "holy" and "spiritual" (Rom. 7:12, 14) he is thinking only of the ethical commandments summarized in the formula, "you shall not desire" (v. 7)--likewise where he calls "love" the fulfilment of the Law (Gal. 5:14; Rom. 13:9f.;... Then, however, freedom from the Law also actualizes itself in the freedom to differentiate between the valid and the non-valid, according to its content, within the Law as it has been handed down. Paul did not work out this problem in detail, but the obligation to practice such criticism is contained in the capacity of "proving what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12: 2) or of "approving what is excellent" (i.e. distinguishing what is important"--Phil. 1:10).<sup>4</sup>

... The question remains, however, as to where it is that the apostle himself in his precepts and commandments derived the norms for the new obedience required by him.

... In particular it should come up for discussion here whether and, if so, in what sense the law continues to function in the Pauline paraenesis as the source of the knowledge of the will of God and as the standard for the new life.<sup>5</sup>

... For whatever the great emphasis with which he speaks of having been discharged from the law and calls Christ the end of the law, in other places, as it were self-evidently, he time and again harks back to the law, namely, when he wishes to define the content of the new obedience and the express will of God for the new life. The principal pronouncements to be considered here are the following: [Ro. 8:3, 4; 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 7:19; 1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 5:14; Gal. 6:2.]<sup>6</sup>

... Most interpreters, even those who suppose that Paul speaks very unequivocally of the end of the Mosaic law, are therefore of the opinion (on the ground of these unmistakable positive pronouncements) that in one way or another he also retains the law.<sup>7</sup>

... If we survey the whole, so far as the positive significance of the law is concerned, the following may be noted by way of summary.

(1) However much, speaking out of the Jewish conception of the law as the means of salvation, Paul emphatically places the negative significance of the law in the foreground on the other side the so-called "third use" of the law is also unmistakable in his epistles. After all that has been said on "having died to the law," Christ as "the end of the law," etc., the abiding significance of the law as the expression of the will of God is maintained with a certain self-evidentness. Nor is there materially the slightest opposition between the one and the other. One can perhaps wonder at the fact that it all takes place so "silently" and that the apostle, at least in the epistles that have been preserved to us, apparently felt no need to go further into this relationship. But the same thing applies to the very positive manner in which he speaks of "good works" and "righteousness" as well. This involves the fact that it is absolutely impossible, without having recourse to arbitrariness and artificiality, to deny this double significance of the law, namely, both as pedagogue to Christ and as rule for the new life, either on the one side or the other. One will therefore not be able to maintain that love or the Spirit or even Christ is the norm and the rule of conduct of the new life, at least if this would mean a substitution for the law.

The pronouncements on love in Romans 13:8-10 and Galatians 5:14 are unmistakable in this respect. Love functions here not as a new Christian ideal or as a new norm, which comes in the place of the law or makes it superfluous. It is precisely required here as the summary of the law (anakephalaïoutai; Rom. 13:9). In other words, the law does not find its criterion in love, but just the reverse, the requirement of love is so imperative because in it lies the summary of the law.<sup>8</sup>

This does not mean, however - and in this context all the emphasis must lie here - that the Spirit as the standard and norm of the new life sets himself over against or in the place of the law and that he who walks after the Spirit or is led by the Spirit no longer has any need of commandment or law. However much this conception has been propagated in all sorts of literature on Paul, it is in flagrant conflict with the explicit pronouncements of the apostle. We must not here permit ourselves to be misled by the sound of some words. When in Galatians 5:18 Paul says "If you allow yourselves to be led by the Spirit, you are not under the law," it can appear as though for believers the knowledge and validity of the will of God were no longer situated in the law, but in the Spirit. Here again, however, what is meant by

"under the law" is the condition of impotence and condemnation to which man is subjected outside faith and the life-giving power of the Spirit. A moment later, in verse 23, it can accordingly be said that the law is not against such (i.e. those who allow themselves to be led by the Spirit). But the dispensation of the Spirit does not abrogate the validity and the requirement of the law, but precisely confirms this and brings it to fulfillment is not to be denied. The work of the Spirit consists precisely in the working out of the law in the life of believers (Rom. 8:4: "that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit"). The difference between the "mind of the flesh" and the "mind of the Spirit" lies precisely in this, that the flesh does not submit itself to the law of God, nor can it do so (Rom. 8:7). Nowhere in Paul's epistles do we find anything of a spiritualism that with regard to the content of God's will makes an antithesis between the law and the Spirit, the decree coming from without and the inner disposition. The law itself is holy and spiritual (Rom. 7:14), and thus cannot be placed over against the Spirit; it is not made superfluous by the Spirit, but rather established. "Letting oneself be led by the Spirit" consists also in learning anew to discern and prove the good and well-pleasing and perfect will of God (Rom. 12:2), qualifications that with a little variation are elsewhere applied to the law (Rom. 7:12).

(2) Yet with the above everything has not of course been said. This is evident in particular from those pronouncements which have a bearing on the relationship of Christ and the law. Even though one understands the pronouncement of Romans 10:4 that "Christ is the end of the law" of the pedagogical significance of the law and nothing has as yet been prejudiced with respect to the continuing normative purport of the law, nevertheless with the advent of Christ the validity of the law in its historical form has not remained the same. Of importance in this context is the pronouncement in 1 Corinthians 9:21, where Paul amplifies his declaration that to those that are without law he became as without law with the words: "although not without the law of God, but bound by the law of Christ." This passage contains three elements in which the relationship of Christ and the law in its continuing significance is clearly expressed:

(a) The law no longer has an unrestricted and undifferentiated validity for the church of Christ. In a certain sense the church can be qualified as "without the law."

(b) The law of God is not thereby abrogated.

(c) This continuing significance of the law can be qualified as "being bound to the law of Christ" (ennomos Christou). All three elements can be further elucidated from all the epistles of Paul.

As to (a), that the law of Moses in its particularistic significance as making a division between Jews and gentiles is no longer in force constitutes the foundation of Paul's apostolate among the gentiles. He speaks of it as "the law of commandments, consisting in ordinances" and as "the middle wall of partition." It holds for the law functioning in this way that it has been pulled down and rendered inoperative (Eph. 2:14ff.; cf. Gal. 2:14; 4:10; 5:2ff.; 6:12; Col. 2:16ff.; 3:11; also Rom. 2:26ff.; 3:30; 4 passim; 1 Cor. 7:18,19). This holds above all for circumcision, but in general for "living as a Jew" (Ioudaizein, Ioudaikōs zēn; Gal. 2:14), as a description of those regulations which had the effect of maintaining the line of demarcation between Israel and the gentiles in a ritual-cultic and social respect. To be sure, in the epistles that have been preserved to us nowhere is a distinction made explicitly between the moral and the ceremonial, particularistic parts of the law, but materially Paul, certainly continuing to build on the antecedent missionary preaching (cf. Col. 2:6ff.), nevertheless starts from such a distinction.

... So far as the law of Moses is concerned, when Paul gives expression to the continuing demand of the law, he cites the decalogue specifically. One can hardly make contrasts here between "Moses" and Christ, nor between "the law" and "the law of Moses." And this holds, too, for the qualification "the commandments." However true it is that Christ has abolished "the law of commandments, consisting in ordinances" (Eph. 2:15, Col. 2:14), this does not alter the fact that it is said elsewhere that what really matters is the keeping of God's commandments (entolōn; 1 Cor. 7:19), and that in concrete cases an explicit appeal can be made to an individual "ordinance" in the law of Moses (Eph. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:9ff.). Also the contrast between the unity (of the law of Christ) and the multiplicity (of the law of Moses), however meaningful this distinction may be in a specific context (cf. Mark 12:32ff.), must be rejected as false, if it is intended to oppose the continuing significance of Moses.

As for (c), if one asks himself what the material content is of the expression "bound to the law of Christ" (1 Cor. 9:21), the answer will lie in the fact that Christ suo modo represents the law of God and thus the law of Moses. Not only does Christ by his Spirit bring about a new bond to the law in the hearts of believers, whereby the law retains its force as the expression of the will of God in the New Covenant (Jer. 31:33; cf. 2 Cor. 3:3), but Christ also represents the new standard of judgment as to what "has had its day" in the law and what has abiding validity (Col. 2:17). Finally, one should point out the interpretation of the law given by Christ, to which Paul appeals in more than one place (cf. 1 Cor. 7:10ff.), which determines the expression of Galatians 6: 2 as well, namely, that he who helps to bear the sin of his brother "fulfills the law of Christ." There can thus be no doubt whatever that the category of the law has not been abrogated with Christ's advent, but rather has been maintained and interpreted in its radical sense ("fulfilled"; Mark. 5:17); on the other hand, that the church no longer has to do with the law in any other way than in Christ and thus is ennomos Christou.

(3) Finally, how much Christ, the law, the Spirit, and love constitute a unity may appear from a comparison of the following parallel pronouncements:

For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but being a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule [canon], peace upon them... (Gal. 6: 15, 16).

For in Christ Jesus neither does circumcision avail anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith, working through love (Gal. 5:6).

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of God's commandments [is what really matters] (1 Cor. 7: 19).<sup>10</sup>

That it does not come here to a precise delimitation of what is new and old, of what has been done away and what retains its validity, is surely characteristic of the new situation. This also puts an end to the "legalistic" view of life in the sense that the law would cover all "cases" of the Christian life and the right use of the law would consist only in a logical particularizing of the individual pronouncements of the law. Over against this, however, stands the fact that the whole of the law and the whole of life must be understood in the light of the salvation revealed with Christ, and that insight into the will of God for concrete life situations is no less dependent on faith in Christ, being led by the Spirit, and the inner renewal of man than on the knowledge of the law. As little as one may not divorce the former from the latter (see above), so little may the reverse take place.

That--finally--the apostle does not give the transient and the abiding, the special and the general aspects of the law in more detail, will have

to be explained from the fact that he wanted to make the church understand its own responsibility and spiritual activity in these things and that in the new situation in which the young gentile churches found themselves he not only wished to be helpful to them in terms of spiritual counsel and instruction, but also endeavored to bring them to moral and spiritual independence. Those pronouncements point to this, for example, which insist on "proving" the will of God, "distinguishing" those things which "matter," etc.<sup>11</sup>

By fulfilling the promise given to Abraham, Christ has ended the age of the Law and inaugurated the age of Christ, which means freedom from bondage and the end of the Law for the believer. However, it is clear that inasmuch as Paul always regards the Law as holy and just and good, he never thinks of the Law as being abolished. It remains the expression of the will of God.

This is evident from his frequent assertion that redemption in Christ enables believers in some real sense to fulfill the Law. In Christ, God has done what the Law could not do, namely, condemned sin in the flesh, that the just requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in those who walk by the Spirit (Rom. 8:3-4). Here is paradox: by being freed from the Law, we uphold the Law (Rom. 3:31). It is obvious that the new life in Christ enables the Christian to keep the Law not as an external code but in terms of its higher demand, i.e. at the very point where the Law was powerless because it was an external written code. Thus Paul repeats that the essential Christian ethic of love, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 13; Gal. 5:22), is the fulfilling of the Law. The whole law is fulfilled in one word, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Gal. 5:14). In place of the Law as a written code is now the law of Christ. This "new law" cannot be reduced to specific rules but goes far beyond legislation. No set of rules can tell one how to bear the burdens of another (Gal. 6:2); only love can dictate such conduct. However, the law of Christ, which is the law of love, does fulfill the Law. Love will not commit adultery, or lie or steal or covet, or do any wrong to one's neighbor (Rom. 12:8-10).<sup>12</sup>

The permanence of the Law is reflected further in the fact that Paul appeals to specific commands in the Law as the norm for Christian conduct. He appeals to several specific commandments (entolai) of the Decalogue that are fulfilled by love (Rom. 13:8-10). His reference to "any other commandment" designates everything in the Law that relates to one's neighbor. Yet it was the character of the Law as entolai that marked its externality. Again, Paul quotes the command to love father and mother as the first commandment with a promise (Eph. 6:2). It is clear that the Law continues to be the expression of the will of God for conduct, even for those who are no longer under the Law.

It is quite clear, however, that the permanent aspect of the Law is the ethical and not the ceremonial. "For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God" (1 Cor. 7:19). Most of the studies on Paul emphasize the fact that Paul does not explicitly distinguish between the ethical and ceremonial aspects of the Law. This is of course true; but the implicit distinction is unavoidable and should be stressed. Although circumcision is a command of God and a part of the Law, Paul sets circumcision in contrast to the commandments, and in doing so separates the ethical from the ceremonial--the permanent from the temporal.<sup>13</sup>

When Paul speaks of the law in positive terms, as the will of God, he is in fact thinking of the moral commandments. This is shown by the examples which he cites in Rom. 2: you shall not steal, shall not commit adultery. He sums up the whole of the demand of the law in Rom. 7:7 as 'You shall not covet', and, following Jesus, describes the commandment to love as the sum of the law (Gal. 5; Rom. 13:8-10).<sup>14</sup>

Because the end of the law is not a worldly state of affairs but a situation 'in Christ', it also becomes clear that on the one hand it has come to an end as a way of salvation, as its requirements have been fulfilled by Christ and we have therefore been ransomed from it (or, in a completely different category, we have died to it: Rom. 7:6), whereas on the other hand it remains in force as a moral demand. The law is certainly not false!<sup>15</sup>

Christ is the end of the law, but it is still valid. We are free, but confronted with a demand; justified by faith, but judged according to works.<sup>16</sup>

## **EXCURSUS FOOTNOTES**

1. Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, I: 260.
2. Ibid., p. 261.
3. Ibid., p. 262.
4. Ibid., p. 341.
5. Herman Ridderbos, Paul, p. 278.
6. Ibid., p. 279.
7. Ibid., p. 280.
8. Ibid., pp. 281-82.
9. Ibid., pp. 281-84.
10. Ibid., pp. 285-86.
11. Ibid., pp. 286-87.
12. G. E. Ladd, Theology of the New Testament, p. 509.
13. Ibid., p. 510.
14. Hans Conzelmann, An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament, p. 223.
15. Ibid., p. 224.
16. Ibid., p. 225.

# IS THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH A MORAL TEST TODAY?

\* \* \* \*

I propose to test them in this way to see whether they will follow my law or not." Ex. 16:4 Jerusalem Bible (See most modern versions--ASV, NEB, TEV, LB, etc.)

The Sabbath is the lungs by which the Christian religion breathes. Destroy it, and Christianity dies of consumption.  
J. O. Peck, D.D.

Where the holy day becomes the day of man, society and humanity wither away and the demons rule....  
De Quervain

Take this day from the calendar of the Christian, and all that remains will be cloudy and cheerless: religion will instantly decay; ignorance, error, and vice will immediately triumph; the sense of duty vanish; morals fade away; the acknowledgement, and even the remembrance of God, be far removed from mankind; the glad tidings of salvation cease to sound; and the communication between earth and heaven be cut off forever.

Dr. T. Dwight.

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Does God test His people, and if so, how? From Genesis to Revelation the answers can be traced.

## I.

"After these things God tested Abraham ..." Gen. 22:1.

"And you shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you these forty years.... testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments, or not." Deut. 8:2.

"... that by them I may test Israel, whether they will take care to walk in the way of the Lord as their fathers did, or not." Judg. 2:22.

"Prove me, O Lord, and try me; test my heart and my mind." Psa. 26:2.

"This he said to test him." Jn. 6:6.

Yes, God tests men and nations. How? By a multitude of means appropriate to their circumstances and needs. But particularly by His law which is, for all who know it, a constant measuring rod. The apocalyptic writings have this as a major emphasis. Daniel and his fellows are tested ten days as part of the larger test concerning their obedience to the law of God. In Dn. 3, Israel is again tested by God's law over and against human law. See also Dn. 6 and 7:25. In Revelation, the situation is similar. Rev. 13 is based on Dn. 3, thus its allusion to an image and to enforced worship against the commandments of God, as in the sixth century B.C. Those who survive the test are said to "keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12. See also 12:17.

Is there any part of His law which more than the rest has been a moral test for God's professed worshippers? Immediately the second table of the law slips from focus, for men have their own reasons for outward compliance with these commands. Even atheists do not as a rule choose to do the things which would bring them in conflict with neighbors and civil powers. To the first table we must look, and the answer is not difficult to find.

From the beginning of time, God has used the Sabbath as a moral test for His professed people. Man's greatest peril is idolatry-- worshipping the creature rather than the Creator. From Genesis to Revelation, the perils of such false worship are emphasized. Even the eschatological test pictured in Rev. 13 is clearly portrayed as a test concerning true worship. It is not to try man as to passion, honesty, or truthfulness, primarily. Will he worship the beast (the creature) and its idolatrous image, or will he worship the Creator of heaven and earth? That is the issue to be decided by all. Compare Rev. 13:15 with 14:7, 9-12.

Even in Genesis, the Sabbath is presented as a test. Because it concerns the invisible and the intangible, the Sabbath institution is ideally constituted for trying man's supreme loyalties. Dr. Jack Provonsha has asked us to imagine the consequences should God have set apart a great black stone and blessed and sanctified it as the sign of His creative power. The world's paths would have converged to the place where the black stone lay enshrined. It would have become arrayed with costly silks and brocades, and adorned with gold, silver, and priceless gems, and possibly even carried in solemn procession. Dr. Provonsha suggests that eventually the unsophisticated would worship it rather than God. Perhaps they would even try to cut it up into pieces for wearing on their person. "Whenever men take control of God, He degenerates into an idol and true worship degenerates into little more than magic... but God chose a moment of time as His creative symbol because of its inherent prophylaxis against idolatry."<sup>1</sup>

Scripture sets forth time as inherently superior to space. All that is ultimately precious resides in time and not in space, including God Himself. The spiritually-minded perceive that all the things of space must be held subordinate to the things of time lest we become depraved. This is why the Bible is a historical revelation, drawing attention to God's mighty acts in time. The salvation covenants were all time, not space, conditioned.

The Bible is the book of the Old and New covenants. Such are the correct titles for the sections we refer to as Testaments. Our salvation depends upon God's everlasting covenant, and all of Scripture revolves around the covenantal theme. The divine covenant of grace is a protest against legalism and antinomianism. On the one hand, because God is the initiator of the covenant it is made clear that man cannot redeem himself. But on the other hand, Scripture stresses that a certain type of response is expected of all who claim to accept the covenant. "No, for I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice; so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him" (Gen. 18:19).

The crowning symbol of obligation on Abraham's part is found in the record of the offering of Isaac which is specifically referred to as a "test" of Abraham's obedience. See Gen. 22:1, 12ff. Similarly, after the redemption from Egypt the pattern of Israel's response is sketched in the law-code delivered to them. See Ex. 19:1-24; 18. The prophets tell us constantly that catastrophe overtook the nation when she failed to fulfill her covenant obligation. Furthermore, it is the Sabbath that stands for covenant fidelity. In Jer. 17 obedience to the Sabbath commandment stands for loyalty to the whole law. See also Isa. 56:4.

On his part, God, by keeping the sabbath, reveals his saving purpose for mankind; and man on his part, by keeping the sabbath, accepts the sovereignty of God and submits himself to God's will. Thus, the sabbath theology becomes identical with the creation theology, which, as H. H. Schmid notes, is the "Gesamthorizont biblischer Theologie" (the whole horizon of biblical theology).

In this sense sabbath becomes the central commandment, "das Hauptgebot"<sup>2</sup> in the O.T., obedience to which is equivalent to the fulfilment of all the commandments. We noticed above how in the early post-exilic writings sabbath is mentioned in opposition to idolatry. Thus, in Lev. 26:1f. the sabbath commandment, in oppositional combination with the prohibition of idols, is placed as a preamble for the section dealing with blessings and curses. Breaking Yahweh's statutes and ordinances is the same as profaning his sabbaths (cf. Ez. 20:13, 16, 18, 21, 24). Profaning Yahweh's holy things or his sanctuary is also the same as profaning his sabbaths (Ez. 22:8, 26; 23:38f.) Trito-Isaiah<sup>R</sup>, thus, sees sabbath as the only condition for a foreigner to join the congregation of Yahweh (Is. 56:6). Jeremiah<sup>R</sup> demands the proper observance of sabbath as the only condition for the continued establishment of the Davidic kingship.

As sabbath symbolically stood for the acknowledgement and acceptance of the sovereignty of God, in effect, it stood for the negation of all other gods. As Israel attributed all moral and social evils to man's estrangement from his God, sabbath could comprehend all the religious and moral requirements. A man who faithfully observes the sabbath, accepts the sovereignty of God and thus walks in accordance with his will, thus fulfilling all that is laid down in the torah. In this sense, K. Barth is right when he says, "Alles, was es sonst fordert, ist in diesem Einen eingeschlossen, ist ihm unter- und zugeordnet".<sup>3</sup> (Moreover, everything that is required, is included in this one thing, [and] is subordinated and allied to it.)

Sabbath-keeping is now the same as covenant keeping (Is. 56:4, 6). Whoever keeps the covenant keeps the sabbath, and whoever profanes the sabbath breaks the covenant (Lev. 26:42, 45). Thus, sabbath becomes a sign between Yahweh and his people (Ez. 20:12, 20). The repeated assertion "I am Yahweh" (Lev. 19:29; 26:2; 26:45; Ez. 22:16) or "I am Yahweh your God." (Lev. 19:3-4; 26:1; Ez. 20:19, 20), which appear in the context of sabbath, is another indication of this covenant aspect.

The covenant which the writer has in mind is, obviously the patriarchal covenant, the covenant of the "kleines Credo" (little creed) (cf. Lev. 26:42, 45; Is. 58:14; Ez. 15f.), the covenant with its promise of the chosen land for Israel. Thus sabbath becomes the condition for the sustained life in the land (Is. 56:5; 58:14; Ez. 20:15-16). When sabbath is profaned evil is multiplied in the land, and the land thus becomes polluted (Lev. 19:29-30; 26:1-2, 34-43), an instrument of harlotry (Lev. 19:29) and, therefore, unsuitable for living. Thus the exile was seen as the result of people's profanation of sabbath (Lev. 26:34-35).<sup>4</sup>

Sabbath, thus, acquires all the virtues of Yahweh-faith. It is a sign of Yahweh's covenant with his people Israel; it is the sum-total of the statutes and the commandments, the sum-total of the covenant requirements, it is the sign of the acceptance of the absolute sovereignty of Yahweh and the total negation of all the idols.<sup>5</sup>

The very first time we have a human response to the Sabbath portrayed, the "test" nature of the day is stressed.

"And the LORD said to Moses, 'How long do you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? See! The LORD has given you the sabbath, therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days; remain every man of you in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.' So the people rested on the seventh day." Ex. 16:28-30. Note v. 4 in all modern versions where the word "test" is used with reference to the holy day.

The appropriateness of the Sabbath as a moral test is further apparent when we realize that it is the seal of the covenant and thus attached to the covenant document of the two tables of stone. Thus Ex. 20:8-11 and Ex. 31:16-17 echo Gen. 2:1-3 where the Sabbath is the seal of the Edenic covenant.

Says Meredith G. Kline:

Covenants, such as Exodus 20:12-17 has been shown to be, are found written in their entirety on one table and indeed, like the Sinaitic tables, on both its sides. As a further detail in the parallelism of external appearance it is tempting to see in the sabbath sign presented in the midst of the ten words the equivalent of the suzerain's dynastic seal found in the midst of the obverse of the international treaty documents. Since in the case of the Decalogue the suzerain is Yahweh, there will be no representation of him on his seal, but the sabbath is declared to be his "sign of the covenant" (Ex. 31: 13-17). By means of his sabbath-keeping, the image-bearer of God images the pattern of that divine act of creation which proclaims God's absolute sovereignty over man, and thereby he pledges his covenant consecration to his Maker. The Creator has stamped on world history the sign of the sabbath as his seal of ownership and authority. That is precisely what the pictures on the dynastic seals symbolized and their captions claim in behalf of the treaty gods and their representative, the suzerain.<sup>6</sup>

The far-reaching implications of the Sabbath test become apparent on reflection. According to Jer. 17, if Jerusalem had observed the Sabbath, the city would have stood forever. The Tragedies of the 586 B.C. and 70 A.D., and other similar occasions would never have taken place. Which means, of course, that had Israel been faithful in Sabbath-observance, they would have accepted their Messiah and avoided the dispersion consequent on their rejection of Him. Thus there would have been millions of missionaries for the original Christian proclamation, and the long centuries of delay before the second advent would have been unnecessary.

Why is the Sabbath commandment so important? Because it points to the basis for all worship and obedience--our creaturely estate. True Sabbath-keepers desire to, and are enabled to, fulfil God's other requirements. See Isa. 56:4 and compare Jer. 17:19-27, where Sabbath-keeping stands for loyalty to the covenant.

At the beginning and end of each era the Sabbath comes to man's attention as a moral test. We have seen it in Eden where man's first whole day was a Sabbath day. It was not given to the world before he came into being because it was not then needed, and could have been misunderstood as though not intended for man. Nor was it given after the lapse of a great interval of time. Then man would have been liable to mistake its purpose and application. Instead the Sabbath was introduced immediately after man's creation. It was the first day whose dawn man ever saw, and that first day was given to God as the first fruits of his existence. Thus, as our Lord declared, "the sabbath was made for man" (Mk. 2:27).

In Eden, the Sabbath was a continual bulwark and protest against idolatry. All things man saw and loved he recognized as from the hand of the invisible God--the God who had dwelled in eternity long before "things" were given birth. But when man was deceived by the beast, and received his mark of disobedience by idolatrous esteem of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, then Sabbath-keeping henceforward was an ideal ever striven towards by the sinner, but never fully attained. On that day henceforward sacrifices were offered to remind the Sabbath-breaker that holiness would fully be restored only through the Holy One who would be sacrificed for the idolater. Each Sabbath became a test indicating whether the penitent would now acknowledge the Creator as Lord of all things, and also as His Redeemer from sin.

At the end of the patriarchal dispensation the Sabbath came to the fore again. Some commentators, including Jews, have seen an allusion to it in Ex. 5:4, where Pharaoh complains that the people are being made to rest from work. But Ex. 16 is undeniably plain. The Sabbath is given "to test" Israel, to see "whether [they] will walk in His law or not" (Ex. 16:4). Compare verses 27-28.

When the Levitical era was ushered in by the proclamation of Sinai, one third of the Words from the Mount concerned the Sabbath. The commandment relating to it was placed at the heart of the law as its seal, and in such a position as to show its connection with divine worship and human service. Almost at the end of the O.T. account of the Levitical era we find the Jews again tested over the Sabbath. See Neh. 13:15-22. They are reminded that the Babylonian captivity was a result of failure regarding the Sabbath and warned that such evils might result again from the same causes. This was fulfilled in A.D. 70.

Was the Sabbath to pass away with the advent of the Saviour?

Old Testament prophecy has a bearing on the designed perpetuity of the Sabbath rest under Christianity. As this holy day existed prior to Judaism, so it is also distinctly and frequently foretold that it should continue with enlarged significance and more exuberant blessing, under the more spiritual dispensation, after Judaism had become extinct, even as night's candles all go out when the sun has risen and these clear and repeated divine predictions indicated the divine purpose. The only change which the Sabbath was to undergo after the Advent was one of increased significance as becoming not only the memorial of a finished creation but of finished redemption.<sup>7</sup>

With the coming of Christ and the Christian era, the Jews were confronted by the Lord of the Sabbath. He attempted Sabbath reform as had Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Nehemiah before Him. Part of that reformation was His rejection of human traditions in connection with the fourth commandment. He offered them the rest of heart and mind that had been symbolized by physical sabbath rest from the beginning of time. Pleadingly, He invited them, "Come unto Me..., and I will give you rest." But time after time we read that after disputing with Christ over their Sabbath traditions, "they took counsel together to slay Him" (Mt. 12:14; Mk. 3:6; Lu. 6:11; Jn. 5:18).

Christ was crucified as a result of His Sabbath reform. All this mirrors the end of the Christian age when the Church, the Body of Christ, will attempt the same cleansing of the Sabbath from human traditions and be threatened with death in return by those who worship the creature (the beast). Though the Sabbath will be proclaimed as the sign of the gospel, men in rejecting the latter will reject their Creator and Lawgiver also. When those who profess to believe the gospel refuse obedience to the Saviour, they follow Satan in trying to "ungod" God!

In Rev. 13, the first table of the law is clearly the issue. All apocalyptic is stamped with tests over the law of God. It was thus with the first apocalypse--Daniel. See chapters one, three, six, and seven (verse 25). It is to be even so again. All the world is to worship the beast (violating commandment one), setting up an image to it (violating commandment two), blaspheming the God of heaven (violating commandment three), and demanding worship of the creature (the beast) rather than that of the Creator (violating commandment four). The Lord's Day is thus the test of the ages.

The most terrifying warning of Scripture is found in Rev. 14:9-11. It is a warning that has had relevance in all ages, but which finds its fullest application in the final crisis before the return of Christ. The beast, whose number is the number of man the creature demands earth's worship and does so successfully. All but a little remnant, characterized by loyalty to the commandments of God and the faith (gospel) of Christ bow low before the beast and receive his mark. To rightly understand the coming conflict let us keep in mind that the real meaning of worship is worthship. What or who is of ultimate worth is the issue to be decided by all. In all ages, mankind has been called to choose between worship dictated by human traditions, and worship according to God's Word.

The essence of heaven's last warning concerns the perils of idolatry. The false trinity of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet seek to replace the true trinity, employing the system of counterfeit worship including a counterfeit seal, enforced by persecution. Rev. 13 is an enlargement of "the abomination of desolation" foretold by Daniel and Christ. "Abomination" is a Jewish cliché for an idol, and "desolation" has to do with the oppressive and compulsive power of the idolatrous system concerned. The first abomination of desolation according to 1 and 2 Maccabees was the Syrian King of the North (Antiochus Epiphanes) who legislated that the Israelites were not to keep the Sabbath and that they must wear his mark of idolatrous worship.

The king then issued a decree throughout his empire: his subjects were all to become one people and abandon their own laws and religion. The nations everywhere complied with the royal command, and many in Israel accepted the foreign worship, sacrificing to idols and profaning the sabbath.... The penalty for disobedience was death.

1 Mace. 1:41-43, 50.

It was forbidden either to observe the sabbath or to keep the traditional festivals, or to admit to being a Jew at all. On the monthly celebration of the king's birthday, the Jews were driven by brute force to eat the entrails of the sacrificial victims; and on the feast of Dionysus they were forced to wear ivy-wreaths and join the procession in his honour.

2 Mace. 6:6-7.

Idolatry is the first and last sin. The creature must make itself as God, and treat its desires as legitimate, before rebellion against the Creator can take place. On earth this began in Eden with one couple in one place, but ultimately the same scenario is to be enacted on a worldwide scale by all men and all women, and then Christ will come. See Rev. 14:9-14. How does God prepare the world for this final crisis?

Rev. 14:6-12 presents heaven's strategy for the final conflict. Men and women are to be called to worship Him who made heaven and earth and the sea and all therein. Acknowledging that the Creator is the only true Lord, and that His commandments against idolatry are to be observed in gratitude for the everlasting gospel ("the faith of Jesus"), believers will escape the judgment upon the Babylonian world of idolaters.

The Gospel breaks the heart of the proud idolater and melts it into submission to the one eternal God. In gratitude for so great salvation, the believer gives God His place. Then all other things take their rightful position according to their importance in the scale of being. Mt. 6:33.

Idolatry is the prevailing sin of all ages. It underlies all other sins. On the other hand, allegiance to the true God underlies all virtues. Thus in Ro. 1:18, it is made clear that unrighteousness follows ungodliness. As spokes grow nearer to each other as they approach the hub, so men come closer to each other as they draw nigh to God. Thus the first table of the law has to do with godliness, duty to God, before the table dealing with human relationships is reached. It was after man rebelled against God that he attacked his brother. See Gen. 3 and 4.

If then idolatry is our chief snare, wherein lies the chief protection against it? When the great God goes, the little gods come, but just as truly, when the great God comes, the little gods go. When God our Creator and Redeemer is real to us, idolatry has no attraction. We have already seen that according to Rev. 14:6-12, the final warning of heaven presents God as Creator and Redeemer. Creation and redemption constitute an unfailing prophylactic against the snares of idolatrous worship. True worship involves the acknowledgement of Him who alone can create and redeem. After the letters to the churches, Revelation is introduced by scenes of worship of God as Creator and Redeemer. See chapters 4 and 5. Creation and redemption are repeatedly linked in Scripture and we should never separate them.

Now we can see the forcefulness and intent of the very opening of Scripture. The creation account is the most powerful protest against idolatry that could have been given to ancient man. All things are seen to have had their origin in the invisible Creator. All things have their being by His will and permission. All created objects were made to occupy a place of subservience whereby they might prove a blessing. And this creation account is a mirror of redemption. See Jn. 1:1; 2 Cor. 4:6; 5:16.

The serpent and man belong to the creation of the sixth day. Hereafter in symbolic context the number six will bespeak the control of man by the serpent in idolatrous relationship. Thus Rev. 13:18 points back to this. The triple six signifies an idolatrous trinity of the creature stamped with the number of man and the serpent. The contextual two-horned beast poses as a lamb-like creature, but then by erecting an image to the beast, and enforcing its worship (speaks like a dragon), shows its true idolatrous colors. It enforces an idolatrous mark on its worshippers in imitation of creation when the first man and first woman had the mark of God in their faces--His divine image. Gen. 1:26. Thus antichrist poses as Creator with the power of life and death. In the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet is hell's Trinity.

The close of the creation account pictures the Sabbath as woven into the very fabric of the universe by God's chosen mode of creation. He who could, by momentary fiat, have caused all things to stand forth complete, elected to attenuate His great work in order to give a divine eternal, immovable foundation for the Sabbath memorial. One can no more cancel out the earth's birthday than one's own. It is forever true that the seventh day is the seal of the foundation of all worship--creation. Never can it be undone that Christ Himself, as the Maker of all things, rested on the first seventh day, making it His Sabbath day and yet also man's, for it is made for man. The Sabbath seal of God's creative work, when accepted by the creature, man, places him in a right relationship to heaven and earth and thus is "for man" indeed. No true Sabbath-keeper can ever be an idolater. He is safe from the onslaughts of Satan, for he lets God be God in all things, and counts all else as in the right place only when subsidiary to the Author of all. Had the Sabbath ever been observed by the race there would never have been an atheist, a sceptic, or a pagan. By reminding man that all he saw and touched and heard was the property of God, the Sabbath would have preserved man from that idolatry which ever characterizes sin and sorrow, its accompaniment.<sup>8</sup> When we come to the world's final test as described in Revelation, idolatry is still the issue. See Rev. 9:20ff.; 13:1-18; 14:9-11.

All attempts of men to lessen or dissolve the obligation of the seventh-day Sabbath strive to wrench the institution from its original Edenic foundation. For, if the Sabbath was made for man as Christ declared, being for the first man, it is for the last, and for all men in between. While after the Fall it becomes a sign of the redemption rest in Christ, it is not in its essence typical. It belongs to the original nature of things before corruption rested on creation. Adam is assigned the Sabbath before the shadow of sin has fallen, and thus its perpetuity is shown.

Literature and sermons against the Sabbath usually deny its tie to creation. It is linked rather with Judaism, and those Scriptures which condemn the perpetuation of Judaism's obsolete rituals or the moral law as a method rather than a standard are invoked to destroy the divine memorial. It is true that the New Testament views the whole Mosaic code as abolished as a system through the coming of the new and better age. But that has never meant that everything in Judaism therefore is obsolete. Judaism too taught faith, love, gratitude, humility, service, and scores of other principles. It is only in their local, limited Jewish form that Edenic institutions such as the Sabbath and marriage have ceased to be authoritative. Jewry had numerous regulations for matrimony and Sabbath observance which cease to bind believers since the Cross. Those who wish to decide what is duty should listen to the Christ as He pointed back beyond Moses saying, "From the beginning it was not so.... have you not read that... in the beginning....?" Mt. 19: 3ff.

The favorite stronghold of all who would reject the Sabbath has always been the Pauline Epistles, as though the word of the disciple could transcend or cancel the word of the Master. It is true that the Epistles are complementary and often explanatory of the Gospels, but it is not true that we look to the Epistles as the sole summary of truth and doctrine. The great commission never has been, "Go ye into all the world.... teaching all things whatsoever Paul has commanded you and, lo, Paul is with you always even unto the end of the world." The Christian Church was founded by Christ, not by Paul. According to the latter's own testimony, he was but a builder on a foundation already laid. See 2 Cor. 3 and compare 1 Cor. 11:23; 7:10. The Epistles refer us back to the fundamental teaching of Christ. See 1 Thess. 4:15; 1 Tim. 6:3; 1 Jn. 1:1, 3, 5; 2 Jn. 9. As Alexander Reese says, "The oral teaching of our Lord during 'the days of His Flesh' was of supreme and decisive importance in fixing the beliefs and customs of the Apostolic Church in all lands...."<sup>9</sup>

Everything in the Epistles has its seed in the Gospels. For example, the whole of Galatians expands Jn. 4:21. Jerusalem, said Jesus, would soon cease to be the center of religious truth, and Jerusalem's Torah would no longer be the administration chosen of God to lead the faithful. The two letters to the Thessalonians expand and frequently cite the Second Advent discourse found in Mt. 24, Mk. 13, and Lu. 21. Ephesians enlarges Mt. 16:18, and Romans Mk. 10:45, Mt. 26:28, Lu. 15, etc. On the other hand, the Gospels in some respects enlarge the Epistles. According to most scholars, they were written later and reflect the mature theology of the church after Paul. This is particularly true of Luke and John. From the mass of matter revolving around our Lord's life and teachings, the inspired writers of the Gospels selected (after Paul's ministry was over), those things of perpetual relevance to the Christian church.

It is contended by most Sunday-keepers that if the seventh-day Sabbath was still binding in Paul's day, he would frequently have reprimanded through the Epistles all violators of the Sabbath. This is not a sound argument, for in the central section of the Old Testament, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon, we have more chapters than the whole New Testament--but chapters which are silent on the Sabbath, though lists of popular sins abound. No one denies that the Sabbath was kept during the days when those books were written, yet the institution is taken for granted and not referred to once. Because of existing legalism among those to whom he wrote, Paul downplayed baptism. See 1 Cor. 1:17. Similarly, at the time of the writing of these same epistles, as regards the Sabbath a bridle was needed rather than a spur, restraint rather than urging.

Silence is a poor rebuttal to God's own voice on Sinai rehearsing His act at Creation. Let those who use silence as an argument note how rarely the Sabbath is referred to in Scripture in the nine hundred years after the Exodus. Even when mentioned in this period, the references are incidental, and almost accidental as well. Far more significant than Paul's silence are the allusions to the sacredness of the Sabbath found in the writings of a contemporary and friend of Paul who outlived him and who wrote Luke and Acts. See particularly Lu. 23:56. Let it be noted that it is in the Gospel for the Gentiles (Luke) where Christ is recorded as regularly attending the synagogue on the Sabbath (Lu. 4:16). Not as the Son of David, but as the Son of man, did He thus observe it, not only during His official ministry as Israel's Messiah, but before He had thus presented Himself. This was to show that the Sabbath is binding not only upon Jews but upon all men. Our reference to the Gentile Gospel does not suggest that stress on the Sabbath is not found elsewhere. In Mt. 24:20, in a book written first for Jewish Christians, we find the suggestion that although Jerusalem might be destroyed, the Sabbath was something to endure forever. About a dozen chapters in the Gospels refer to the Sabbath and frequently at great length, but like the Epistles taking the obligation for granted.

It is this fact that the Christian Gospels ascribe so much importance to the Sabbath which assures us that it is intended for Gentile believers. As the reason attached to the fourth commandment is not Jewish, so in the New Testament, we read our Lord's declaration that it was made for man; not just the Jewish man, but all men, for there were no Jews at the time when things were made. Consonant with this testimony of the Gospels is the fact that even in O.T. times Gentiles could keep the Sabbath without becoming Jews--a situation which parallels Acts 15. For Jewish ritual such as the Passover, circumcision was mandatory. But this was never the case with the Sabbath. Indeed the O.T. prophetic word was that "the sons of the stranger," even "everyone" that took hold of the Sabbath in the widespread lands of the dispersion would receive blessings unparalleled--as sons and daughters of God riding on the high places of the earth. See Isa. 56:3-8; 58: 12-14.

Why is there no definite command in the N.T. regarding the Sabbath? For several reasons. Nowhere does the N.T. set out to legislate afresh the law of God. Instead it continually points back to truths and ideals made known long ago. Even the "new" commandment is not "new." See 1 Jn. 2:7-11, and compare Lev. 19:18. The new Israel is grafted into the stock of the old and only those of Israel are included in the new covenant. See Eph. 2:11-22; Ro. 11:17; 2:29; Gal. 3:29; Heb. 8:8. There is hardly a paragraph in the teachings of our Lord that does not take its root from the O.T. For example, every phrase of the Lord's Prayer is taken from the holy books of Israel. Nowhere in the New Testament is there a specific command not to make graven images. There are warnings about idolatry, but the detailed prohibition of the second commandment is not repeated but taken for granted.

Secondly, Sabbath-keeping of the first century A.D. had become a travesty of the real thing. Renewed emphasis upon it as a form could have aggravated that evil. Instead, the Gospel writers showed Christ's antagonism to all human perversions of Sabbath-keeping and showed also His concept of what type of behavior was lawful and "guiltless" on the Sabbath. See Mt. 12:7, 12.

Third, the situation of the early Christians as they developed worshipping communities in far-flung countries was very different to that of ancient Palestine or to the situation of our own day. For this reason Christ's principle that works of necessity, mercy, and piety are permissible on the Sabbath was fully relevant. As Lord of the Sabbath, He ameliorated its observance without detracting from it one whit. But God did not lay upon the early Christians a burden which they could not have borne--the type of Sabbath-keeping endemic to Judaism with its multitude of human regulations. All truly moral principles can be fulfilled in any geographical location, but to bind about any such principles with a multitude of rules makes it impossible of fulfilment under certain circumstances. At least 59 of the 60 N.T. references to the Sabbath take for granted its sacred nature and it was no part of the apostles' task to do what the Master refused to do--lay down rules for Sabbath observance.

The New Testament does not give any details regarding Sabbath observance. It does not specify minutely what things are proper to be done on the Sabbath and what things are improper, this is not its practise. It is characteristically a book, not of details, but of principles. In regard to the question of church government, for instance, to take a familiar example, we find no categorical statement in the New Testament as to what form is right, the presbyterian, the episcopal, or the independent. It gives us no exact

or detailed statement on the subject, no precise code of rules. It supplies us with great principles which can easily be gathered from it by the diligent enquirer, but not the proper working out of these principles into detail for a Scriptural form of church government. So with this question of Sabbath observance.

Here the Christian Sabbath stands in a remarkably different position from the Jewish. It gives us great principles on the subject and great principles only, leaving their application to the individual conscience. The regulations which would have suited the first century would have been found quite inadequate to meet the circumstances in the twentieth. What is good for an oriental nation would have been quite unsuitable for the Western peoples.<sup>10</sup>

Fourthly, silence often means an institution is taken for granted. Thus for 700 years, from Joshua's time on, the Sabbath is unmentioned, and for 150 years after Elisha likewise. None of the poetical books even allude to the Sabbath except in a heading attached to the ninety second psalm.

But could slaves in a heathen world keep the Sabbath? It is true that Sabbath-keeping for Christian slaves would have been sometimes a difficult affair. But it is a mistake to think that slaves would have found it that much easier to observe other phases of morality. Their master was too often their god by right of power and could force them in matters of purity, honesty, and violence, or at least attempt to do so. To single out the Sabbath as one difficult to keep is to offer a false dilemma. While it is true that there were slaves in the early Christian congregation it is not clear that these were a large group. Some certainly belonged to unbelieving masters, but the vast majority, like Onesimus, belonged to Christians, and therefore could worship in harmony with the household.

Let us now consider the main Pauline texts used against the Sabbath. Apart from the overall argument of Galatians against the continued validity of the Mosaic system, the key Pauline strongholds against Sabbath-keeping are held to be Gal. 4:10; Ro. 14:1-5; Col. 2:16. Let us look at these and particularly see the appendix of this book.

The most significant fact about all three references is that none of the contexts are discussing the Ten Commandments, but instead all deal with matters of ceremonial. This is a vital point, for every New Testament reference to the Ten Commandments assumes their validity for Christian behavior. See Mt. 5; 19:16-22; 22:36-40; Ro. 7:7-16; 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 7:19; Eph. 6:1-4; 1 Tim. 1:8-10; Jas. 2:8-12. (Our comment in the text has reference to the fact that none of the commandments are specified in these passages of Gal. 4 etc. We do not mean that no commentator sees the moral law of God in these verses. That which is blotted out is man's debt through breaking the law, but Paul's admonition has to do with the typical symbols which prefigured the Calvary nullification of our guilt. Compare Eph. 2:15--a similar (though without Gnostic elements) passage to Col. 2:14--which speaks of the dissolution of the Jewish code which acted as a barrier between Jews and Gentiles, simultaneously with the dissolving of the sin-barrier between all men and God. Other scholars take the "regulations" of Col. 2:14 to be the same man-made regulations as in verses 20-22, and the "shadows" as the rudimentary forms of human religion.)

The Galatians passage does not name the Sabbath but refers to "days," not a specific weekly "day." Furthermore, the Galatians are described as turning "again" to these. These people were originally pagan rather than Jewish, and while their dereliction could include an embracing of Jewish solemnities, the context nowhere makes that obvious. Even if, as many commentators believe, Jewish days are meant, the fact remains that the Sabbath is not named. In sixty other places in the N.T., we do have the word for Sabbath. Why is it not here, if intended? The generic days rather than a specific term is a vague designation, if the most well-known sacred time of the calendar was in view.

In Romans, the observance of days is linked to abstinence from flesh foods. Nowhere in the mosaic system is the eating of clean meats forbidden, and the use of vegetables instead ordained. What the N.T. passage seems to be countering is a heretic, ascetic system, which was purely vegetarian and very likely included special fast days, as well as abstinence from wine. See v. 21. This was not Jewish. To assume that the seventh-day Sabbath is here meant, though not named, is a hazardous exegetical procedure.

This leaves us with but one text, and before we examine it, let us remember the threefold admonition of Scripture that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." A single negative reference to the term Sabbath" is hardly sufficient to smother the command from Sinai and nullify the sanctification and blessing of Eden. Furthermore, this passage speaks of "a" sabbath, rather than "the" Sabbath. The term was in common use for other rest days and although the order here seems to follow the yearly, monthly, weekly order of several O.T. texts, we cannot be certain that such is intended. Nevertheless, we personally believe that the seventh-day Sabbath is present at least by way of inclusion, if not solely and specifically. But it is the Sabbath as a Jewish ordinance, and particularly as being invoked in this Colossian setting as a phase of "will worship," according to "human precepts and doctrines" associated with "the worshipping of angels." See vv. 18, 22, 23. Paul is forbidding any sabbatical laws humanly enacted in support of false worship though they might claim support from the mosaic system of ritual worship. He reminds us that the Sabbath as a shadow is over. All its ritual aspects have been fulfilled in the one great sacrifice and its Jewish form with multitudinous restrictions is now obsolete. Those who wish to legislate now in detail regarding Sabbath observance (especially as part of the adoration of angels and subduing of the flesh) have no right so to do.

We admit that this is the strongest text in all of Scripture to support anti-Sabbatarians and thus in this book we devote a whole chapter to it. But Col. 2:16 does not bear all the weight placed upon it. To make a dubious passage about Jewish typical institutions and about human traditions and false modes of worship obliterate the clear light of Gen. 2:1-3, Ex. 20:8-11, Mk. 2:27, 28 and the other more than fifty references to the Sabbath in the N.T., makes a risky business for the conscience. Do the proponents really believe that an institution founded in Eden, perpetuated through all the ages to the Cross at least, observed by patriarchs, prophets, kings, apostles, and Christ Himself in life and death, becomes void because of a vague reference in those writings notoriously hard to be understood? We submit that Col. 2:16 no more forbids all Sabbath-keeping than it does all eating and drinking (also mentioned in the same text--see R.S.V.). The verse does not parallel Ezec. 45:17, as the Greek words translated "eating and drinking" cannot possibly refer to meat and drink offerings. See all modern translations.

Other questions in connection with the conclusions drawn from the Pauline passages automatically arise. Did the Cross cancel the need for a memorial of creation? After all, when would such a memorial be most necessary, near to the event commemorated, or after distant centuries had been reached? Did the Cross cancel out man's need for refreshment of body and soul? Has man's nature so been changed by the Cross that a special time for reflection, worship, and rest are no longer required? Is the New Testament man that different from his predecessors? Are we now so spiritual that outward signs are no longer needed? And if so, why do we practise baptism and the Lord's Supper? Does the substance and reality automatically render the form unnecessary? When eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Christ by trusting in His merits, does observance of the commemoration supper become irrelevant? When crucified with Christ by faith, should a new believer affirm that the ordinance of baptism is not requisite in his case because he has the reality? Do we give up kneeling for prayer because it is our habit to bend our wills in submission? Should we refuse to lift up holy hands in petition because our hearts are elevated?

Let none try to draw all truth from Paul. He never sets about reenacting a new law or religion. The atonement and the resurrection are his themes--not the life and teachings of Christ (concerning which he says almost nothing), nor devotional duties such as daily feeding on the Word, attending church, or keeping the Sabbath. He particularly tells us he was not called to emphasize such matters as baptism (1 Cor. 1:17), and the only reason one of his church epistles refers to the Lord's Supper is because of congregational misbehavior at that ordinance.

## VII

The misuse of Paul to which we have referred always assumes that the seventh-day Sabbath is against man. Acts 15 is invoked to prove that circumcision was a symbol of all those heavy yokes resting upon Jewish believers, and from which Gentiles were to be free. But according to Scripture, God has graciously "given" us His own Sabbath as something honorable, a delight, calculated to refresh us as He claims it did Him. See Ex. 31:17; Eze. 20:12; Isa. 58:13. Note how God in Ezekiel ten times calls the Sabbath "my" Sabbath. It is true that many have made of the Sabbath a burden, but such a situation is a perversion, and never the divine intention. Furthermore, it is clear that Jesus in Mk. 2:28 is claiming his right to ameliorate (but not abolish) and interpret Sabbath-keeping so that men of all races might observe it with profit and joy. Our Lord gave no rules for Sabbath-keeping, but laid down the principle that works of piety, necessity, and mercy were legitimate and indeed in harmony with the Sabbath law. See Mt. 12:12.

At this point, it is natural to ask--of whom would you like to enquire regarding your duty as to the Sabbath if given the privilege of choosing? Christ, of course, is the answer. To our joy, there is no dearth of material to find out His mind on this subject. Approximately one chapter in every eight of the Gospel record speaks of Christ's attitude to the Sabbath.<sup>11</sup>

Our Lord performed many miracles on the holy day and of these, seven are recorded--seven which are amazing in their scope. These miracles include blessings brought to those of varying age and sex and condition, and from each dominant sector of human life--the sacred (in church), the domestic (at home), and in public (along the way). Note the following:

Healing of the demoniac (man) in the synagogue/ Mk. 1:21-28

Healing of Simon's mother-in-law at home. Mk. 1:29-31

Healing of man with withered hand in the synagogue. Mk.3:1-6

Healing of bent-over woman in the synagogue. Lk.13:10-17

Healing of man with dropsy at home. Lk. 14:1-6

Healing of impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. Jn. 5:1-20

Healing of blind man on the road. Jn. 9: 1-41

The range in people, places, and needs is impressive. A young man (the beggar of Jn. 9 declared to be "of age" by his parents), an old man who has been almost forty years paralyzed, an old woman (probably Peter's mother-in-law, advanced in years, and perhaps the woman eighteen years "bent"), others who were probably in middle life--all find blessing beyond compare on the holy day. This blessing is not only bestowed in the holy place of church but in the domestic center of family life, as well as on the busy highway of social and business intercourse.

The arguments invoked by Christ as He defends His reform of the Sabbath institution are similarly wide-ranging. He argues as follows:

From the Edenic account recorded in the Torah. Mk. 2:27, 28

From the Israelite Sabbath laws. Mt. 12:5

From the story of David recorded in the early prophets. Mt. 12:3-4

From the words of the later prophets. Mt. 12:7-8

From God's continuous providential work in nature Jn. 5:17

From man's everyday experience. Lu. 13: 15; Mt. 12:11

From human reason. Mk. 3:4; Mt. 12:12; Lu. 13:15, 16

The Messiah's Lordship. Mt. 12: 6, 8

The appeal to conscience. Lu. 14: 3; Jn. 9:13-16; 37-41

Thus Christ uses sacred history, sacred law, sacred prophecy, divine example, human custom, reason and conscience. We challenge all to find any other institution that Christ labored so hard to defend and to perpetuate. He is as one chiselling away at an inscription long partly-covered, in order that the writing might stand out clearly. Who cleanses laboriously, and with risk, an old shaky shed, and having cleansed it, burns it down?

Furthermore, Christ's Sabbath reforms were engaged in at the risk of His mission and life. Again and again, we read, "then they took counsel together to destroy Him." Did Christ ever do this for any temporary, merely Jewish ritual form? Note also that none of the infirmities cured were so urgent as to demand immediate attention rather than wait for another day.

Christ is emphatic that "the Sabbath was made for man," not "for a few men for a little time," but for all men in all time. He rejected only Pharisaic Sabbath-keeping, insisting that His enemies had condemned the "guiltless" and that He had done only what was "lawful"--i.e. in harmony with the original Sabbath law. See Mk. 2:27; Mt. 12:7, 12.

Foretelling the downfall of Jerusalem, Christ urged upon His followers the necessity of praying for forty years that their flight might not need to be in times that would bring pain to body or soul in the winter or on the Sabbath day. This was not because the gates of Jerusalem would be shut, because history records that the Jews of the first century, when threatened by the invading armies, relaxed Sabbath regulations that they might be unhampered in defending themselves in whatever way necessary. Furthermore, the admonition was for all "in Judea" and there were no walls around Judea.

Let it be carefully noted that while Christ sanctioned Jewish laws apart from the Decalogue, at no time did He expatiate upon them. His teaching as the Saviour of the world was reserved for the matters of enduring importance throughout the Christian age. See, for example, Mt. 23:23, 24:

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices--mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law--justice, mercy and faithfulness. You ought to have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel. N.I.V.

Observe that it is "the more important matters of the law" with which Christ was concerned--those moral elements which compared to the rest were as a camel in contrast to a gnat. None of the discourses of Christ recorded in the New Testament apply only to the Jewish age. Not once did He do honor to any ceremonial or judicial enactment by redeeming it from the glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees. Christ

remains for all enquirers "the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6). Every question, including the Sabbath question, may be settled by recourse to His teachings. Jn. 18:37-38.

Is it by sheer coincidence that our Lord completed His work of recreation on the sixth day by the eve of the Sabbath, once more proclaiming "it is finished" and entering into rest? The only complete day He spent in the tomb was the Sabbath day. Is it sheer coincidence that the second Adam again on the sixth day has His side opened, and falls into a deep sleep that He might procure unto Himself a bride? Does not all this signify that the new era has dawned with the Cross and that it provides the substance pointed to by the old era--yet not by reducing the Sabbath privilege one whit--for the crucified Christ rests through all the hours of that holy day and thus sanctifies it by His rest, as surely as He did at creation. Henceforth, the Sabbath rest taught that because of Christ's finished work, all who believe enter into continual rest of spirit, despite their infirmities. Hb. 4:3. Redemption adds to the Sabbath, but does not subtract. This is clearly taught in Deut. 5:15.

Concerning those who had been His intimates, who had heard His teaching by day and by night, in the Mount of Olives, on journeys, and within the shadow of the temple--of these informed ones we read "and they [after the Cross], rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." Let us remember, it is Paul's friend Luke writing, and probably writing after the death of the apostle to the Gentiles. He still thinks of the Sabbath law as "the commandment" to Christ's closest friends. Is there any N.T. record of Christ's followers following secular employment on this holy day? Is there any clear word informing us that the word of God from Sinai is now no longer significant for believers? Are we ever told that the blessing of Eden has been removed from each seventh-day and that its sanctification no longer applies? A law must be revoked with as much solemnity as marked its initial proclamation, but there is none such as regards the Sabbath. Had the apostles declared Sabbath-keeping unnecessary, the Epistles would be filled with reverberating echoes, as is the case with circumcision.

The very frequency with which Jesus sought to explain the true nature of the institution, and to present it before men in its primeval beauty, places it beyond all reasonable doubt that it did not belong to the things which were to be shaken or removed. We may be sure that He would not have taken so much pains with the explanation of an ordinance which was on the point of being cast aside, as belonging to the beggarly elements of the system that had outlived its day.... He removed the glosses and perversions with which the Pharisees had turned it into the opposite of itself, and beneath the word "creation" which His hand had engraved on it at the beginning of time carved out the words "resurrection and redemption" not abrogating its earlier memorial use, but adding to it a second and greater.<sup>12</sup>

If God proposed to test man, how should He do it? By making a test of some law that all men could think out for themselves and which mere human reason affirmed as expedient? By choosing something that even unbelieving governments could affirm and demand? By selecting something so obvious as to leave men entirely without excuse? Or would He rather be likely to do as He did in the beginning--make an issue of something where only His word made the difference, and where there would be left scope for argument by the dishonest? Has God ever overwhelmed man by irrefutable argument of his own existence, the truth of Scripture, the Christian way? Or are these decided on a weight of evidence only, and by those honest enough to wish to know the truth?

If, in the last days, God plans to test man as Rev. 13 declares, will not the test be similar to the first test in Eden? Protology and eschatology go together, and the latter always in certain vital respects replays the former.

In Eden, nothing was said of faith and love. Respect for the Word of God was to be the token of these, shown by the sanctifying of a tree that looked no different to all other trees. The foundational fact of the divine creatorship was to be acknowledged by the practised awareness that creatures had no right to help themselves to what they had not themselves brought into being. The issue was worship of the Creator versus worship of Satan the creature. The sin of idolatry--false worship--would unlock the Pandora's box on unhappy rebellious man, or the loyalty of obedience to the Creator would guarantee eternal joy for the race.

So it is to be again. Once more the serpent appears (see Rev. 12 and 13). Once more the issue is whether the Creator or the creature is to be obeyed, again only the Word of God makes the difference between the permitted and the forbidden, again only those with faith in their Maker can resist solicitation to the idolatry of human values.

Notice how perceptive C. S. Lewis is in his parabolic story of Ransom's Voyage to Venus (earlier called Perelandra). He is describing the temptation of a new Eve (the "lady" of the account, while Ransom is a faint figure of Christ).

[Woman]: "I am wondering," said the woman's voice, whether all the people of your world have the habit of talking about the same thing more than once. I have said already that we are forbidden to dwell on the Fixed Land. Why do you not either talk of something else or stop talking?"

[Tempter]: "Because this forbidding is such a strange one," said the Man's voice. "And so unlike the ways of Maleldil in my world. And he has not forbidden you to think about dwelling on the Fixed Land."<sup>13</sup>

\* \* \* \*

[Woman]: "It is not from the making of the story that I shrink back, O Stranger," she answered, "but from this one story that you have put into my head. I can make myself stories about my children or the King. I can make it that the fish fly and the land beasts swim. But if I try to make the story about living on the Fixed Island I do not know how to make it about Maleldil. For if I make it that He has changed His command, that will not go. And if I make it that we are living there against His command, that is like making the sky all black and the water so that we cannot drink it and the air so that we cannot breathe it. But also, I do not see what is the pleasure of trying to make these things."<sup>14</sup>

[Woman]: "Maleldil has never said to us that any word or work of His was a jest. How could our Beloved need to jest or frolic as we do?..."

[Tempter]: "But could the taking away of your hand from His--the full growing up--the walking in your own way--could that ever be perfect unless you had, if only once, seemed to disobey Him?"

[Woman]: "How could one seem to disobey?"

[Tempter]: "By doing what He only seemed to forbid. There might be a commanding which He wished you to break."

[Woman]: "But if He told us we were to break it, then it would be no command. And if He did not, how should we know?..."

[Woman]: "How can I step out of His will save into something that cannot be wished? Shall I start trying not to love Him--or the King--or the beasts? It would be like trying to walk on water or swim through islands. Shall I try not to sleep or to drink or to laugh? I thought your words had a meaning. But now it seems they have none. To walk out of His will is to walk into nowhere."

[Tempter]: "That is true of all His commands except one."

[Woman]: "But can that one be different?"

[Tempter]: "Nay, you see of yourself that it is different. These other commands of His--to love, to sleep, to fill this world with your children--you see for yourself that they are good. And they are the same in all worlds. But the command against living on the Fixed Island is not so. You have already learned that He gave no such command to my world. And you cannot see where the goodness of it is. No wonder. If it were really good, must He not have commanded it to all worlds alike? For how could Maleldil not command what was good? There is no good in it. Maleldil Himself is showing you that, this moment, through your own reasons. It is mere command. It is forbidding for the mere sake of forbidding."

[Woman]: "But why...?"

[Tempter]: "In order that you may break it. What other reason can there be? It is not good. It is not the same for other worlds. It stands between you and all settled life, all command of your own days. Is not Maleldil showing you as plainly as He can that it was set up as a test--as a great wave you have to go over, that you may become really old, really separate from Him."

[Woman]: "But if this concerns me so deeply, why does He put none of this into my mind? It is coming from you, Stranger. There is no whisper, even, of the Voice saying Yes to your words."

[Ransom]: "Lady," said Ransom, "if I speak, will you hear me?"

[Woman]: "Gladly, Piebald."

[Ransom]: "This man has said that the law against living on the Fixed Island is different than the other Laws, because it is not the same for all worlds and because we cannot see the goodness in it. And so far he says well. But then he says that it is thus different in order that you may disobey it. But there might be another reason."

[Woman]: "Say it, Piebald."

[Ransom]: "I think He made one law of that kind in order that there might be obedience. In all these other matters what you call obeying Him is but doing what seems good in your own eyes also. Is love content with that? You do them, indeed, because they are His will, but not only because they are His will. Where can you taste the joy of obeying unless He bids you do something for which His bidding is the only reason?"

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The idea that He might not really wish to be obeyed to the letter was the sluice through which the whole flood of suggestion had been admitted to her mind.<sup>15</sup>

All in all, God seems to have done the same regarding the issue of the Sabbath as He has with reference to His own existence and the truthfulness of His word. The evidence is sufficient for the seeker, but does not overwhelm the rest. This makes the fourth commandment an ideal test for all ages. Who loves God enough to ever give Him the benefit of the doubt, to decide from a weight of evidence? Notice the words of one great Christian in connection with his decision on a similarly debatable issue:

Even if there were only the faintest possibility of believer's baptism being the Master's will, I would be baptized, in order to be on the safe side. He will never find fault with those who did all they thought to be His will, even though they had slighter grounds for thinking so than we have for believer's baptism. He may find serious fault with those who did not investigate His commandments for themselves, or postponed obedience because the matter was non-essential. True love knows no difference between the essential and the non-essential.<sup>16</sup>

Remember that the approaching end of the world is not the first end of an age. Two thousand years ago there was another. The Head of the Church lurched towards Calvary as soon as He opposed human traditions regarding the Sabbath. It was on this issue that He antagonized His religious opponents and precipitated His own death. So it will be with the Church which is His body. It will repeat His appeal against human traditions replacing divine institutions, and a worldwide Calvary will threaten to envelop this body of Christ. But they will "rest from their labors," while all others will "find no rest day nor night" because they have worshipped the beast (the creature) and received his mark (his institution). Only those who have entered by faith into spiritual rest through the gospel of Christ will be ready for the last conflict. For them, the everlasting sabbatismos is assured. Hb. 4:3, 9. The Sabbath is indeed God's rest day, His blessed day, therefore the best day--but from age to age, the test day. See p. 144.

Others besides members of those denominations distinguished by their Sabbath-observance have glimpsed the unique "test" nature of the fourth commandment. The following are but examples from a list that could include Karl Barth, Haldane, and many others. (Particularly see pp. 5, 83, 120ff., 143, 275)

We now come to the Fourth Commandment, with which we are specially concerned. Note that we only reach it now. As if the great Legislator had foreseen the attempts which would be made to get rid of it, it is entrenched in the very heart of the Decalogue, so that one must get rid of Monotheism, must deny the permanence of the prohibition of image-worship, must admit that the law against the profanation of the Creator's name is abrogated, before he can plead for the repeal of the Sabbath law. Or, if he approach it from behind, he must get rid of the Divine prohibitions of injuries to man's person, property, and character, and must weaken the defences of all virtue, before he can lay a finger on the law of the Day of Rest. Is this remarkable position an accident? Has this law been put in its place at random? And has God inserted a temporary law along with a body of others which are admitted to be permanent? Is the fourth an exception to all the rest of the commandments? How does it come that it is in a code, every other provision of which is admitted to be obligatory, if it alone has lost its force and its authority? There is here a crux which it will be difficult indeed for any sophistry to get over.

Looking more closely at the commandment, who shall say that in its main features and in the duties which it inculcates, the fourth is not as plainly a permanent ordinance as any of the other nine? If God alone is to be worshipped--if that worship is not to be ordered after man's own devices but according to His will--if it is to be a reverent and holy worship, must there not be a time set apart for it? Does not the law written on our hearts tell us that a portion of our time ought to be set apart for God's worship? More than that, does not the same law tell us that God has the right, if He so pleases, to fix the amount of that portion, and that, where he fixes it, it is our duty to obey His command? What is there in all this of a merely Jewish character?<sup>17</sup>

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Some have thoughtlessly drawn an argument against the present binding nature of the Decalogue from the words of the Preface: "I am the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." They say, "We were never in either the land of Egypt or the house of bondage--what therefore can we have to do with a law which begins thus?" Now this argument either proves too much or too little. If the Commandments bind none but those literally brought up out of Egypt, then they did not bind even all the Jews, but only the generation of the Exodus. But if they bind all Israel, then St. Paul proves that Christians are of the true Israel. "We are the circumcision," he says. Let anyone read his argument on this subject in the Epistle to the Romans and he must see that we in this economy are identified with the Jews in a very real manner--that we are now before God the true Israel, and any argument therefore which is brought against the Commandments, on the ground of the Jewish cast of the Preface, recoils on those who use it.

To only one other argument on this part of the subject do we deem it necessary to allude. It is said that Christ, having by his atoning work satisfied the law of God--that law is gone, for us, forever. The text is quoted--"Having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us." Now this argument is simply based on a confusion of thought. Suffering the penalty of a law does not abolish that law. Nor does perfect obedience to a law abrogate it. But these two things constitute what Christ did. He rendered a perfect obedience to the law and he bore for His people its utmost penalty. Neither of these two works of His, nor both of them together, amount to anything like the abolition of the law. When a criminal suffers on the scaffold, that means something very different from the abolition of the law against which he has offended. It means the exact contrary. It manifests the strength of the law. His death magnifies the law.<sup>18</sup>

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No doubt we read the Ten Commandments now in the New Testament light and read into them a New Testament spirit. We do not stand trembling before "the mount that might be touched and that burned with fire." Calvary, rising over against Sinai, has transfigured it. We look upon God's laws not as our foes but as our friends, and upon Himself, not as a hard taskmaster, but as a loving Father. But, nevertheless, we do not alter one of those laws. We dare not. Rome usurping the prerogative of Deity, omits and changes to suit her purposes. We shudder at her audacity. Yet which is worse--the highhanded daring which lifts one of those Divine precepts out of the place which God has assigned to it, or the casuistry which at one fell swoop blots them all out of the Christian statute-book altogether?

Turning now again specially to that Fourth Commandment with which we are here specially concerned we admit at once that, like all the other nine, it is cast in a Judaic mould. The Commandments at Sinai were promulgated primarily to Jews, through a Jewish mediator, and just as a river is tinged by the soil through which it flows, so with the Decalogue. But in saying this we only say what is true of the whole Christian religion. It had a Jewish origin. It arose in Palestine. The New Testament is the development of the Old Testament, as the Old Testament is the root of the New. Christ was a Jew according to the flesh, and by Jews the holy oracles were written. Jerusalem is "the mother of us all," and has left its mark upon the whole Christian Church. If we are therefore to discard the Fourth Commandment, or any other commandment, because it wears a certain Judaic aspect, we must discard more than the Decalogue. We will not have much of the Bible, nor much of Christianity left.<sup>19</sup>

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The Decalogue is a unity. To eliminate one law from it is to lose all. To admit one is to admit all. Change the case. Let it be a question not of divine, but of human, legislation. What then? Are you at liberty to say, "I will submit to some of the laws of this empire, but others I will have nothing to do with?" You know you cannot. Being a subject of the Queen, you are bound by all the laws which, in conjunction with the other estates of the realm, she imposes. Can we treat the Supreme Government of all otherwise? The Sabbath law is one of a string of ten precious pearls, threaded together by a Divine hand--"patent pearls," but not "at random strung." Before you detach one of them from the rest you must cut the string and endanger all. God has joined these

then together. What man shall dare to put them asunder?

(2) The position of the Fourth Commandment in the Decalogue is worthy of notice. This position is not a matter of chance. There can be no chance about any arrangement which God makes. He does nothing at random, we may be sure. He is the Author of the order in which He places events, or prophecies, or commands, just as much as He is the author of the events, prophecies, or commands themselves. That order, we may be certain, is an intended order, and must be a significant order and the best order that is possible. Now, the order in which the law of the Sabbath comes in among the rest is remarkable. It does not stand at the end of the Decalogue, else the suggestion might possibly occur to a suspicious mind, that did not desire to be under its yoke, that it had got added on by mistake, that it was a mere Jewish law, which, somehow or other, in the lapse of time, had crept into the position of a universal statute. It does not stand at the beginning of the Decalogue. If it did, the same suspicion might have arisen regarding its origin. Nor yet do we find it precisely occupying the central position in the code, else restless minds, once they had begun to doubt its validity and to desire to get rid of its authority, might have suggested the theory that a Jewish legislator had, with most exact calculation, estimated what was the safest place in which to deposit it, and put it there. It stands in none of all these positions, but in one really stronger than any of them. You must pass over and get rid of three most solemn and holy laws before you can reach it from the beginning of the Decalogue. You must get rid of six most salutary and necessary laws before you can reach it from the end. In front of it, like three strong and stalwart sentries, stand the First, and the Second, and the Third Commandments. You must deal with them before you can touch it. At its back stands a rearguard of six other laws before you can touch it. If you wish to attack it from behind you must first deal with them. There it lies entrenched in the heart of those ten laws, as in a camp, with nine stout and watchful sentinels keeping every point of attack. Like the donjon-keep in the Norman fortress, it holds the key of the position. Like the keystone of an arch, it is buttressed up on either side by well-chosen and well-fitted stones, and itself, while supported by them, gives them in return their strength. Is there no teaching in all this? Was it all undesigned? Has it all come by chance? If we were dealing with a work of man we might say so. But this is a work of God, who knows the end from the beginning, and disposes, with the utmost exactness, of the lot which men cast at random into the lap. Who shall say either that He did this by chance or that it has no meaning and no purpose?

(3). Notice again the relations of this Commandment to the others. It might have happened that the Ten Laws should have had no mutual connection or relation that we could see. They might have been ten separate and distinct decrees, with no further affinity to each other than that all were in the one code. Is it so? By no means. When we come to look at them, we find that they grow out of and fit into each other in the most beautiful manner. They are ten fruitful branches, springing from one trunk with one common root. They are ten polished stones, compactly built together, each fitting into and joined on to its, neighbours, and the whole forming one strong tower of defence. Or, like the ten fingers of the human hands, they are formed of the same substance, animated by the same vitality, and feel the beatings of the one great Heart.

Let us see how this is. Looking at the Decalogue as a whole, we find that it has two aspects--a Godward and a manward. These two aspects correspond with its two tables. A complete law for man evidently must possess this two-fold character. No man can be right who is not right in both ways, who does not maintain a conscience void of offense both toward God on the one hand, and toward man, on the other. Take the First Table, which teaches our duty to God. It has in it four laws. The first tells us whom we are to worship, the second and third how we are to worship, the fourth when. The first warns us against the sin of polytheism, the second against the sin of idolatry, the third against the sin of profanity, the fourth against the sin of relegating to any time (which might prove to be no time) the duty of adoring the Creator. In the first, God points the worshipper to himself and demands his homage, in opposition to the gods many and lords many of heathenism--in the second He warns him against the sinful practices of those who will only worship when they have a visible representation of their deity--in the third He bids him guard against the corruptions into which all mere human worship has a tendency to degenerate, the corruption of mere vain repetition--in the fourth He bids him, lest all his worship should sink into a mere vapid, and general, and indefinite thing, to set apart for it a time. There is thus a great unity in this table. You cannot displace one of its laws without marring the completeness of the whole table. By so much as you interfere with one of them, you spoil the beauty of a piece of legislation, the equal of which the world has never seen, which left God's hand, like all his works, "perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Just in the same way, we might show how the six several laws of the Second Table are in like manner mutually related and stand or fall together. It would be equally easy to illustrate how this Second Table is related to the first, duty to God involving and implying the performance of duty to man, and *vice versa*, so that the two tables revolve round and support each other like binary stars. In addition, it would be specially suitable here to show how the Fourth Commandment, in particular, has a marvellous connection with the requirements of the Second Table, there being hardly a sin prohibited there which has not been proved by actual experience to be associated with Sabbath-breaking.

There are people who would stand aghast at the very idea of violating any other of the Commandments who look very lightly on a breach of the Fourth. Hint to them the possibility of their stealing--or lying--or breaking the Seventh Commandment--and they feel insulted at the bare suspicion of such a possibility. But the Fourth has no such sanctity in their eyes. Why is this? Who made it to differ from God's other laws? By whose authority do we place it in a lower position than the rest? Certainly not by God's. There is no hint, either in itself, or anywhere else, to show that He pays less respect to it than to the other nine, or lays less stress upon it. On the contrary, it might be argued that He has a special and particular regard for it. His dealings with Israel showed He was very jealous of any breach of it. It is worth remembering that the whole of Palestine today stands out before the world as a monument of the consequences of the breach of the law of the Sabbath. See Lev. 26.

The very fact that the fourth commandment seems to the uninstructed mind of less moment than some other precepts of the Decalogue, and the breach of it a less heinous sin than the breach of others, makes it in some sort a superior test of the spirit of obedience. Is not a command whose supreme importance and necessity we cannot see as plainly as we do those of others a better test of our full-hearted allegiance to God than others whose necessity and importance is written on their faces? To our first parents the eating or not eating of the forbidden fruit appeared a light matter, the reason for the prohibition was not plain to them. No reason was given by God, they were to obey Him simply because He bade them. On that very account the command was a better test of their character and obedience than one whose intrinsic goodness and the evil consequences of disobeying would have been more apparent. So was this fourth commandment. It may seem to us a matter of small moment whether we keep or break it, than whether we keep or break some of the others, whether we do or do not steal, or lie, or worship idols. But the very fact that it's

importance and advantages may not be so immediately and conspicuously clear to us, in reality renders it a more solemn and searching test of our loyalty to our great King. There is a special warning in Scripture against him who shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, which ought to be well pondered by all, who weighing all the ten words in their imperfect balances, come to the conclusion that if they keep the other nine, they may safely disregard the fourth.<sup>20</sup>

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There is this connection, again, between the Fourth and the other Commandments--that it provides the opportunity and the time for learning the duties prescribed in the other nine. If the Commandments were recorded for us in no published book, and if there were no formally set apart and generally recognised time for their exposition, it is evident that the likelihood of their general observance would be greatly diminished. But just here comes in one evidence of the perfection of the code, that it provides within itself the means of its own enforcement and perpetuation. One of its ten precepts provides for the setting apart of a weekly day for the exposition of that revealed will of God of which it is so essential a part, for our being reminded of our duty to that God, and for our renewing of the vows of our allegiance to Him. It is not too much to say, therefore, that the observance of the Fourth Commandment is connected in the closest manner with the observance of the other nine, and that every attempt to weaken its force, or undermine its foundations, militates not only against it but against the entire code of which it is an integral part.<sup>21</sup>

It has been beautifully said that the Sabbath is a ring which marries Creation to its Creator. Let that marriage ring be dishonoured, or broken, or thrown away, and who can wonder if the laws and the love of God are also forgotten or cast off? Let it be cherished and gloried in, as the link that unites us to our Maker, and it is but natural to expect that we shall better remember our duty, and live more constantly and truly in the service of Him who has given us the Holy Day at once for our own advantage and His glory.<sup>22</sup>

It is objected that God made the Sabbath "a sign" between him and the Hebrews (Ex. 31:13, 17; Ezek. 20:12, 20). The attempt is made to infer hence that the Sabbath was a mere type to the Hebrews, and thus has passed away along with all the other types, since the antitype, Christ, came. Again I reply: If its being "a sign" between God and Israel proves it a type, then the same argument proves that the great first law of love itself was a type, and has been abrogated; for in Deut. 6:8, Israel is commanded to make this "a sign." Such is the absurdity of this argument. Moreover: the Decalogue itself is called again and again "the testimony," and the very chest in which the two tablets of stone, written with the commandments, were kept, is called the "ark of the testimony" (Ex. 25:16, 21; 31:18; 32:15; 31:29; Ps. 78:5). If the reader would see how near this word "testimony" is to the other word "sign," let him read Josh. 22:26-34. (The word is the same in the main.--Ed.) Let him compare also Ruth 4:7, where the shoe "was a testimony in Israel." The idea of the "sign" between God and Israel, and of the witness between them, is there nearly the same. Hence I argue again: If the Sabbath being "a sign" proves it a mere type, the Ten Commandments being a "testimony" or "witness" proves themselves a mere type.

To understand this "sign" we must remember that all the world except the Hebrews had gone off into idolatry, neglecting all God's laws and also the proper observance of his Sabbath. The covenant which Israel made with him was, to be separate from all the pagans and to obey his law, so neglected by them. Now, the public observance of the Sabbath gave the most obvious, general, visible sign to the world and the Church of this covenant, and of the difference between God's people and pagans. Hence it was eminently suitable as a sign of that covenant. The human race is still divided between the world and the Church; and holy Sabbath observance ought to be precisely such a "sign" of the Church's relation to her God now. This simple view relieves the whole question. The general apostasy of the nation's made this duty of visible Sabbath-keeping, which God enjoins on all men of all ages, a badge and mark of those who still fear him.<sup>23</sup> (emphasis ours.)

(1) The Sabbath is the only institution of the cultus of Israel enjoined in the decalogue of Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.<sup>a</sup>  
[Footnotes put in with small letters, rather than numbers to avoid confusion with rest of chapter's footnotes. These footnotes are at the end of this section of quotes from Hansen.]

(2) The Sabbath commandment is one, and it is the first, of the only two commandments in this decalogue which are expressed positively instead of negatively. It is also "the longest and most elaborate" commandment in this decalogue, taking "nearly a third of its space."

(3) The Sabbath is given emphasis by being cited first in the list of sacred seasons... commanded to be observed in Leviticus 23.

(4) In the Pentateuch, the Sabbath is commanded to be observed in each of the constituent sources recognized by modern critical scholars.

(5) Especially during the period of the exile and restoration, men who assumed major responsibility for the spiritual leadership of Israel--Jeremiah, Ezekiel, "III Isaiah,"<sup>b</sup> and Nehemiah--placed a strong emphasis upon Sabbath observance,<sup>c</sup> an emphasis that clearly distinguished such observance from other cultic practices.<sup>d</sup>

(6) No other institution of biblical Israel served as a focus for, and inspired, so many significations as did the Sabbath.

(7) So profound was the identification of Israel's spiritual life with the observance of the Sabbath--at least on the part of certain religious leaders--that when the Old Testament canon was fixed a narrative having as a primary emphasis the association of the Sabbath with the original creative activity of God was placed at its beginning. The entire saga of Israel was developed out of this narrative; this narrative was evidently designed to give expression to fundamental aspects of Israel faith; the Sabbath was the only religious institution of Israel honored by inclusion therein.

(8) The Sabbath is the only institution in biblical Israel which is specifically said to be "blessed" by God. Aside from God's blessing the work, fields, food, etc., of persons whom He favors, the Sabbath is the only inanimate thing said to be so blessed.

(9) Sabbath observance is especially enjoined upon Gentiles in III Isaiah's vision of a universal acceptance of Israel's God.<sup>e</sup>

These emphases indicate that prior to the close of the Old Testament canon the Sabbath was a subject of considerable reflection in Israel. The subsequent success of the Sabbath as a religious institution--both in the history of the Jewish people and in the world-wide scope of the history of mankind--demonstrates the singular appropriateness of the associations with the Sabbath which this

reflection produced.<sup>24</sup>

In view of the importance attached to this concept of "test", it can scarcely be without significance that this theme, too, is associated with the Sabbath. Actually, the Sabbath as "test" is a major theme of the legend with which the Sabbath is first introduced into the historical experience of Israel.<sup>25</sup> (emphasis ours.)

Clearly the intent of the narrative [of Ex. 16] is to give expression to Israel's experience of the Sabbath as a "test" of confidence in and loyalty to her God.

This aspect of Sabbath observance seems also to be definitely implied in Ex. 31:13 ff., where the mutual reciprocity of the covenant obligation is indicated.<sup>26</sup>

In Genesis I, it was associated with the primacy of time over space, as a manifestation of Yahweh's holiness and power, with a notion of time as a continuous succession of different but unrepeatable and significant events, with the activity of God as movement towards the certain fulfillment of his purposes, and, indirectly, with the concept of human dignity and freedom under God as an aspect of man's endowment in the creation. Genesis I also makes the week, consisting of six days of labor followed by a day of rest, a divine paradigm for human life which embraces all of man's time.<sup>27</sup>

Association of the Sabbath with the covenant makes the institution a perpetual symbol of Yahweh's pledge to Israel, and its observance by Israel an expression of her confidence in the fulfillment of Yahweh's purposes and promises; hence, also, an expression of confidence in her own ontological fulfillment. Sabbath observance by Israel also expressed her loyalty to the covenant and her perpetual commitment to its obligations.

As Israel's understanding both of Yahweh's holiness and his ultimate purpose for human life came to signify moral and ethical excellence, so also was Sabbath observance associated with the realization of this ideal as the goal both of history and of man's ontological quest.

Thus was the Sabbath, in the Old Testament, conceived as a major symbol of, and as a major vehicle for, the experience, expression, and preservation of biblical Israel's distinctive experience of time and holiness, under Yahweh....<sup>28</sup>

In Genesis I, there is no uncertainty; there are no obstacles to be overcome; there are no hindrances to the fulfillment of the divine purpose; there is no struggle with antagonistic forces; there is only a steady advance toward the fulfillment of divine purpose from the beginning to the end of the narrative. This view of God's creation is emphasized by a careful delineation of each single day's activity and fulfillment. Of this theme--purposed movement toward significant achievement in time--the Sabbath was made a perpetual symbol and vehicle in Israel.<sup>29</sup>

... it is not alone God's sabbath rest after creation which is made a paradigm for Israel's life; the entire week is part of the paradigm.<sup>f</sup> Hence, all time was by the Sabbath embraced.<sup>30</sup>

... the creation myth which Israel placed at the beginning of her Bible ends with the establishment of the major cultic medium through which the holy was conceived to be dispensed to Israel by her God. Though the Sabbath is nowhere specifically called an omphalos, the evidence is clear that, to the creators of the Old Testament, the Sabbath served Israel as an omphalos, relating her to Yahweh just as Israel constituted an omphalos between Yahweh and "the nations."

We can with complete justification parallel Wensinck's list of characteristics common to the spatial omphalos: (1) in being blessed and sanctified, the Sabbath was exalted above all the other days, and by its position in Genesis I and in the decalogue the Sabbath was given the place of highest honor among the religious institutions of Israel; (2) its origin was at the creation of the world; (3) in III Isaiah's vision of a world-wide submission to Israel's God, the central importance of the Sabbath is demonstrated by its being the only cultic requirement imposed upon alien converts to Yahweh; (4) the Sabbath was a major link between Yahweh and Israel, through which was communicated the all-important evidence of participation in the covenant and in the holiness of Yahweh consequent thereto; that it was a means of communicating the power of the divine to Israel is further attested by God's act blessing the day; it also served as the link between the time of creation and the time of human history; (5) it was actually considered a major medium through which even material benefits were distributed to Israel.

To be sure, this application of the omphalos principle to time was unique....<sup>31</sup>

Two features, however, distinguish the sacred time of the Sabbath from that of myth. Both of these features appear to express Israel's notion of Yahweh's transcendence over cosmological deities and a direct opposition to cosmological thought. In myth, the sacred time of the beginning of things derives its character from the fact that the great events of creation were wrought in that time. In Genesis I, though the Sabbath memorializes creation, it is precisely the time of God's creative acts which is not durative and is not made holy; and it is precisely time in which He did nothing that is made holy. Thus is emphasized the idea that the holiness of the Sabbath does not consist (as did the sacredness of holy days in cosmological thought) in any quality of the day itself, or in any merely coincidental (natural or mythical) associations with the day. The holiness of the Sabbath consists wholly in the quality of holiness arbitrarily put into the day by the Creator. This point is further emphasized in Israel's making the weeks to follow each other with absolute succession, in contrast to characteristic cosmological practice which geared holy days to the cyclic processes of nature. Thus the Sabbath reflects Israel's faith that whatever aspects of his being God manifests in nature, he is not consubstantial with nature, but transcends it.

For all his transcendence, Yahweh, nevertheless, is always near to his people. As developed in Israel, the Sabbath was an especially appropriate medium for expressing that faith. As enjoined in the commandments, the observance of the Sabbath embraced all the days of the week. Not merely on one day in seven did the Israelite Sabbath observer live in imitation of his deity, but on every day of every week.

The importance of the six days of labor as a part of the Sabbath commandment would seem to be a direct emphasis, whether made purposely or intuitively, upon the ideal of a constant, continued existence in the present under God.

Furthermore, the Sabbath comes to everyone, in every place--it cannot be escaped. In this way, too, did the sacred day mediate the near presence of the divine "otherness" in a way no sacred space could.<sup>32</sup>

It is now the purpose of Sabbath observance to translate passing existence under God "into terms of the durative," ....

On this basis, Jeremiah's insistence that whether Jerusalem should "remain forever" or revert to chaos depended upon whether Israel observed or desecrated the Sabbath becomes quite understandable. Sabbath observance--duplicating each week the divine action of creation, but cutting directly across the rhythms of nature to which cosmological societies were oriented--is considered essential for transmitting the durative power of creation into the historical order of the Hebrew commonwealth. Was the transmission of that power not a purpose of God's act in putting his "blessing" upon the day?....

Something of this idea seems also strongly implied in Exodus 31:12 ff.;

Surely my Sabbaths you shall keep for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations that ye may know that I, Yahweh, sanctify you.... Between me and the children of Israel it is a sign forever that in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth and on the seventh day abstained and was refreshed. [italics author's]

The ontological significance of the experience of Yahweh's holiness is here made plain in that this experience is assumed to be the ultimate objective of Israel's life. For Israel, this ontological fulfillment in her experience of the holy depends upon Yahweh: it is he, and he alone, who makes this experience possible. But in order to participate in Yahweh's holiness, Israel must duplicate in her ongoing life that divine pattern of six days of work followed by a day of rest which led, in creation, to the establishment of the omphalos of the holy. Only in this way can she know Yahweh's holiness.

In the Old Testament, the verb "to know"... commonly implies far more than mere intellectual awareness. It regularly signifies actual experience.<sup>33</sup>

Yahweh's making Israel holy, in Exodus 31, is best understood as constituting, for Israel, the experience of being made holy, throughout her generations. And here, the actualization (or, realization) of this experience is said to depend upon Israel's continued imitation of the pattern of action established by her deity in creating the world's order and the omphalos of the holy.<sup>34</sup>

It is of the essence of the prophetic word of the Old Testament that Yahweh's holiness cannot be experienced through any primary orientation to place. It is rather to be experienced through attunement with him in moral and ethical excellence sustained in time. III Isaiah not only stresses the point, but strongly associates it with the Sabbath:

... [Isa. 56:1 f.]

The message is addressed not only to Israel, but to aliens as well:

... [Isa. 56:1-8]

Then, to Israel, the following is addressed:

Is not this the fast I have chosen?  
To loose the bonds of wickedness,  
To undo the thongs of the yoke,  
To let the oppressed go free,  
And to break every yoke?<sup>35</sup>

All these things my hand has made,  
And so, all these things came to be, says Yahweh.  
But to this will I look:  
To the lowly and humble of spirit--  
The one who trembles at my word.

Then, in a final portrayal of a world in which this purpose has been realized, the central position of the Sabbath is once again affirmed:

For as the new heavens and the new earth  
Which I will make shall stand before my face, says Yahweh,  
So shall stand your seed and your name.  
And it shall be that from one new moon to another,  
And from one Sabbath to another,  
Shall all flesh come to worship before my face, says Yahweh.

Thus, as with history's beginning event, creation; and its central event, the deliverance and servanthship of Israel; is the final event, the universal sway of Yahweh's holiness--ethical and moral excellence--in the lives of men; joined, in Israel's ideology, to the Sabbath.<sup>36</sup>

#### Footnotes to this quote

a. Cf., on the point made, Martin Buber, Moses: The Revelation and the Covenant ("Harper Torchbooks: The Cloister Library"; New York and Evanston, 1958), p. 129: "Why is the prescription of circumcision not to be found? Why is Sabbath observance required, but not that of the New Moon festival? Why the Sabbath but not the Passover?"

b. Whether an individual or a "school" is immaterial to the point here made.

c. 46: 1 ff.; 13:15 ff. Jer. 17:19 ff.; Eze. 20:12 ff.; 22:8, 26; 44:24; 45:17; Isa. 56:2 ff.; 58:13 f.; 66:23; Neh. 9:14; 10:32 ff.; 13:15 ff.

d. Cf. John Bright, Jeremiah: Introduction, Translation, and Notes ("The Anchor Bible"; Garden City, 1965), p. 120: "This rather one-sided emphasis upon the Sabbath is strange coming from Jeremiah, who elsewhere so often and so sharply rebukes the notion that Yahweh's favor can be gained, and the nation's well-being secured, through diligent prosecution of the cult. It is, therefore, entirely likely that we have in this passage an instance of the further development--possibly the misunderstanding--of Jeremiah's thought in the circles of those who perpetuated his words. Nevertheless, contrary to the opinion of some, the passage is not, either in style or content, necessarily very late. Moreover (cf. Randolph), there is every likelihood that it does develop actual words of Jeremiah on the subject. Jeremiah must certainly have held the Sabbath in respect and, though the least legalistic of men, must have regarded the breaking of it as serious.... Sabbath was, after all, an integral part of the covenant law (the Decalogue!), over the breach of which Jeremiah repeatedly showed the profoundest concern (e.g., 7:8-10)."

Such scholarly embarrassment over the Sabbath emphasis found in what are considered the nobler portions of the Old Testament is not uncommon. Among other examples that could be cited is that of Charles Cutler Torrey, The Second Isaiah: a New Interpretation (New York, 1928). While attempting to prove the unity of Isaiah 34, 35, 40-66, Torrey insisted that the Sabbath passages of chapters 56 and 58 were interpolations, with the comment (p. 121): "Second Isaiah calls for repentance and faith, the supplementing editor thinks of the Gentiles only as proselytes to Judaism, and promises especial favor with God as the reward of a strict observance of the Jewish Sabbath."

It is not within the scope of this study to enter into questions of source criticism. It is believed that this study will suggest that whether or not such Sabbath passages are in fact from the hand of the original major author of the work in question, there was a purpose behind their inclusion in these texts, and that, from the point of view of the ideology being developed around the Sabbath, these passages are not so discordant as they have sometimes been judged to be.

e. Commenting on this passage, Isa. 56:6, Samuel M. Segal, The Sabbath Book (New York, 1942), pp. 176 f., says: "The Sabbath is the only Jewish institution which is applied as a test for proselytes in their conversion to Judaism."

f. Ex. 20:8-11; 31:17. Whether or not the Bible writers were aware of it, the implication seems to be that proper Sabbath observance requires significant achievement during the week, so that man may, on the Sabbath, celebrate his accomplishments as God did on the "first" Sabbath.

The fourth commandment is not as yet seen by us to rest on the same ground of morality as the other nine. But perhaps on this very account the fourth may be fitly said to be better adapted than any other of the Ten Commandments (of which we see the reason) to try our faith and obedience to God. We have good reason for obeying God in all that He commands. But in doing things of which we ourselves see the reason, we may be only obeying ourselves, and not be obeying God. Therefore Almighty God tests our faith by things of which we do not see the reason.<sup>37</sup>

For further discussion on the Sabbath as a test, see the author's commentary on the book of Revelation, entitled Crisis.

O day of rest and gladness,  
 O day of joy and light,  
 O balm of care and sadness,  
 Most beautiful, most bright;  
 On thee, the high and lowly,  
 Who bend before the throne,  
 Sing, Holy, Holy, Holy,  
 to the Eternal One.

Thou art a port protected  
 From storms that round us rise,  
 A garden intersected  
 With streams of Paradise;  
 Thou art a cooling fountain  
 In life's dry dreary sand;  
 From thee, like Pisgah's mountain,  
 We view our promised land.

A day of sweet reflection,  
 Thou art, a day of love;  
 A day to raise affection  
 From earth to things above.  
 New graces ever gaining  
 From this our day of rest,  
 We seek the rest remaining  
 In mansions of the blest.<sup>38</sup>

EPILOGUE

This is the place where it must be added that all who think they have advanced light need the continual reminder that "knowledge puffs up," but "love builds up." A humble trusting Sunday-keeper who has never been convicted of the need to observe the seventh-day is much more acceptable to God than his Sabbath-keeping brother, if the latter puts his trust in a form rather than in the Christ and His gospel to which that particular form points.

Furthermore, if some, after diligent, earnest study, yet remain unconvicted of the duty of keeping the seventh-day, it is not anybody's prerogative to pin upon such a person "the mark of the beast." The latter applies particularly to the eschatological crisis and will only appertain to those who have so submitted to the deceptions of evil that they cannot perceive the truth even when attended by pentecostal power. A person who does not now "see" the Sabbath is not to be labelled as consequently antinomian.

And yet another reminder. The ultimate mark of the beast (which will have its outward form in a non-scriptural human traditional form) is the character of Satan, whereas the ultimate seal of God sheltering the saints in the final judgment (while having an outward scriptural form) is the character of Christ which is formed to some degree in all who trust solely in Him merits. Rev. 14:1; 22:4; Ex. 34:5,6; Gen. 1:26; Zech.3:5; Ex. 28:36-38; Gal. 6:13-18. Some would have faith alone as the seal of God, but the test of Rev. 13 is a test of professed believers. Obedience before others is the evidence of the unseen faith. Thus the many references in the teaching of Jesus, Paul, James, and John that obedience demonstrates the genuineness of a believer's profession. See Jn. 15:14; 14:15; Lu. 6:46; James chs. 1-5; 1 Jn. 3:3-24; 5:1-3; and the second half of each Pauline epistle.

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. Jack Provonsa, God is With Us.
2. (The chief commandment.)
3. Gnana Robinson, The Origin and Development of the Old Testament Sabbath--A Comprehensive Exegetical Approach (Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Hamburg, June, 1975), pp. 413-14.
4. Ibid., p. 302.
5. Ibid., p. 313.
6. Meredith Kline, The Treaty of the Great King, pp. 18-19.
7. Rev. Thomas Hamilton, Our Rest Day--Its Origin, History, and Claims (Edinburgh, 1886).
8. Note how Scripture stresses the Sabbath as a prophylactic against idolatry.

### **Lev. 19: 3b-4**

#### **Sabbath**

And you shall keep my sabbaths; I am Yahweh your God (v. 3b)

#### **Reference to Idolatry**

you shall not turn to idols and you shall not make for you molten gods, I am Yahweh your God (v. 4).

### **Lev. 19:29-30**

#### **Reference to Idolatry**

You shall not profane your daughter by making her a harlot, lest the land commits harlotry and becomes full of wickedness (v. 29)

#### **Sabbath**

My sabbaths you shall keep, and my sanctuary you shall honour, I am Yahweh. (v. 30)

### **Lev. 26: 1-2**

#### **Reference to Idolatry**

You shall not make for you idols nor shall you erect graven images or pillar and you shall not set up figured stone in your land to worship them (v. 1).

#### **Sabbath**

You shall keep my sabbaths and honour my sanctuary, I am Yahweh (v. 2).

### **Ez. 20: 16**

#### **Sabbath**

because they rejected my statutes, and profaned my sabbaths;

#### **Reference to Idolatry**

for their heart went after their idols.

### **Ez. 20:24**

#### **Sabbath**

and (they) profaned my sabbaths

#### **Reference to Idolatry**

and their eyes were set on their father's idols.

### **Ez. 22:8-9**

#### **Sabbath**

You have despised my holy things and profaned my sabbaths (v. 8)

## Reference to Idolatry

There are men in you who slander to shed blood, and men in you who eat upon the mountains, men commit lewdness in your midst (v. 9).

## Ez. 29:38b-39

### Sabbath

They have defiled my sanctuary on the same day and profaned my sabbaths (v. 38b)

## Reference to Idolatry

For when they had slaughtered their children in sacrifice to their idols, on the same day they came into my sanctuary to profane it (v. 39).

These sabbath-idolatry oppositional references are so many in number that their combination cannot be simply ignored as accidental. Gnana Robinson, op. cit., pp. 304-05

9. The Approaching Advent of Christ, p. 279.

10. Rev. Thomas Hamilton, op. cit.

11. "The O.T. sabbath plays a prominent role in the N.T. The synagogue worship on sabbaths was a regular feature during the earthly ministry of Jesus. Jesus made use of such occasions to meet the Jews and to talk to them. The sabbath-motif holds, as part of the salvation scheme, an important place in the N.T. Both Matthew and Luke arrange their genealogies in a sabbatical (heptad) scheme. Matthew arranges his genealogy in three groups of fourteen generations each: Abraham to David fourteen generations, David to the Babylonian Deportation fourteen generations and Babylonian Deportation to Jesus fourteen generations (1:2-16). Luke, on the other hand, counts Adam to Jesus seventy seven generations (3:23-28). In Matthew's genealogy, the high points are Abraham, David, and Jesus, and Matthew sees the salvation in Jesus as the continuation and culmination of the salvation scheme, which began in Israel, symbolized by the number seven. Luke traces the genealogy down back to creation, showing thereby that God's salvation scheme, symbolized by the number seven, begins right from creation, and in this Luke makes it clear, right at the beginning of his Gospel, that salvation in Jesus Christ is for the whole humanity, a fundamental truth which the O.T. sabbath symbolises.

"V. E. McEachern has shown, in an interesting study, how Luke through his redactional insertions, arranges his whole Gospel in a sabbatarian scheme. According to Luke, in Christ, a seventh rule, a sabbath kingdom begins (Lk. 3:1f.). Corresponding to the O.T. idea of sabbath being a sign of creation, in the N.T. as well sabbath is seen as a sign of new creation: "new age is about to begin when the Messiah appears, a seventh Kingdom similar to the Sabbath rest of Gen. 2:3" and "the person of Christ embodies the presence of this kingdom". Jesus is the Christ, the King (Lk. 23:2f., 37f.) Thus, "the seventh or sabbath Kingdom of the Messiah appropriately opens in Nazareth on the sabbath day (Lk. 4:16)". McEachern further notes that "A survey of Luke reveals that exactly 'seven' pericopes begin with a special notice that what ensues takes place 'on the sabbath', viz. 4:16, 31; 6:1, 6; 13:10; 14:1 and 23: 56b". "The seventh sabbath is that of Jesus' death..."

"... What does Jesus mean by this? Does he contradict or repudiate the O.T. laws on sabbath? Quite unlikely.... Traditio-historically seen, Jesus is, in fact, not contradicting the O.T. idea of sabbath, but only protesting against what the Jews have made out of the O.T. sabbath, against a casuistic legalistic interpretation of the sabbath. He is opposing the "Sabbatvergötzung", the mistake of making a means (of grace) an end in itself. Jesus is appealing to the original spirit of the sabbath, an institution meant for "the enhancement of human life", "a day of the fullest possible service".... It is not that Jesus pushes the sabbath commandment behind the love-commandment, but he brings out the love element which is there at the basis of the O.T. sabbath all the time.

"Jesus, the Messiah, is the Lord of the Sabbath. This means that the sabbath belongs to the Messiah, even as sabbath in the O.T. belonged to Yahweh.... This sabbath is given to man as a gift from God, as a sign of God's covenant with man, that man may know that the one who is the Lord of the sabbath is God (cf. Lev. 19:3b, 30; Ez. 20:20), that it is he who sanctifies him (Ez. 20:12=Ex. 31:13) and gives him "a portion and a name" in his house (Is. 56:5), a place of worship in his house of prayer (Is. 56:7). In this sense, sabbath is certainly given for the sake... of man, for his salvation. It is exactly this message which Jesus tries to drive home to his listeners when he asks them:

"Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?"--Mk. 3:4 = Mt. 12:10ff.; Lk. 6:9

"Should this woman... who has been kept prisoner by Satan for eighteen long years, be not freed from her bonds on the sabbath?"--Lk. 13:16

"Is it permitted to cure people on the sabbath or not?"--Lk. 14:3

"... are you angry with me because on the sabbath I made a man's whole body well?"--John 7:23b

"Jesus does not provide a third alternative. He sees only two possibilities: life or death, freedom or bondage: the same alternatives, as Hinz rightly notes, which the apodictic commandments of the Decalogue offered: "life or death, God or Baal". And in this sense, Jesus' interpretation of the sabbath is in complete harmony with the basic sense of the O.T. sabbath.

"Sabbath is the symbol of God's love for man revealed in Jesus Christ (Mt. 12:7). In Jesus Christ, who is greater than the temple, all people find their menûhā, their salvation and freedom. It is this message of salvation which Jesus demonstrates in his healing actions on sabbaths - healing the man with the withered hand (Mk. 3:4=Mt. 12:3; Lk. 6:10), the man with the unclean spirit (Lk. 4:33ff.), the crippled man with a spirit (Lk. 13:10ff.), the man suffering from dropsy (Lk. 14:2ff), the crippled man at Bethesda (John 5:1ff.), the blind man (John 9:13ff.). All these are cases which could wait for a day or two, there was no immediate danger to life involved. Still, by healing them on sabbaths, Jesus, perhaps, intends to show the imminence of the Kingdom of God, the urgency of his mission. These are the signs of the Messianic Kingdom (Lk. 4:16-19; 7:22). In other words, sabbath becomes the sign of the Messianic Kingdom." Gnana Robinson, op. cit., pp. 420-424.

12. Rev. Thomas Hamilton, op. cit.

13. C. S. Lewis, Perelandra, pp. 103-104.
14. Ibid., p. 112.
15. Ibid., pp. 1-6-18, 133 passim.
16. Fullerton, F. B. Meyer, p. 84
17. Rev. Thomas Hamilton, op. cit., pp. 86-88.
18. Ibid., pp. 93-95.
19. Ibid., pp. 97-98
20. Ibid., pp. 111-120.
21. Ibid., p. 122.
22. Ibid., p. 188.
23. R. L. Dabney, The Christian Sabbath, pp. 24-26.
24. Clifford W. P. Hansen, "The Ideology of the Sabbath in Biblical Israel," (Ph.D. thesis), pp. 2-6.
25. Ibid., p. 214.
26. Ibid., p. 215.
27. Ibid., p. 222.
28. Ibid., pp. 223-24.
29. Ibid., p. 111.
30. Ibid., p. 114.
31. Ibid., pp. 182-83.
32. Ibid., pp. 185-86.
33. Ibid., pp. 188-90.
34. Ibid., p. 191.
35. Ibid., p. 202.
36. Ibid., p. 204.
37. Bishop Wordsworth, Commentary on the Holy Bible, vol. I, p. 272.
38. "O Day of Rest and Gladness," by Christopher Wordsworth.

## THE DECALOGUE AND THE LAW OF ISRAEL

Are the Ten Commandments set forth in Scripture as a superior and distinctive code, or do they merely form one part of a conglomerate of rules and regulations, some of which are moral, some civil, and some ceremonial? Are there grounds for affirming the inherent superiority and scope of the Decalogue?

It is quite clear that both the Hebrew and Greek words for "law" cannot be limited to the Ten Commandments. The terms are much more comprehensive, usually signifying the whole, or part, of God's revealed will.

Nevertheless, Christendom from the beginning has made a distinction between the Ten Commandments and the other Old Testament laws. Almost all doctrinal statements of the chief Christian bodies assert such a distinction. Why?

It is not because the Bible never mingles the moral precepts with ceremonial or civil. The contrary is the case, just as in nature precious metals may be found near to dirt or materials similarly worthless.

The reasons for distinguishing the Decalogue from the ceremonial law may be summarized as follows:

1. The two institutions of Eden, the Sabbath and marriage, embody all the Ten Commandments as the acorn embodies the oak. When man came to know His Maker through the Sabbath the first table of the Decalogue was immediately obligatory. Once man was no longer alone, but a "house-band" with others to care for, the commandments of the second table automatically constituted duty for him. Thus, throughout Genesis, despite its emphasis on history rather than legislation, the moral responsibilities later summarized on Sinai are taken for granted. Cain knows murder is wrong and could result in his own death. Joseph cried out that to commit adultery would be to sin against God. All ten of the Commandments are implicit in the record of the Bible's first book.

2. The Decalogue covers comprehensively and succinctly all the great moral principles governing human life. When we recall that a positive implies a negative and vice versa (as Christ taught in Luke 6:9), and that the greater includes the lesser, then we perceive the all-encompassing breadth of the Sinaitic code. Even faith in Christ is demanded by the first Commandment. To trust any human being before Him is idolatry.

This divine law casts its aegis over every phase of our existence. Relationships to God and man, responsibility towards thought, word, deed, care about life, time, property, reputation, purity, truthfulness, honesty--all are embraced. Even our duty towards domestic animals is found in the fourth commandment.

3. When the N.T. wishes to summarize duty, it repeatedly draws from the Decalogue to do it. The second table is usually the one quoted, as the duties of it are more obvious and tangible. But even these are dependent upon fulfillment of the requirements of the first table, for all unrighteousness grows out of ungodliness. See Ro. 1:18; Mt. 22:36-40; Mt. 19:17-20; Ro. 13:8-10; Jas. 2:10-12.

4. While we find Christ sanctioning the requirements of the ceremonial law, we never find him expatiating upon it. But it is otherwise with His use of the Decalogue. See Mt. 5:17-48; 19:4-9, 17-19; Mk. 7:5-13; and the Sabbath controversies. While Christ foretold the dissolution of all connected with the Temple, He never dropped a hint about any obsolescence of the Decalogue. Cf. Jn. 4:21 and Mt. 5:19ff.

5. The circumstances of the giving of the Ten Commandments were unique and full of significance, the thunders and lightnings attending the gathering of the multitudes before their Creator are reminiscent of the great Judgment Day which it typifies. God Himself spoke this law and wrote it, not on papyrus, but on enduring stone. He ordered that the tables should be placed in the ark under the Shekinah manifestation of His presence. Placed in the very heart of the tabernacle, the Decalogue by its position indicated the position it should have in the heart of man, the heart of the Church and of the world.

6. Because the Jewish commonwealth was both a typical institution and a theocracy, its laws of necessity fell into three categories--moral, civil, or political, and religious or ceremonial. Note well that these three separate groups were not only different in nature, but were revealed at three different times. The moral law was first proclaimed, sounded forth by God Himself and to the whole multitude of His professed people. Later Moses ascended to the Mount and privately received the set of judgments which were the foundation of all civil relationships. These chiefly were elucidations of the Ten for all the phases of Jewish public life. THEN CAME THE RATIFICATION OF THE COVENANT--BEFORE THE GIVING OF THE CEREMONIAL SYSTEM. The blood was sprinkled to ratify the people's acceptance of the Decalogue and its amplification. Only after this ratification was the Tabernacle planned and ultimately reared. It should never be forgotten that neither the national nor Levitical code were proclaimed by God in the audience of Israel, nor were they engraved in stone or placed in the heart of the ark. They had no part in the tables of the Testimony, nor were they ratified by the blood of the covenant. Instead, they were given privately and at later times.

These facts have long been recognized and they explain why the religious creedal symbols of the chief churches have ever held the Decalogue to be perpetual in its obligation. We append typical comments by scholars on this matter of the distinction between the Ten Commandment law and the civic and ceremonial codes.

Now, why this difference both in method of designation and time and manner of delivery? Why this special preparation for the one and not the other? Why the one spoken in an audible voice in the hearing of the people, and the other given privately to Moses? Why the one written, yea, twice written by divine fingers, and upon tables of stone, whilst the other was written once upon parchment by the finger of man? Why the one deposited in the ark of the covenant, the symbolic throne of the Most High, beneath the very shadow of the Almighty, thus turned over, so to speak, into the very hands of Jehovah himself for safe keeping, whilst the other was simply given into the custody of the priests, to be preserved in the archives of the nation? The truth is, a man must be simply blind who does not see that a most marked and peculiar deference is paid these "ten words" even above every other revelation to man, and that by the Lawgiver himself. The example of God, if nothing else, in thus honoring those commandments must forever lay upon man the obligation likewise to yield to them the profoundest reverence.

2. The second thing set forth in that history is the complete and peculiar isolation of that code from the others. That separation is most clearly and sharply defined, so far at least as the Levitical code is concerned. They were given at different times. The one

was given before, the other after, the formation of the national covenant. They were given at different places. The Levitical law was not given from Mount Sinai at all, but from the tabernacle. (Lev. i. 1) It was not until that tabernacle was reared, and the Shekinah of the Lord had entered it, that the Levitical or ceremonial law was delivered to Moses, and from that tabernacle. They were kept by different hands. God was the custodian of the one, the priest of the other. And not only was the moral code given at a different time, under a different appellation, from a different place, and under different circumstances, but was ever afterwards kept separate from the ceremonial. The tables of stone, with the inscription of God, were never mixed up and put on an equality with parchment containing the inscription of Moses, thus showing that the former were intended to be regarded as having a separate and independent existence, and complete in themselves.

But this separation will appear the more striking if we consider the object and nature of the latter. The object of the ceremonial or Levitical was to make atonement for the violations of the moral and political, the sins of the nation and individuals. Hence, it was placed after these, and given to Moses at his last interview with the Lord. It pertained to offerings and sacrifices, and methods of expiation. What a strange jumbling together of law and remedy would this be, of making the law for which the ceremonial cleansings were instituted a part of the cleansing itself. Law is one thing, and the provisional arrangements made for securing satisfaction to that law quite another. If the typical sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood could so swallow up the moral code of the Jews as to abolish it, then surely the real atonement of Christ has likewise swallowed up the moral code of the Christian, and we are forever absolved from any further obedience to that code. The very fact that these two things stand in the relation of law and remedy shows that they are entirely separate; and the very fact that in process of time the typical remedy should give place to that which was real, and which it prefigured, cannot in the least disturb the perpetuity of the law. That law must ever stand, no matter what becomes of the remedy, whether accepted or rejected, changed or withdrawn.

If, then, the moral never formed an integral portion of the Levitical or ceremonial law proper, being always separate, both in name and the time and place of its delivery and custody, as well as its nature and object, it is perfectly obvious that the abrogation of the latter could in no way affect the perpetuity of the former--the temporary character of the one, and the perpetual nature of the other being strikingly and symbolically set forth in the very character of the places from whence they emanated--the tabernacle, the origin of the one, having long since crumbled into ruin, whilst Mount Sinai, the source of the other, still stands to-day unshaken and immovable, the imperishable symbol of an imperishable law.

James Stacy, Day of Rest, pp. 79-82.

We naturally look first to the DECALOGUE--the ten words, as they are usually termed in the Pentateuch, which stand most prominently out in the Mosaic legislation, as being not only the first in order, and in themselves a regularly constructed whole, but the part which is represented as having been spoken directly from Heaven in the audience of all the people, amid the most striking indications of the Divine presence and glory--the part, moreover, which was engraven by God on the mount, on two tablets of stone--the only part so engraven--and, in this enduring form, the sole contents of that sacred chest or ark which became the centre of the whole of the religious institutions of Judaism--the symbolical basis of God's throne in Israel. Such varied marks of distinction, there can be no reasonable doubt, were intended to secure for this portion of the Sinaitic revelation the place of pre-eminent importance, to render it emphatically THE LAW, to which subsequent enactments stood in a dependent or auxiliary relation.

Patrick Fairbairn, The Revelation of Law in Scripture, pp. 82, 83.

Viewed thus as enshrining the great principle of love, and in a series of commands chalking out the courses of righteous action it was to follow, of unrighteous action it was to shun, the law of the two tables may justly be pronounced unique--so compact in form, so orderly in arrangement, so comprehensive in range, so free from everything narrow and punctilious--altogether the fitting reflex of the character of the Supremely Pure and Good in His relation to the members of His earthly kingdom. It is emphatically a revelation of God--of God generally, indeed, as the moral Governor of the world, but more peculiarly as the Redeemer of Israel; and to lower it to the position of a kind of semi-political and religious code, were to deprive it of all that is most distinctive in its spirit and bearing, and render utterly inexplicable the singular prominence assigned it, not alone in the legislation of the old covenant, but in the Scriptures generally alike of the Old and the New.

Ibid., p. 93.

What was needed was a brief but comprehensive series of precepts which for thoughtful and considerate minds would be found to embrace the wide range of duty, and, if honestly complied with, would render acts of ungodliness and crime practically unknown. And this is what the Decalogue really contains. That anyone who sincerely opens his heart to the reception of its great principles of truth and duty, and lives in the loving connection it implies with God and his fellow-men, should deem himself otherwise than bound to practise justice, temperance, beneficence, and truth, it is impossible to conceive.

Ibid., p. 94.

But in the circumstances in which mankind generally, and the Israelites in particular, actually stood, such conformity could never be more than partially realized; transactions, interests, would be sure to come up, which might render it doubtful even to sincere men how to apply, or how far to carry out, the precepts of the Decalogue; and, what was likely to be of much more frequent occurrence, wayward and selfish men would take occasion to traverse the pure and comely order, which it was the design of those precepts to establish among the covenant people. In the event of such things arising, how was the external polity to be regulated and maintained? What modes of procedure in definite circumstances should be held in accordance with its spirit? What, as between one member of the community and another, might be tolerated, though falling somewhat below the Divine code of requirements? What, again, calling for excision, as too flagrantly opposed to it to consist with the very being of the commonwealth?

It was to provide some sort of answer to these questions that the statutory directions and enactments now under consideration were introduced. They are called, in the first mention that is made of them, the mishpatim, the statutes or judgments, because bearing that character in relation to the commandments going immediately before. A series of particular cases is supposed--by way of example and illustration, of course, not as if exhausting the entire category of possible occurrences--and, in connection with them, instructions are given as to what mayor should be done, so as to preserve the spirit of the constitution, and to restrain and regulate, without unduly cramping, the liberty of the people.

Ibid., pp. 95,96.

And it was only after the covenant had been formerly ratified and sealed with blood over 'the ten words' from Sinai, with those supplementary statutes, that the ritual of the Levitical system, in its more distinctive form, came into existence. From its very place in the history, therefore, it is to be regarded, not as of primary, but only of secondary moment in the constitution of the Divine kingdom in Israel; not itself the foundation, but a building raised on the foundation, and designed, by a wise accommodation to the state of things then present, and by the skilful use of material elements and earthly relations, to secure the proper working of what really was fundamental, and render it more certainly productive of the wished for results. The general connexion is this: God had already redeemed Israel for His peculiar people, called them to occupy a near relation to Himself, and proclaimed to them the great principles of truth and duty which were to regulate their procedure, so that they might be the true witnesses of His glory, and the inheritors of His blessing. And for the purpose of enabling them more readily to apprehend the nature of this relation, and more distinctly realize the things belonging to it, the Lord instituted a visible bond of fellowship, by planting in the midst of their dwellings a dwelling for Himself, and ordering everything in the structure of the dwelling, the services to be performed at it, and the access of the people to its courts, after such a manner as to keep up right impressions in their mind of the character of their Divine Head, and of what became them as sojourners with Him in the land that was to be emphatically His own.

Ibid., pp. 134-35.

'The Levitical prescriptions,' says Weber excellently, 'follow the establishment of the covenant and its realization in the indwelling of Jehovah in Israel. They are not conditions, but consequences of the Sinaitic covenant. After Jehovah, in consequence of His covenant, had taken up His abode in Israel, and Israel must now dwell before Him, it was necessary to appoint the ordinances by which this intercourse should be carried on. Since Israel in itself is impure, and is constantly defiling itself, because its natural life stands under the power of sin, it cannot quite directly enter into fellowship with Jehovah; but what took place at Sinai must ever be repeating itself--it must first, in order to meet with Jehovah, undergo a purification. Hence, one department of the ordinances of purification in the Levitical part of the Law. But even when it has become pure, it still cannot approach Jehovah in any manner it may please, but only as He orders and appoints. It will not, in spite of all purifications, be so pure, as that it could venture to approach immediately to the Lord. The glory of the Lord enthroned above the cherubim would consume the impure. Therefore must Israel come near to the Lord through priests whom He has Himself chosen; and still not personally, but by means of the gifts which ascend in the fire and rise into Jehovah's presence, nor even so without the offerer having been first covered from the fiery glance of the Holy One through the blood of His victim.'

Ibid., pp. 137-38

Viewed in this light, the law of fleshly ordinances were a great teaching institute--not by itself, but when taken (according to its true intent) as an auxiliary to the law of the two tables. Isolated from these, and placed in an independent position, as having an end of its own to reach, its teaching would have been at variance with the truth of things; for it would have led men to make account of mere outward distinctions, and rest in corporeal observances. In such a case it would have been the antithesis rather than the complement of the law from Sinai, which gave to the moral element the supreme place, alike in God's character, and in the homage and obedience He requires of His people. But, kept in its proper relation to that law, the Levitical code was for the members of the old covenant an important means of instruction; it plied them with warnings and admonitions respecting sin, as bringing defilement in the sight of God, and thereby excluding from His fellowship. That such, however, was the real design of this class of Levitical ordinances--that they had merely a subsidiary aim, and derived all their importance and value from the connexion in which they stood with the moral precepts of the Decalogue--is evident from other considerations than those furnished by their own nature and their place in the Mosaic legislation. It is evident, first, from this, that whenever the special judgments of Heaven were denounced against the covenant people, it never was for neglect of those ceremonial observances, but always for palpable breaches of the precepts of the Decalogue; evident, again, from this, that whenever the indispensable conditions of access to God's house and abiding fellowship with His love are set forth, they are made to turn on conformity to the moral precepts, not to the ceremonial observances; evident, yet again and finally, from this, that whenever the ceremonial observances were put in the foreground by the people, as things distinct from, and in lieu of, obedience to the moral precepts, the procedure was denounced as arbitrary, and the service rejected as a mockery.

Ibid., pp. 141,42.

If anything, indeed, has more clearly discovered itself than another, from the whole of this investigation, it is the fundamental character of the Decalogue--its preeminent and singular place in the Revelation of Law. This was in itself emphatically THE LAW; and all, besides, which bore that name was but of secondary rank, and derived its proper value and significance from the relation in which it stood to the other. Hence, the prominent regard, as in due time will appear, which, in the use of the term Law by our Lord and His apostles, was had to the moral precepts of the Decalogue. Hence, also, the groundlessness of the statement, which has been often made by modern writers, that the distinction, with which we are so familiar, between moral and ceremonial, was not so sharply drawn in the Books of Moses, and that precepts of both kinds are there often thrown together, as if, in Jewish apprehension, no very material difference existed between them. It is easy to pick out a few quotations which give a plausible support to such a view. But a careful examination of the subject as a whole, and of the relation in which one part stands to another, yields a quite different result. And Mr Maurice does not put it too strongly when he says, 'The distinction between these commandments and the mere statutes of the Jewish people has strongly commended itself to the conscience of modern nations, not because they have denied the latter to have a divine origin, but because they have felt that the same wisdom which adapted a certain class of commands to the peculiarities on one locality and age, must intend a different one for another. The commandments have no such limitation.... All the subsequent legislation, though referred to the same authority, is separated from these. All the subsequent history was a witness to the Jew, that in the setting up of any god besides the Unseen Deliverer; in the fancy that there could be any likeness of Him in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth; in the loss of awe for His name, in the loss of the distinction between work and rest as the ground of man's life, and as having its archetype in the Divine Being, and as worked by Him into the tissue of the existence of His own people; in the loss of reverence for parents, for life, for marriage, for property, for character; and in the covetous feeling which is at the root of these evils, lay the sources of political disunion, and the loss of all personal dignity and manliness.'

Ibid., pp. 145-46

## THE SABBATH AND THE GOSPEL

The perfect redemptive work of Jesus Christ accomplished a new creation. It justified God, ransomed the world, consolidated heaven, shook hell, and condemned the devil. It magnified the law, satisfied justice, delighted God the Father, glorified God the Son, and brought down to earth God the Holy Spirit. It nullified sin, justified sinners, and petrified Satan.

What a tremendous event--the coming of the Son of God to this foolish, fitful, feverish planet! It was the coming of eternity into time, day into night, summer into winter, life into death--to fashion that lever, the lever of the Cross, which alone could lift earth to heaven as it testified of heaven's stooping to earth. To receive that good news brings rest to the heart and mind. We cease from trust in our own works so continually stained by sin, and enter into His rest. Thus is eternal life and heaven begun for the believer.

All of this, according to Heb. 4:1-9 was symbolized by the first Sabbath of Eden when God ceased from His perfect work and entered into rest--a rest which had no evening for it pointed to the eternal rest of heaven. That first Sabbath day was a dramatic enacted parable whereby God invited man, the creature, to share the Creator's joy, delight, and "rest." Henceforth the special day was to be a sign and test of man's spirituality, for the Sabbath being not susceptible to sight or touch was a perpetual protest against all idolatry of visible, tangible, created "things." Man was to worship only Him who was distinct from all creation, Him who had made all things. Man's keeping of the Sabbath demonstrated that God had so formed him that satisfaction (rest) could only be found in a personal relationship with the Author of his existence, and trust in Him from whom all blessings flow.

The Sabbath is the only religious institution that dates from before the Fall. (Marriage is social.) The entire account of Creation is so told as to make the Sabbath its climax, and to portray God's spiritual purpose in creating all things. The seventh-day Sabbath was the complement of God's mighty work--setting the seal of Heaven on its beauty and completeness. His blessing of that day was the settling upon it of a special dowry for all who would acknowledge its purpose. All who gladly would observe it would experience life for evermore.

The great need of the creature was to know who he was, and who God was, in order that he might always choose aright by the light of those guiding stars. The Sabbath answered these questions, and by its continual recurrence made it easy to keep the eternal verities in mind. Adam, the Sabbath-keeper, thus had the seal of God in his forehead. As the very first religious sign, the Sabbath was the seal of God's Edenic Covenant, a seal implicit in all of the other divine covenants, for redemption itself is dependent upon the Creator's work. Scripture links the Sabbath repeatedly with the right performance of all covenant obligations on the part of both God and man. See Ex. 31:12-17; 16:28-29; Isa. 56:4; Eze. 20:12-13, 18-22; 22:8, 26; Jer. 17:19-27; Heb. 4:10. Had the Sabbath always been observed there would never have been a pagan, or an atheist, agnostic, or idolater. Had the Sabbath been truly kept by man, giving him opportunity to meditate on God and learn His ways and precepts, earth would have been a little heaven with every family reflecting the family above. War and crime could never have been, nor the dark places of earth come into existence.

In the four Gospels we find the New Testament's chief discussions on the Sabbath. About one chapter in every eight refers to God's holy day which had become sadly profaned by human traditions. In one sense the Gospels are the first and last of the Christian Testament, for they talk about "the first things" of the gospel era, and were written (according to most scholars) after the epistles of Paul. It is highly significant that the Gospels have so much to say of Christ's untiring efforts to reform the Edenic institutions of the Sabbath and marriage. In so doing, He referred man back to "the beginning," (the time when the Sabbath and man were "made"), as the pattern for all who wished to follow Him. (See Mt. 19:4, 8; Mk. 2:27.) Risking His life and mission to make the Sabbath once more "a delight," "the holy of the Lord," and "honorable" (Isa. 58:13), Christ never dropped any hint that the time would ever come when its observance would be unnecessary. It was to continue on beyond the end of the Temple and Judaism. See Mt. 24:20.

At the close of the record of the Gospels, John was inspired to present Christ's redemptive work as a new creation. He had hinted at that by his introduction with his reference to the coming of the Light "in the beginning." But now in the account of the Cross he repeatedly refers to a "finishing" on the sixth day before Christ entered into the Sabbath of redemption rest. He portrays the second Adam naked like the first, and also like the first Adam, in that He is tested by a tree of the knowledge of good and evil located in a garden. See Jn. 19:28, 30, 23, 41; Acts 5:30. As Adam had his side opened on the sixth day so that he might have a bride, so John tells of the side of the second Adam being opened that He too might have His bride--the church. See 19:4.

It was not by chance that our Lord finished His mighty work of Atonement on the sixth day. It was not by chance that, unlike the thieves, He died on that day. (The legs of the thieves were broken, for they were still alive when taken down from the Cross, but this was not necessary for the lifeless Christ.) It was not by chance that He was placed in Joseph's new tomb before the sun set on the sixth day. And likewise it was no coincidence that led our divine Lord to remain in the sepulcher through all the holy hours--the only complete day He spent in the grave. Thus was His original rest day (for it was Christ who made the world and who rested on the first seventh day) stamped with a new glory and made the memorial of the second creation, as one day it will also be a memorial of the third. See Isa. 66:22, 23.

Those who knew Him best and loved Him most also "rested according to the commandment" on that holy day. See Lu. 23:56. We are not left in any doubt as to Christ's perfect observance of redemption Sabbath, for we are informed that the holy women after the Cross had time to prepare "spices and ointments" before the sun set on that sixth day. Lu. 23:56. Think you, that you will ever be condemned for choosing to remember that sacred Sabbath observed by Christ at creation, and in His earthly life and death, and kept by the first Christians? Was He not our great Exemplar? Did He ever so honor those Mosaic ordinances which were soon to pass away? Can we really be so inane as to insist that the records of Sabbath observance in the book of Acts are only records of Christ's friends trying to secure an evangelistic audience? See Acts 13:14, 27, 42-44; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4.

But the New Testament has more to say on this subject. It records seven miracles of our Lord on that day--none of which were urgent, and which therefore testified that the eschatological era of restoration of life and health and joy had dawned in the Messiah. See Mk. chs 1, 2, and 3; Lu. chs. 6, 13, 14; Mt. 12; Jn. 5:9; and cf. Isa. 35:5-6; 61:1-3.

Let us turn now to another N. T. parallelism concerning the Sabbath. When Judaism was about to pass away with its glorious temple ritual, the book of Hebrews was written telling of the "better" things that remained for believers in Christ. The book is full of exhortations to receive fully the blessings the Cross had provided. Again Christ is portrayed as Representative and Exemplar. We are told repeatedly that

He has entered into the Most Holy place of heaven, and that we too can "have confidence to enter the sanctuary [the Most Holy] by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is through his flesh" (Heb. 10: 19, 20) . Compare 10:12, 24.

The full significance of these exhortations is only found by comparing the records of Hebrews three and four when we are told of a Sabbath rest that we can all by faith enter. The word "enter"--is found about a dozen times here. The rest of Eden's Sabbath, the rest of Canaan from the wilderness wanderings, the future rest of heaven, are all used as symbols of the rest of conscience all can have who believe in the efficacy of Christ's finished atonement. "Whoever enters God's rest ceases from his own labors as God did from his" (4:10). These words testify that all who see the meaning of the Cross no longer depend upon their own works. They refuse to be either encouraged or discouraged by their own deeds, and find rest from sin and guilt by faith's entrance into Christ. Believers look to His perfect work instead of their own which is tattered and stained. The physical rest of the Sabbath then becomes an emblem of the rest of conscience enjoyed all week long. By believing the gospel we enter the most holy place, the presence of God symbolized by the sacred rest-day from the beginning of time.

As Adam's flesh was riven on the eve of the first Sabbath, so was Christ's on the eve of the Sabbath of the new creation. The veil outside the Most Holy Place, which was torn as Christ died, represented the tearing by death of the physical life of our Substitute and Representative in order that a new and living way might be made for all to enter the presence of God and enjoy the rest which that presence brings. Read again Heb. 10:19-20.

The seventh-day Sabbath is an enduring memorial of God's mighty acts of creation and redemption. It is the seal of the everlasting covenant because it is linked with the shedding of the blood of Christ. See Heb. 13:20. While as a form detached from Christ and the gospel it can only be a fetish and bring cursing, when linked to Him and the good news of His finished atonement, it becomes a glowing gift from Paradise mirroring heaven and aiding us to enter that sabbatismos which remains for all the people of God (Heb. 4:9).

In conclusion we quote from a modern writer, taking the liberty of changing his word Sunday to Sabbath wherever it occurs.

Near my home in a London suburb there is a little park. Formerly it was just the grounds of a gentleman's house, and the Borough Council have taken it over and made it into a very pleasant little spot. There are lovely flowerbeds, beautiful lawns, shady trees, a rock garden, and a little pool where two rather tired ducks make the best of the muddy water. Nevertheless, I do not sneer at this little oasis in a London suburb. The action of our Borough Council is to be commended. They have railed round this little park with iron railings, and they lock it at night. There are notices which say, "Please do not pick the flowers," and "Please keep off the grass."

One might say, "Why the palings and the prohibitory notices? Why not leave people free to do what they like?" But I am quite sure that the answer is this: if there were no notices, there would soon be no flowers; and were there no prohibitions, there would soon be no little park for anybody to enjoy at all....

Sabbath is a little park in the noisy din of our hectic week. Sabbath is a little oasis in the desert of our monotonous and unnatural life. But I believe that, human nature being what it is, Sabbath must be protected and guarded by a number of "Thou shalt nots," or else very soon there will be no Sabbath for anybody to enjoy.... if you take no action in this generation, two generations hence there will be nothing to take action about.

... the Babylonian [and Hebrew] word for "Sabbath" is a picturesque word meaning "stop" or "halt." Stop doing what you are doing! Push away all these hectic activities of every day! Stop forever trying to make money, and be quiet! Let us remember that the word "holy" and the word "whole" and the word "healthy" all come from the same root. You could even translate the commandment about the Sabbath to read: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it healthy," health for the body, health for the mind, and health for the spirit.

Let me finish with one picture. A little while ago I was called to see an old man who was dying, and who was very frightened of death, as some people are. And when, as tenderly as I could, I tried to talk to him about God and religion and the soul, he said, very bitterly and brokenly, mumbling as he said the words, "I have led a very busy life. I have never had time for that sort of thing." But he had had four thousand Sabbaths!

The oldest preacher of the everlasting gospel is the seventh-day Sabbath which from Eden on for twenty-four hours each week has invited men to accept God's gift of eternal rest. Nothing, we repeat, nothing--can ever undo the related facts that Christ sabbatized on the seventh day after His work of creation, and again after His finished re-creation--redemption. Thus the seventh-day was, is, and ever will be, Christ's Sabbath (rest) day--the Christian Sabbath--sign of completed creation and redemption. Those who use it aright by looking to Him who has done all things well will find heaven begun and soon will enter the eternal "sabbatismos" that remains for believers.

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. Leslie Weatherhead, When the Lamp Flickers, pp. 107-8, 114-15.

## A SHORTHAND SUMMARY OF THE SABBATH QUESTION

The whole matter of the binding obligation of the Sabbath hinges on the following issues:

1. Was the Sabbath instituted for all men or for Jews only?
2. Were the Ten Commandments given for all humanity, or only for the Jews prior to the Cross?
3. Did Jesus intimate that the Sabbath was insignificant and soon to pass, or did He reform its observance recognizing it as of value for all men for all time?
4. Does the Christian dispensation enlarge or truncate the believer's blessings? Is the Sabbath one of those things that was 'against' men and therefore abrogated, or is it biblically viewed as a 'delight,' 'honorable,' and 'for' man?
5. Does the silence of Paul negate the thunderous voice of God from Sinai, or His act of blessing and setting apart His rest-day in Eden?
6. Do two or three ambivalent texts from Paul contradict the rest of the Scripture regarding the Ten Commandments as a standard (not method) of righteousness?
7. Does the coming of the reality mirrored in an institution always abrogate that institution, or can the latter accompany and promote the former?
8. Does the passing of the Mosaic law as a system mean that even individual laws or principles therein that reflect Edenic duties and moral relationships for all men have also been suspended?

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1. See our chapter on the Edenic origin of the Sabbath. The best of exegetes in all ages including Luther and Calvin believed that Gen. 2:1-3 taught the institution of the Sabbath for all men from the foundation of the world.

Every biblical memorial begins with the event it memorializes, not thousands of years later. Man was a worker and a worshipper from the beginning, and God made provision for rest and worship. Mk. 2:27 tells us Christ's 'yes' to this question. He says the Sabbath came in at the time when man was made. He does not say, 'the Sabbath was made for a tiny percentage of the race for part of the time,' but 'the Sabbath was made for man.'

If the Sabbath was for the first man, it is for the last also and for all in between. The further from creation we get, the more essential is its memorial, for it is easier to forget the event. In this age of meaninglessness and constant high pressure, the Sabbath has become more rather than less relevant.

2. Romans by 'law' chiefly has in mind God's moral law, and the Ten Commandments are frequently alluded to as a summary of that law. Even the heathen had the essence of this in his conscience, though not the details. See 2:15. This law is the 'embodiment of knowledge and truth' 2:20. It is 'spiritual,' 'holy, just and good.' The believer 'delights' in it (7:22), but the carnal mind IS (not used to be) not subject to this law but hates it. The righteousness of the law IS fulfilled in him who walks after the Spirit. Ro. 8:4. It is fulfilled only by love. Ro. 13:8.

While circumcision is nothing, the keeping of the commandments of God is everything. 1 Cor. 7:19. With deep reverence Christ referred to the 'commandment of God' (Mark 7:8, 9), and warned that every substitute for it would be uprooted (Mt. 15:13). He came to fulfill it and not to abolish it. (Mt. 5:17-19). In this statement, He had particularly the law's moral requirements in mind, for He proceeds to state three of the Ten Commandments and show their depths. He saw that only a righteousness reflected in the keeping of these commandments would be accepted in the Judgment. (See Mt. 19:17). Christ is not saying anyone can earn eternal life by keeping the Ten, but looking into their depths, sinners feel their need of Christ's perfect righteousness-- for He alone has observed these laws aright.

Every N.T. statement apparently against the Ten Commandments is rebuking their use as a method and not as a standard. The second half of every Pauline epistle sets forth duties corresponding to this law, particularly the second table which best reflects our attitude to the first. The first table was not an issue to the first converts of the Christian church. Nowhere is ANY of the first four commandments quoted, though all are referred to. The fourth commandment is more fully quoted than any of the others. See Acts 4:24; 14:15; Rev. 10:6; 14:7.

Hebrews 7:12 tells us a change has come in the law, and Heb. 10:8, 9 tells us the nature of the change. Sacrifice and all associated with it has gone, but the will of God is established. The writer is quoting Ps. 40:8 where we are specifically told that God's will is His law. Heb. 8:10 makes it clear that God's law remains in this age, but it is in the heart rather than merely in a book or on stone tablets.

The consensus of American, English, German, Dutch, and French exegetes, is that the N.T. assumes the binding obligation of the Ten Commandments for all men for all time. See Bultmann, Conzelmann, Ridderbos, Ryle, Fairbairn, Swete, Haldane, Pink, Jamieson Fausset and Brown, etc.

The principles of the Ten Commandments are loyalty, worship, reverence, holiness, respect for authority, love, purity, honesty, truthfulness, contentment. Which of these can we safely dispense with?

At the heart of the Ten Commandments are the only two positive ones, and they reflect the original Edenic institutions of the Sabbath and marriage from which all the other commandments flow. This proves that all Ten Commandments are obligatory from Eden to Eden--from Eden lost to Eden restored.

3. See chapter 'Is the Seventh-day a Moral Test Today? Our Lord could say He had kept His Father's commandments and remained in His love. See Jn. 15:10. Those who say He broke the Sabbath join with His Pharisee opponents who made that charge. His answer was that He and His disciples were 'guiltless.' See Mt. 12:7.

Our Lord reformed both the marriage and Sabbath institutions and referred His listeners back to Eden when commenting on both. He foresaw the passing of the Mosaic law, but recognized that all principles and institutions from Eden (such as marriage and the Sabbath)

would remain forever. He even risked His mission and life in performing seven (recorded) miracles on the holy day to demonstrate that true Sabbath-keeping brought blessing not injury. Never did He defend any institution soon to pass away. He is silent on the issues of how to observe the ceremonies of the Jewish law, and tells the woman at the well that all that was particularly Jewish was soon to be no more. Jn. 4:21. But compare Mt. 24:20 and Lu. 23:56. One chapter in every eight in the Gospels refers to the Sabbath, showing its continuing significance for the Christian church. Let us remember that the Gospels (at least for the most part) were written after the death of Paul, and have emphasized those sections of Christ's teachings of lasting relevance for the Gentile church.

4. Those who affirm the Sabbath to have been abolished see it as 'against' man and a hindrance to the spreading of the gospel. This is contrary to the whole spirit and teaching of Holy Writ. There we find the Sabbath to be 'a delight' (the Hebrew word means a luxury), 'honorable,' 'for' man. The Lord gave to His people His Sabbath. See Ex. 16:29; 31:13; Neh. 9:14; Isa. 58:13, 14; Ex. 20:8-11; Mk. 2:28.

What a boon for the myriads of workers ground down through the ages to have the right to time for rest and worship! What is there 'against' man in this protection against greed, idolatry, materialism, and atheism? So long as man is a worker and a worshipper, he needs an allocated time for rest and worship. Unless God Himself selected the time, men would have differed and thus fragmented social worship. Man is a creature of habit and habit is formed by regularity. Those who claim to keep every day as a Sabbath actually keep none. What belongs to any time, ultimately belongs to no time. Neither is, or ever was, the Sabbath for mere idleness only. God knows better than us that Satan finds mischief for idle hands. From the beginning, rest from work was in order not only to promote health, but to provide time for worship. The Sabbath is called 'a holy convocation'--a time for convening with others to adore God. Where there is no Sabbath ultimately there is no church, and where there is no church, ultimately there is no family, and then finally no State worth living in.

5. See our chapter 'Is the Seventh-day a Moral Test Today?' Paul takes for granted the rest of Scripture. Thus he never stops to tell us incidents in Christ's life. Only His trial and crucifixion are referred to in his epistles. Paul does not reinstitute marriage, nor marriage laws--but He assumes such and refers us back to Christ. See 1 Cor. 7:10.

Paul is silent as to whether women can observe the ordinances, as to whether children should be baptized, and on the issue of the use of graven images in worship. Some of his statements can easily be misunderstood. He declares Christ did not send him to baptize, that it is good for a man not to touch a woman, that all things are lawful, that a woman should not teach or speak in a church, and that wine is good for the stomach. Even Peter warned us that Paul can be misused. See 2 Pet. 3:15.

But it is the same Paul who assures us that the law is good if a man uses it lawfully, that the keeping of the commandments of God is everything though things like circumcision count nothing, that the strength of sin IS the law, that he personally delighted in the law of God, and that the righteousness of that law is fulfilled in him who walks after the Spirit. Paul it is who declares the Ten Commandments to be 'holy, just and good' and warns us that it is the carnal mind that is enmity to the law of God.

Paul does tell us that the written Mosaic code is no longer AS A SYSTEM binding. Yet he constantly takes portions of it which remain forever obligatory and endorses them for Gentile Christians. See Eph. 6:1-3 for example, and throughout the second half of his epistles.

Paul, like Jesus, refers us to the Edenic situation as the model for truth. See 1 Tim. 2:13, 14. He never pretended to supersede Jesus but, rather, taught the reverse. The Great Commission is not a command to go into all the world and teach what Paul has commanded, but to present Christ's instruction as of primary importance. See Mt. 28:18, 19.

Whatever was to be in the covenant sealed by the blood of the Cross had to precede Calvary. See Gal. 3:14. The teachings of Jesus are 'the gospel.' See Mk. 1:1. Paul elaborated what His Master had concisely expressed. Nothing can cancel a law so publicly and authoritatively proclaimed as the Ten Commandments except an event of equal magnitude and equally specific. All laws remain binding until revoked by the authority that gave them, or an equal authority. There is no hint from the lips of Christ that any of the Ten Commandments would ever lose their place as a summary of duty for the believer. In at least five places it is recorded that He affirmed the continuing binding obligation of the Decalogue.

6. All erroneous theological positions are based on obscure Scriptures. The Bible is written so plainly that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err in the path of duty. The texts used by Paul against the Sabbath are no more obscure than other passages which exegetes refuse to give their apparent face value. No one who really loves Christ thinks 'all things are lawful' is an absolute for conduct. And most Christians have married despite Paul's admonition that it is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman. The fact is that Gal. 4:9, 10 and Ro. 15:5, 6 would never have been used against the Sabbath, but for the false invocation of Col. 2:16 in the same regard. Sunday keepers, vainly seeking support for their belief that the seventh day must have been revoked, have used these texts as a trifling pretext. None of them mean what Sabbath antagonists want them to mean. Gal. 4 is speaking of heathen astrological observances possibly mingled with Jewish times. Paul speaks of 'bondage' for those who observe these times, and he speaks of 'returning' to a worship they knew as idolaters. It is not the seventh day which is named but 'days'--plural. Similarly, they observed 'lucky' years--and this did not fit Judaism. A Jubilee could only be kept by most once in a lifetime, and there is no evidence that the Jews or heathen ever faithfully kept such a time during the Christian era.

Ro. 14 is speaking of days marked by fasting and abstinence from wine. See verses 2, 3, 21.

As for Col. 2:16, let it be noted that Paul never uses the word 'law' in this epistle. Thus many commentators think that the ordinances mentioned in Col. 2 were pre-gnostic ones associated with angel worship, human regulations, and antiquated Judaism. See vv. 14, 20. These heathen elements, like the Mosaic types, prefigured something better, just as did the heathen system of sacrifice. The 'therefore' beginning verse 16 must take us back to v. 14, and v. 14 with its ordinances must be compared with the human ordinances of verses 20-22, a far cry from the commandments of Sinai. At the most generous interpretation, Col. 2:16 can only be said to forbid men to make regulations concerning observances of the Sabbath as known in Judaism with its multitudinous laws. The fourth commandment and the Edenic ordinance are not in focus.

The chief security against wresting the Scriptures is to remember 'the analogy of faith.' That is to say, no passage is rightly interpreted if made to mean that which is contrary to the main tenor of the Word. Thus in three places in Holy Writ we are reminded that 'in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.' All sorts of weird heresies have been built on isolated texts. The Mormons have established a ritual of surrogate baptism for the dead on the basis of a single verse from Paul-- 1 Cor. 15:29. Jehovah's Witnesses and other cults work similarly. God challenges us to 'rightly divide the word of truth.' 2 Tim. 2:15. Therefore, to construe the approximately 150 references on the Sabbath in the light of the one only passage which appears negative, and that a passage in an obscure context, is

exegetical mayhem.

7. The reality of the Sabbath is the rest found by faith in Christ's finished work. Does this disqualify the observance of the day? Baptism and the Lord's Supper also find their reality in the faith experience, but none contend that the substance here displaces the form. Similarly, the family institution mirrors the relationship between God and His children, but this does not displace the family. And Paul informs us that marriage prefigures the mysterious union between Christ and His church, yet this in no way disannuls marriage. Further, Paul says there is now neither male nor female (analogous to Ro. 14:4, 5 about no day being distinctive from another). Who would wish to conclude that therefore there is no place for marriage?

The only forms displaced by the reality are those introduced after the Fall, as shadows of the Cross. Marriage and the Sabbath were creation ordinances, and though used as emblems of deeper realities when written up in the age of sin, yet they remain forever in this life as part of the divine plan for man. So long as man is in the body, he will need formal observances. We are not pure spirit, and we are prone to forget unless recurring formal observances come to our aid. It should never be forgotten that the spiritual Jew of O.T. times was just as afraid of legalism as the best of Christians. A single reading of Deuteronomy makes that plain. Every informed Jew knew that in loving God with his whole heart, every day should be consecrated to God, yet he still observed the Sabbath in a way commanded him. The Jew also knew that the physical rest of Sabbath mirrored the heart rest of one who trusted in God, but that awareness only made his observance of the Sabbath a more joyous affair.

8. Does the passing of the Mosaic code as a system mean the annulling and abolition of every duty prescribed therein? It is plain that Galatians and other passages tell Christians that the whole Jewish system was a preliminary to something better, and that therefore no believer is under that written legislation which comprehended matters civil, ceremonial, and moral. But the same Paul who tells us this, also invokes certain passages from that law to enforce duty. In other words he recognized that the abolition of the reign of Moses did not mean that there were no abiding values to be had from that source. The command to love God with all the heart is found in Deut. 6, and the admonition to love our neighbor comes from Lev. 19.

When a person is naturalized, he or she is no longer subject to the legal code of their former country. Yet numerous laws in their adopted country are identical with those of the realm they have left. Similarly, Christians rejoice in the moral principles that are age-abiding and were recognized in O.T. times. Jesus and Paul see the Ten Commandments as limited to neither time nor people inasmuch as they reflect the duties growing out of the original relationships signified by the Sabbath and marriage.

Certain things should be kept in mind in considering the theory that the New Testament so supersedes the Old as to make the admonitions of the latter obsolete.

- i. The very titles--Old Testament and New Testament--as applied to sets of books are man-made titles. The Old Testament knows all the elements of the new covenant, though the fullness of the latter was not possible till the ratification of the Cross. Bible writers themselves do not thus divide the Scriptures.
  - ii. Those who use the 'N.T. only' argument are not consistent. We find that in practise they usually only want that part of the N.T. which has to do with events after the Cross or after Pentecost. This means that even the teachings of Jesus can be discarded. That believers in Christianity could make that error is a testimony to the folly accompanying depravity. No N.T. writer ever separates the teachings of Jesus from the Christian gospel. The Bible's last book assures us that the eschatological remnant of Christians will observe the commandments of God (from the O.T.) and the faith (teachings) of Jesus from the four Gospels. See Rev. 14:12.
  - iii. The attitude of Christ and all the apostles to the O.T. is one of strict reverence and very different to that of today's protagonists. See Jn. 5:39, 46, 47; Lu. 24:27, 45 (Christ knew nothing of this doctrine of discounting the O.T. though He recognized that some features within it had time and place limitations built into them.)
- 2 Tim. 3:15-17 tells us in Paul's words that the Old Testament Scriptures are still profitable for doctrine and instruction in righteousness, and indeed--able to make any reader wise 'unto salvation.' Those who make Paul the final arbiter of all truth should remember his estimate of the Mosaic code and the set of books comprising it. They should also remember that where he seems to disparage the former it is because of perversion, or its limitation, not its relevance.
- See also Ro. 3:1-18; 7:7; 13:8; Eph. 6:1-3; Jas. 2:8-12; 1 Pet. 1:16; 2 Pet. 1:21, and also the book of Revelation which in every paragraph draws from the Old Testament.
- iv. The Israelites were by Paul declared to be 'stewards' of God's oracles for mankind. '... the Jews are entrusted with the oracles of God.' Ro. 3:2. Stephen, years after the Cross, declared these oracles to be 'living.' See Acts 7:38.
  - v. Paul tells us that the Christian church is the result of a grafting into the church of Israel--not a separate plant. See Ro. 11:16ff.
  - vi. Nowhere is there found in the N.T. the proclamation of a new code. Nothing analogous to Sinai is to be found there. All is but an elaboration and emphasizing of elements long known to Israel and enshrined in the sacred Old Testament. See, for example, Mt. 4:4-10; 15:1-9; 19:16-19; Lu. 10:25-28, etc.

The opening words of the N.T. dovetail into the preceding Testament and are incomprehensible without it. The same is true of practically every other chapter of the N.T. Therefore, we may say in this connection what Christ said in another: 'What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'

Let the bewildered disputant remember that all great philosophical and religious issues are always open to controversy without dismissing their truth. The existence of God, the truthfulness of His word, the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, Justification by Faith, the Atonement--all are subjects of great debate and ever will be. Yet the honest soul can find the weight of evidence and decide accordingly. It is even so with the Sabbath. Indeed, it is in the providence of God, especially so, for God has made the Sabbath a 'test' of the fidelity of professed worshippers. See Ex. 16:3, 4, 28; Jer. 17:24-27; Eze. 20:12, 20; Ex. 31:12-17.

And yet another caveat. God tests us according to the principle of duty's second mile. Obvious incontestable duties never constitute a test. Baptism by immersion, abstinence from alcohol, the tithing principle, and numerous other matters as well as Sabbath-keeping, are not beyond contesting, yet the one desirous of pleasing his lord in all things will take no risk, but ever go beyond obvious duty lest he be found to fall short of it.

In the Day of Judgment, those who have chosen to follow the patriarchs, prophets, Christ and the apostles (in recognizing the day which can never be other than the birthday of the world and God's own day of holy rest in the beginning) will have no cause to be ashamed. But if they now decide that to be a galling yoke which God has declared 'a delight' and treat as 'against' man what Christ said to be 'for' him--what then?

Special note:

We would be remiss if we did not warn against a mysticism which has recurrently threatened the Christian faith over the centuries. This mysticism contends that the believer no longer needs any written directives to guide him in conduct, and that faith and love alone are sufficient to dictate behavior. This is a very dangerous half-truth. Notice the comment of Bonar on the matter:

Some will tell us that it is not service they object to, but service regulated by law. But will they tell us what is to regulate service, if not law? Love, they say. This is a pure fallacy. Love is not a rule, but a motive. Love does not tell me what to do; it tells me how to do it. Love constrains me to do the will of the beloved one; but to know what the will is, I must go elsewhere. The law of our God is the will of the beloved one, and were that expression of His will withdrawn, love would be utterly in the dark; it would not know what to do. It might say I love my Master, and I love His service, and I want to do His bidding, but I must know the rules of his house, that I may know how to serve Him. Love without law to guide its impulses would be the parent of will-worship and confusion, as surely as terror and self-righteousness, unless upon the supposition of an inward miraculous illumination, as an equivalent for law. Love goes to the law to learn the divine will, and love delights in the law, as the exponent of that will; and he who says that a believing man has nothing more to do with the law, save to shun it as an old enemy, might as well say that he has nothing to do with the will of God.

God's Way of Holiness, pp. 69- 70

## SABBATH OR SUNDAY?

In the twentieth century two divine institutions have fallen into neglect and decay, bringing subsequent chaos to morality and social order. These two institutions are the very ones established in Eden, reaffirmed in the Decalogue, and specially reformed by Christ Himself -- the Sabbath and Marriage.

As all other moral duties grow out of the fourth and fifth commandments, so the neglect of the Sabbath and family institutions brings neglect of all other religious obligations. Satan needs but to attack these two, and the whole structure of piety must ultimately be dissolved if he is successful. In the tragic history of the last century we find confirmation of this truth.

Were it possible for a nineteenth century observer of men and things to reappear in our day, the contrast in social and religious behavior would prove overwhelming. We do not mean that human nature has essentially changed one jot, but only that once accepted standards have disappeared in a landslide of ideals. If anyone wishes to trace certain of the influences which brought this to pass, let him study what historians and sociologists have to say about the impact of the Darwinian and technological revolutions, and the changes brought by World Wars I and II.

One classical work in this regard is Gertrude Himmelfarb's Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution. See also Will Durant's The Story of Philosophy, particularly his chapter on Nietzsche. In more popular vein are the sociological studies by Frederick Lewis Allen, Only Yesterday, Since Yesterday, and The Big Change. (For a more philosophical viewpoint, see P. Sorokin's The Crisis of Our Age.)

Allen points out as one straw indicating the direction of the social wind that divorce rates tripled in the first half of this century. Since 1950 they have doubled again, so that now one marriage in every two in this country is headed for the courts. As for Sabbath-keeping, look around you.

The great mass of people in the professed Christian world have never observed Sunday in a sabbatical sense. This has been true in Europe for centuries, but only true of England and America this last hundred years. In modern church-going we have a brief tipping of the hat to our Maker, but even that gesture is riddled with the planning of secular pursuits for the rest of the day. What this means, of course, is that the greatest agency for learning of God and duty has been largely denuded of its effectiveness. Hitherto, wherever faithfully practised, the sanctifying of a whole day to religious purposes made possible the effectiveness of the Christian gospel by providing for its proclamation and by instruction regarding its need. But now, for all practical purposes, the fourth commandment has been eviscerated, and with it the professing Christian church. Sound and fury remain, but the potency of the apostolic and the Reformation eras is unknown.

Without a doubt, the decay of the sabbatical institution and the truths it symbolizes have resulted in our present meteoric crime rate, rampant materialism and humanism, the increase to pandemic proportions of suicide and depression its preliminary, and the general moral malaise. Those who rarely stop to think of God, also rarely stop to think of right in contrast to wrong. Not blatant atheism nor immorality is the central problem but rather the practise of the absence of God. Has it not been demonstrated through all time that there is need to fear most that person who fears God least?

One of the reasons for Sunday ceasing to be observed in a sabbatical sense is the increased awareness by Protestant ministers that the New Testament does not provide any legitimate basis for observing Sunday as the fulfillment of the fourth commandment. Exegetical advance since the publication of Winer's Greek Grammar has been along the lines of geometrical progression. So much so, that today exegetes from Jewish, Catholic, or Protestant backgrounds often agree in their conclusions on a given passage of Scripture. Because of this, there is now a great gulf fixed between some of the creedal tenets of a church body and what is believed by the professional exegetes of that same group. For example, since Oscar Cullmann's "Immortality of the soul and the Resurrection of the Dead," published in the Harvard Divinity School Bulletin a generation ago, a countless host of exegetes have acknowledged that the Bible nowhere teaches the Platonic view of the nature of man. Similarly, many long cherished sectarian beliefs have melted in many movements before the fire of scholarly research pursued within those same movements.

A large number of Sunday-"keeping" clergy have long been aware that the Puritan polemic for sabbatizing on the first day of the week has not withstood modern investigation. Let us refer to a few features which have become apparent to many in this century.

1. As H. Reisenfeld and others have pointed out:

In actual fact there is nothing which indicates that the first weekday in the life of the early church was a "holy day" on an analogy with the Sabbath in the life of the Jewish people.<sup>1</sup>

2. Not only was the first day of the week not observed as a holy Sabbath, but there is no real New Testament evidence that it was even kept as a regular meeting day. Again we quote Reisenfeld who reflects the convictions of many:

... neither in the cited passages nor elsewhere is anything said about the apostles or later Christians in general gathering together on that day. True, Jesus had risen from the dead on the first day of the week according to the Jewish chronology, but if this day had been expressly selected as a substitute for the Sabbath by Christians, then somewhere in the New Testament writings or in the older literature of the early church it should be called "the day of the resurrection" or something similar. But all designations of this kind are lacking and, similarly, any suggestion in the texts in question that the early church consciously selected a week day for their gatherings is absent.<sup>2</sup>

3. Furthermore, both the biblical and historical evidence indicate that the seventh-day Sabbath was long observed in the Christian church. Scores of Christian writers from the early centuries can be quoted to this effect. See our appendix on the matter. Note Reisenfeld again:

We may take it for granted that the Sabbath days gave Christians in general the opportunity to go to the temple's or synagogue's three services during the course of the day, or at least to one or some of them.<sup>3</sup>

The fact that the Christian day--or night--of worship was preceded by the Sabbath, resulted, however, in even the Sabbath being used for Christian gatherings and services in districts where this day to a greater or lesser extent had the character of holiday in the

general life of the community. It is easy to picture that for many members of the community it would be more suitable to take part in services during the course of this day, when work ceased in the large Jewish communities in, for example, Syrian towns, than to do this during the night hours before a new working day and working week. That this was the case can be read from the order of service in parts of the Eastern church, where instructions and lectionaries indicate that the Sabbath was a day of worship in a way similar to Sunday.<sup>4</sup>

If we now turn our gaze from the ministry of Jesus to the rules and conceptions of faith in the early church, it may seem as if the church should have retained the observance of the Sabbath--even though in a modified form--and this precisely because Jesus had given to this day a new symbolic content and consequently an eschatological perspective, something which must have appealed to the reflective activity of early Christian leaders. That they were aware of the Master's attitude to and teaching about the Sabbath is clear both from the fact that the pericopes containing the arguments concerning the Sabbath were handed down in the various strata of Gospel matter and also from the wording in which the various pericopes have been clothed.<sup>5</sup>

4. Even key "first-day" texts more likely apply to Saturday night than to Sunday.

When Paul was in Troas and thus in a Christian community in a Hellenistic milieu in the fifties, people gathered together "on the first (day) after the sabbath" to break bread. From the context it appears that it was in the evening, perhaps late, for the apostle prolonged his sermon until midnight (Acts 20:7). It was on that occasion that a young man fell asleep and fell out of the window. The form of the expression suggests that it was the evening after the Sabbath, not the evening after the day following the Sabbath.... When Paul instructs the Corinthians that literally "on the first after the sabbath" they should put aside what they can do without to put in the collection (1 Cor. 16:2),... it would appear to have been in the evening or night following the Jewish Sabbath.<sup>6</sup>

One should compare the N.E.B. translation of Acts 20:7 and the discussion in The Expositor's Bible on this text.

5. Thus for the first three centuries we never find Christian writers using the "first-day" texts as evidence for Sunday Sabbath-keeping. Reisenfeld believes the early church met on Saturday night and then later for "practical reasons" brought in Sunday observance.

... the combination of the first day of the week with the day of Christ's resurrection was not the primary and, from the very beginning, the ideologically dominating conception of the Christian day of worship, but rather that this had developed in obvious connection with the rhythm of the Jewish week but for practical reasons was postponed to the night after the Sabbath and later to the following day.<sup>7</sup>

Dr Samuele Bacchiocchi, in his monumental From Sabbath to Sunday summarizes thus:

Traditionally the adoption of Sunday observance in place of the seventh-day Sabbath has been attributed to ecclesiastical authority rather than to Biblical precept or mandate. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), for example, states categorically: "In the New Law the observance of the Lord's day took the place of the observance of the Sabbath, not by virtue of the precept Fourth Commandment, but by the institution of the Church." The same view was reiterated three centuries later in the Catechism of the Council of Trent (1566), which states, "It pleased the Church of God that the religious celebration of the Sabbath day should be transferred to 'the Lord's day.'" During the theological controversies of the sixteenth century, Catholic theologians often appealed to the ecclesiastical origin of Sunday in order to prove the power of their Church to introduce new laws and ceremonies. The echo of such a controversy can be detected even in the historical Lutheran Augsburg Confession (1530), which states: "They [the Catholics] refer to the Sabbath-day as having been changed into the Lord's Day, contrary to the Decalogue, as it seems. Neither is there any example whereof they make more than concerning the changing of the Sabbath-day. Great, say they, is the power of the Church, since it has dispensed with one of the Ten Commandments!"<sup>8</sup>

The monumental symposium (about 700 pages) sponsored by the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical Research in Cambridge, England and written by Professors D.A. Carson, Harold H.P. Dressler, C. Rowland, M.M.B. Turner, D.R. de Lacey, A.T. Lincoln, and R.J. Bauckham, concludes that "it is barely imaginable that first day Sabbath observance... commenced before the Jerusalem council. A.D. 49. Nor can we stop there. We must go on to maintain that first day Sabbath observance cannot easily be understood as a phenomenon of the apostolic age and of apostolic authority, at all."<sup>9</sup>

True, there are some modern writers defending the Puritan position. These include R.T. Beckwith, W. Stott, F.N. Lee, and Paul K. Jewett. But their works have not met with general scholarly agreement. And it has to be conceded by all that the opposing position is by no means novel. The volume Questions on Doctrine has a symposium of statements by earlier writers to the same effect. Neander, Robert W. Dale, Dr Isaac Williams, Lyman Abbott, Dean F.W. Farrar, Canon Eyton, N. Summerbell, William E. Gladstone concur. For example, the well-known statement of Neander runs:

The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday.<sup>10</sup>

Turning from human testimonies, let us endeavor to give a brief summary of the biblical evidence on this matter.

1. The first day of the week is referred to only nine times in Scripture, once in Gen. 1, and the remaining eight in the New Testament.
2. Six of the eight New Testament references apply to the same first day--that of Christ's resurrection.
3. None of these six have any word attached to them regarding the subsequent solemnizing of the day. None of them give a sacred title to the day. None link it with Sabbath-keeping, and none contain a precept for the Christian church.
4. The other New Testament references have neither of them anything to say about Sabbath-keeping, and give no command for Sunday-observance.
5. One of these two references, at least, applies to Saturday night and not Sunday.
6. The other of these two does contain a command but not one to do with the fourth commandment or one with continuing relevance. Rather the precept addressed to those helping in famine relief required a measure of book-keeping in order to ascertain how much money

could be given for an emergency offering. This money was to be laid aside and stored up at home until called for. There is no evidence the money was placed in some collection plate at a first-day worship service.

7. Thus there is nowhere in the New Testament a command to observe the first day of the week as a Christian meeting day or as a Sabbath.

8. But the same inspired volume refers to the seventh-day Sabbath at least fifty-nine times without a single negative note. The one possible exception is where Sabbath-keeping was being prostituted to the astrological worship of angels. See Col. 2:16-22.

9. The central figure of Christianity tells us that the Sabbath was made for man, inferring its introduction at the time of creation and its continued obligation so long as men exist on this planet. Mk. 2:27.

10. Christ certainly observed the Sabbath Himself in life and death, and nowhere intimated that it was soon to cease. At the risk of His life and mission He cleansed that institution from its human burdensome traditions obviously with a view to its later right use. He warned against those who made void the commandments of God by their human traditions. See Mk. 7:9-13.

11. Both Christ and the apostles take for granted the binding obligation of the Decalogue. Every reference to it in the New Testament as a standard for living is commendatory. Though inadequate as a method of salvation, it remains "the commandment of God" (Mk. 7:8, 9), and in contrast to circumcision which is nothing, the divine precepts are set forth as "everything". See 1 Cor 7:19 Weymouth. With this in view, let us recall that one-third of the Decalogue is given over to the fourth commandment. In the very heart of the proclamation from Sinai are the words: "the seventh day is the Sabbath." This affirmation is literally the very center of the Decalogue.

12. The New Testament's last book refers to the "Lord's Day", but there is no evidence that Sunday is intended. Nearly a century passed before that phrase became common enough in Christian literature to be preserved for us. And that century was one of increasing apostasy, a time when many strange practices appeared among the successors of the apostles. That Rev. 1:10 applies to the seventh-day Sabbath is suggested by Mk. 2:28; Isa. 58:13, 14; and Ex. 20:8-11. The whole context with its references to the king-priest motif, the Alpha and Omega I AM, the sanctuary, redemption all points back to the times of Ex 20. This includes the "loud voice like a trumpet" found in the same passage as "the Lord's day." The great events in the history of early Israel were the bondage of Egypt and its redemption, the judgment scene of Sinai, and the rest of the Promised Land. In the fourth commandment were allusions to all three. Compare Deut 5:15.

Three times Ex 20:8-11 calls the seventh day the Lord's. To apply Rev. 1:10 to the last great day of God does not fit the context which tells us the key factors about the actual writing of the book ---who, where, when. It was perfectly appropriate that the persecuted beloved disciple in exile should receive visions of the eternal glory on the hallowed rest day. About fifty times he uses the number seven describing the experiences of the Israel of God from the Cross to the Sabbatismos of glory. See Heb 4:9.

Let those who wish to live by "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" consider the biblical and historical evidence on this issue. Then fear not to take your stand with patriarchs, kings, prophets, apostles, and the great God ---all of whom kept the Sabbath of Eden. Not in order to be saved, but because of the gift of so great salvation, be not timid to follow the example of Him who named Himself "the Lord of the Sabbath."

Remember not only that on the sixth day of creation God the Son entered into rest, but that the sixth day of Calvary was also precipitated by His defense of the covenant sign. See Mk. 3:6; Mt. 12:14; Lu. 6:11; Jn. 5:16, 18. See the opening of the side of the second Adam that eve of the Calvary Sabbath "in the place where... there was a garden" Jn. 19:41. The only whole day in the garden tomb was the Sabbath day and when He rose He left His garments in the place of rest to assure us that as our great High Priest the atonement was accomplished and henceforth we might enter also "the rest that remaineth" through the veil into the very presence of the reconciled God. Cp. Lev. 16:23; Heb. 4:3; Heb. 6:19, 20; 9:12, 24, 25; 10:19, 20 (compare the "enters" of Heb. 4 with those of chapters nine and ten.)

George Adam Smith in his classic commentary on Isaiah wrote that in essence the Sabbath passages of that book (especially 58:13, 14) taught "Inasmuch as ye do it unto the Sabbath, ye do it unto Me." Therefore let us keep the festive day as the recurring reminder of God's mighty works in creation and redemption. See in it the symbol of the perfect joyous rest of heart and conscience given to all who trust in the finished work of Christ, for it is written "we who have believed enter that rest." Heb. 4:3. Christ is our Sabbath and He has given us His special day to remind us of that glorious truth.

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. H. Riesenfeld, The Gospel Tradition, p. 124.
2. Ibid., pp. 123-24.
3. Ibid., p. 127.
4. Ibid., p. 131.
5. Ibid., p. 122.
6. Ibid., pp. 127-28.
7. Ibid., pp. 136-37.
8. S. Bacchiocchi, Divine Rest for Human Restlessness, p. 229.
9. Ibid., p. 231.
10. Cited in Questions on Doctrine, p. 172.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Do you consider that someone who differs from you on the Sabbath is lost?

A. No one is saved by what they do, or lost by what they do not do. It is the whole-hearted response to Calvary, the taking hold of Christ's saving merits, which alone is essential. But it is certain that anyone so trusting will also be obedient to whatever light God in His providence casts on their pathway. Jn. 12:35; 14:15; Ps. 18:14; Lu. 6:46; 8:21; Mt. 7:21.

Q. Do you look on those who reject the fourth commandment as antinomian?

A. In its worst form antinomianism suggests that justification by faith leaves room for willing persistence in sin. This certainly cannot be said of the vast majority of Christians who do not recognize the binding obligation of the Sabbath. There is another form of antinomianism which rejects the moral law as the rule for Christian living. In the Brethren movement are found many who hold this view, but it should never be thought that such believers are therefore careless in behavior. Such is not the case. Nevertheless, all disparagement of the Decalogue tends to feed the rebellious world's disregard for the will of God as revealed in His law, and indirectly at least feeds antinomianism.

Q. Is it possible for Sabbath-keepers to have fellowship with those who worship on another day, or who observe no day at all?

A. Protestants who reject the use of graven images yet recognize a vast host of Roman Catholics as Christian brethren. Obviously there can be fellowship among such, but just as obviously such fellowship can never be complete while a significant difference of opinion in worship exists. What is true of the situation involving the second commandment of the Decalogue is true also concerning the fourth.

Q. How can you stick to the Sabbath idea when the main group who teach it once taught that salvation had closed for the world in 1844?

A. Most Christians have no trouble assenting to the majority of what Calvinists teach despite the fact that thorough-going Calvinists believe that from eternity it has been decreed that most men should be lost, and that only a minority have been singled out for eternal life. Infallibility is not the pre-requisite for a theological contribution. Otherwise, no group could contribute anything.

Q. But do you seriously think it is possible that one day the whole world could be tested over the Sabbath?

A. The very first time the Sabbath is named (not just mentioned) in Scripture, it is referred to as a test. See Ex. 16:4, 28-29. At the beginning and end of each dispensation, we find the Sabbath conspicuous in that light. See, for example, Gen. 2:2-3; Ex. 20:8-11 (& ch. 16); Jer. 17:24-27; Neh. 13:15-18; Isa. 58:13-14; Mt. 12; Mk. 2; Lu. 6, 13, 14, etc. Protology and eschatology have long been recognized as related. In Eden, man was told nothing about faith and love, but he was told to obey in a matter that seemed insignificant and unnecessary, and therefore calculated to be a true test. So the Bible's last book distinctly asserts that the final sifting of professing Christians will be over obedience to the commandments of God. See Rev. 13:13-18; 14:9-11; 12:17. As one reads these Scriptures which refer repeatedly to worship, it is obvious that the first table of the Decalogue, and not the second, is in focus. The key issue will be whether the world acknowledges the Creator, or chooses to worship according to creature-made traditions.

Said Bishop Wordsworth:

The fourth commandment is not as yet seen by us to rest on the same ground of morality as the other nine. But perhaps on this very account the fourth may be fitly said to be better adapted than any other of the Ten Commandments (of which we see the reason) to try our faith and obedience to God. We have good reason for obeying God in all that He commands. But in doing things of which we ourselves see the reason, we may be only obeying ourselves, and not be obeying God. Therefore Almighty God tests our faith by things of which we do not see the reason.<sup>1</sup>

Karl Barth agrees:

The holy day is a sign, and keeping it holy an exercise, of man's freedom before God and of the special responsibility towards Him in which he is man, the human creature. As the regular observance of a definite portion of time, keeping the holy day is the most visible and, because of this day's special meaning, the most comprehensive form of this special responsibility.<sup>2</sup>

Q. The Pharisees were strict Sabbath-keepers but Christ did not seem to agree with them. Was this not because He saw it was unimportant?

A. On the contrary. Christ risked His life and mission to rescue the Sabbath from the legalistic perversions of the Pharisees and to show what was in harmony with the original law. See Mt. 12:7, 12. He spoke no word implying the abolition of the Sabbath. Why should He so carefully define, defend, and clear from superstitious accretions an institution immediately to be abrogated? No one repairs a house as a preliminary to burning it down, or re-etches the letters of a monument prior to its destruction.

Q. You speak much from the Gospels, but surely the words of Paul are more significant for us. Jesus spoke before the Cross, but Paul after. Is not that the case?

A. Both the Gospels and the Epistles were written after Pentecost, and the Gospels later than the bulk of the Epistles. For many years it has been recognized by scholars that the Gospel writers selected from the great mass of oral tradition about Jesus those things specially relevant for Christians this side of the cross.

The Bible's last book has much to say about "the testimony of Jesus" and the "faith of Jesus." These are subjective genitives, and therefore signify the witnessing words and teachings of our Lord. (Compare Rev. 1:9 which refers to "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus." "The word of God" does not mean words about God but words which came from God, and similarly "the testimony of Jesus" means testimony from Jesus.) Should we not observe that these key phrases are not: "the testimony of Paul" or "the faith of Paul."

As one reads the Gospels carefully, it stands out significantly that our Lord's words on purely Jewish matters have never been recorded at length. We find an amazing reserve in His attitude to external rites and ceremonies. Apart from His baptism as our Representative, we find no ceremonial washings in His practise, no Nazarite vow, no outward anointing, no special offerings. In His relationship to the Temple, He

made it clear that when He died, it would cease to have significance (see Jn. 2:13-22; 4:21-24).

As for the subsidiary laws of Israel compared to the Decalogue, He likened them to a gnat contrasted with a camel. See Mt. 23:23, 24. While the Gospels record His reforms in connection with the third, fourth, fifth, and seventh commandments, we read of no defense from Him of any of Israel's civil or religious institutions outside the Decalogue.

The disciples are set forth in the Gospels as representative Christians. God was their Father, Christ their Lord, and the Spirit already theirs by the plan and promise of God, and bestowed when Christ was glorified. As Norman Douty has written:

... these are precisely the relations to the persons of the Trinity in which all who have believed since that ministry, have stood. Since the relations of both groups are the same, the groups are spiritually one--the earlier being representative of the later.

It, therefore, follows that whatever Christ taught His disciples during His earthly ministry, He taught them as our representatives. He taught them as prospective members of His Church. Hence, His teaching given to them belongs equally to us. Accordingly, whoever strips the Church of Christ's teaching, does it a serious wrong....<sup>3</sup>

Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation confirm this. See Acts 1:1 which tells us clearly that everything after the ascension is but a continuation of our Lord's teaching. It is an addition to, not an alteration of, His previous instructions. This, of course, was precisely promised by Jesus when He said the Spirit would call to the minds of the disciples what He had earlier said, as well as lead them further into the infinite storehouse of truth. See Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 7:10-12; 1 Tim. 6:3; Heb. 2:3; 1 Thess. 4:15; Hb. 2:3; 1 Jn. 1:1, 3, 5; 2 Jn. 9. Each passage is illuminating on this issue.

Christ likened Himself to the Sun. See Jn. 8:12. Every ray of spiritual truth but reflects the teachings of Christ, as moon and stars the central light of the solar system. Thus Christ could tell Pilate that His purpose in the world was to bear witness to the truth, and to others He said, "If ye continue in my word, then... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 18:37; 8:31, 32).

Our Lord is the Way, and the Life, because He is also the Truth. He is the pattern Son of man, and the Door of the Sheepfold of the church, as well as our manna and wine. The light of God has never shone more clearly than through the words of Jesus recorded in the four Gospels. While Paul expanded on the themes of the Atonement, the resurrection, and justification by faith, the seeds of all his developments are found in the discourses of Christ.

Q. Is not the Sabbath a barrier in reaching others?

A. It is rarely wise to stress differences at the commencement of a new relationship. For example, evangelical Baptists in seeking the conversion of a soul rarely mention immersion. Furthermore, faith in Christ is the pre-eminent badge of any Christian--the faith that works by love. But light on the fourth commandment shed at the right time need be no barrier. The Sabbath was made "for" man. It is a precious gift, an heirloom of Eden, and according to Isa. 58:13 a "delight" (or "luxury" as the original signifies). Rightly entered into, Sabbath-keeping is a superlative aid in Christian living and an opportunity for Christian service. In an existential age where meaninglessness threatens all who know not God, the Sabbath is specially significant as a continual reminder that life has meaning because the good God made us all. Time, for the capable person, is more scarce than rubies, and to receive a mandate from heaven to regularly dedicate time to such primaries as worship is a tremendous help for every conscientious soul. The Sabbath commandment brings a blessed relief from tedious toil, from covetous employers, and from the incursions of worldliness.

Q. How can one keep the Sabbath in Arctic regions? And what about the uncertainties created by the International Date-line?

A. Days are habitually reckoned at the Arctic by the dip-point of the sun or stars. No one has ever had trouble keeping a diary there.

It is no more difficult to find the seventh day of the week on this round world than it is to find the first. The international date line chiefly affects travelers; reckoning has to be adjusted by such because of the fact that they are traveling either with or against the sun. The Middle East was the cradle of the race, and men spread east and west from there until they met at the Pacific. When they met, because of the different direction of their travels and the apparent gain or loss of time, it was necessary that an adjustment be made. This adjustment was made in the place where it was needed, and the international date line merely legislated that which God's providence had indicated.

When men met in the Pacific it was legitimate for them to adopt either Eastern or Western time, and decisions were made according to geographical, political, economic, and social conditions and connections. These motives were legitimate ones and whatever time was adopted by the inhabitants of the Pacific was chosen appropriately, according to the exigencies of the case.

Here is a quotation from one student of the question: "As man in his travels compassed the earth, westward or eastward, it was necessary that he should, as the case might be, drop a day from, or add a day to, his reckoning time.

"The necessity was first met and realized in the Pacific and in the Pacific the difficulty was adjusted by those whom it immediately affected. Commerce and science are in perfect accord with the method and place of adjustment. In the absence of any instruction from the Lord, it is perfectly right for, in fact incumbent upon, man to make such adjustments as will dispose of the difficulty. God is a lover of order, and whenever He has not given explicit directions concerning anything that is essential for man's order and welfare, it is because he has endowed man with judgment sufficient to settle the matter for himself. The custom of adding a day to, or dropping a day from, the reckoning of time in crossing the Pacific, produces order out of that which would otherwise be confusion, and meets the case to the entire satisfaction of all the world.

"From the facts enumerated above, it is reasonable to conclude that the custom of coordinating dates in the Pacific Ocean is a providential appointment; and that, although not explicitly commanded, it is obligatory in its nature, and should be recognized by those who visit the islands of the Pacific or cross its broad waters. The time, Eastern or Western, decided upon by those who inhabit the islands, is the time the stranger should adopt, as he adopts the time of any other place to which he may go.

"The powers that be are ordained of God.'... How are they ordained? Not by revelation; nor miraculously; but providentially through the will of the people.... We can see the hand of Providence in the affairs of both Church and State. In the same sense it can be said that the custom of adjusting time in the Pacific, to which man is committed by circumstances upon which he has no control, is divinely ordained. It is for the benefit of all. It exalts no individual, no nation, no religious sect. The custom reflects

unfavourably upon none. It detracts no honour from God; neither does it interfere with the keeping of His law in any way; but rather, in certain difficulties, simplifies its observance."<sup>4</sup>

Q. How could all keep the Sabbath these days when society is dependent upon the upkeep of service utilities such as electricity etc.?

A. The Bible teaches clearly that work of necessity is permitted on the Sabbath. But if all were Sabbath-keepers, essential activities could be maintained by skeleton staffs with a regular change of personnel so that none would continually be deprived of the blessings of the Sabbath. See Neh. 13:19; 1 Chr. 9:32; 2 Chr. 23:4, 8; Mt. 12:5, 12.

Q. Did not circumcision stand as a badge for all Jewish distinctives including Sabbath-keeping?

A. This was indeed the case for Jews, but not for the Gentile "God-fearers" who attended the synagogues without becoming Jewish in life-style. There is a plethora of statements from early writers concerning Gentile Sabbath-keepers who were not circumcised. Note Acts 13:42-44.

Q. Should we now be bound to every letter of the Ten Commandments?

A. No. Since Pentecost, Christians have been led to apply the Decalogue in harmony with the position and privileges of the Church. This usually means a deepening of the significance of the Ten Commandments rather than a lessening of obligation. Christ shows the way in each instance. See Mt. 5; Mk. 7; Mt. 12, etc. See 2 Cor. 3 and Ro. 7:6; 8:4.

Q. Are not faith and love the big matters rather than commandments?

A. Yes, as regards motivation. No, as regards content for specific responsibility. Love and faith energize rather than inform. If even Adam and Eve needed specific guidance (see Gen. 1:28, 29; 2:3, 16, 17), how much more do we sinners need it? Dependence on faith and love alone can lead to mysticism.

Q. Does not general revelation inform us concerning Gods' eternal moral law?

A. Not adequately. It (general revelation in the world of nature) teaches neither monotheism, or monogamy. It does not warn against idolatrous image-making or convince us that covetousness is wrong. General revelation can only be rightly understood through the glass of the special revelation of Scripture. Even the greatest of the pagan philosophers believed in homosexuality and disbelieved in fundamental Christian virtues such as meekness and humility.

Q. Does not Ro. 14:5 teach that it does not matter whether we esteem one day above another, or all days alike?

A. When Paul urges believers to be fully persuaded in their own minds and leaves them free to follow their own consciences he is certainly discussing indifferent matters, not the commandments of God. In Ro. 14 the situation concerns fasting on certain days and abstaining from wine. This was not something that came from the Jewish Torah, but was a Gentile superstition or an adoption from the Essenes. Ex. 16:4 uses "every day" in the sense of every week day except the Sabbath, and the same is true in Ro. 14.

Q. Do we look to Paul or to Christ for the last word on this issue of the Sabbath?

A. Only Paul could fully explain the Atonement because complete explanation of that could not be given under after the event of the Cross. But everything to be sealed by the blood of the new covenant had to be set forth before the Cross, and thus Christ even summed up the meaning of His death before it happened. See Mk. 10:45; Mt. 26:26.

Everything in the Christian faith is first found in Christ. He, and not Paul, is the one foundation other than which no man can lay. Christ on earth acted as the Saviour of the world, not merely as a son of Abraham. We never find Him discoursing at length on ceremonial duties, or upon anything about to pass away. He made it clear that moral issues lie at the heart of duty. See Mt. 23:23-24.

The four Gospels were written after Pentecost and thus the life of Christ is there set forth as basic in its teaching for all Christians for all time. See Mk. 1:1; Jn. 14:6; 18:37. Christ, not Paul, is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. As Dr. A. H. Lewis has written:

Christ is the central character of the New Testament. The gospel is embodied in him; God was in him, reconciling the world unto himself. His teachings and practices form the ultimate authority, in all matters of Christianity. What he did, he did as Christ the Saviour. He always observed the Sabbath. Instead of destroying it, he pruned it, that it might bring forth more fruit. If Christ kept the Sabbath as a Jew then "Christ lived and taught simply as a Jew, and not as the Saviour of the world."

Q. Is it not characteristic of Old Testament religion to live by a rule-book, whereas in Christianity one decides from principles?

A. This is only a half-truth. Note the words of Patrick Fairbairn:

It was characteristic of the Old Covenant that it had a system of rules, dealt in exact and definite prescriptions; but these, it ought to be remembered were far from defining everything in the wide world of duty: a very large proportion of them related merely to the sacrificial worship of the temple, and to particular conditions and circumstances of life; while in a great variety of things besides, things pertaining to the weekly service of God and the procedure of ordinary life, men were to a large extent thrown upon principle for their guidance, and if this failed, then they had no specific rule to fall back upon. They were commanded, for example, to honour the Lord with their substance--to be kind to the stranger sojourning amongst them--to treat with compassion and generosity their poor--to love a brother, and in love rebuke him, if sin were found to be upon him; --but for carrying out such commands in all supposable cases, no precise rules either were or could be given.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, look at the specific counsels in the second half of every Pauline epistle. (e.g. Ro. chs. 12 and 13.)

Q. Do the Epistles interpret the Gospels?

A. We would err if we thought the Epistles were written last and the Gospels first. The reverse is true. But both were written after Pentecost, and each casts light upon the other. The Epistles have almost nothing to say about the life and words of Jesus--the greatest light which ever shone upon men. Earlier religious generations thought of the Gospels as historical and biographical but not theological, and the Epistles as the reverse. No theologian thinks that way today, for it has been repeatedly demonstrated that the four Gospels are profoundly theological in their presentations.

Q. Why does not the Jerusalem council refer to Sabbath-keeping for the Gentiles if they were to keep it?

A. Note that the Gentiles were told to abstain from not only fornication but also from acts that were not in themselves immoral. Why? Lest Jewish Christians be offended. Thus they were to refrain from eating food offered to idols. If, as all admit, the Jewish Christians observed the Sabbath would they not have been more scandalized had their Gentile brethren ignored the holy day and trodden upon it? Only the fact that the Gentile Christians took Sabbath-keeping for granted made it unnecessary for the Jerusalem Council to enjoin it. See Acts 13:42, 44; 16:12, 13; 15:21.

Q. Is it true that the New Testament makes no difference between ceremonial and moral laws?

A. No. Christ only ever discoursed upon the latter, and likewise Paul. See Mt. chs. 5-7 and 1 Cor. 7:19.

Q. How could Gentile slaves have kept the Sabbath?

A. How could they have followed righteousness in other matters such as purity, etc., when constantly urged by their owners to achieve the latter's objectives whatever the cost? It is exceedingly doubtful that there were large numbers of Gentile slaves among the early Christians unless we include those owned by Jewish or Christian masters. We never once find the word "slave" on a catacomb tomb.

Some slaves, of course, had risen to positions of trust and had a large measure of freedom. The Roman Empire granted religious freedom wherever possible, and so did many of the Roman aristocrats to their human property. It should also be remembered that early Christian meetings were often very lengthy affairs and the time taken in travelling and attending such would often have swallowed most of a day. Therefore, Sabbath-keeping or no Sabbath-keeping, slaves of intolerant masters would have had a problem in being Christians.

... the general membership of the congregations was, contrary to the usual view, composed of fairly well-to-do and intelligent people and commonly had among them also persons of highly respectable, and sometimes quite conspicuous positions. I am glad in this view to find myself supported by the writer already frequently quoted--V. Schultze. "It was not the base elements," he says, "which came into the Church; but, on the contrary, the better strata of the Roman population, the artificers, the shopkeepers, and the small landed proprietors, therefore preponderatingly the under and middle portion of the citizen class, who, in the general moral and religious dissolution of heathenism, still proved themselves the soundest classes in the community." Untergang, I, p. 25. I propose, in the remainder of the lecture, to adduce some of the evidence furnished by early ecclesiastical history, which, I think, makes clear the justice of this contention.

Here, again, I can have no hesitation in placing in the forefront of my argument the comparatively recent and singularly impressive testimony of the Catacombs.<sup>6</sup>

We should not, however, regard slaves as a homogeneous group. They came from many national backgrounds and served many different functions in the Roman economy. Their condition varied greatly according to such factors as geographical location (Egypt was notable for care and protection of slaves), individual skills, attitudes of owners, and political conditions. The slave revolts in Italy and Sicily in the late Republic attest to widespread discontent at that time, and this picture is reinforced by Cato's account of slave labor in the realm of agriculture. Under Augustus the fate of slaves further declined as a result of the official policy to restore the Roman citizen to a preferred position vis-à-vis foreigners, freedmen, and slaves. By contrast, the period following Augustus saw a gradual improvement in slave conditions.<sup>7</sup>

The picture of slave religion is at once puzzling and revealing. To begin with an apparent anomaly, we note that Paul's letter to the Philippians concludes with a greeting from "those of Caesar's household" (1:22). Although it is clear that the persons concerned were slaves and freedmen, not members of the imperial family, the presence of Christians among the emperor's slaves comes as something of a surprise. On the other hand, this bit of information suggests that the slaves were free in their religious life as long as it did not interfere with their official duties. Beyond this, F. Boerner has noted that Roman law granted slaves full legal standing in religious matters: their oaths were binding, their graves were sacred and could not be violated without penalty, and their curses were regarded as efficacious.

... In religious matters, slaves formed a microcosm that reflected the macrocosm of their masters. Weber had theorized that slaves as a group were almost never bearers of a distinctive type of religion. Even the willingness of slaves to accept the religious forms of their owners, which one might regard as somewhat surprising, is accounted for by his theory. One factor was surely the ever-present possibility of release from slavery, which must have encouraged a superficial acceptance of traditional cults. Another is that the ambivalent attitude of depressed groups toward their social superiors always includes, along with hate and resentment, an element of admiration and an impulse toward emulation. Still another factor was the gradual improvement in the conditions of slavery in the early Empire....<sup>8</sup>

Q. Where does the New Testament say that though some major parts of the Mosaic code no longer apply, and that the entire system as a system is abolished, yet some of the moral laws therein such as the Decalogue remain for Christians?

A. See Heb. 7:11; 8:13; 10:9 ff; Eph. 2:15; Gal. chs. 2-5; Mt. 5:17-48; Jn. 4:21; 2 Tim. 1:8; Ro. 13:8-10; Mt. 19:16-19; Ro. 7:12, 14; 8:4, etc.

In Hebrews we are told of a change of the law rather than a simple abolition. See 7:11. In 8:13; 10:9 ff., it is said that the law once written on stones is now to be transcribed on the heart, while laws relative to sacrifice are taken away. 1 Cor. 7:19 tells the same story. All of which harmonizes with the Old Testament declarations that obedience is better than sacrifice, and that God rejected all outward ceremonial unless accompanied by a surrendered heart. For example, see Isa. chs. 1, 58; Jer. 7; Hos. 4:1, 2.

The O.T. law has indeed been changed as Heb. 7:11 says. Not only the civic laws which ceased with the nation, but the elements typifying the solution to the sin problem have been abolished. But other elements reflecting the Edenic relationship between God and man when the divine law was written on the heart--these are established under the new covenant. Thus we have in the new covenant (the New Testament) both continuity and progress.

Heb. 9 shows that the two apartments of the sanctuary symbolized this truth. The first apartment reflected an era characterized by distance from God as shown by various required washings and sacrifices imposed until the time of reformation. But the second apartment where only the high priest entered and where the moral law was enshrined within a chest that represented the heart of Christ and the throne of

God--this second room symbolized the Christian era where the moral law remains though the ceremonial and national elements of the Torah have gone.

Q. Is it not clear from Galatians that the whole Mosaic code is no longer binding upon Christians?

A. Yes, as a complete code it has ceased to govern men. Yet that same code did contain laws relative to duties that are perpetual, such as loving God with all one's heart and one's neighbor as oneself. The collapse of a house does not destroy the sunshine which illuminates it, and the collapse of the Torah does not dissolve the moral law within it. One may leave his native country and become naturalized in another. Though no longer under the law of the first, such a person will inevitably find its major moral laws still binding in the second country. Thus it was with the transition from Judaism to Christianity.

Paul could write many years after the Cross that men who knew the law would be judged by it and that its commandments were holy, just, and good still. See Ro. 2:12; 7:12, 14. Even about thirty years after the Cross he saw the moral law as "the embodiment of knowledge and truth." Ro. 2:20.

Q. Are not the passages in Ro. 14, Gal. 4, and Col. 2 against the keeping of days conclusive against the Sabbath in our time?

A. Only Col. 2 mentions the Sabbath, and that in a setting speaking of regulations springing from human precepts and traditions associated with angel worship. See Col. 2 verses 4 to 22, particularly v. 22. Prominent commentators tell us the Sabbath is not here viewed as part of the Decalogue but as a Jewish legalistic institution perverted and abused by heretics.

Ro. 14 speaks of matters indifferent. Only concerning such could Paul say, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Ro. 14:23. The issue there seems to have reference to abstinence from certain types of food and drink on certain days. This did not emanate from the Jewish law and has no reference to the Sabbath. "Every day" of v. 5 is also found in Ex. 16:4 and there excludes the Sabbath.

Gal. 4 in vs. 8-10 speaks of a return to pagan worship of gods that were no gods, a worship that would be bondage. It does not mention the Sabbath, but refers to slavish legalistic observance of certain "lucky" times associated with "elemental spirits." Though elements of Judaism may have been incorporated such will not explain the whole passage. The Jewish seventh year was certainly not observed in Galatia, nor the year of Jubilee. Nor should the reference to "months" be confused with "new moons" (single days) as some do.

In a recent scholarly commentary on Galatians by John Bligh, the question is asked, "Why is not the Sabbath mentioned in Gal. 4:10?" and the answer given is that the Sabbath was still being kept. Bligh does not say it was kept by all, and indeed no one can do more than reason from New Testament evidence when speaking of Christian practice in the first century. Too many commentators accepting traditional Sunday observance have jumped at the opportunity to find in this passage an abolition of the Sabbath, but such exercise is not legitimate. Bligh is correct. The Sabbath is not mentioned.

Only one text out of the sixty references to the Sabbath in the N.T. appears at all negative, and that one is easily explained by its context. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

Q. How can the Ten Commandments be relevant now when they obviously include references to Jewish conditions?

A. The same question could be asked about every part of the Bible including the words of Christ and Paul. All of God's revelation is historically conditioned, but this in no way robs it of its essence for those taught of the Spirit. The Epistles were all written to people of other cultures long dead, but we apply them to ourselves and rightly so. The case is similar with the Decalogue. Observe in Mt. 4:4 how Christ used an old passage from Deuteronomy addressed to the people of the Exodus. He gratefully appropriated it to Himself.

Q. Why is the fourth commandment not reenacted in the N. T. when all the other nine are?

A. None of the Ten Commandments are reenacted in the N.T. Most are referred to, which is another thing. The second commandment against making graven images is never mentioned, yet all Protestants believe that commandment to be binding. None of the first four commandments are quoted, though more of the fourth commandment is quoted, and more often, than any other. See Acts. 4:24. 14:15; Rev. 10:6; 14:7.

The N.T. is not a book of legislation. It takes the moral law for granted as binding on all. Marriage is never reinstituted, or laws against incest, etc. In view of the legalism of Christ's day, and the excessive attention to form, it is no wonder the Sabbath is not stressed. Yet true Sabbath-keeping is clearly taught in the several chapters of the Gospels recording the Sabbath controversies. See Mt. 12; Mk. 2; Lu. 6, 13, 14; Jn. 5:9. Anyone who sees Christ's deep reverence for "the commandment of God" (Mk. 7:8, 9, 13), will hesitate to dismiss a jot or tittle of the Decalogue. Only God who first enacted the Sabbath could ever rescind it, and it would need to be done with a matching solemnity.

Q. Is not the rest of the Sabbath a symbol of our rest in Christ? Why then should we still observe the symbolic day?

A. The answer to the first question is "Yes!" But the Sabbath is much more besides, for it is a memorial of creation, and a provision for the learning of God's will through regular worship, as well as a restorative agency for body and mind and soul. Marriage is said to be a symbol of the relationship between Christ and His church. See Eph. 5:31-32. No one thinks that this gets rid of marriage in the Christian era. Scripture also declares that in Christ "there is neither male nor female," but again this does not obliterate holy wedlock, the institution of Eden. Obviously, Christ's labors for us do not make unnecessary our labor for six days each week. Neither does His rest from the work of redemption make the rest of the Sabbath unnecessary. See Lu. 23:56. Similarly, our feeding on Christ's death by faith does not make the Lord's Supper unnecessary.

Q. It is not said about the original seventh day what is said regarding evening and morning for the first six. Does this not mean that the rest there recorded goes on forever and does not just apply to a day?

A. We should beware of excessive spiritualization. Ex. 20:8-11, as well as Gen. 2:1-3, makes it quite clear that the inspired writer meant us to conceive of the seventh day of the first week as identical in length to the first six. The blessing of the seventh day meant something special for that part of the week--not a blessing on all of subsequent time. The lack of reference to "the evening and the morning" on day seven points to the final eschatological fulfillment spoken of in Heb. 4:9 which has not yet dawned.

Q. Is there any evidence that Gentiles kept the Sabbath?

A. There is abundant evidence. But first let us remember that the N.T. gives us next to nothing about the regular worship meetings of the

early Christian church. But what we do know is that Isaiah, in speaking of the influx of Gentiles, foretold that they would keep the Sabbath. See Isa. 56:1-8. Gentiles interested in the religion of the Old Testament were already observing the Sabbath in the days when the gospel began to be preached. See Acts 13:44.

Many historians, recent and modern, including Sozomon, Socrates, Brerewood, Coleman, Hefele, Gieseler, and early Christian leaders, including Tertullian, and Augustine, and well-known ancient Christian writings, such as the Apostolic Constitutions, refer to Gentile Sabbath-keeping. Had the early Christians taught the abolition of the fourth commandment, the inevitable storm would have echoed through all the Epistles, just as does the minor (by comparison) issue of circumcision. In some lands, such as Abyssinia, the seventh-day Sabbath was kept for long ages. Almost every writer on the topic admits that both the seventh day and the first were observed in the Roman world for centuries.

Q. Is the Sabbath of the fourth commandment a shadow?

A. Col. 2:17 refers to feasts, new moons, sabbaths, and observances in connection with eating and drinking as a "shadow" 'of the reality brought with Christ. Does Paul have in mind the Sabbath of Eden and Sinai, or the Sabbath of Judaism encumbered with ceremonial practises and minute rules?

A shadow (skia) in the N.T. stands in contrast to an image. See Heb. 10:1. The word is adequately translated in our English versions and essentially means something lacking substance but foreshadowing a blessing to come. Because it lacks substance in itself, it is contrasted with substance and image.

Is it true that the Sabbath of Eden contained nothing in itself? That its only value was its nature as a finger post to Christ and the gospel? It is obviously correct that the feasts and new moons had little of value in themselves correctly considered. They indeed can rightly be called "shadows." Is the same term as appropriate for the original seventh-day Sabbath?

None should deny that the physical rest of the Edenic institution is a figure of the rest in Christ. Heb. 4 makes this clear. But is it only that? Adam was a type or a shadow of Him who was to come, but was he only that? Marriage prefigured the relation between Christ and the church, but was that its only content? The opening of Adam's side pointed to Christ's experience on the Cross, but did the taking of Eve from Adam's side only have the typical meaning of the church springing out of Christ's sufferings?

We walk upon shadows without observing them. They impede no progress and provide no substance that is usable for good or evil. In a sense they are a nothingness and have value only in that they point to something that does have value. Is this all true of the Sabbath?

It is clear that Adam had reality and substance, though a figure of Christ. Similarly, marriage had the same though symbolizing Christ and the church (Eph. 5:31). Had there been no fall, Adam would have lived forever in his integrity and his marriage partner as well. Is not the same true of the Sabbath?

A shadow points forwards but the Sabbath of Eden as stressed in Ex. 20:11 as well as Gen. 2:1-3 points primarily backwards. Creation is memorialized by it. That is its primary purpose and linked with that are the accompanying subsidiary purposes of rest and worship neither of which are insubstantial. Work, rest, worship, are the staple of existence for beings in the image of God. The Sabbath of Eden is no mere finger-board but a part of original and abiding reality. As long as man is man he needs work, rest, worship-- and the Sabbath is so intimately associated with all three.

Shadows are local and visible. But the primeval Sabbath was neither. It was for all the creation and belonged to the spiritual invisible realm. It had no tangible accoutrements like the ceremonial offerings of Judaism's Sabbath. Man as a spiritual being was given a spiritual help-meet in the holy day as surely as he, as a physical being, was given a physical help meet in Eve.

It is clear that the holy day "made for man" had substance in itself--the substance of rest, worship, the presence of God, the memory of great truths relating to the relationship between man the creature and God the Creator. While the Cross brought an end to all the temporary features linked to the Sabbath in Judaism, it strengthened and endorsed the Edenic institution.

Q. Did not the Protestant Reformers pay scant attention to the Sabbath, and reject its binding obligation?

A. The Reformers wrote so little on the issue of the Sabbath that the whole could be read in a matter of minutes. But certain facts stand out concerning their attitude.

1. They found the Sabbath mixed up with a multitude of other holy days of Catholicism. Like Saul, it was "hidden under the stuff." They rejected the lot. But in theory only.

2. While denying that the seventh day or the first is binding upon Christian conscience, the Reformers none the less asserted the necessity of regular Sabbath worship. Like some who today assert that the fourth commandment no longer has significance, they nonetheless did keep one day of the week separate from the rest for purposes of rest and worship. The fact is that religion cannot successfully be separated from Sabbath-observance and thus Calvin could write, "... if it [the Sabbath] were abolished, the Church would be in immediate danger of immediate convulsion and ruin."<sup>9</sup>

Luther also spoke in similar vein. But note the comments of a modern scholar:

By making the Sabbath commandment merely a type and shadow, by reducing the Lord's Day to an expedient custom, the Reformers, we contend, erred on the side of Marcion; they failed to do justice to the church's inheritance in Israel. In other words, the Reformers so stressed the movement in redemptive history--the fulfillment of the Sabbath rest in Christ--that they failed to appreciate the unity of redemptive history, the continuation of the sabbatical division of time in the New Testament church.<sup>10</sup>

For a detailed study of this question, see Patrick Fairbairn's work, The Typology of Scripture.

Q. How can Gen. 2:1-3 be persuasive regarding the Sabbath when many Christians do not believe the early chapters of Genesis to be historical?

A. Many fine Christians believe that as surely as God foretold the distant future in symbolic language, so He did likewise with the distant past. It is certain that some terms in Gen. 1 and 2 cannot be taken literally. For example, Gen. 2:4, by "day," cannot mean in that verse a twenty-four hour day. This is in contrast to the other references to "day" in the creation account. Other terms also are ambivalent in

meaning. Consider the varied meanings for the same Hebrew term translated "heaven" in these chapters.

However, the question is beside the point. Nowhere does Scripture have as its purpose the teaching of science or history. If Genesis one had been written according to heaven's science, we would probably have no more than an equation--and one that no one would be able to understand until glorified! The purpose of Scripture is to tell us how to go to heaven, not how the heavens go. See 2 Tim. 3:15, 16; Jn. 20:31. Most things to do with the physical world are set forth in Scripture according to the language of appearance. Thus we read of the hare chewing the cud and of the sun rising and setting. Similarly, the history of Scripture is salvation--history, the events of the past portrayed in such a manner that truths of salvation stand out.

When we see how Christ and other Bible writers, including Paul, used the early chapters of Genesis, we can be certain they express truth at its deepest level. These Scriptures are fully reliable for their original purpose. The meaning for Christian behavior implicit in Gen. 2:1-3 is clearly spelled out in Ex. 20:8-11. Man, made in the image of God, is to emulate his Creator according to the original work-rest schema.

Q. The New Testament does not support Sabbath observance, for such an external form would provide a method of gaining easy virtue. Is not this the case?

A. Sabbath-keeping, as presented in the New Testament and the Old, is not just an external form. Christ showed that true Sabbath keeping involves a spirit of compassion and a dedication to the healing of men's physical and spiritual ills. See Matthew 12. Hebrews 4:1-9 shows that true Sabbath-keeping comes from entire dependence upon Jesus for righteousness and victory over sin. "We which have believed do enter into rest," says the inspired apostle. Only these with saving faith can keep the Sabbath truly.

We are not to shun requirements of God merely because they are accompanied by an external form. Baptism and the Lord's Supper as well as outward Sabbath observance are external forms, but they are clearly set forth as Christian duties. The external symbolism is a vehicle of truth, instructing all who are illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

W. E. Sangster has written as follows: "He who would abolish symbols altogether must never again shake hands with a friend, or kiss his child, or raise his hat to a lady, or revere and salute his country's flag. Lift all this to a divine level! Think of a Cross, and Bread and Wine... and all impulses to a cavalier dismissal of ritual will die."

Q. What does it mean in the book of Galatians, chapter 3:23-25, where it says that we are "no longer under a schoolmaster"? The schoolmaster here refers to the law, so does not this teach that we need no longer be bothered with law?

A. I doubt that any Christian really believes that we have nothing to do with the law. Some Christians believe that we have to observe only nine-tenths of the law, leaving out the fourth commandment. That is another thing, but it is hardly consistent.

What Paul is saying in Galatians is that the whole Jewish system (called the Torah or "law") was a schoolmaster to prepare the world for the coming of Christ. Now that Christ has come, we need no longer submit to all the ritualistic requirements contained in Judaism.

There is another sense in which the law, and this time we refer to the moral law, is also a schoolmaster. When one gazes into the Ten Commandments of the holy God, he becomes aware of how far short he falls and recognizes his need for a Saviour. Thus the law becomes a schoolmaster to bring him to Christ. When he comes to Christ, he will no longer do what is right merely because it is found in the law; he will do it now out of love for his Saviour. Thus, in another sense, he is no longer under the schoolmaster but under the grace of Christ. But unless a man is in Christ, he remains under law and under condemnation.

Q. Please comment on 1 Timothy 1:9: "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." Christians do not class themselves with such, and neither did Paul. So the law is not for them, and they are allowed to keep whatever day they choose.

A. The preceding verse is worth noticing. It declares, "We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully." The apostle is simply affirming that the saints of God will never have conflict with the law as long as their lives are in complete harmony with it. Just so today, most of us are untroubled by the official guardians of the law of the state because we are not contravening that law. It is the lawbreaker who is condemned by the law, not the lawkeeper. Jas. 2:10, 11 makes clear that the commandments remain the Christian's standard. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For... that law which 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."

Q. Was not the Decalogue given to the Jews? Why then should Christians subscribe to it, seeing Christians came on the scene later?

A. Yes, the Decalogue was given to Jews. So was the Sermon on the Mount and the Great Commission. To whom else could God have given these things? The Jews were the only race with some knowledge of the truth of God. In the Decalogue the Creator referred to Himself as "the Lord thy God." Here He affirmed that He was the God of the Jews, but we Christian Gentiles believe that He is our God also.

Similarly, the code of duty required of the Jews is required of us, plus extras because of our additional privileges in New Testament times. The fifth commandment contains a promise of eternal life and heaven for those demonstrating filial honor. See Eph. 6:1-3. As Gentiles, we should like to think that we also have an opportunity to inherit these blessings. Consider the principles of the Decalogue: loyalty, worship, reverence, sanctification, respect to authority, love, purity, honesty, truthfulness, contentment. Which of these principles can Gentiles dispense with? The two positive commandments of the ten, namely the fourth and the fifth, deal with the Edenic institutions of the Sabbath and marriage, commemorating creation and human love. When will the facts undergirding these institutions cease to be facts? Only then will the institutions based upon them, and the subsidiary laws growing out of them (i.e. the rest of the Ten Commandments), cease to be obligatory.

The apostle John penned this promise: "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." Rev. 22:14. Even the alternative translation of the verse implies that sin (law breaking) defiles our robes of character.

Q. When Jesus cried out on the cross, "It is finished," did He not mean that the Ten Commandments were now abolished?

A. Inasmuch as the suffering Saviour was the One who earlier said "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:10), it is hardly likely that His expiring cry was one of relief that such a burden was now unnecessary. In fact it was the Spirit of Christ

that inspired John to write: "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." 1 Jn. 5:3. Christ's high-priestly prayer gives us the key to understanding His words on the cross. In Gethsemane He prayed, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Jn. 17:4. See also Lu. 12:50.

Q. Please explain Ro. 5:13, 14: "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come." I always thought that the law was in the world from the beginning. Gen. 26:5. What are the laws referred to in Ro. 7 and 8:14? Ro. 6 to 8 seems very puzzling.

A. The apostle Paul, writing under inspiration, used the word "law" in a variety of applications, just as there are some words we use today, which, although spelled the same, have different meanings in different contexts (e.g. a haughty air, a musical air, fresh air). By "law," Paul sometimes means (1) the entire Old Testament (1 Cor. 14:21); (2) the Torah, or the books of the law which the Jews recognized as such (Gen. through Deut.) (1 Cor. 14:34); (3) a principle of, or experience in, life (Ro. 8:2); (4) the entire Hebrew legal code, without special distinction as to the moral or ritual law (Gal. 2:16); (5) the Ten Commandment law (Ro. 7:7); (6) the ritualistic law (Gal. 5:3). In Ro. 5:13, 14, Paul is saying this: Until the giving of the Hebrew legal code through Moses, sin was in the world, for from all eternity God's great moral law of the Ten Commandments had existed. The existence of death through all the centuries from Adam till the Hebrew code was given proves that there must have been a law from the beginning, for it is the transgression of law--sin--which caused death.

In Ro. 7 it is evident that Paul had his eye specifically upon the Ten Commandments. See vv. 7-12, where the apostle quotes one of the ten. Ro. 6:14, in the R.S.V. reads, "For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace." Notice that there is no article before "law." Here Paul is using the word in the third sense mentioned previously. He is saying that the truly born-again Christian will be motivated to obedience by the grace of Christ, not by a servile or legalistic attitude. He will keep the commandments, not in order to be saved, but because Christ is already saving him. This is the key to the three chapters of Ro. 6, 7, 8. In summary, these chapters mean as follows: Those who are baptized are to reckon their old self and their old way of living as now dead, crucified with Christ. They are not to be slaves to the old vices or led by the old motives. Now they are married to Christ, and this union will enable them to do what before was impossible. Before, in their own strength, they constantly failed to keep the commandments of God (Ro. 7:7-25), but now as a result of Christ's work of grace, He writes His law on the fleshly tables of the heart.

Q. In Christ it is not circumcision or uncircumcision (or Saturday Sabbath or Sunday Sabbath) that matters, but the new birth according to Gal. 6:15. Why then do you make a fuss over a matter which is of minor importance and which can only create confusion and useless controversy?

A. You are quite correct in affirming the New Testament principle that it is no outward act which saves, but rather that faith in Christ brings new life to the soul. However, it is interesting to compare with the above verse two similar ones which begin with the same statement. Here they are. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." Gal. 5:6. "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; Obedience to God's commandments is everything." 1 Cor. 7:19, Weymouth.

Comparing these three parallel passages we get the whole truth. The born-again soul will be anxious to please God and will work from the Cross by faith and love. This faith and love, which will spring from the salvation imparted by Christ, will yield an implicit obedience to all the requirements or commandments of God. As we are anxious to please a loved one in every minute particular, so the Christian will yearn to know God's will about every detail of living and then will seek to fulfill it. This includes the fourth commandment spoken by God's own voice and written by His own finger, contained in the ten precepts by which all will be judged. Jas. 2:10-12.

Q. Jesus kept the Jewish feast days. Should not Christians follow His example?

A. Jesus came as a Jew as well as being the universal "Son of man." We need to distinguish carefully between what He did and what He taught. The second is always mandatory but not so the first. For example, Christ worked seven miracles on the Sabbath and simultaneously expounded the principles which should govern true Sabbath keeping. He taught that works of necessity, piety, and mercy are in harmony with the purpose of the Sabbath. See His teachings in Mt. 12 and Jn. 5. Christ even risked His life and ministry in order to show the truth about the binding obligation of the fourth commandment. Time after time we read that His enemies then counseled together to slay Him after His Sabbath miracles. (See Mk. 3:1-6; Jn. 5:18, etc.) But never do we read of Christ making such efforts over the typical festival days. He knew that at the cross they would cease to have significance. Note the words of Heb. 9:9, 10 about the earthly sanctuary service which included the feast days. "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."

Thus it is distinctly affirmed that the services connected with the earthly sanctuary, including the special feast days, were meant to last only until "the time of reformation." This time is said to have come with Christ, according to verse 11. As all shadows cease at the foot of the object casting the shadow, so all the types of the Cross of Calvary ceased to have significance when that Cross was raised.

Q. Wasn't the Sabbath only a matter of physical rest?

A. No. God knows even better than we that the devil finds work for idle hands to do. Every negative in the Decalogue implies a positive. The positive implication of the fourth commandment is the doing of God's work in contrast to our own, as His Providence indicates. The day is for worship and holy service. Note the words of A. B. Davidson:

We sometimes hear the opinion expressed that the idea of the Sabbath was only rest, cessation from toil, and that thus it was a merely humanitarian institution. But this is to entirely mistake ancient institutions. All institutions were an expression of religion. The Sabbath expressed a religious idea--the acknowledgement that time was Jehovah's as well as all things. The day was sanctified, that is, dedicated to Jehovah. The householder allowed his servants to rest, not, of course, with the modern idea that they might have time to serve God, but with the ancient idea that the rest of his servants and cattle was part of his own rest, part of his own full dedication of the day to God. Hence in the Deuteronomic law the duty of keeping the Sabbath is based on the Lord's redemption of the people from Egypt.<sup>11</sup>

Q. Does Rev. 1:10 signify the Day of the Lord at the end of time rather than a day of the week such as the Sabbath?

A. Wherever the New Testament is clearly speaking of the last great day, the Greek form is quite different to what we have here. Let anyone compare 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10, with Rev. 1:10. Secondly, the context shows that John is speaking of the time he received his visions, for he also gives us the place of writing, his own name as the human author, and his condition "in the Spirit."

Thus "the Lord's day" in this setting means the time he received the messages from heaven, not the time he was writing about. Furthermore, much of the rest of the book has to do with events years before the great day of the Lord. For these reasons and others, the major Bible versions do NOT use "the day of the Lord" in this place.

Q. In what sense did Christ claim lordship over the Sabbath?

A. When we compare Mk. 2:28 with Mt. 12:8, we see that Christ is defending the lawfulness of his disciples' action on the Sabbath. In His capacity as the Messiah, One greater than all institutions and therefore their legitimate Interpreter, He pronounces what is in harmony with the original law He himself gave. He certainly is not using His scepter as an axe. The whole point of all the Sabbath controversies is that "it is lawful to do good on the sabbath." Mt. 12:12. The force of "for" joining "the guiltless" of Mt. 12:7 with this debated comment should not be missed.

Q. If Adam in Eden was Lord of the Sabbath could he not dictate what could and could not be done on that day, and we also?

A. The Sabbath was made for man's benefit but it fulfills that task only as man recognizes its hallowed nature. Neither the Old nor the New Testament suggests that man can do whatever he likes with holy things. See Isa. 58:13, 14 and Eze. 20:12, 20, etc. When Christ speaks of what is "lawful" on the Sabbath, He is simultaneously saying that some other things are not lawful.

Q. Surely it is wrong to say the Sabbath is eternal. Where does the Bible say that?

A. Much depends on the definition we give this word "eternal." Its strict meaning encompasses the eternal state but we know no modern scholars who claim that the mode of observing the seventh day now is that which has and will characterize eternity. The issue is whether it belongs to the whole of life in this world and simultaneously reflects an eternal principle. Mk. 2:27 indicates "yes" to both. The Sabbath being made for the first man was also for the last man and for all in between. Christ looks both backwards and forwards when He affirms that the Sabbath from creation was God's gift to humanity. The principle involved, of course, is that of worship. Man needs a set time to fulfill that which angels have been doing throughout endless aeons.

Q. Does not Isa. 66:22, 23 name new moons along with sabbaths in the new earth state?

A. Yes, and so does the New Testament. Rev. 22:2 indicates that each new month will witness the yielding by the tree of life of a special type of fruit. But the real point is that Isa 66:22, 23 is significant because it is one of a series of statements in the last chapters of Isaiah which transcend Judaism--chapters indicating that the Sabbath is for the Gentile as well as for the Jew, and for the Messianic kingdom as well as for the pre-cross era. See chapters 56 and 58.

Q. Are there not many texts saying that the law only came in at Sinai and was to remain only till the coming of Christ?

A. Yes, indeed. But be careful how you understand the word "law." In Galatians, it does not mean the Ten Commandments but the whole Jewish system. See Gal. 3:21, 22. And note carefully that the same Paul who wrote Galatians also wrote Eph. 6:1-3 and 1 Cor. 7:19. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' (this is the first commandment with a promise), that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth." "For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God."

Note that Paul knows none of this new mysticism about love being sufficient. He specifically alludes to and quotes the Ten Commandments as obligatory on Christians. Why do not people who quote apparent anti-law texts be honest enough to furnish the texts also which refer positively to the Decalogue?

Q. Is not every day now a Sabbath to the Lord?

A. Those who so claim end up by making every day a week-day. While in the flesh it is necessary for the benefit of body and soul to work--and usually to work regularly six days a week. The N.T. knows nothing of this exaggerated super-spirituality which can dispense with a special time for religious worship. How many people in this world can rest seven days a week?

Q. Does not Ro. 7 teach that the form of the Decalogue has been done away?

A. By no means. Be careful to observe that the opening verses speak of ourselves as being dead, not the law. Inasmuch as legally we died with Christ, we need not knowingly yield to trespass against God's holy code of righteousness. Instead we shall serve it in newness of spirit, not just mere legalistic observance of the letter. See Ro. 7:6 margin. Law-keeping is not the same as legalism. The latter means just enough outward observance of the law to supposedly gain merit. But the former is a response of love to the gift of salvation.

Q. How should one observe the Sabbath?

A. There are no rules for Sabbath-keeping, only principles. The chief of the latter is made clear in the teachings of Jesus, namely that only works of piety, mercy, or necessity conform to the fourth commandment. Isa. 58:13 also gives good counsel. Circumstances alter cases but not principles. For one who is physically very active during the week, a sedentary Sabbath is a blessing, but such is not the case for people whose week is sedentary. For these, a good long Sabbath walk would be an excellent thing. Walk with a spiritual companion or members of the family and dedicate the conversation to the things of God.

Where there are small children, one must avoid too many "don'ts." Rather distract them from the lesser good by something absorbing but spiritually profitable. Nature, Bible games, edifying stories, service for the spiritual well-being of others constitute some of the options.

Q. How can you contend that Sabbath-keeping is a practical matter in the twentieth century? Is it not a useless relic of Judaism?

A. The Sabbath preserves the most essential ideals of human existence. In an age of meaninglessness and prevailing existential nihilistic philosophy the testimony of every Sabbath is that life has significance and that human beings are the children of a loving heavenly Father. Twentieth century man still needs to work, rest, and worship--the duties prescribed in the fourth commandment.

Q. Did not Luther and Calvin treat the Sabbath laxly?

A. The Reformers blew hot and cold on the Sabbath. Because they linked it with the other holy days of the mediaeval church they rejected it as divinely authoritative along with the rest, but because they saw the necessity of a day of rest and worship, every Reformer accepted the institution pragmatically. Both Luther and Calvin when exegeting Gen. 2:1-3 taught that the Sabbath was from the beginning of the world set apart to divine worship that in all ages it might be sacred among men.

Q. What is your basic reason for asserting the Sabbath to be for all men rather than just for Jews?

A. The fact that the Sabbath is linked not with anything Jewish but with the creation of the world is the strongest evidence it is intended for all men in all time. Even the chief scholars who contend against the permanent nature of the Sabbath have conceded that the Scripture links it with creation. See the writings of Paley, Hessey, F. W. Robertson, Whately, Arnold, and Hengstenberg. Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Mk. 2:27; Heb. 4:3, 4 certainly teach that the Sabbath originated simultaneously with the creation of humanity and therefore was intended always for all men. There is no evidence of the Sabbath being instituted at the time of the manna at the Exodus. Compare Ex. 16 with the account of the origin of the Passover in Ex. 12. But once we grant the Scripture evidence on the link between the Sabbath and creation, is it possible to believe that God arranged His creative work in order to found a temporary institute for a single nation only? The thought is inadmissible, for the disproportion between the ordinance and its basis would be ludicrous.

A supporting argument is that there is an obvious intimate link between the Sabbath and the nature of man. All men need time to rest and worship, not just the Jew. Finally, the fact that the other nine commandments of the Decalogue apply to all men suggests that this one does likewise.

Q. Why say that the Sabbath is important because it reminds us of God? Did not the Passover, circumcision, the Feast of Tabernacles, etc., remind men of God?

A. Why bother to sit down to a meal, when it is possible to grab fruit from trees as one goes? Obviously because one is much more efficient for its purpose than the other. The Passover happened once a year, and likewise Tabernacles. Circumcision happened once a lifetime and practically nobody remembers anything about it. But with the fourth commandment only, God attached the word "remember." He did it because (1) its purpose was to act as a remembrance of vital truths, and (2) it was the one commandment men were most likely to forget. Can anyone devise something more efficient for all men everywhere in all time to the end that God might become a reality? He who spends every seventh day disciplining his mind to dwell on holy things makes God and heaven very real through all time and thus is enabled to prepare for eternity.

Q. Surely unfallen man did not need a Sabbath. Was man sick in any way?

A. Unfallen man like the angels needed to worship God, though he was not sick in any way. The plain fact is that both Gen. 2:1-3 and Ex. 20:8-11 make it plain that the Sabbath was hallowed for man from the time of creation before man fell.

Q. There is not the slightest thread of Bible evidence that the day of the Sabbath has always been a test. Isn't that true?

A. No, it is not true. The very first time the Sabbath comes before us by name (for it exists in Gen. 2 before this but not by name), it is called a test. See Ex. 16:4, 26-30; 31:12-17; Neh. 13:17, 18; Jer. 17:24-27; Isa. 58:13, 14; Mt. 12:1-12, etc. How can men who claim to believe the Bible assert there is not the slenderest thread the Sabbath is a test when God Himself uses that very word with reference to it? The word "prove" in Ex. 16: 4 is correctly translated "test" by scholars.

Q. The material of the Gospels on the Sabbath is not significant for it has to do with events before Pentecost. So why quote the Gospels to support Sabbath-keeping?

A. The Gospels were written after Pentecost, and that by about four decades. Inasmuch as Jesus had done so much and said so much that John says the world could not house the whole record we are forced to ask: "On what principle did the Gospel writers select what was to be recorded for their Christian readers?" Obviously, as good Pastors, they recorded what would meet the needs of their Christian congregations. And in Mt., Mk., Lu., and Jn., we find one chapter in every eight referring to the Sabbath with never the slightest hint that the Sabbath is no longer obligatory. Instead we are told what is "lawful" on the Sabbath. Mt. 12:12. The silence of the Epistles only indicates how well Christ did His work. No Christian doubted that the Sabbath-keeping was as surely required by God as refraining from blasphemy, and honoring parents. Christ did for the fourth commandment what He did for the third, fifth, sixth, and seventh--rescued them from legalistic observance and showed their true meaning.

Had Sabbath-breaking been the rule in Gentile churches the storm would have echoed through the entire N.T. just as the minor issue of circumcision does. Those who use a single Pauline reference (Col. 2:16) on the Sabbath to offset the other 150 in the Bible have forgotten that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." And when we find in the context of that single negative reference that Paul has his eye on man-made rules and regulations about abstaining from certain foods and drinks on holy days in order to worship angels, then it is quite clear that it is not the God-given Decalogue precept that he has in mind. See especially Col. 2: 22, "according to human precepts and doctrines."

Q. Does the fourth commandment only have to do with the seventh day, or all seven?

A. No one can keep the seventh day by a mind centered on divine things who has not practised all week long. For six days secular work should be done to the glory of God. Let it be carefully observed that the appeal in the fourth commandment is for man to copy the example of His Maker who worked six days and rested one--thus our fulfillment of the command includes the copying of the Divine Worker as well as the Divine "Rester." Only a worker can rest. He who is lazy all week long every week can never keep the Sabbath. Thus even Adam worked in Eden. Gen. 2:15. These conclusions render impossible the notion that our spiritual rest in Christ displaces the need for obedience to the fourth commandment, inasmuch as the latter calls for work as well as rest.

Q. Is not the law of God that which all men can learn from nature and conscience?

A. No. Nature and conscience do not call forth loyalty to either one God or one wife. Nature tells us as little of the duty of honoring parents, or of the sin of theft, as it does of the observance of the seventh day. Conscience indeed makes us aware we are responsible beings and subject to "oughts" but the fine detail is always missing apart from the special revelation of Scripture. Thus nature indicates we should rest, but it does not tell us how much. Nature might prompt us to acknowledge the source from which all things come, but how and when thus to acknowledge by worship it cannot tell.

Q. Does not the omission of "the evening and the morning" in connection with the seventh day indicate that the rest of Eden was to be perpetual? Did Adam and Eve really have to work?

A. The omission finds its explanation in Heb. 4:9. The Sabbath of Eden is a symbol of the heavenly rest. But Gen. 2:1-3 is interpreted for us in Ex. 20:8-11. Both texts call the seventh day just that--indicating its kin to the other six. According to Gen. 2:15, man in Paradise was given work. Inasmuch as God Himself in the previous verses (2: 1-3) is described as "working," there is nothing strange that unfallen man should be given employment.

Even in innocence, man would have suffered if indolent. All his endowments and faculties called for activity. Safety against temptation then as now called for occupation. Inasmuch as man's Creator is ever at work superintending the universe, there is nothing strange in his creature being assigned duties.

Gen. 2:15 says man was given the garden of Eden "to cultivate and take care of" (Jerusalem Bible). Certainly this was pleasant activity for no curse rested then upon the earth. Had such employment been withheld it is difficult to see how man with his multiple capacities could have found satisfaction and happiness. Happiness has always been the fruit of fulfillment.

Recognizing our first parents as workers calls also for the awareness that they must also have been "resters" and worshippers. We find all three elements in the prophecies of the earth made new. See Isa. 65:21-23; 66:23. Such patterns remain ideals for us while pilgrims in this fallen world.

Q. Is it true that the Hebrew Christians and the Hellenist Christians represent different strands of primitive Christianity, with the latter proving to be the forerunner of Gentile Christianity? Were Philip and Stephen Hellenists?

A. The most recent scholarly work on these topics is found in the Anchor Bible Commentary on Acts. It casts its vote against the above theories. For the details we refer the reader to the volume itself, but the following indicates its conclusions.

Attempts have been made to interpret the tension between Hebrews and Hellenists as a tension between Jewish and Gentile Christians or at any rate to see in the Hellenists a kind of preparation for the Gentile mission. This is wrong. Hebrews and Hellenists are groups inside Jewry, to be found also in that section of it belonging to the church.

It has been supposed that the seven men with Greek names were all Hellenistic Jews.... But too much importance should not be attached to the names. At the time, there were many Jews with Greek names--there were two among the twelve apostles.... among the seven... the best-known members, Stephen and Philip, may very well have been Hebrews.<sup>12</sup>

According to the same source, Stephen (judging by his use of the Samaritan Pentateuch and theology), must have had a Samaritan background. For centuries the Samaritans called themselves "Hebrews" while the Jews of the first century never applied the term to themselves, nor did the Gentiles apply it to them. The Hebrews of Acts 6:1 are Samaritan Christians according to Johannes Munck, and other scholars.<sup>13</sup> The reconstruction of the first century situation offered in your question is not correct, or at the best, dubious.

Q. Is it true that the persecution of Acts 8:1 was principally directed against the Hellenists, and that this event resulted in the foremost missionaries of the Christian church being Hellenists?

A. Johannes Munck in his recent commentary says on Acts 8:1: "It is hard to explain why the words in verse 1b have been taken to mean that this persecution was only concerned with the Hellenists in the church." The probable reason the apostles remained was their great desire to witness the conversion of the Jews, but other Jewish Christians were certainly scattered.

Q. Is it true that the Hellenists of Acts 6:1 were Greek-speaking Jews identical in nature with those Jews mentioned in Acts 2 who came from distant countries? And is it true that these were a major group in the Jerusalem church who finally became the missionaries to the Gentiles?

A. Much of the old literature on such questions as these is now being contradicted by recent studies. C. S. Mann, writing on Acts for the Anchor Bible, says it is erroneous to describe the Hellenists as the Greek-speaking Jews for "many Jews in Palestine, unless living far from cities, would be more or less at home in the vernacular Greek of the time."<sup>14</sup> "Certainly it would appear from Acts that these Hellenized Jews together with the Samaritans, formed the two most significant minority groups in the early Jerusalem church."<sup>15</sup> Munck sees in the Hellenists a small group of Jews at Jerusalem who had been much influenced by Greek codes of life. He warns us that "It is important that we do not exaggerate the dimensions of the quarrel between the Hellenists and Samaritan Christians in Jerusalem."<sup>16</sup>

Q. Why do we need the Ten Commandments now? We have the example of Jesus. Is that not enough for our guidance?

A. The life and death of Jesus are indeed enough for motivation of true behavior but they do not furnish us with sufficient detail for an adequate pattern example. The four Gospels only record about 44 days of our Lord's life. In other words, close study shows that the Gospels give us a picture that is perforated by big gaps, including a gap of almost all His first thirty years. Again, many things Jesus did were not our example, such as His claims to preeminence and His atoning sufferings.

When Albert Schweitzer read dozens of "Lives of Jesus" he found that each generation of scholars read their own thoughts into the record of our Lord. Cornelius Loew commenting on this adds:

He found that each man who wrote a life of Jesus created a picture that revealed his own character.... here is what he said, "There is no historical task which so reveals a man's true self as the writing of a life of Jesus."<sup>17</sup>

At no stage do we get beyond the need of guidance from the revealed will of God, including the Decalogue. Mere sentimental counsels about "following Jesus" are mystical and impractical. He indeed motivates us, and shows that the spirit of the Cross should permeate all our behavior, but at no time did He attempt to prescribe or exemplify all our choices in the moral life.

Q. I have been told that Gal. 4:10 must apply to Jewish times because the problem setting of the book is clearly that of Pharisaic Christians from James in Jerusalem leading Gentiles to the Jewish law. Is this correct?

A. It is true that this is a popular understanding of the situation underlying Paul's letter. But the reality is probably not that simple. The supplementary volume to the Interpreter's Bible Dictionary in its article on Galatians speaks as follows:

The studies by Crownfield and Munck showed that the problem of precisely who Paul's Galatian opponents were had remained unsolved. Was there one type of opponent or two (Lütgert); were they Christian Jews or non-Christian Jews or Gentiles; were they resident Galatians or intruders, and if the latter, where did they come from and why? Crownfield described them as Jewish-Christian syncretists favoring circumcision for a symbolic reason. Munck held them to be not Jews but Gentiles who had recently become circumsised members of a Judaizing Christian movement in Galatia, which without connections to Jerusalem had developed as a "heresy" within Paulinism. Schmithals launched the most vigorous attack against the lingering consensus that the opponents were "Judaizers," that is, Christians who demanded the acceptance of the Jewish Torah, including circumcision, as a condition for salvation. Showing that this consensus does not match with the sources, Schmithals proposed that the opponents be regarded as (Christian or non-Christian) Jewish Gnostics, promoters of the ritual of circumcision, but "libertines" in regard to the moral demands of the Torah.

The article rings the changes still further, mentioning also the possibility of a syncretistic group being the cause of Paul's polemic. The one thing that is certain is that anyone dogmatic on the background of Galatians is ignorant.

Gal. 4:10 is probably typical of pre-Gnostic syncretistic heresy, demanding astrological worship by means of "lucky" times drawn from Gentile and Jewish sources. There is no evidence that the fourth commandment is being rejected. See the recent commentary by John Bligh.

Q. If the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, can we not individually decide how to use it?

A. Yes and no. The Sabbath was made for man as a Sabbath, not as a week-day. It is appropriate for all men in all ages in all places as a Sabbath, but as nothing else. Christ is certainly not giving men liberty to forget the fourth commandment. What He is saying is that rightly understood the Sabbath law works for the good of man.

Q. Why talk about the Sabbath? Why not just talk about the Gospel?

A. God has used many pointers to the Gospel and among these is the Sabbath--the institution most often referred to in the Bible. There is perhaps no other one thing in the world, with which man's best interests are more closely bound up, than they are with the Sabbath. That day both announces and symbolizes the blessings of the grace of God. Without the Sabbath, the Gospel would, to a great extent, become ineffective for want of sufficient opportunity for telling on the hearts and consciences of men.

Sabbath-keeping with its emptying of human hands and the looking upwards to God in order to rest in Him is a magnificent parable of righteousness by faith apart from works. We should use every Sabbath gratefully as a step to glory, a Pisgah from which we view our promised land. A poet has written,

The week were dark but for thy light;  
Thy torch doth show the way.

Q. Has not Christ fulfilled the Sabbath for us, making our Sabbath-keeping unnecessary?

A. No more than He has kept the seventh commandment for us, making it unnecessary for us to refrain from adultery. The fourth commandment encompasses work ("Six days shalt thou labor"), rest ("the seventh day... in it thou shalt not do any manner of work") and worship ("keep it holy"). Now, our Lord did not work for us so that we might become free from labor. Neither did He rest for us, so it would be unnecessary for us to rest. And as certainly He did not so worship as to make ours no longer needed.

Everywhere in the N.T. the week is regarded as a sacred unit, made so by the Sabbath culmination. Wherever in our translations we read the word "week" the original has "Sabbath." Thus the New Testament recognizes that all our time is covered by the fourth commandment. None can rest who have not labored. Gen. 1 and 2 show that man, like the world, was made on a seven-day plan and is called to duplicate the original divine rhythm of labor and rest.

Some speak and act as though only the seventh day is the object of attention in the fourth word of the Decalogue, but this is certainly not the case. No one could ever consecrate his mind to God for a whole day who was not dedicated to God in all his days of toil. Probably this is why Sabbath-keeping in Scripture is often taken as the sign of obedience to all the commandments of God. See Isa. 56:4; Jer. 17:24-27; Eze. 20:12,20. Our Lord did not come to release us from the blessings of obedience to that law which best summarizes moral reality. Neither is real rest possible for one who has not continually so labored as to glorify God in the common round of life.

Q. Is not the keeping of the seventh day just a ceremonial matter?

A. Most of the fourth commandment revolves around this very matter of sanctifying the seventh day, and that element is as moral as anything else in the Decalogue. Only God knows how often we should worship socially, and we should accept His decision. Note that Eze. 22:8; 23:38 and many other passages link the Sabbath with exclusively moral duties.

James Orr wisely wrote on this matter:

Without obedience to the fourth commandment, obedience to the remaining precepts could not long be maintained. The Sabbath, standing in the midst of the Decalogue, is guardian at once of the duties we owe to God, and of the duties we owe to our fellow men. Without a Sabbath, neither could religion be kept alive, nor would man long retain the sense of his spiritual dignity. With loss of self-respect, there comes of necessity weakened regard for the lives, property, persons, character--in general for the rights and claims of others, so that every commandment suffers.

The fourth commandment has therefore justly been termed "the very center and heart of 'the Ten Words'" and if that and all that it represents and embodies, be taken away or neglected, the life and circulation that energizes the whole body will fail.

Q. If Christ claimed to be Lord of the Sabbath, could He not do with it as He pleased?

A. In context (in Mt. 12), Christ is claiming that He has the right to interpret what is lawful on the Sabbath. He is not claiming lordship over an institution about to be divorced from his kingdom. His scepter is not an axe. It would be strange indeed if the Saviour claimed to be Lord of a vanishing institution, for He is not God of the dead but of the living. His statement means rather, "Because the Sabbath is humane and for humanity, therefore it comes under the jurisdiction and guardianship of the Representative and Ruler of mankind, whose appointed

office is to guard, regulate, and preserve all human rights and immunities." That little word "even" in the statement of Christ implies the exceptional and therefore lasting dignity of this hallowed institution entrusted to our first parents for all mankind, for all time.

## **FOOTNOTES**

1. Bishop Wordsworth, Commentary on the Holy Bible, vol. 1, p. 272.
2. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics III:4, 73.
3. Norman Douty, Has Christ's Return Two Stages? p. 15.
4. George Teasdale, The Sabbath in the Pacific.
5. Patrick Fairbairn, The Revelation of Law in Scripture, p. 286.
6. James Orr, Neglected factors in the Study of the Early Progress of Christianity, pp. 111-113.
7. John G. Gager, Kingdom and Community, p. 104.
8. Ibid., p. 105.
9. Calvin, Institutes, II:VIII
10. Paul Jewett, The Lord's Day, p. 105.
11. A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament, p. 243.
12. The Anchor Bible Commentary on Acts, p. 56-57.
13. Ibid., p. 294.
14. Ibid., p. 301 .
15. Ibid., pp. 302-303 (emphasis ours).
16. Ibid., p. 304.
17. Cornelius Loew, Modern Rivals to Christianity, p. 76.

## APPENDIX I

### CHRIST AND THE SABBATH

J. Stacy, Day of Rest, pp. 105-119.

Was everything under the old dispensation repealed? Has the ordinance of marriage been repealed? or the law of murder, so soon announced after the fall? or the law of incest? or any other part of the moral law? If, like the ordinance of marriage, this institution has existed from the beginning,--if it formed part of the original creation,--and, like the law of murder, entering only into a temporary alliance with the Jewish commonwealth, it is impossible to see how the revolution in the days of the Saviour could affect it in the least. If antedating the Jewish hierarchy, why not also survive the wreck of that hierarchy? If only temporarily bound up with the ritualistic system, why perish with it? If a recognized part of the moral code of the world for four thousand years, how could it, in any way and upon any principle, be repealed at so late a day? The positions already considered and established do interpose such insuperable barriers in the way of repeal, and furnish such a foundation for the strongest presumption in favor of perpetuity, that nothing but the most emphatic and unequivocal declaration on the part of him who is the Lord of the Sabbath will suffice for the destruction of a law so long and so well and securely established.

And let it ever be borne in mind that we are now dealing with law, and not simply an ordinance. The ordinance was the result of the law, and not the law itself; and here, then, is a solemn decree, resulting in the enactment of a law based upon the nature of God and the facts of creation, and which, at a very early day, was formally incorporated in the moral code, which code prevailed unto the coming of the Master, and nine-tenths of which is still recognized of binding authority! Shall, then, such a decree be set aside without an express declaration on the part of the law-giver that ordained it? If the Incarnate Son, he by whom the Father created all things; who ended his work on the seventh day by resting; who, by way of anticipating his incarnation, appeared so often in different forms to the children of men..., who, in such glorious epiphany, and from the summit of the burning mount, authoritatively repeated and proclaimed that law; and who afterwards so clearly asserted this as his high and sole prerogative, being "Lord of the Sabbath," -- if he should proclaim the law repealed, then it would be repealed indeed! But has he at any time or anywhere said that that law was repealed? Nay, never. Not one word of his lips, not one act of his life, can be so construed. He never said at any time to anybody that he had repealed it in whole or in part, or would repeal it, or had authorized anyone to repeal it. Instead of this, he at all times recognized its binding authority; he obeyed it himself; he interpreted it, and died leaving it, with his interpretation annexed, as the expressed statute of his kingdom, as much so as he left the law of murder, or adultery, or profanity, with his interpretation annexed, as the law of that kingdom. Instead of repealing, the truth is, he actually entered into argument with the Pharisees to show that his acts were all conformable thereto. And instead of removing, he positively asserted that he did not come to destroy, but to fulfil, or, in other words, to maintain. If Christ the Lord actually made an argument to show that he had not violated the law, it does seem strange that man should now be making an argument to prove that he did, and to accuse him at this late day of doing something he himself asserts he never did, and which he even entered into argument with the Pharisees to prove that he never did!

When he said, "The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath," did he mean that he was Lord to destroy, or simply to defend? Did he not mean this, that, as he was Lord of the Sabbath, he would see to it that its claims should be properly defended--its honor duly vindicated? His action must determine his meaning. If what he had done, or allowed to be done, destroyed the day, or was inconsistent with the law, then this answer, which was given in explanation or vindication of his conduct, would mean that he was Lord in the sense that he had the authority to set the law aside. But who else than the Pharisees have ever charged him with violating the fourth commandment in what he did? He not only protested his innocence, but even argues to show that he did not violate the law. "Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungered, and they that were with him?" "Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?" "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." (Matt.12:3-7.) Mark the expression, the guiltless. If, then, he did not violate the original law, and this answer was simply given as the reason for his conduct, why bring it up as evidence of repeal? To make the words mean that he was Lord to destroy, is to say that he had set the fourth commandment aside, and was acting under a law of his own--the very thing he was repudiating and endeavoring so earnestly to disprove. There is but one simple explanation of the words, and that is, that as he was the Lord of the Sabbath, who originally gave the law, and who certainly understood and had a right to interpret its meaning, he therefore could not, and would not, as the Pharisees supposed, violate his own law.

He claims that his disciples were guiltless in gathering the corn, as it was a case both of necessity and mercy, as much so as David's eating the shew-bread, or the work of the priests at the temple. In other words, that neither he nor his disciples had violated the fourth commandment, for the reason that the Sabbath was originally made for man, to be used in the way they had used it, the Pharisees denying on the other hand that it was made for any such purpose.... To say because the Saviour asserted, in vindication of himself, and in interpretation of the original law, that the day was originally made for man, to be used in the way he had used it, namely, for works of necessity and mercy, therefore it was made for any and every purpose, is a most miserable non sequitur. It is a piece of reasoning akin to the following: Woman was made for man, therefore concubinage is allowable. Money was made for man, therefore it is right to steal.

The Saviour was speaking of the original enactment, let it be noted, and the original purpose for which the day was made. If you wish to know the intention of the lawgiver you have only to see what He said about the law at its first enactment. And now does the objector mean to say that the Master intended to teach, that when God first made the day, and established the law, he made and established it for any and every purpose? That when God blessed and sanctified the day, he blessed and sanctified it for any and every purpose? That when he proclaimed from the summit of the mount, in such awful majesty, "Six days shalt thou labor and do: thy work, but on the seventh day thou shalt do no work," he then simply meant that the day was made for any and every purpose? If that were his intention, it was singularly strange that he afterwards commanded the Sabbath breaker to be stoned. The whole legislation, as well as past history of the Jews, simply belies any such interpretation. To make the Saviour mean that the day was originally made for any and every purpose, is simply to make him flatly contradict all that had ever been written, said or done on the subject. It is to accuse him of saying that Moses was mistaken, the Jews mistaken, the whole world up to that time mistaken, and even the lawgiver himself mistaken when he gave the law; for that law, when first enunciated, meant nothing more than this, that the day was then made for any and every purpose. Away with any such blasphemous

impeachment of the divine wisdom.

.... he was not asserting any new principle or new law, but interpreting an old one, and laboring to show that neither himself nor his disciples had been guilty of any infraction of the old law.

Whilst his main object was the vindication of himself and his disciples, he, at the same time, and in an indirect way, gave utterance to a great underlying truth, which forever deals a death blow to this idea of repeal. "Made for man," and yet confined to the Jew! "Made for man," and yet repealed! How do all these conflicting assertions hang together? A precious boon, made for man, and given to man by the Creator, together with his unrepealed benediction and unrepealed sanctification, and yet the Saviour cruelly taking it away! It does seem very singular indeed that he who proclaimed himself the friend of man, whose mission to him was one of unselfish devotion and love,--should nevertheless yet rob him, at the outset, of one of the chiefest gifts of his Creator! And what seems still more astounding is, that this Friend of man should proclaim the Sabbath to be a gift, and at the same time be asserting its withdrawal,--thus proclaiming the law and its repeal with the same breath! A gift to man, and yet not a gift. Specially made for him, and yet specially made for him no more than any other day! Was the Sabbath specially made for man, and in a different sense from which the other days were made? Yea, verily, and for that reason unrepealable. And for that very reason not for the Jew alone, but for man in general. As man needed the rest before, so he will always hereafter to the end of time. This one single passage, if there were none other, would of itself be sufficient to establish the perpetuity of the sabbatic law. If the Master intended to abolish this law, why did he not, then, say so? That was the time, if he ever intended to say it, when he was accused of violating it. Instead of declaring it set aside, he actually establishes its authority by showing that he was obeying it.... he even proceeds to give the spirit and intention of the law, and to show how it was to be applied in the future, thus, by his very interpretation, forever confirming and establishing the same.

He was not seeking to change that law, but to correct the perverted notions of the Pharisees concerning it. He did here just as in the case of the third, fifth and seventh commandments.... is it the custom of workmen to repair what they intend speedily to destroy? Is it customary for legislators to interpret statutes they intend immediately to repeal? Repairs upon a building carry the idea of continuance. A commentary upon a law is the very best evidence of its perpetuation.

Thomas Hamilton, Our Rest-Day, pp. 136-137, 153-154.

It has been argued by some that Christ here (Mt. 12) draws a distinction between the law of Sabbath observance and the law of mercy, and that He argues that if these two clash, the former, as being a mere ceremonial regulation, must give way. This argument, however, proceeds upon an entire misunderstanding of the passage. Our Saviour is not excusing a breach of Sabbath law. There has been no breach of Sabbath law. There had been no failure to observe the Sabbath as required. On the contrary, His contention is that the disciples had broken no law, but that the Pharisees, their accusers, had.

.... It is as if Christ had said: "You have been condemning these men unjustly. They are entirely innocent. It is enough that I say so, for I am the Lord of the Sabbath. Its law is my law, and if I am satisfied, that is enough." .... the word "innocent" completely bears out our position. Christ is here vindicating guiltless persons, not excusing transgressors.

Sometimes there is found buried in one of our Irish bogs a golden ornament which, centuries ago, has fastened the mantle of some Celtic chieftain. Through the damps and neglects of ages it has become green and disfigured, so as almost completely to have lost, not only the beauty of workmanship which once adorned it, but even the very appearance of gold. When it comes into the hands of one who recognizes its preciousness, and when he carefully cleanses away the accretions which have gathered round it, does this action of his proceed from a disregard of his "find" and from a desire to destroy it? On the contrary, is not his cleansing of the ornament reverent and thorough in proportion to the value which he sets upon it, and to the strength of his wish that it may exhibit again its pristine beauty? So with our Lord's treatment of the Sabbath. He found it buried amid a mass of traditional observances which had thrown its meaning and spirit almost altogether into obscurity. He took it up lovingly, recognising its beauty and value, and with firm but kindly hand He removed the foreign incrustations which had gathered round it, that it might shine again in its own native lustre for the joy and blessing of a needy world.

He taught that it was to be a day (a) of worship; (b) of beneficence; (c) not of narrow, Pharisaic restrictions, but of holy freedom--freedom, however, always subordinate to, and within the limits of, law.

Roger T. Beckwith & W. Stott, This is the Day, pp. 21-22.

The idea that he regarded it as part of his messianic mission completely to set aside the Law, or certain of its precepts, has first to be established by evidence before it can be accepted.

A less subjective treatment of the Gospel record leads one to very different conclusions. For,

(i) The statement by Christ in Matthew and Luke that it was not his purpose simply to destroy the Law, or any of its precepts, must be taken seriously into account (see Matt. 5:17-20; Luke 16:16-18). There is no comparably clear statement that can be adduced against this.

(ii) The controversies of Christ over the sabbath all concern the sabbath rest. An equally important part of sabbath observance was the worship and teaching that took place in the temple and synagogue on that day. Jesus only visited Jerusalem for the feasts, and consequently did not come much into contact with the sabbath day sacrifices there. But there are four distinct contexts in the Gospels which show him teaching in the synagogue on the sabbath. (Mark 1:21f.; 6:2; Luke 6:6; 13:10), and there is one passage which shows him taking an active part in the regular service by reading the prophetic lection and expounding it, the evangelist remarking in this connection that 'he entered into the synagogue on the sabbath day, as his custom was' (Luke 4:16-27). Any claim that Jesus rejected the sabbath must come to terms with these facts.

(iii) If it is admitted, as it must be, that Jesus did not reject the sabbath day assembly for worship and teaching in the synagogue, it follows that he did not reject the sabbath rest either. For the sabbath day assembly presupposed the sabbath rest. Philo tells us that the sabbath day assembly went on until the late afternoon.

W.F. Crafts, The Sabbath for Man, pp. 367, 370-371.

As it is necessary in the Pentateuch to keep the transient ceremonial laws distinct from the perpetual moral Law, so in reading the Gospels it is important to distinguish very carefully between the Pharisaic Sabbath, which Christ condemned, and the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment, which He always observed, and which, instead of abrogating, He repeatedly confirmed. On five different occasions He indorsed the Decalogue (and so the Sabbath) as of perpetual and universal obligation, and also gave a special and direct endorsement of the Sabbath Commandment by itself when He said, "The Sabbath was made for man."

Those who have not clearly distinguished the Pharisaic Sabbath from the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment, perceiving dimly that Christ antagonized some Sabbath, have jumped to the false conclusion that it was the Divine original, when it was only the human counterfeit. The Pharisaic Sabbath is no more the Bible Sabbath than Romanism is New Testament Christianity.

The pool of Bethesda is now buried under heaps of rubbish. It is said that this is to be removed, and the ancient fountain uncovered for the refreshment of the people. Something like this proposed work Jesus did for the Sabbath. The restful and refreshing Sabbath of Eden and Sinai had been buried by the Pharisees under the rubbish of petty rules. Strangely enough, some readers have mistaken Christ's work in removing this rubbish, that the people might once more enjoy their Sabbaths, for an effort to destroy the Divine fountain itself.

One might as well say that one who was scraping barnacles from the bottom of a ship was destroying it, as to say that "Christ was a Sabbath-breaker." .... Christ's condemnations of Pharisaic modes of Sabbath observance no more abolish the Sabbath than His condemnations of Pharisaic almsgiving and praying abolish benevolence and prayer.

The Sabbath garments of glory and beauty which God had given to man at his Edenic coronation, these Pharisees had lined with iron. They made the Sabbath not only a "heavy burden, grievous to be borne," but also an iron strait-jacket to which men must be fitted. It was this human lining which Christ separated from the God-given Sabbath, without marring the original, when He said to the Pharisees who opposed His Sabbath works of necessity and mercy, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for, the Sabbath."

.... That "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," no more proves that it is not to be observed than the fact that a man should eat to live, not live to eat, proves that eating should be abolished. It is strange indeed that anyone should suppose that He who came to bring rest to those that "labor and are heavy laden" could have taken away their Sabbath rest, and so weighted their yoke instead of lightening it.

James Bailey, "The Sabbath under Christ" (tract), p. 15.

Acts of worship, and of relieving the sufferings of humanity, were consistent with Sabbath sacredness. Acts performed for selfish and personal ends were inconsistent with Sabbath sacredness. Jesus enthroned God's holy day where God placed it, a great central guide to all worshipers of all ages, and disrobed it of dull and lifeless forms, and routine services, and so taught it as to show that it was a blessing and not a curse. There is no doctrine of religion more clearly set forth by Christ than the doctrine of God's holy day. Christ observed it, and taught its observance, and enforced the law of the Sabbath as immutable and eternal. If the teachings and examples of Christ have any authority, then by these has he enforced the duty of remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy which God blessed and sanctified in the beginning and made a Sabbath for man.

D. Boardman, The Ten Commandments, pp. 137, 145.

He was very far from meaning to lessen the obligation of the sabbath: he only meant to emancipate the sabbath from the thrall of Pharisaic sanctimoniousness, superstition, and gloom. Instead of destroying the sabbath, he brought out its real meaning, as being a day of rest and gladness; and so he kept in deepest sense the sabbath. And just because the Son of man disenthalls the Jewish seventh day, my Christian freedom binds me to keep the sabbath even more conscientiously than did the ancient Jew. Is it easier to be a Hebrew than a Christian. May the God of our fathers evermore avert the day when our American sabbath degenerates into the European!

Lastly: Jesus Christ himself is our Sabbath, alike its origin, its meaning, and its end. In fact, the final cause of the sabbath is to sabbatize each day and make all life sacramental. And Jesus Christ being our true sabbath, Jesus Christ is also our true rest, even the spirit's everlasting Eden. May it be for us all evermore to be in the Lord's own Spirit on the Lord's own day.

J.C. Ryle, Mark, pp. 41, 43.

There is nothing in all this to warrant the rash assertion of some, that our Lord has done away with the fourth commandment. On the contrary, He manifestly speaks of the Sabbath Day as a privilege and a gift, and only regulates the extent to which its observance should be enforced. He shows that works of necessity and mercy may be done on the Sabbath Day; but He says not a word to justify the notion that Christians need not "remember the day to keep it holy."

A passage in Mayer's Commentary is worth reading. "It is certain that Christ being a perfect pattern of doctrine in all things, did not transgress, or maintain any transgression against any law of God. Wherefore it is to be held that all His speech here tendeth to nothing else but to convince the Pharisees of blindness and ignorance touching the right keeping of the Sabbath according to the commandment, it being never required to rest so strictly as they thought."

J.C. Ryle, Luke, pp. 122-123, 149-150.

He teaches us that the command to "do no work" on the Sabbath, was not intended to prohibit works of necessity and mercy. The Sabbath was made for man's benefit, and not for his hurt. It was appointed to promote man's best and highest interests, and not to debar him of anything that is really for his good. It requires nothing but what is reasonable and wise. It forbids nothing that is really necessary to man's comfort.

Let us pray for a right understanding of the law of the Sabbath. Of all the commandments that God has given, none is more essential to the happiness of man, and none is so frequently misrepresented, abused, and trampled underfoot. Let us lay down for ourselves two special rules for the observance of the Sabbath. For one thing, let us do no work which is not absolutely needful; for another, let us keep the day "holy," and give it to God. From these two rules let us never swerve. Experience shows that there is the closest connection between Sabbath sanctification and healthy Christianity.

The interpretation of God's law respecting the Sabbath was never intended to be strained so far as to interfere with charity, kindness, and the real wants of human nature: all such interpretations only defeat their own end; they require that which fallen man cannot perform, and thus bring the whole commandment into disrepute. Our Lord saw this clearly, and laboured throughout His ministry to restore this precious part of God's law to its just position.... though our Lord repeatedly explains the requirements of the fourth commandment, He never struck it out of the law of God, or said that it was not binding on Christians at all.

.... Whatever others do, let us resolve to "keep the Sabbath holy." God has a controversy with the Churches about Sabbath desecration. It is a sin of which the cry goes up to heaven, and will be reckoned for one day. Let us wash our hands of this sin, and have nothing to do with it. If others are determined to rob God, and take possession of the Lord's day for their own selfish ends, let us not be partakers in their sins.

Gnana Robinson, The Origin and Development of the Old Testament Sabbath--A Comprehensive Exegetical Approach, pp. 422-424.

What does Jesus mean by this? Does he contradict or repudiate the O.T. laws on sabbath? Quite unlikely.... Traditio-historically seen, Jesus is, in fact, not contradicting the O.T. idea of sabbath, but only protesting against what the Jews have made out of the O.T. sabbath.

It is not that Jesus pushes the sabbath commandment behind the love-commandment, but he brings out the love element which is there at the basis of the O.T. sabbath all the time.

Jesus, the Messiah, is the Lord of the Sabbath. This means that the sabbath belongs to the Messiah, even as sabbath in the O.T. belonged to Yahweh. This sabbath is given to man as a gift from God, as a sign of God's covenant with man, that man may know that the one who is the Lord of the sabbath is God (cf. Lev 19:3b, 30; Ez. 20:20), that it is he who sanctifies him ( Ez. 20:12=Ex. 31:13) and given him "a portion and a name" in his house (Is. 56:5), a place of worship in his house of prayer (Is. 56:7). In this sense, sabbath is certainly given for the sake of man, for his salvation. It is exactly this message which Jesus tries to drive home to his listeners when he asks them:

"Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" Mk. 3:4= Mt 12:10ff.; Lu. 6:9

"Should this woman... who has been kept prisoner by Satan for eighteen long years, be not freed from her bonds on the sabbath?" Lu. 13:16

"Is it permitted to cure people on the sabbath or not"? Lu. 14:3

"Are you angry with me because on the sabbath I made a man's whole body well?" John 7:23b

Jesus does not provide a third alternative. He sees only two possibilities: life or death, freedom or bondage: the same alternatives, as Hinz rightly notes, which the apodictic commandments of the Decalogue offered; "life or death, God or Baal." And in this sense, Jesus' interpretation of the sabbath is in complete harmony with the basic sense of the O.T. sabbath.

Sabbath is the symbol of God's love for man revealed in Jesus Christ (Mt. 12:7). In Jesus Christ, who is greater than the temple, all people find their... salvation and freedom. It is this message of salvation which Jesus demonstrates in his healing actions on sabbaths.... These are the signs of the Messianic Kingdom (Lu. 4:16-19; 7:22). In other words, sabbath becomes the sign of the Messianic Kingdom. It symbolises the "Vollmacht", "the authority" and the love of the Messiah.

A.J.C. Bond, Sabbath History, Vol. 1:24-25.

In passing through the grain fields Jesus did not so much as rub out the grains to satisfy his hunger....

Think what kind of Sabbath-keeping Jesus must have practiced when those who would condemn him by the strict law of the Pharisees could find no charge more serious than these ministries of mercy on the Sabbath day. The whole attitude of Jesus toward the Sabbath convinces us beyond a peradventure that it was one of the institutions of the Old Testament that had permanent worth. It must be preserved but purified. It must be redeemed from Pharisaical formalism and restored to its primitive purpose of blessing to all mankind.

F. Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, Vol. II:339

He did not teach any new laws. He taught exactly what Moses taught. The "Law and the Prophets" had said that the love of God and of the neighbor constitute the essence of God's commandments, and He said that He had nothing to add to that, Matt. 22:34-40.... And in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7, Christ does not correct Moses, but the perversions of the Mosaic Law by the scribes.

## APPENDIX II

### ROMANS 14:5, 6

Introduction to extracts from commentators. The reader should remember as he reads commentators on Scripture (including this one) that commentators are ordinary mortals as much caught up in customs, culture, and trends as other people. Because this is so, we find a vast host of commentators just parroting their predecessors in areas long taken for granted. It is therefore inadequate for me or others to merely marshal a string of quotations to support a case. Such usage only has value where the case supported differs from what has been traditional. Then the intelligent reader will conclude that he is by no means forced into customary beliefs about certain passages of Scripture.

For example, almost universally until comparatively recent years Protestant commentators on the first-day texts of the New Testament assumed that these texts evidenced the observance of Sunday by early Christians. Now it is acknowledged by many scholars that religious bias rather than exegetical evidence led to such a conclusion.

Likewise, texts referring to "soul" or "spirit" in the New Testament have been similarly mis-used to support traditional views and that for centuries. Only in this century have exegetes generally conceded that the Greek view of the nature of man is not found anywhere in Holy Writ. And again, texts long used to support an ever-burning hell are now being given a new look with results quite different to formerly.

Paul's comments on days in Colossians, Galatians, and Romans have ever been assumed to give the needed evidence that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment has been annulled. Such a position would never have been taken but for the existence of the Sunday institution which took for granted that somewhere along the way the former holy day must have been abolished. These texts were eagerly grasped to fill the lacunae of evidence for Sunday-keeping. Such prejudices must be kept in mind when reading commentators.

The punch-line is this. Commentators are only of value where they draw evidence from Scripture or history hitherto unknown or unnoticed by the reader. Scripture thus remains the authority, not commentators.

Another caveat is this: too often the words of Paul have been assumed to have the last word in theological debate. It is important to remember that most scholars hold that the four Gospels tell us more about the later theological scene than do the epistles of Paul. The following quotation will illustrate this fact and also cast light on the debated law passages in the letters of the New Testament.

Peter Ellis, Matthew: His Mind And His Message, pp. 154-155

Where Paul, especially in Galatians and Romans, seems positively hostile to the Law, Matthew throughout his Gospel insists that the Law not only has been brought to perfection by Jesus but must be observed as a whole by Christians.

The solution to the problem will not be found through the matching of texts where Paul and Matthew apparently agree (e.g., Mt 22:34-40 and Rom 13:8-10). Nor will it be found by saying that Matthew and Paul were speaking about a different Law. In each case they are speaking about the same Law but from a different viewpoint and under drastically different circumstances.

When Paul spoke with such apparent hostility to the Law, he was speaking at a time and in a context of warring theological opinions. In Galatians especially, but also to some extent in Philippians and Romans, when Paul attacks those who put their trust in the keeping of the Law, he is attacking them precisely because they say, or appear to say, that simply by keeping the Law a man can be saved. Paul's gospel is that man is saved through faith in Jesus not by the observance of the Law...

Paul is not just against the Mosaic law, he is against any law, even the new law of Christ, if a man thinks that he can find salvation in the keeping of such law. As S. Lyonnet says: "To the extent that the New Law of Christ is a code of written law, to the extent that it contains the teachings of faith and moral precepts that govern human attitudes and acts, the New Law does not justify any more than did the Old Law since its nature is not different; it remains a norm of conduct, not a principal of activity."

When Matthew wrote toward the end of the first century, some thirty years after Paul wrote Romans, there was no longer any overt debate about the question of faith versus law. For Matthew as for Paul, faith was elemental--the DNA of the spiritual life. For Matthew, as for both Christians and Jews in general, the Law represented God's gift to man. The Law was the explication of what a good God wanted from his creatures for their good. The keeping of the Law was man's way of doing God's will "on earth as it is in heaven." It was man's way of acknowledging through his actions that he belonged to the Kingdom of God. In short, Matthew's attitude toward the Law was the same as that of the Wisdom writers of the Old Testament for whom the Law was a gift from God and for whom "the beginning of wisdom [was] the fear of the Lord" (i.e. observance of the commandments).

Paul and Matthew certainly agree on the centrality of the law of love (cp. Mt 22:34-40 and Rom 13:8-10). Prescinding from the theological debate with the Judaizers who claimed that man was saved by keeping the Law, Paul would also agree with Matthew that the Law is a gift of God....

For Matthew, the law is not a necessary evil but a positive good. Matthew's radicalization of the Law in the antitheses demonstrates that his aim is the perfect doing of the will of God, not just the keeping of the Law for the sake of the Law. In this Paul and Matthew would be in full agreement however different their approaches. (See W.D. Davies, The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount, who says that for Paul the Sermon on the Mount would "not be an alien importation into the faith" p. 366).

We have not "scraped" the libraries of Christendom to find the following extracts. They could readily be multiplied but we trust these are sufficient to show that the dogmatic use of "opposite" references indicate at the very best either culpable ignorance or careless research.

John Murray, Romans, pp. 257-258.

The question is whether the weekly Sabbath comes within the scope of the distinction respecting days on which the apostle reflects in Romans 14:5. If so then we have to reckon with the following implications.

This would mean that the Sabbath commandment in the decalogue does not continue to have any binding obligation upon believers in the New Testament economy. The observance of one day in seven as holy and invested with the sanctity enunciated in the fourth commandment would be abrogated and would be in the same category in respect of observance as the ceremonial rites of the Mosaic institution. On the assumption posited, insistence upon the continued sanctity of each recurring seventh day would be as Judaizing as to demand the perpetuation of the Levitical feasts.

Observance of a weekly Sabbath or of a day commemorating our Lord's resurrection would be a feature of the person weak in faith and in this case he would be weak in faith because he had not yet attained to the understanding that in the Christian institution all days are in the same category. Just as one weak Christian fails to recognize that all kinds of food are clean, so another, or perchance the same person, would fail to esteem every day alike.

These implications of the thesis in question cannot be avoided. We may now proceed to examine them in the light of the considerations which Scripture as a whole provides.

1. The Sabbath institution is a creation ordinance. It did not begin to have relevance at Sinai when the ten commandments were given to Moses on two tables.... It was, however, incorporated in the law promulgated at Sinai and we would expect in view of its significance and purpose as enunciated in Genesis 2:2, 3. It is so embedded in this covenant law that to regard it as of different character from its context in respect of abiding relevance goes counter to the unity and basic significance of what was inscribed on the two tables. Our Lord himself tells us of its purpose and claims it for his messianic Lordship (Mark 2:28). The thesis we are now considering would have to assume that the pattern provided by God himself (Gen.2:2, 3) in the work of creation (cf. also Exod. 20:11; 31:17) has no longer any relevance for the regulation of man's life on earth, that only nine of the ten words of the decalogue have authority for Christians, that the beneficent design contemplated in the original institution (Mark 2:28) has no application under the gospel, and that the lordship Christ exercised over the Sabbath was for the purpose of abolishing it as an institution to be observed. These are the necessary conclusions to be drawn from the assumption in question. There is no evidence to support any of these conclusions, and, when they are combined and their cumulative force frankly weighed, it is then that the whole analogy of Scripture is shown to be contradicted by the assumption concerned.

The Wesleyan Bible Commentary, Vol. V:86

Of course this whole discussion concerns matters on which God has not spoken clearly in His word. No such questions can be conscientiously raised concerning the fundamental moral issues that are clarified in the Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, or in any other plain statement of Scripture. When God has spoken there is no other legitimate side to the issue.

J.R. Richardson-Chamblin, Romans, p. 144

This liberty of conscience is to be interpreted as the liberty the Christian enjoys in the use of things not wrong in themselves or indifferent from the standpoint of Christian teaching. The technical name for these things is adiaphora; that is, in themselves they are neutral, neither good nor bad. The character of the action is determined by the person who does it.

William G.T. Shedd, Romans, p. 393

... this and the following statements have no reference to the Christian Sabbath.... The Jewish Sabbath itself was distinguished from the other sacred days of Judaism, by being made a part of the moral law or decalogue, while the secondary holy-days were provisions of the ceremonial law only.

Benjamin Jowett, The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, Galatians, Romans, p. 370

Superstitions of another kind may have also found their way among the Roman as well as the Colossian and Galatian converts. Astrology was practised both by Jew and Gentile; nor is it improbable that something of a heathen mingled with what was mainly of a Jewish character; the context of the two passages just quoted (Col. 2:18, 20., Gal. 4:9), would lead us to think so.

R. Knight, Romans, p. 566

If therefore the Sabbath was meant and St. Paul does not censure its total non-observance, the question must be not as to how the Sabbath was to be observed, but whether it was to be observed at all or not. But we know that it always has been observed, and never considered, at least in the early ages, as one of the adiaphora.

F.J. Leenhardt, Romans, pp. 348-349

What precisely is at issue in all this? Some make distinctions between the days. Since nothing suggests that we have here to do with Judaizers, we shall not regard this as an allusion to the Sabbath but to practices of abstinence and fasting on regular fixed dates.

P.C. Boylan, Romans, p. 212

Complete abstention from meat and wine is here discussed--and such abstention was not, per se, a feature of Judaism....

There is also uncertainty about the groups that select certain days for special observance, and about the purpose for which the days are set

apart. Some scholars think that the days selected by the "weak" are fast-days: others, that they are festival-days....

Since the context deals with abstinence from meats and wine, it is antecedently more probable that the "days" are fast-days rather than feast-days. The prohibition of fasting on Mondays and Thursdays contained in the Didache (viii) supports this view.

Moreover, Paul himself, who evidently cannot be reckoned here among the "weak," observed the Sabbath and other Jewish feasts--and would, therefore, be unlikely to suggest that others who did the same were "weak" in faith.

E. Käsemann, Romans, p. 370

It appears, then, that Christians are in view who are convinced that days stand under lucky or unlucky stars (cf. Billerbeck; Lagrange).

## APPENDIX III

### GALATIANS 4:9, 10

H. Betz, Galatians, pp. 217-218

The cultic activities described in v 10 are not typical of Judaism (including Jewish Christianity), though they are known to both Judaism and paganism....

Paul describes the typical behavior of religiously scrupulous people. The description itself is typical and part of a literary topos well known in antiquity. It portrays the Galatians as conforming to the religious character of the... "religiously scrupulous" or even "superstitious." One must read Theophrastus' "Character" or Plutarch's diatribe De superstitione to fully realize the power of Paul's argument. Within this context, religious observances such as Paul lists make up the behavior pattern characterized by... "a fearful cowardice with regard to the divine." According to Plutarch, this attitude of fear "utterly humiliates and crushes a man," corrupts his mind and emotions, and disables him, so that he fails to take care of his daily needs and problems. For Plutarch, who speaks for a certain philosophical world-view, this life of the superstitious is even worse than slavery.

The terminology is technical: ... "observe" denotes the activity of cultic observances in a general sense. The other terms, "days and months and seasons and years," describe the intricacies of calendar observations, that is, the constant preoccupation with idle questions as to what day, month, season, or year it is, and what that has to say about what one should or should not do.... But these activities are not exclusively Jewish, as some commentators suggest, even if a wealth of material illustrating the attitude of intensive cultic scrupulosity can be found especially in Jewish apocalypticism and Qumran.

John Bligh, Galatians, pp. 371-374

Why does St Paul not mention the sabbath in 4:10? It is remarkable that in v. 10, when St Paul is speaking of Jewish practices, he does not refer explicitly to the observance of the sabbath....

St Paul explicitly condemns the adoption of circumcision as a Christian rite. It is, therefore, puzzling that he should avoid explicit mention of the sabbath. There may be an allusion to it in the word "days" in v. 10, but this is uncertain, and even if it is admitted, the absence of any explicit comment on sabbath observance remains a puzzle.

A possible explanation of St Paul's silence on this point is that the sabbath had already gained widespread acceptance among the Gentiles in general (pagans as well as Christians) and was therefore no longer a distinguishing mark of the Jews. Listen to Philo:

We may fairly say that mankind from east to west, every country and nation and state, shew aversion to foreign institutions, and think that they will enhance the respect for their own by shewing disrespect for those of other countries. It is not so with ours. They attract and win the attention of all, of barbarians, of Greeks, of dwellers on the mainland and islands, of nations of the east and the west, of Europe and Asia, of the whole inhabited world from end to end. For who has not shewn his high respect for that sacred seventh day, by giving rest and relaxation from labour to himself and his neighbours, freemen and slaves alike, and beyond these to his beasts?

If this passage could be taken literally, no further explanation of St Paul's silence would be required; but it probably contains a good measure of exaggeration. We may conjecture, therefore, that in the church of Antioch it had been the custom from the very beginning for Christians, both Jew and Gentile, to meet for the liturgy on the sabbath, and that St Paul did not wish to upset this custom.

.... If a Christian is in no way outwardly distinguished from his non-Christian neighbours, he can get away with conduct which is sub-Christian. If, on the other hand, he is known to be a Christian, everyone expects him to live up to Christian standards. It is therefore good for Christians to be known as such, and to be easily identifiable as such. Some kind of covenant sign seems desirable. Until very recently Coptic Christians had a cross tattooed on their wrist--a primitive device, but no doubt effective.

(On p. 372 Bligh discusses the sabbath "as a covenant-sign.")

Ragnar Bring, Galatians, p.207

As an example of the bondage to which the Galatians had begun to return during Paul's absence he mentions that they observed days, months, seasons, and years. Some exegetes point out that these words could have a wider reference than merely to Jewish legal requirements. The Ethiopian Book of Enoch holds that astronomic relationships have special significance for human life. Months and seasons are assumed to depend on the authority of definite powers. It is suggested that Paul's "elemental spirits of the universe" refer to astrological powers of nature which are assumed to control human life. Certain exegetes (for example, Schlier) have interpreted vs 10 in this direction and rejected the commonly accepted assumption that "days, months, seasons, and years" refer to regulations contained in the law of Moses, e.g., the Sabbath, the Year of Jubilee and other matters in the Jewish calendar of festivals.

Archibald M. Hunter, Galatians, pp. 32, 34

Once it was thought that Paul was here describing Gentile and Jewish religion before Christ came, as a kind of religious ABC, or the rudimentary forms of religion. But the way Paul talks about these "elements" later in this chapter and in Colossians 2:8, 20 leads most modern interpreters to understand the "elements" as the heavenly bodies and the spirit-powers which were thought to inhabit them and to control men's destinies.

Then (4:10) he attacks their fussy observance of Jewish sabbaths, new moons, annual feasts, and sabbatical years, probably because such observances were closely tied up with the idolatrous worship of the stars and their potentates. But did not Paul himself observe the main Jewish feasts, and did he not recognize the Lord's Day? Yes, but what Paul condemns is not the celebration of the high days in the religious calendar, hut a fussy, all-absorbing concentration on times and seasons, dedicated to quite undivine deities. If Paul's converts prefer this mummary to the adoration of Abba, Father, his work among them has gone for naught.

## APPENDIX IV

### COLOSSIANS 2:13-23

E. Lohse, Colossians, comments on Col. 2:16-23.

In the context of Col, however, the command to keep festival, new moon, and sabbath is not based on the Torah according to which Israel received the sabbath as a sign of her election from among the nations. Rather the sacred days must be kept for the sake of "the elements of the universe," who direct the course of the stars and thus also prescribe minutely the order of the calendar.

In Judaism the observance of sacred times continued to be an expression of obedience to the law of God who was the Lord of the universe. In the syncretistic "philosophy," however, observance of days and seasons had an essentially different character. They were expressions of the worship of the elements of the universe.

Those teachers want to burden men with something that in reality is nothing but man-made commandments and teachings. The correspondence of this polemical phrase with LXX Is 29:13 should not be overlooked: "In vain do they worship me teaching the commandments and doctrines of men." ... Although the opponents claim that they are passing on traditions hallowed by antiquity, what they really offer are regulations and doctrines fabricated by men (2:8: "according to the traditions of men").

This teaching, in which knowledge and legal observance are closely joined, is clearly syncretistic. Since the cosmic powers control the fate of men, they are worshipped. Above the All is enthroned the one deity who, as the "fullness," contains the fulness in himself. Insofar as the "philosophy" demands in strict legal terms the observance of special days and the keeping of food prohibitions, an important contribution to this philosophy has also been made by the Jewish tradition. The "regulations," however, were not thought of as a sign of allegiance to the God of Israel, who had chosen his people from among all other nations as the community of his covenant. Rather they are thought of as expressing man's submission to the "angels," "powers," and "principalities," under whose control man has come through origin and fate. Consequently the adherents of the "philosophy" cannot be considered Essenes, members of the Qumran community, or proponents of heretical Jewish propaganda. Rather their teaching is one made up of diverse elements which, because of the emphasis placed on knowledge as well as its world-negating character, can be termed Gnostic or, if a more cautious designation is desired, pre-Gnostic. A Gnostic understanding of the world is also exhibited in the desire to be filled with divine power as well as in the boastful arrogance of those who think they have experienced such fulness and possess wisdom and knowledge.

The concept "law" is absent in Col, and the polemic against the "philosophy" takes a completely different tack than that against the Judaizers in Gal.

The Broadman Bible Commentary, Vol. XI:218-219.

The error troubling Colossae plainly involved both Jewish and pagan elements. Unmistakably Jewish elements are the stress upon sabbaths, circumcision, the law, and probably the references to keeping festivals and new moon holy days....

Unmistakably pagan elements include a "philosophy" depending upon plausible methods of reasoning resting upon human tradition, rather than upon logical demonstration and revelation. The worship of angels... probably reflects the widespread pagan fear of heavenly beings, elemental spirits of the universe. Of these beings, the sun, moon, and stars were in some sense the material embodiment. Ruling the earth, they should be placated, especially on their appointed seasonal occasions, by self-abasement and rigorous devotions.... the reference to drink and the association with ascetic repression of the body suggest a pagan dualism.

Gunther Bornkamm, "The Heresy of Colossians," Conflict at Colosse, pp. 124, 131.

... the elements of the world are personal, angelic powers.... Since worshipping them, according to Gal. 4:10 as well as Col. 2:16, included the observation of certain festival days and periods, one must also think at least of the worship of astral powers.... Whoever obeys these "regulations," keeps the established festivals and seasons, and satisfies certain ascetic prescriptions, has the promise that he will receive a share of the divine power that holds sway in the elements.

Also the festivals which are kept by the heretics point towards a syncretistic-gnostic origin of the Colossian Judaizing movement. Paul mentions New Moon and Sabbath (Col. 2:16), days, months, seasons, and years (Gal.4:10), i.e. in each case days and seasons that do not stand under the sign of the history of salvation, but under the sign of the periodic cycles of nature, i.e. corresponding to the movement of the stars....

Finally, also the taboos and the ascetic requirements of the heretics (Col. 2:21ff.) expose the erroneous doctrine as a variety of syncretistic Judaism. There are requirements which cannot be derived from the Jewish law--indeed, in strict Judaism they are expressly rejected--but most likely belong to the practice of pagan philosophical schools and gnostic mystery circles. These prescriptions have nothing to do with Jewish fasts. On the contrary, they correspond entirely to the attitude and intent of gnosticism, which wants to lead its adepts along this path of voluntarily adopted pious practices and asceticism to "fulfillment" with the divine powers of the elements of a higher world.

Fred O. Francis, "Humility and Angelic Worship in Col 2:18, 11" Conflict at Colosse, pp. 183,195.

Thus the lunar and sublunary referents of Col 2:16 were probably held to be the [shadows] by which most men apprehend God. That some men apprehend the [shadows] in the very vision of God is in accord with our earlier observation that instruction in humility may be the subject of visions. Moreover, the relation of these two -- the earthly [shadows] and its transcendent disclosure--derives from the circumstance that although not every Colossian practice would have been an aspect of the vsl0nary technique itself, the errorists probably

claimed that everything they enjoined had been gained from visionary access to the throne of God. In two other passages Philo indicates that the vision itself may be said to have the character of [shadows]. The force of [the things to come] may be grasped from a perspective we previously cited from Scholem: "the ecstatic sees in his life time what other people see only after death."

It now becomes evident that the whole of 2:17 was a shibboleth of the errorists. With great skill the writer opposed the claim of that verse, arguing on the one hand that the errorists practice was not a copy of Christ, and on the other hand that the Colossians shared in the very reality itself.

H.C.G. Moule, Colossian Studies, p. 175.

It is plain from the argument that the Sabbath is here regarded not as it was primevally (Gen. 2:3), 'made for man' (Mark 2:27), God's benignant gift, fenced with precept and prohibition only for His creature's bodily and spiritual benefit; but as it was adopted to be a symbolic institution of the Mosaic covenant, and expressly adapted to the relation between God and Israel.... In that respect the Sabbath was abrogated, just as the sacrifices were abrogated, and the New Israelite enters upon the spiritual realities foreshadowed by it, as by them. The Colossian Christian who declined the ceremonial observance of the Sabbath in this respect was right. An altogether different question arises when the Christian is asked to 'secularize' the weekly Rest which descends to us from the days of Paradise, and which is as vitally necessary as ever for man's physical and spiritual wellbeing.

## APPENDIX V

### THE EVERLASTING TEN

(This appendix was originally published in the Ministry magazine of February, 1964, with other names linked to the author's, but the writing was done by the latter.)

From the apostle Paul's day to our own there has been much "striving about the law" which has frequently proved "unprofitable and vain." With good reason did Martin Luther declare that one of the most important tests of true theology is the ability "rightly to deal law and gospel."

The Scylla and Charybdis menacing every mind that has not been illuminated by the Holy Spirit are legalism and antinomianism. While the former by law "would frustrate the grace of God," the latter would "make void the law through faith." The Pharisees of Christ's day and the Zwickau prophets of the Reformation era typify the extreme forms of these perversions. Remarkable indeed is the fact that the great symbols of Protestant faith at the time of the Reformation successfully steered between these doctrinal monsters, and affirmed the perpetuity of the normal requirements of God once written with the divine finger on tables of stone. (See Answers to objections, F. D. Nichol, pages 496-501.)

Since the nineteenth century there has been increasing departure in Protestant circles from the landmarks of the Reformation, and we would anticipate that this would be true with reference to the Biblical code of duty, as well as in other areas of Scripture. Those who in modern times present the commandments of God, in contrast to the traditions of men, encounter much opposition from the churches that once affirmed in the strongest terms the perpetuity of the Ten Commandments. It would appear that the battle against antinomianism needs to be fought again, and this time more conclusively than in the sixteenth century.

The spearhead of the attack against the binding obligation of the code proclaimed at Sinai consists usually of the misuse of texts such as Lu. 16:16; Jn. 1:16, 17; Gal. 2:19; 3:18-25; Ro. 3:21; 6:14; 7:1-6; 2 Cor. 3; and Col. 2:14-16.

It must now be admitted, as the first Protestants admitted, that on the face of them, these texts do testify to a New Testament opposition to law. This cannot truthfully be denied. The passages referred to all mention law, and do so with some apparent aspersion. What explanation is there for this?

First, it should be recalled that the New Testament was written when the extreme of legalism rather than antinomianism dominated the religious scene. The New Testament exponents of righteousness by faith therefore aggressively repudiated law as a method of salvation in order that men might turn to Christ and to Him alone for righteousness. There is, however, another reason also for the confusion resulting from some interpretations of these texts. Interminable striving about law has been possible these many centuries because the term itself has several meanings rather than merely one. This is why texts "against" law can be used to "contradict" texts "for" law. When opponents on the Sabbath use such texts as these listed above to confound those who believe in the present standing of the Ten Commandments they are frequently interpreting "law" in these texts as a synonym for the Ten Commandments. Inasmuch as most of the contexts concerned give emphasis to the dissolution of the obligation of the Mosaic code as a whole, it becomes apparent that such interpretations of the word law are erroneous and misleading. Believers in the Decalogue need to be careful lest they repeat the same error in their use of a different line of texts employing the Hebrew word torah or the Greek nomos. As Dr. E. Heppenstall has pointed out, "There must be a distinction made between the term 'law' as it is used in the New Testament and this term as it is used in the Christian church."<sup>1</sup>

The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary in its article on "Law" recognizes the various meanings of the term:

[Heb. Torah, "direction," "instruction"; dath "regulation," "law"; Gr. nomos "rule," "principle," "law."] In the Bible, a set of principles or standard of conduct. The usual Hebrew term translated "law" is torah, a term signifying all the revealed will of God, or any part of it. Unless the context indicates otherwise, "law" in the OT usually denotes the divine "instruction" God had given His people (Gen. 25:5; Ex. 16:1,28; Ps. 1:2; 19:7; 119:1,165; Is. 1:10; 8:16, 20; etc. This "law," or written revelation of God's will, made known the divine purpose for the Hebrew people in OT times. To the devout Jew, God's "law" was equivalent to His plan for the salvation of the world. It is in this sense that Isaiah says "the isles shall wait for his law" (Is. 12:4). The instructions God imparted to Moses came to be known as "the law of Moses," that is, the instruction given by Moses (Jos. 8:31; Neh. 8:1; Lk. 2:22; 21:14; Acts 28:23; etc.). In view of the fact that the instruction imparted to Moses occupies a major part of the first 5 books of the Bible, commonly known as the Pentateuch, the Jews often referred to the Pentateuch as "the law of Moses" (Lk. 24:44; Jn. 1:17; cf. Mt. 5:17,18).

In the N.T. the term "the law" is used with various shades of meaning, and unless these different aspects of "law" are kept in mind, and the context examined to ascertain which shade of meaning the writer is alluding to, the modern reader of the N.T. is almost certain, at times, to misconstrue what is said about the "law." To a Jewish reader or to one familiar with the Jewish religious system, the different nuances of the word "law" were clear, and a speaker or writer could shift rapidly from one to another without being misunderstood, since the context of his remarks would be sufficient to make this meaning clear. In fact, to the devout Jew all the different shades of meaning implied by the word "law" were, for practical purposes, one, and each blended almost imperceptibly into the other. Furthermore, the Jews did not ordinarily distinguish between moral, ceremonial, civil, and health regulations, since God was the author of them all, and all were binding upon His people. To the modern reader, on the other hand, this can all be very confusing. In the NT the word "law" is used in 2 distinct but closely related senses: (1) Scripture as a revelation of the divine will (see Jn. 12:31; 15:24, etc.; etc.). In Jewish terminology the word "law" may refer to the Pentateuch, the 5 books of Moses, in contrast with the Prophets and the Writings, or the Hagiographa--the 3 divisions of the OT according to the Hebrew canon (see Lk. 24:44). Occasionally they used the expression "law of Moses" when referring to the Pentateuch, but more often simply the word "law" (see Mt. 7:12; 11:13; 12:5; 22:40; 23:23; Lk. 10:26; 16:16, 17; Jn. 1:45; 7:19; 13:15; Rom. 5:13,20; 7; etc.). At times the word "law" is used in connection with the Decalogue, though in some instances "law" may refer specifically

to the Pentateuch, of which the Decalogue is an integral part (Mt. 22:36-40; Rom. 7:7; Jas. 2:10-12). (2) The Jewish religious system as a whole, or some particular part of it (Jn. 1:17; Acts. 18:13, 15; 22:3; Rom. 6:14, 15; Gal. 3:19-25; etc.). The Jewish religious system was, of course, based on the revelation of God's will as contained in the OT Scriptures, particularly the Pentateuch. Sometimes the term "law" refers particularly to the ritual law, the characteristic outward feature of the Jewish religious system (Lk. 2:22-24; Acts 15:5, 24; etc.). The expression "works of the law" commonly refers to the requirements of the ritual law, though such law is also spoken of as "the law of the Lord" (Lk. 2:23). In Heb. 7:12 "law" refers to that part of the Law of Moses dealing with the priesthood.

Obviously, texts referring to "the law" should be used only after the most careful study of the context in order to ascertain the intent of the inspired writer, and with a fine sense of discrimination.

All authoritative theological works confirm this delineation of the meaning of "law" given by Adventist scholarship. In view of the fact of the multi-meaning significance of the term "law," we might well ask, Is there some more direct route in presenting the truth of the eternal nature of the Ten Commandments rather than striving about "law" texts? The burden of this article is to point out that there is such a route, one that is completely reliable from a Biblical standpoint and which also is irrefutable in polemics.

It often has been pointed out that the one book in the Bible written especially for the last days and the last church is the eschatological book of Revelation. This is the scripture that most of all deals with the last things. From the first chapter to the last it points to the return of Jesus, and the last half of the book in particular describes the final crisis that will determine the destiny of the generation living on earth just prior to the Second Advent. In these last chapters we find a call to that wholehearted worship which is manifested in complete obedience to "the commandments of God." Twice the remnant church is characterized as a commandment-keeping church (Rev. 12:17; 14:12). Attention often has been called to these points. What has not been so frequently observed, however, is the fact that the writer of Revelation nowhere uses the word law in the Apocalypse or in his Epistles.<sup>2</sup> It would seem that the Holy Spirit, foreseeing the controversies that would ensue over the Pauline references to law, admittedly containing "some things hard to be understood" (2 Pet. 3: 15, 16), planned that John should exalt God's moral code above all possible misconstruction and polemics.

Central to all the visions of the Apocalypse is the heavenly sanctuary (see Rev. 1:12; 4:1; 8:3; 15:5; etc.). In Revelation 15:5 John refers to this sanctuary as "the tabernacle of the testimony," thus directing us in the omega of Scripture to the usage of that same term found in the alpha of the Inspired Word. In the Pentateuch of Moses "the tabernacle of the testimony" is referred to repeatedly. Why was it given this name? Because in its heart resided the ark, which housed the "tables of the testimony"--the Ten Commandments. The term "testimony" as found in the Bible's first five books means the Ten Commandments and only the Ten Commandments and the recurrence of the term in the last book of Scripture identifies these same commandments as still central in the plan of God during the Christian dispensation.<sup>3</sup> The focal point of the work of redemption in heaven is referred to as "the tabernacle of the testimony," revealing afresh what was typified by the Mosaic sanctuary--namely, that the sacred will of God is the cynosure of all heavenly beings, and the very basis of all divine acts.

The Mosaic recital is so written as to make it evident that the whole of the typical ceremonial service would have been unnecessary but for the presence in the Most Holy place of the record of the holy will of Jehovah. (See Ex. 25:10, where the first item of the sanctuary discussed is the ark containing the Ten Commandments; compare Lev. 4:1). Furthermore, this ancient history makes it clear that God Himself made a distinction between the tables of stone and His other requirements. The Ten were written by His own finger and placed within the ark, while all other commandments were written by Moses and placed at the outside of the ark (Deut. 31:26, margin). Thus it was God, not man, who separated the Ten Commandments from all other features of the Mosaic code.

Many authorities may be cited as recognizing the Biblical evidence that the Ten were frequently referred to as the "testimony."

TESTIMONY... The two tables of stone, whereon the law, or ten commandments were written, which were witnesses of that covenant made between God and his people. Exod. 25:16, 21, 31, 18. --CRUDEN, A Complete Concordance.

The Decalogue, which is often called "the testimony" (Exod. XVI:34; XXV:16, 21, etc.).--The Pulpit Commentary, on 2 Kings 11:12.

Before the Book of the Law was completed, the word testimony (eduth) was used specially to denote the Ten Commandments.--Wordsworth Commentary, on 2 Kings 11:12.

He now uses a word Marturion, Testimony, familiar to Jewish ears, especially to readers of the Pentateuch in the LXX, "where it is found about thirty times, and signifies the (eduth), "Testimony," i.e. of the Holy of Holies.... The Tables of the Law were "The Testimony," the Ark was "the Ark of the Testimony." See Acts 7:44; Rev. 15:5.--Wordsworth Commentary, on 1 Tim. 2:6.

The testimony.... the term commonly used of the Ten Commandments.--The S.D.A. Bible Commentary, on 2 Kings 11:12.

They are... "the testimony," the witness to men of the divine will, righteousness itself, demanding righteousness in man.... It is by virtue of their presence in it that the ark becomes, in its turn, the ark of the covenant (Numb. x, 33, etc.), that the sacred tent became the tabernacle of witness and testimony (Exod. xxxviii, 21, etc.) --McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, Vol. 10, p.272. Art. "Ten Commandments."

A designation of God's law as testifying the principles of His dealings with His people. So the ark of the covenant is called the "ark of the testimony" (Ex. 25; 22), as containing "the testimony" (vers. 16), i.e. the tables of the Law upon which the covenant was based.--International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, p. 1852.

(Ten Commandments) still more frequently... called "The Testimony" as the attestation of the will of God concerning human character and conduct.--C. HODGE, Systematic Theology, vol. 3, p. 272.

Something evidential, i.e. (gen.) evidence given of (spec.) the Decalogue (in the sacred Tabernacle).--Strong's Concordance, on Marturion.

See also Smith's Bible Dictionary, et. al.

Two other terms are used by John in Revelation for the Ten. They are "covenant" and "commandments." A similar passage to Revelation 15:5 is Revelation 11:19, which refers to the "ark of his testament," and between these two texts are others which describe the people of

God on earth (in the sanctuary's court) as those who "keep the commandments of God" (Rev. 12:17; 11:12). Ex. 34:28 and 29 makes it clear that all three terms--testimony, covenant, commandments--may be applied to the Ten, and it is in this way that John uses them. Earlier in the New Testament such texts as Gal. 5:1-3 clearly testify to the fact that the rule of life now to follow is not the keeping of the whole law. Such references, however, as Gal. 5:6; 6:15; and 1 Cor. 7:19 show that whatever in the law has ceased to be binding, the commandments, implemented by faith and love in one who has become "a new creature," remain forever. It is John who identifies these enduring commandments by the texts in Revelation already mentioned. He portrays both the people of God on earth and the worshipers in heaven as paying allegiance to that same code which was once enshrined in the ark of the earthly Holy of Holies. It should be emphasized that this code in both cases consists of all ten of the commandments, and therefore the Sabbath remains sacred throughout all dispensations.

The worker for God today is counseled to present the binding obligation of God's eternal requirements by dwelling upon the evidence from Revelation as supported by the parallel reference from the Pentateuch.<sup>4</sup> Such an approach in any preliminary presentation of the truth will avoid all controversies over texts employing the word law and will result in the conviction of many. It should be remembered, however, that the compelling of mental assent is useless unless the heart is won; and the Lamb of God who honored the divine code by His atoning death should be so exalted by every minister in his word and manner that the hearts of the listeners will be melted and the truth become desirable.

1. Our Firm Foundation, vol. 1, p. 460.

2. 1 Jn. 3:4 in the Authorized Version is a mistranslation. Anomia, rendered "transgression of the law" means "lawlessness," as in the Revised Version.

3. See Appendix A.

4. See Appendix B.

#### APPENDIX A

The Hebrew word for testimony is eduth, and in the NT it finds its nearest Greek synonym in the word marturion. This is amply demonstrated by the Septuagint. Neither of these words in themselves necessarily signify the Ten Commandments, but when they are associated with the service of the tabernacle they always do so refer. (See Num. 1:50, 53; 17:8, 10; 18:2; Acts 7:41; Rev. 15:5.)

#### APPENDIX B

##### Two Approaches to the Ten Commandments

##### First Approach--based on the three terms for the Ten Commandments used in the book of Revelation.

(1) Rev. 15:5 Tabernacle of the Testimony

(2) Rev. 12:17 Commandments of God

(3) Rev. 11:19 Ark of the testament

These texts prove without any disputation that the Ten Commandments are in prominent focus sixty years after the cross, and thus they were not affected or abolished at the cross.

##### The basic OT text Ex. 34:28, 29.

(1) Covenant equivalent of testament

(2) Ten Commandments

(3) Tables of the Testimony

##### Ark of the Covenant (from Hebrew berith):

Num. 10:33; Deut. 10:5; Josh. 8:33; 1 Sam. 6:15; 2 Sam. 6:2; 2 Chron. 35:3; Ps. 132:8; Heb. 9:4; Rev. 11:19. Greek Diatheke--Covenant or Testament.

##### Commandments of God (from Hebrew asereh hadebarim; Greek entolas)

Ex. 20: 1-17

Deut. 4:13

Deut. 10:1

Deut. 5:29

Deut. 13:4

Joshua 22:5

1 Kings 2:3

1 Chron. 29:19

Ps. 78:7

Ps. 119:151

Prov. 4:4

Eccl. 12:13

Isa. 48:18

Matt. 5:19

Matt. 19:17

Mark 7:7-15

Luke 23:54-56

Jn. 15:10

1 Cor. 7:19 cf. Gal. 5:6; 6:15

2 Cor. 3:1-3

1 Jn. 5:2, 3

Rev. 12:17

Rev. 14:12

Rev. 22:14

Testimony of the Lord (from Heb. **eduth**)

Ex. 31:18

Ex. 25:16, 22

Ex. 16:34

Ex. 40:20

Lev. 16:13

Num. 4:5

Joshua 4:16

2 Kings 11:12

Num. 1:50

Num. 1:53

Num. 10:11

Ex. 38:21

Num. 17:4, 7

Num. 18:2

2 Chron. 21:6

Acts. 7:44

(Rev. 15:5 Testimony from Marturion which refers to the Decalogue in this passage according to Strong.)

Having proved from the terms used in Exodus 34:28 and 29, and also in Revelation, that the Ten Commandments remain in the NT era, then the texts employing the word "law" can be used strongly to support the Ten. The Law is based on the Ten and becomes the inspired exponent of them in application and elaboration.

Second Approach--based on texts using "law" (to be used only after the above).

Ex. 24:12

Ps. 19:7

Matt. 22:36-40

Ro.7:12

Acts 15:21

Deut. 31:26

Isa. 42:21

Lu. 16:16, 17

Ro. 8:6, 7

1 Tim. 1: 6-10

Joshua 1:8

Isa. 8:19, 20

Ro. 3:20

Jas. 2:8-12

Heb. 8:9, 10

Ps. 1:1, 2

Matt. 5:17, 18

Ro. 3:31

1 Jn. 3:4

2 Cor. 3:4-16

## APPENDIX VI

# THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR CHRISTIAN SABBATH-KEEPING IN THE EARLY CENTURIES

### The witnesses:

#### a. Indirect testimonies showing recognition of the origin and identity of the seventh-day Sabbath:

- (1) The Sabbath and the first day of the week are distinguished in the Diatessaron (Harmony of the Four Gospels) of Tatian (cir. 100-170 A.D.): Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. IX, pp. 43 ff.
- (2) The Sabbath, becomes "the seventh", a name adopted by every nation: Bishop Theophilus of Antioch (cir. 170 A.D.), To Autolycus, bk. ii, chap. 12: Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. VI, Cols. 1069-1072. A.N.F., vol. II, p. 99.
- (3) "Christ did not at all rescind the sabbath": Tertullian (cir. 160-230 A.D.), Against Marcion, bk. iv, chap. 12: Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. II, Col. 415. A.N.F., vol. III, p. 363.
- (4) The Lord's day follows the Sabbath: Bishop Cyprian of Carthage (cir. 200-258 A.D.), Ep. 58 (or 59, or 64), Chap. 4: Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. III, Col. 1053. A.N.F. vol. V, p. 354.
- (5) Bishop Dionysius the Great of Alexandria (cir. 190-260 A.D.) wrote a treatise On the Sabbath, of which there is nothing extant: Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea (260-340 A.D.), Ecclesiastical History, bk. vii, "Intro.", chap. 22, para. 11: Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. XX, Cols. 691, 692; Jerome, Lives of Illustrious Men, Chap. 69: Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. XXIII, Cols. 717, 718. Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers, 2nd series, vol. I, pp. 293, 307, and vol. III, p. 376.
- (6) The Sabbath has not been abolished plainly, but tacitly: Bishop Archelaus of Carrha (A.D. 278), Disputation with Manes, Chap. 42: Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. X, Col. 1498. A.N.F., vol. XI, p. 217.
- (7) The rest day of creation "is the Sabbath": Lactantius (260-340 A.D.), Divine Institutes, bk. vii, chap. 14: Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. VI, Cols. 781, 782. A.N.F., vol. VII, p. 211.
- (8) The Seventh-day is the Sabbath, but the eighth day a perfect one: Bishop Hilary of Poitiers (315-367), Prolegomena to the Psalms, chap. 12; Tractatus ad Titulum Ps. 91: Migne, Patrologia Latina Tom. IX, Cols. 239, 240.
- (9) The Sabbath is kept by abstaining from sin; and prefigures heavenly rest: Jerome (340-420 A.D.), On Isaiah, chaps. 56, 58: Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. XXVI, Cols. 540-542, 573, 574.
- (10) "The Scripture name for the day is the Sabbath": Bishop Augustin of Hippo (354-430 A.D.), Reply to Faustus the Manichaean, bk. XYiii, chap. 5: Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. XLII, Col. 346. N.P.N.F., 1st Series, vol. IV, p. 238.
- (11) The Sabbath points toward the eternal rest: Augustin, Ep. 55 (or 119), or II Ep. to Januarius, chap. 11, para. 20: Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. XXXIII, Col. 214. N.P.N.F., 1st series, vol. I, p. 309.

#### b. Direct evidence of Christian observance of, and worship on, the seventh-day Sabbaths:

- (1) Cerinthus, the Gnostic heresiarch (cir. 60-125 A.D.), is reported to have taught Sabbath observance and circumcision: Bishop Philaster of Brescia (325?-387), Liber Diversarum Hereseon, (VIII), xxxvi, (2): "He taught moreover to circumcise," Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. XII, Cols. 1152, 1153.
- (2) The sect of Jewish Christians called the Ebionites (cir. 100-400 A.D.) kept both the seventh-day Sabbath and the "Lord's day" (first day of the week):
  - (a) Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea (260-340 A.D.), Ecclesiastical History, bk. iii, chap. 27: "The Sabbath and the rest of the discipline of the Jews they observed just like them, but at the same time, like us, they celebrated the Lord's days as a memorial of the resurrection of the Saviour." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. XX, Cols. 273, 274. N.P.N.F. 2nd series, vol. I, pp. 159, 160.
  - (b) Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus (386-457 A.D.), De fabulis haeticorum, bk. ii, chap. 1: "They observe the Sabbath according to Jewish law, and sanctify the Lord's day in keeping with our custom." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. LXXXIII, Cols. 387-390.
- (3) If some wish to keep Sabbath, etc., "we" ought to associate with them: Justin Martyr (100-165 A.D.), Dialogue with Trypho, chap. 47: "If some, through weak-mindedness, wish to observe such institutions as were given by Moses (from which they expect some virtue, but which, we believe were appointed by reason of the hardness of the people's hearts), along with their hope in this Christ, and [wish to perform] the eternal and natural acts of righteousness and piety, yet choose to live with the Christians and the faithful, as I said before, not inducing them either to be circumcised like themselves, or to keep the Sabbath, or to observe any other such ceremonies, then I hold that we ought to join ourselves to such, and associate with them in all things as kinsmen and brethren." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. VI, Cols. 577, 578. A.N.F., vol. I, p. 218.
- (4) Some do not kneel while worshipping on the Sabbath: Tertullian (160-230), On Prayer, chap. (18) 23: "In the matter of kneeling also prayer is subject to diversity of observance, through the act of some few who abstain from kneeling on the Sabbath; and since this dissension is particularly on its trial before the churches, the Lord will give His grace that the dissentients may either yield, or else indulge their opinion without offence to others. We, however (just as we have received), only on the day of the Lord's Resurrection ought to guard not only against kneeling, but every posture and office of solicitude; deferring even our businesses lest we give any place to the devil. Similarly, too, in the period of Pentecost; which period we distinguish by the same solemnity of exultation. But who would hesitate every day to prostrate himself before God, at least in the first prayer with which we enter on the daylight? At fasts, moreover, and Stations, no

prayer should be made without kneeling, and the remaining customary marks of humility; for (then) we are not only praying, but deprecating, and making satisfaction to God our Lord. Touching times of prayer nothing at all has been prescribed, except clearly "to pray at every time and every place." Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. I, Col. 1298. A.N.F., vol. III, p. 689.

(5) Worldly labor ceases on the Sabbath for the Christian, in view of Heb. 4:9: Origen of Alexandria (185-254 A.D.), Homily 23 on Numbers, chap. 4:

"After the festival of the unceasing sacrifice [the crucifixion] is put the second festival of the Sabbath, and it is fitting for whoever is righteous among the saints to keep also the festival of the Sabbath. Which is, indeed, the festival of the Sabbath, except that concerning which the Apostle said, 'There remaineth therefore a sabbatismos, that is, a keeping of the Sabbath, to the people of God [Hebrews 4:9]'? Forsaking therefore the Judaic observance of the Sabbath, let us see what sort of observance of the Sabbath is expected of the Christian. On the day of the Sabbath nothing of worldly acts ought to be performed. If therefore you cease from all worldly works, do nothing mundane, but are free for spiritual works, you come to the church, offer the ear for divine readings and discussions, and thoughts of heavenly things, give attention to the future life, keep before your eyes the coming judgment, do not regard present and visible things, but the invisible and the future: this is the observance of the Christian Sabbath." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Vol. XII, Cols. 749, 750. (Photostat No. 117)

(6) Fasting forbidden on the Sabbath in Spain, 305 A.D.: Council of Elvira, canon 26:

"Lest one should fast on each Sabbath. It is ordered to correct the error, that we should keep a fast on each Sabbath day." Labbe et Cossart, Sacrosancta Concilia, Tom. I, Col. 973 (But see opposite interpretation in Hefele, History of the Councils of the Church, Vol. I, pp. 147, 148).

(7) Arius' friends attempted to bring him into church for communion on the Sabbath, but the attempt was deferred until the communion of the "next day" 336 A.D.: Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria (296-373 A.D.), Letter 54 to Serapius, para. 2:

"2. When therefore he swore that he did not profess the opinions for which Alexander had excommunicated him, [the Emperor] dismissed him, saying, 'If thy Faith be right, thou hast done well to swear; but if thy Faith be impious, and thou hast sworn, God judge of thee according to thy oath.' When he thus came forth from the presence of the Emperor, Eusebius and his fellows, with their accustomed violence, desired to bring him into the Church. But Alexander, the Bishop of Constantinople of blessed memory, resisted them, saying that the inventor of the heresy ought not to be admitted to communion; whereupon Eusebius and his fellows threatened, declaring, 'As we have caused him to be invited by the Emperor, in opposition to your wishes, so to-morrow, though it be contrary to your desire, Arius shall have communion with us in this Church.' It was the Sabbath when they said this." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. XXV, Cols. 685-688. N.P.N.F., 2nd series, vol. IV p. 565.

(8) The Council of Laodicaea (between 343 and 381 A.D.) specified what Scriptures should be read in church worship on Sabbath, but forbade Judaizing on that day: Canons 16 and 29:

"Can. 16. 'On Saturday [Sabbath] the Gospels and other portions of the Scripture shall be read aloud.'

"[Neander remarks that this canon is open to two interpretations. It may mean that on Saturday, as on Sunday, the Holy Scriptures shall be read aloud in the church, and therefore solemn public service shall be held; and canon 49 is in favour of this interpretation. It was also the custom in many provinces of the ancient Church to observe Saturday as the Feast of the Creation.]" Hefele, Councils, vol. II, p. 310.

"Can. 29. 'Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday, but shall work on that day; but on the Lord's day they shall especially honour, and, as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out from Christ.'" Sabbe et Cossart, Sacrosancta Conciliar Tom. I, Cols. 1511, 1512. (Photostats Nos. 41, 42, 98, 99.)

(9) The Council of Laodicaea also gave directions concerning the celebration of communion, and the commemoration of the martyrs, on Sabbaths during Lent: Canons 49 and 51. Labbe et Cossart, Sacrosancta Concilia, Tom. I, Col. 1514. Hefele, History of the Church, vol. II, pp. 310, 311, 316, 320.

(10) The heretic Apollinaris, or Apollinarius (cir. 325-390), onetime bishop of Laodicaea, taught that Christians should be circumcised and keep Sabbath: Bishop Basil of Caesarea (328-379), Letter (74) 263, chap. 4:

"Second to him is Apollinarius.... Now there are not only his theological writings, which are constructed, not out of Scriptural proofs, but out of human arguments, but there are also his writings about the resurrection, composed in the manner of myths, or rather in the manner of the Jews, wherein he tells us to return again to the worship which is according to the law, and again to be circumcised, and to observe the Sabbath, and to abstain from meat, and to offer sacrifices to God, and to worship in the temple at Jerusalem, and in general to become Jews instead of Christians. What could be more ridiculous, or rather more foreign to the teaching of the Gospel, than these things?" Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. XXXII, Col. 979. N.P.N.F., 2nd series, vol. VIII, pp. 302, 303.

(11) Bishop Basil took communion on the Lord's day, Wednesday, Preparation day and Sabbath, and on saints' days: Letter (93) 289:

"I, indeed, communicate four times a week, on the Lord's day on Wednesday, on Friday, and on the Sabbath, and on the other days if there is a commemoration of the Saint." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. XXXII, Col. 483. N.P.N.F., 2nd series, vol. VIII; p. 179.

(12) Since the Lord's day and Sabbath are sisters, why behold the first and despise the second? Bishop Gregory of Nyssa (331-396), De Castigatione.

"In whose eyes is the Lord's day regarded, who dishonor the Sabbath? Do not these know that they are sisters? If you wrong the one, do you not strike at the other?" Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. XLVI, Cols. 309, 310.

(13) Bishop Ambrose of Milan (340-397) fasted every day except Sabbath and Sunday: Paulinus, Vita Ambrosii, chap. 38.

"He was constant at prayer day and night; he slept little, and fasted every day, except on the Sabbath and Sunday, on which days only, he dined." Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. XIV, Col. 42.

(14) Ambrose fasted on the Sabbath when at Rome, but not when he was at home in Milan: Bishop Augustin of Hippo (354-430 A.D.), Letter 54 (118) or I Januarius, chap. 2, para. 3.

"3. I think you may have heard me relate before, what I will nevertheless now mention. When my mother followed me to Milan, she found the Church there not fasting on Saturday [Sabbath]. She began to be troubled, and to hesitate as to what she should do; upon which I, though not taking a personal interest then in such things, applied on her behalf to Ambrose, of most blessed memory, for his advice. He answered that he could not teach me anything but what he himself practised, because if he knew any better rule, he would observe it himself. When I supposed that he intended, on the ground of his authority alone, and without supporting it by any argument, to recommend us to give up fasting on Saturday, he followed me, and said: 'When I visit Rome, I fast on Saturday; when I am here, I do not fast. On the same principle, do you observe the custom prevailing in whatever Church you come to, if you desire neither to give offence by your conduct, nor to find cause of offence in another's.' When I reported this to my mother, she accepted it gladly; and for myself after frequently reconsidering his decision, I have always esteemed it as if I had received it by an oracle from heaven. For often have I perceived with extreme sorrow, many disquietudes caused to weak brethren by the contentious pertinacity or superstitious vacillation of some who, in matters of this kind, which do not admit of final decision by the authority of Holy Scripture, or by the tradition of the universal Church, or by their manifest good influence on manners, raise questions, it may be, from some crotchet of their own, or from attachment to the custom followed in one's own country, or from preference for that which one has seen abroad, supposing that wisdom is increased in proportion to the distance to which men travel from home, and agitate these questions with such keenness, that they all is wrong except what they do themselves." Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. XXXIII, Cols, 200, 201. N.P.N.F., 1st series, vol. I, pp. 300, 301.

(15) Assemblies usually held on both Sabbaths and Sundays, by orthodox Christians and Arians alike: Socrates Scholasticus (cir. 385-445) Ecclesiastical History, bk. vi, chap. 8:

"The Arians, as we have said, held their meetings without the city. As often therefore as the festal days occurred--I mean Saturday [Sabbath] and Lord's day--in each week, on which assemblies are usually held in the churches, they congregated within the city gates about the public squares, and sang responsive verses adapted to the Arian heresy." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. LXVII, Cols, 687-690. N.P.N.F., 2nd series, Vol. II, p. 144.

There were Christians in Constantinople in the 4th century who kept Sabbath like the Jews: Bishop John Chrysostom (347-407 A.D.), Commentary on Galatians, 1:7:

"You will now understand why Paul calls circumcision a subversion of the Gospel. There are many among us now, who fast on the same days as the Jews, and keep the sabbaths in the same manner; and we endure it nobly or rather ignobly and basely. And why do I speak of Jews seeing that many Gentile customs are observed by some among us; omens, auguries, presages, distinctions of days, a curious attention to the circumstances of their children's birth, and as soon as they are born, tablets with impious inscriptions are placed upon their unhappy heads, thereby teaching them from the first to lay aside virtuous endeavors, and drawing part of them at least under the false domination of fate." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. LXI, Col. 623. N.P.N.F., 1st series, vol. XIII, p. 8.

(17) Marked variation in Augustin's day, as to fasting or not fasting on the Sabbath:

(a) Augustin, Ep. 54 (118) or I Januarius, chap. 2, para. 2:

"2. There are other things, however, which are different in different places and countries: e.g. some fast on Saturday [Sabbath], others do not; some partake daily of the body and blood of Christ, others receive it on stated days: in some places no day passes without the sacrifice being offered; in others it is only on Saturday [Sabbath] and the Lord's day, or may be only on the Lord's day. In regard to these and all other variable observances which may be met anywhere, one is at liberty to comply with them or not as he chooses; and there is no better rule for the wise and serious Christian in this matter, than to conform to the practice which he finds prevailing in the Church to which it may be his lot to come. For such a custom, if it is clearly not contrary to the faith nor to sound morality, is to be held as a thing indifferent, and ought to be observed for the sake of fellowship with those among whom we live." Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. XXXIII, Col. 200. N.P.N.F., 1st Series, vol. I, p. 300.

(b) Augustin to Jerome, Ep. (19) 82, chap. 2, para. 14:

"If we say that it is wrong to fast on the seventh day, we shall condemn not only the Church of Rome, but also many other churches, both neighboring and more remote, in which the same custom continues to be observed. If, on the other hand, we pronounce it wrong not to fast on the seventh day, how great is our presumption in censuring so many churches in the East, and by far the greater part of the Christian world!" Migne, Patrologia Latina, Tom. XXXIII, Col. 281. N.P.N.F., 1st Series, vol. I, pp. 353, 354.

(18) The monks in the East held public worship on both Sabbaths and Sundays; John Cassian (cir. 375-440) See Migne, Patrologia Latina; Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd Series, Vol. XI.

(a) On these days the New Testament is read: Institutes, bk. ii, chap. 6 (Tom. XLIX, Cols. 89, 90), (Vol. XI, p. 207).

(b) There are public services among the Egyptian monks only on these days, for communion: Insts. iii, 2 (Tom. XLIX, Col. 115); (Vol. XI, p. 213).

(c) One monk fasted each day in his cell, and only on Sabbaths and Sundays, having gone to church, brought back strangers to eat with him: Insts. v, 26 (Tom. XLIX, Col. 245); (Vol. XI, p. 243).

(d) Abbot Paphnutius went a distance to church each Sabbath and Sunday even at old age: Conferences, bk. iii, chap 1 (Tom. XLIX, Cols. 557-559), (Vol. XI, p. 319).

(19) Vigils were kept by monks of the East at the commencement and the dawn of each Sabbath: Caasian, Insts. iii, 8-11. (Tom. XLIX, Cols. 140-150); (Vol. XI, pp. 216-219).

(20) The Psalm was omitted at meals of monks of the East on the Sabbath and Sunday: Insts., bk. iii, chap. 12 (Tom. XLIX, Cols. 150, 151); (Vol. XI, pp. 216-219).

(21) Fasting was not permitted on the Sabbath in the East: Cassian:

(a) In some countries of the West, and in Rome, there was no dispensation from Sabbath fasting: Insts. iii, 10 (Tom. XLIX, Cols. 147-149); (Vol. XI, p. 218).

- (b) Meals were eaten on Sabbath and Sundays, without the reading of the Psalm: Insts. iii, 12 (Tom. XLIX, Cols. 150, 151).
- (c) Strict fasting included abstinence from cooked foods on Sabbaths and Sundays: Conf. ii, 21 (Tom. XLIX, Col. 553); (Vol. XI, P. 317).
- (d) No fastings on Sabbaths and Sundays of Lent, except on the Great Sabbath: Conf. xxi, 24, 25 (Tom. XLIX, Col. 1200); (Vol. XI, p. 513).
- (e) Some fast on Sabbaths during Lent, to get forty days, fast in six weeks: Conf. xxi, 27 (Tom. XLIX, Cols. 1200-1201); (Vol. XI, p. 513).

(22) Sabbath-keeping except at Home and Alexandria:

- (a) Socrates Scholasticus (cir. 385-445), Ecclesiastical History, bk. v, chap. 22:

"Although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the sabbath of every week yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. LXVII, Cols. 635, 636; N.P.N.F., 2nd Series, Vol. II, p. 132. (Photostat No. 118).

- (b) Sozomen (cir. 400-443), Ecclesiastical History, bk. vii, chap. 19:

"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." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. LXVII, Cols. 1477, 1478; N.P.N.F., 2nd Series, Vol. II, p. 390. (Photostat No. 119).

c. Evidence from anonymous or interpolated works of uncertain date:

- (1) The seventh day, preceding the Lord's day, is called the Sabbath in the Gospel of Peter (cir. 185 A.D.), verses 7 and 8, (35 and 50), A.N.F., vol. IX, pp. 27, 29.

- (2) "Except ye make the sabbath a real sabbath [sabbatize the sabbath], ye shall not see the Father": Sayings of Jesus, Logion ii, Greek papyrus, lines 8-11 (cir. 250 A.D.). (Oxyrhynchus Papyri, Grenfell and Hunt, Part I, p. 3) (London, Egypt Exploration Fund, 1898) (Photostat No. 122).

- (3) Services to be held on [Sabbath] evening: Syriac Teaching of the Apostles (cir. 250-300 A.D.), para. 6, Rule 4. A.N.F., Vol. VIII, p. 668.

- (4) Keep Sabbath spiritually, and the Lord's day as a festival: Interpolated Ignatius, Ep. to the Magnesians, chap. 9 (Longer recension dated about 300 A.D.):

"Let us no longer sabbatize in a Jewish manner, (and) rejoicing in holidays,... but let each one of you sabbatize spiritually, rejoicing in meditation on the law, not in rest of body, admiring the artisanship of God, not eating stale things and drinking lukewarm things and walking measured distances and enjoying dancing and plaudits which do not have sense. And after the sabbatizing, let every friend of Christ keep as a festival the Lord's [day], the resurrection day the queen, the chief of all the days": Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. V, Cols. 766-770. A.N.F., vol. I, pp. 62, 63. (Photostat No. 116).

- (5) No fasting on Sabbath, Pseudo-Ignatius, Ep. To the Philippians, chap. 13 (written perhaps about 300 A.D.): "If anyone fast on the Lord's day, or on the Sabbath, except on the paschal Sabbath only, he is a murderer of Christ." Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. V, Col. 938. A.N.F., vol. I, p. 119.

- (6) Sabbath observance, and non-fasting on the Sabbath, are clearly provided for in the Constitutions of the Holy Apostles (cir. 300-350 A.D.), widely used and influential in the East (Migne, Patrologia Graeca) (Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. VII):

- (a) "Always remember the ten commandments of God.... Thou shalt observe the Sabbath": ii, chap. 36; vii, chap. 23 (Tom. I, Cols. 685, 686, 1013-1016); (Vol. VII, pp. 413, 469).

- (b) The Sabbath is the memorial of creation, for rest and meditation on God's law; the lord's day is for assembling to rejoice because of the resurrection, vii, chap. 36 (Tom. I, Cols. 1031-1034); (Vol., VII, p. 474).

- (c) Assemble on every Sabbath day, but fast on only one Sabbath: v. chap. 20 (Tom. I, Cols. 905, 906); (Vol. VII, p. 449).

- (d) Assemble together especially on the Sabbath day, and on the resurrection day, the Lord's day, ii, chap. 59 (Tom. I, Cols. 743, 744); (Vol. VII, p. 423).

- (e) Slaves should work only five days; on the Sabbath day they should have leisure to go to church on account of creation and on the Lord's day on account of the resurrection; viii, chap. 33 (Tom. I, Cols. 1133, 1134); (Vol. VII, p. 495),

- (f) Let judicial cases between members be tried on the second day of the week, to provide an interval till the Sabbath, so as to be able to set the controversy right and bring peace "against the Lord's day" [evidently the final hearing then], ii, chap. 47 (Tom. I, Cols. 879-884, 889-892, 1013-1016); (Vol. VII, pp. 445, 447, 469).

- (7) Apostolic Canons, canon 64 (65, 66): "If any one of the clergy be found to fast on the Lord's day, or on the Sabbath day, excepting one only, let him be deprived; but if he be one of the laity, let him be suspended; Constitutions, viii, 47, (cf. Hefele, History of the Councils of the Church, vol. I, pp. 449 ff.); (A.N.F., vol. VII, p. 504.)

- (8) The apocryphal Report of Pilate the procurator concerning our Lord Jesus Christ (cir. 350-400 A.D.) states that Jesus taught to disregard the Sabbath. It speaks of the resurrection day as the "first day of the week". A.N.F., vol. VIII, p. 461.

- (9) Assemble on the Sabbath, not from Judaism, but to honor the Lord of the Sabbath: Pseudo-Athanasius, De Semente (cir. 450 A.D.).

- (10) Peter was accused of disregarding the Sabbath: Apocryphal Acts of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul (cir. 450 A.D.), para. 14. A.N.F.,

(11) John Mark remained on his knees three Sabbaths, entreating Paul's forgiveness for delaying at Perga: Apocryphal Acts of Barnabas (cir. 450 A.D.), paras. 4-6. A.N.F., vol. VIII, p. 493.

(12) Joseph begged Jesus' body on the evening of the Sabbath, and Christ arose in the evening of the "first day of the week": Apocryphal Narrative of Joseph of Arimathea (cir. 500 A.D.), chap. 4. A.N.F., vol VIII, p. 470.

#### d. Inferential references to the Sabbaths

The Christians at about the year 85-110 A.D., met regularly for worship on a "stated day": Pliny the Younger, Roman governor of Pontus cir. 110 A.D., Letters, bk. x, 96, Loeb Classical Library, Pliny, vol. II, pp. 402, 403 (Photostat No. 97).

### 3. Challenge: There is no evidence that Christians observed the seventh-day Sabbath.

#### IV. The Papacy and the Sunday. (Purposeful pressure of the church of Rome, manifested in the second century, and culminating in the fourth.)

##### 1. Comments from Mrs. E. G. White:

"I saw that God has not changed the Sabbath, for He never changes. But the pope had changed it from the seventh to the first day of the week; for he was to change it from the seventh to the first day of the week; for he was to change times and laws." Mrs. E. G. White, Early Writings, page 33.

"The pope has changed the day of rest from the seventh to the first day. He has thought to change the very commandment that was given to cause man to remember his Creator. He has thought to change the greatest commandment in the decalogue, and thus make himself equal with God, or even exalt himself above God. The Lord is unchangeable, therefore His law is immutable; but the pope has exalted himself above God, in seeking to change His immutable precepts of holiness, justice, and goodness. He has trampled underfoot God's sanctified day, and, on his own authority, put in its place one of the six laboring days." Ibid., page 65.

"Roman Catholics acknowledge that the change of the Sabbath was made by their church, and declare that Protestants, by observing the Sunday, are recognizing her power.... The Roman Church has not relinquished her claim to supremacy; and when the world and the Protestant churches accept a sabbath of her creating, while they reject the Bible Sabbath, they virtually admit this assumption." Great Controversy, pages 447, 448.

##### 2. First Sunday observance was in Rome -- the first historical instance of "Sunday" observance by Christians, recorded by Justin Martyr (100?-166 A.D.) (Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Tom. VI):

(1) The "day of the sun" is observed by Christians, because of the resurrection: Apology, I, chap. 67.

"And on the day called Sunday there is an assemblage of all who live in the cities or the country, and the memoirs of the apostles, or the writings of the prophets are read so long as there is time. Then the reading having ceased the leader in discourse gives the admonition and the challenge to imitate these good things. Thereupon we all rise together and offer prayers. And as we said before, when we have ceased praying, bread is brought, and wine and water. And the leader in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, as much as he is able, and the people express their assent, saying the "Amen." And there is a distribution to each one and a partaking of that over which thanks have been given, and it is sent to those absent by the deacons. And those having means and who are willing, each one according to his choice, gives whatever he wishes; and the collection is deposited at the leader's home, and he himself provides for the orphans and widows, and for those who on account of sickness or for any other reason are in want, and for those who are in prison, and for the sojourning strangers, and in a word, he is a guardian to all those who are in need. And we all in common make our assembly on Sunday, since it is the first day in which God changed the darkness and matter and made the world, and Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead on the same day. For on the day before Saturday [Sabbath] they crucified him, and on the day after Saturday [Sabbath], which is Sunday, he appeared to his apostles and disciples, and taught these very things which we have imparted to you also that you may view them." (Cols. 429, 430). Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. I, pp. 185, 186.

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