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The Day of Worship for the Christian Church

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THE DAY OF WORSHIP FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM UNDER CONSIDERATION

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy . . . but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God . . ." (Ex. 20:8, 10a). "Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain" (Gal. 4:10, 11).

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem seen. Above are given two Scripture passages, one from the Old Testament and the other from the New Testament. The former is part of a command to observe a day, "to keep it holy," while the latter is an obvious admonition against the observing of days and other such times. Here are two different approaches to the observance of a day, or as one considers the purpose of these "Days," it can be said that here are seen two different views concerning a day of worship. This difference is seen throughout the Old and New Testaments, respectively. It is also seen in the historic practices of observance of a day of worship during the centuries since the time of Christ. The Jews and certain other groups have stressed the seventh day of the week as the proper day of worship, while the main body of Christians observe the first day of the week for the assembling together for worship. A conflict has existed through the centuries because of this difference. This

conflict is the basis for the purpose of this study.

The problem stated. Within the Judaeo-Christian framework there is the obvious conflict between the observance of the seventh day or of the first day of the week as the proper day for worship. The concern for this study is to analyze the day of worship as it concerns Christians in particular. Thus the problem under consideration is the conflict between the observance of Saturday or of Sunday as the day of worship for the Christian Church.

II. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

A real conflict. "The Sabbath has constituted a point of violent controversy through the centuries."¹ As one reads the pages of either secular or religious histories, the truth of this statement is clearly seen. Literature is widely distributed which stresses a particular point of view concerning the Sabbath. Many people are confused over this issue, and most of them have little basis for forming an understanding of the principles behind the issue. It is the purpose of this paper to provide information which can be used for a better understanding of the conflict and the issues involved.

A worthy goal. This study is more than a mere stating of a problem and analyzing of it. It includes a study of the Scriptural teaching related to the

¹Horace G. Cowan, The Sabbath in Scripture and History (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1948), Introduction.

problem and a survey of the historic practices concerning the problem at hand. It includes also an evaluation of these and some workable conclusions concerning the resolving of the problem. Thus the goal of this paper is to help the reader in reaching his own conclusions as to the proper day of worship for the Christian Church.

III. DEFINITIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are offered so that the terms used in this paper will be understood as intended:

Christian. Refers to the larger body recognized historically as being related to or followers of Christ and His teachings. Includes groups with varying views on the proper day of worship.

Protestant. Refers to those Christians that have followed the basic Reformation principles, such as the priesthood of all believers, the authority of the Scriptures, etc.

Roman Catholic. The historic church recognized by that name, with its central authority in Rome, Italy (The Vatican).

Evangelical. Refers to Christians who hold basically to the following essentials of the Faith:

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.

2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of God the Father and in His personal return in power and glory.

4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.

5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a Godly life.

6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.²

Seventh Day Groups. Includes the Seventh Day Adventists, the Seventh Day Baptists, the Seventh Day Christians, and other smaller groups which emphasize the seventh day of the week, or Saturday, as the only acceptable day for Christian worship. The Seventh Day Adventists are referred to in places as "S.D.A."

In addition to these definitions, frequent reference is made to "Scriptures" or "the Bible." Thus for the purposes of this paper, it is understood that these terms refer to the sixty-six books of Scripture which are commonly recognized as canonical by most all Christians, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. References and quotations are from the American Standard Version of

²Statement of Faith as given in the Constitution and By-laws of the National Association of Evangelicals, Wheaton, Illinois.

1901 unless otherwise indicated. The usual abbreviations for the Books of the Bible are used. Underscoring of words or phrases of the Scriptural text is done frequently for clarity or emphasis of a point. These are not found in the original text.

Limitations of Study

In order to stay within the limits of what is prescribed by the title of this paper, many related topics cannot be dealt with. The practices and teachings of present-day Judaism is a related area, as it is concerned with the Day of Worship. But this cannot be covered here. The calendar and history of the reckoning of dates and years is also related, but is only touched upon lightly in this paper. There are two areas in which further study would be most interesting and profitable in relation to the Day of Worship. The first of these is the area of the relationship between law and grace. The other is a deeper study of the history of the Day of Worship in the first four centuries of the Christian Church.

IV. PREVIEW OF ORGANIZATION

The Scriptural studies. These form over half of this paper. They form three chapters, which are as follows:

- CHAPTER II: AN OLD TESTAMENT STUDY OF THE DAY OF WORSHIP
- CHAPTER III: A NEW TESTAMENT STUDY OF THE DAY OF WORSHIP
- CHAPTER IV: A BIBLICAL STUDY OF LAW AND GRACE

The other studies. Even with a thorough understanding of the Scriptural teaching concerning the Day of Worship and related principles, many questions are left unanswered. Foremost in such questions as these is the question of how the early church interpreted the New Testament teachings related to the topic. This would be revealed in their writings and practices. This is just one area of a Historical Study which is included. Along with the Historical Study is a chapter entitled: An Analysis of Seventh-Day Group Teachings. This provides an introduction to the teaching of such groups as the Seventh Day Adventists. The final chapter is one of Summary and Conclusions.

V. HISTORY AND RESOURCES

History of the problem. The conflict between the observance of the seventh day or of the first day of the week as the proper time for Christian worship began in New Testament times. This is seen especially as recorded in the Book of Acts and the Epistles of Paul. But the roots of the problem go back to the Old Testament times. An understanding of the Old Testament teaching on the law and especially on the Sabbath is very important in understanding the historical and religious background of the problem. The profaning of the Sabbaths by the Israelites is a part of this history. Another important area is an understanding of the legalism which had developed concerning Sabbath observance in the centuries just prior to the birth of Christ. The chapter which forms the Historical Study shows the history of the problem from the New Testament times

to the present day.

The resources utilized. The Scriptures are the primary resource for this study. Histories and books on the Sabbath question form the next major source of information. Of special value for this study are the following six books:

1. Horace G. Cowan, The Sabbath in Scripture and History.
2. M. R. De Haan, Law or Grace.
3. Lewis Sperry Chafer, Grace.
4. Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages (Seventh Day Adventist).
5. _____, The Great Controversy (Seventh Day Adventist).
6. Arthur S. Maxwell, Your Bible and You (Seventh Day Adventist).

CHAPTER II

AN OLD TESTAMENT STUDY OF THE DAY OF WORSHIP

This chapter is divided into three divisions plus a summary. These main divisions correspond to the three natural divisions of the Old Testament, as found in most of the English translations. They are as follows:

- I. IN THE BOOKS OF THE LAW
- II. IN THE BOOKS OF PROPHECY
- III. IN THE OTHER OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

Therefore this Old Testament portion of the study begins with an introduction to the teaching on Worship found in the Books of the Law.

I. IN THE BOOKS OF THE LAW

The theme for this division of Chapter Two is a phrase found in one of the Ten Commandments: "REMEMBER THE SABBATH" (Ex. 20:8).

Scriptural Introduction to the Principle of Worship

In reading through the first book of the Bible, the Book of Genesis, it is evident that no formal instruction or systematic outlines are found concerning worship. However, there are found several examples of acts of worship which reveal what was understood in this relationship in the time which was covered by the Book of Genesis.

The first record of acts of worship. The Book of Genesis

provides a record of several acts of worship on the part of Abel and Cain, Noah, and Abraham. The first of these is the offerings of Abel and Cain:

And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof (Gen. 4:3,4).

These offerings were obviously made as an act of worship or homage to God. "It is not said here that the offering of sacrifices was based on divine institution. It may have been a spontaneous act of gratitude and the recognition of God. The origin of sacrifice is shrouded in the unknown."¹ The second recorded act of worship is another offering, that of Noah as he first sets foot on dry ground after the flood: "And Noah builded an altar unto Jehovah, and took of every clean beast, and every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar" (Gen. 8:20):

Noah builded an altar (V. 20). The new life of man on earth began with an act of worship. This is the first reference to an altar in the pages of Scripture, though it is probably not to be regarded as the first altar to be built.²

In the Twelfth Chapter of Genesis is found the record of an altar being built by Abraham: "And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto

¹Francis Davidson (ed.), The New Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), p. 81.

²Ibid., p. 85.

thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared unto him" (Gen. 12:7). Abraham also built similar altars of worship at Bethel and Mamre (Gen. 12:8 and 13:18). These altars were a part of worship, as is made clear in the context of these passages.

One can only speculate as to just how much these early Patriarchs understood concerning what God expected concerning worship. But the implication is that oral instruction had been given. Cain's offering was rejected while Abel's was accepted, implying instruction which gave the basis for what was acceptable. Also, these acts of worship are not presented in the Scriptures as unusual, but as what was normally done in relation to worship.

The first usage of the term worship. The word or term "Worship" does not appear in the Scriptures until the record of acts of worship by Abraham's servant. These took place upon his finding Rebekah and sensing that she was God's choice for a wife for his master's son, Isaac. It is recorded that ". . . the man bowed his head, and worshipped Jehovah" (Gen. 24:26). "The dominant note of this worship was evidently wonder and praise. His whole heart went out to God in devotion."³ He refers to his act of worship in Gen. 24:49, and later it is recorded again that he bowed in worship while

³Basil F. C. Atkinson, The Pocket Commentary of the Bible: The Book of Genesis (Chicago: Moody Press, 1957), p. 222.

in the home of Rebekah's family: "And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself down to the earth unto Jehovah" (Gen. 24:52).

The term Worship is not found again until the record of the Israelites in bondage in Egypt. When Moses and Aaron arrive in Egypt and inform the Israelites of God's plans for deliverance, it is recorded: "And the people believed: and when they heard that Jehovah had visited the children of Israel, and that he had seen their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped" (Ex. 4:31).

It is recorded that the Israelites again bowed their heads in worship at the instituting of the Passover as Jehovah prepared the Israelites for the final plague upon Egypt (Ex. 12:26,27).

In each of these cases worship was an overt act as well as an evidence of inward evidence of thanksgiving, faith and reverence. In each of these cases the head was bowed in humble respect to God. There is no indication that they followed any previously set or planned structure or ritual. They were spontaneous responses to Jehovah in the form of worship. Thus they give insight not so much as to any principles of worship, but to the practices of worship at that time. However, they do reveal how the Israelites understood God and their worship relationship to Him. But as yet nothing is recorded concerning a Day of Worship. Reference to a Day of Worship is not found until the record of the first commandments concerning worship.

The first commandments concerning worship. The first actual commandments concerning worship are found recorded in Exodus and Deuteronomy, in what are called the "Ten Commandments." These commandments are introduced by a preface or Preamble, which reveals the ones to whom the commandments are addressed: "And God spake all these words, saying, I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Ex. 20:1,2). The first four of the Ten Commandments deal with man's relationship to God, while the last six deal with man's relationship with his fellow man:

They are generally divided into what they term the first and second tables. The first table containing the first, second, third and fourth commandments; and comprehending the whole system of theology, the true notions we should form of the Divine nature, the reverence we owe and the religious service we should render Him. The second table, containing the last six commandments, and comprehending a complete system of ethics, or moral duties, which man owes to his fellows, and on the due performance of which the order, peace and happiness of society depend. By this division, the first contains our duty to God; the second our duty to our neighbor. This division, which is natural enough, refers to the grand principle, love to God and love to man, through which both tables are observed: 1. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength." 2. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two hang all the laws and the prophets." See Matt. 22:37-40.⁴

The first commandment reminds the children of Israel that God is unique and demands undivided devotion: "Thou shalt have no other gods

⁴Adam Clarke's Commentary (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, [n.d.]), I, 402.

before me." (Ex. 20:3). The unity of God demands that He must be first in all of their relationships, which includes their worship:

The Lord is unique (20:3). His people were therefore not to add the worship of false gods to their worship of the Lord, as they tried to do later, e.g., in introducing the cult of Baal as an addition. The unity of God demands undivided devotion.⁵

The second commandment tells the children of Israel that they are not to worship any man-made idols or images:

Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God . . . (Ex. 20:4,5).

Here is revealed something of the nature of God:

The Lord is Spirit (20:4-6). Cf. Jn. 4:24. He must not be worshipped under any material representation, whether it be the product of plastic or pictorial art. Such not only diverts the mind from the knowledge of the pure spirituality of God, but inevitably these become themselves the object of veneration and also give rise to many sensual practices. The command of Verse 4 does not prohibit all sculpture and painting.⁶

The third commandment prohibits swearing and profanity: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Jehovah thy God in vain" (Ex. 20:7).

This is seen in contrast to the proper use of the name of God in worship. As yet nothing has been mentioned in these commandments concerning a Day of Worship. But it is included in the Fourth Commandment, which is covered

⁵Davidson, op. cit., p. 120.

⁶Ibid.

in the following section.

Scriptural Introduction to the Concept of Sabbath

Two new concepts are introduced in the Fourth Commandment. These are the Sabbath and a Day of Worship. It is found throughout the rest of the Old Testament that these two concepts are intimately related. So it is important that the concept of Sabbath be carefully considered:

In view of the wide-spread confusion which exists regarding the sabbath and especially in view of the effort which is made to recognize it as in force in this present age, it is imperative that the precise teachings of the Scriptures concerning the Sabbath shall be carefully weighed.⁷

The fourth commandment. This fourth commandment says simply: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8). Here is introduced the term Sabbath in relation to a Day to be kept holy or observed. This is not the first use of the term Sabbath. There is one usage of this term previous to this, where it is used four places in the Sixteenth Chapter of Exodus in connection with the giving of the manna. But there it is used merely as a day of rest, with no reference to acts of worship or of a day being "observed" as an institution or kept holy. But with the giving of the law at Sinai the Sabbath is clearly indicated as a Day of Worship, including the accompanying assemblies and offerings. It was also to be a day of rest, or ceasing from the common labors of other days. This is seen in the instructions which follow the basic command of Verse Eight:

⁷Lewis Sperry Chafer, Major Bible Themes (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Assn., 1937), p. 218.

Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it (Ex. 20:8-11).

Thus the Fourth Commandment includes instructions which indicate that the Sabbath was to be a day of rest for the whole Israelite household, servants and animals, as well as man:

The sabbath (Heb. shabbath [italics in the original], from the verb shabath [italics in the original], to "cease" or "rest") was to be principally a day of cessation from all except unavoidable labour, and was to include every member of the household and even the animals (the law of God is unique among the ancients for its regard for the dumb creatures). It was called "a sabbath unto the Lord" (V. 10, RV), because it is a holy day (V. 8), one set apart for worship and attention to the things of God.⁸

The other record. The first record of the Ten Commandments, already mentioned, is in Ex. 20:8-11. There is another record of these Ten Commandments found in the Book of Deuteronomy. This record is preceded by a longer Preamble, or Introduction, which emphasizes the personal nature of God's addressing of the law to the children of Israel:

And Moses called unto all Israel and said unto them,
Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which
I speak in your ear this day, that ye may learn them,
and observe to do them, Jehovah our God

⁸Davidson, loc. cit.

made a covenant with us in Horeb. Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day. Jehovah spake with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire (I stood between Jehovah and you at that time, to show you the word of Jehovah: for ye were afraid because of the fire, and went not up into the mount), saying, I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage (Deut. 5: 1-6).

Cowan observes the following:

Then follow the Ten Commandments in the order of their occurrence in Exodus, with slight verbal differences in the expression of some of them, but no significant change except in the Fourth Commandment, where not only a difference in wording, but an entirely different basis for Sabbath keeping appears.⁹

Here is the Deuteronomy record of the Fourth Commandment:

Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as Jehovah thy God commanded thee. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day (Deut. 5:12-15).

Thus a difference between the two records of this Fourth Commandment is seen. The one in Exodus is the one most commonly known and

⁹Horace G. Cowan, The Sabbath in Scripture and History (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1948), p. 55.

quoted, but both of these are equally inspired and valid. The unity of the two records is seen in the similarities between them. Actually, there is much more that is similar or the same than that which is different. They express a compatibility which is evident whenever two facets of the same truth are seen side-by-side:

For the statements in Exodus and Deuteronomy exhibit a unity which must needs banish any hesitation to accept them. Both tables of the Ten Commandments are prefaced by the declaration: "I am the Lord thy God, which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."¹⁰

The terms used. Much of the confusion concerning the Sabbath is a result of a hazy understanding of the terms used in the Fourth Commandment. So it is important to consider some of the main terms which are used. The first one is the term "remember" which is the first word of the basic command of Ex. 20:8: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." This is the only place that this word Remember is used in reference to observing the Sabbath. It can best be understood in light of the terms used in other references to the Sabbath. The Deuteronomy record of the Fourth Commandment begins: "Observe the sabbath day . . ." (Deut. 5:12). This is the same word that is found in Ex. 31:16 where the children of Israel are admonished to "observe the sabbath throughout their generations." Most of the other

¹⁰Ibid., p. 60.

references use the word "keep" in this respect, such as in Ex. 31:13:

" . . . ye shall keep my sabbaths" The word Keep is used also in:

Ex. 31:14,16 and Lev. 19:3,30:

The word remember (V. 8) should then be taken to mean not "bring to mind what you already know", but "keep in perpetual remembrance." The repeated disregard for the sabbath by later generations illustrates and confirms the need for this command to "remember."¹¹

The term "Sabbath" is often misused and misunderstood. The term is the same in most all of the references. It means simply "cease" or "put an end to.":

The grammatical inflexions of the word "Sabbath" would show that it is a feminine form, properly SHABBAT-T for SHABBĀT-T. The root has nothing to do with resting in the sense of enjoying repose; in transitive forms and applications it means to "sever," to "put an end to," and intransitively it means to "desist," to "come to an end." The grammatical form SHABBĀTH suggests a transitive sense, "the divider," and apparently indicates the Sabbath as dividing the month. It may mean the day which puts a stop to the week's work, but this is less likely. It certainly cannot be translated "the day of rest."¹²

The observation is made here that the term Sabbath alone cannot be translated as: "the day of rest." This is true because the word in itself possesses no time value. A failure to recognize this has caused considerable confusion in the use of the term Sabbath.

¹¹Davidson, loc. cit.

¹²William R. Smith and Stanley A. Cook, "Sabbath," The Encyclopedia Britannica (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1911), XXIII, 959.

There is nothing septenary about the meaning of the word "sabbath," or the Hebrew word from which it is translated. The meaning of the Hebrew word "Shabbath" is cessation or rest. There is nothing about the word to determine the length of the sabbath. The same word is used to describe periods of rest of five different lengths: (1) A rest of one day: The Fourth Commandment, Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15; et al. (2) A rest of two days long: Lev. 23:15,16,21, et al. (3) A rest of one year long: Lev. 25:4,5,8; et al. (4) A rest of two years long: Lev. 13:5,6,27,32, 34; 14:9,39-42; Num. 6:9, et al. and (5) A rest of seventy years: II Chron. 36:21. Hence it is not the word "sabbath" that indicates the length of the "rest," but the word day or year.¹³

The principle of Sabbath can be observed on any day of the week and it may include days or years. This is because the institution of the Sabbath is not the same as the time in which this institution is observed. In both the Exodus and the Deuteronomy records of the Fourth Commandment the phrase is found: "The seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah." That is, the seventh day weekly Sabbath was a Sabbath, or one among many Sabbaths the Israelites were to observe. (Ex. 20:10; Deut. 5:14).¹⁴

The sabbath, as an institution, is distinct from the day on which it is placed. The slightest inspection of the Sabbatic law will show us that it includes two things which are essentially distinct: First, the Sabbath or rest itself; and secondly, the day

¹³Samuel Walter Gamble, Sunday, the True Sabbath of God (Cincinnati: Jennings and Pye, 1900), p. 75. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

¹⁴This is seen in the Hebrew texts and in the more literal English translations, but is obscured in the words "the sabbath" of the Authorized Version.

on which the sabbath is placed . . . If, as is alleged in this controversy, the seventh day and the Sabbath are identical and therefore interchangeable terms, we reduce the Fourth Commandment to an absurdity. Let us make the substitution and see the result: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day [italics in the original] is the seventh day [italics in the original] of the Lord thy God," etc. This substitution converts the commandment into sheer nonsense, and proves unanswerably that the Sabbath is distinct from the day on which it is placed, and could originally, or at any subsequent time, have been placed on a different day without destroying the institution.¹⁵

Thus the word "day" added to the word "sabbath" forms another term, "Sabbath Day" which does have a time value. It is this combined term which is found in the Fourth Commandment. The term Sabbath alone is commonly used to indicate what is actually meant by Sabbath Day, so misunderstanding concerning the meaning of Sabbath has developed. For the purpose of this study the distinction is made clear either by the terms used or by some explanation.

Both records of the Ten Commandments and many other references to the observance of Sabbath indicate that it was to be a day of ceasing or rest which followed six days of labor. Not a single one of these passages refer to the Sabbath Day as the seventh day in reference to a week. The word week is not found in the Scriptures in reference to either the six days of labor or the seventh day of rest. The seventh day was to be after a series of six,

¹⁵John McClintock, The Methodist Review, 1849, p. 24. [No other bibliographical information available].

whatever day of the week it might have fallen upon, with calendar changes and local time adjustments to compensate for variations in time around the world:

There is not a single passage of Scripture in all of the Bible which says that the "seventh day" of the week "is the sabbath," not one. The Fourth Commandment does not say, "Remember the seventh day and keep it holy;" but, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."¹⁶

"By all of this it is evident that the sacred character of the day belonged to its relative place in a series of seven days, and not to a particular day of the week."¹⁷ This is important to remember as the Sabbath Day is applied to any particular day. Because the Fourth Commandment is properly applied to a particular day, such as the modern Saturday, that day is not made holy or sacred in itself. This would distort and destroy the Scriptural principle of Sabbath.

Scriptural Introduction to the Purpose of Sabbath

Often the real purpose of God's instituting of the Sabbath is lost in the controversy over the day on which it is to be observed. So it is vital to consider the basis for Sabbath observance as presented in the Scriptures.

¹⁶Isaac H. Beardsley, The True Sabbath (Cincinnati: Cranston & Curts, 1892), p. 34. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

¹⁷Lewis Sperry Chafer, Grace (Chicago: Moody Press, 1943), p. 252.

Remember Jehovah the Creator. The Exodus record of the Fourth Commandment closes with these words: "For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20:11). Here a commemoration of God's creativity is given as the basis for the observing of the Sabbath by the Israelites. This refers to the day of God's rest or ceasing following the six "days" or periods of the creation process:

And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished His work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made. (Gen. 2:1-3).¹⁸

The term Sabbath is not found in this passage. But the Sabbath principle of rest is seen in the English of the text as well as in the Hebrew of the original text:

The word Sabbath does not occur here in the English, but in the Hebrew shabath is the original of "rested," in the sense

¹⁸The time value of the "days" or periods of creation is not indicated in the Scriptures. The term "day" is used several ways in the Creation account: (1) It is used as the title for light, with no time value (Gen. 1:5). (2) It is used as the designation for the periods of the creation (Gen. 1:5, 13, 19, 23, 31; 2:2). These have no time value in themselves. The earlier ones were before the formation of the sun and moon to control day and night (Gen. 1:16). The last period is given without any ending, but only an evening or "closing" of the sixth "day" and a morning or "dawning" of the seventh period. (3) It is used to designate the total creation period, of uncertain time length (Gen. 2:4).

of "to cease, rest, keep Sabbath," and Sabbath is the translation of the word in its substantive form Shabbath, "cessation."¹⁹

The institution of Sabbath as given to man in the Fourth Commandment is not found in this passage, either in the English or Hebrew. It is God that rested, and the day was therefore blessed because the creation was finished:

It will be noted that there is no hint there that God gave this Sabbath to man. He alone rested. Considered as a day of rest (although God did not rest because He was tired--Isaiah 40:28) the original Sabbath could not logically have been given to man, because as yet he had not labored.²⁰

Another Scripture passage throws considerable light on the nature of God's "rest" following the creation process. This passage re-states the creation as the basis for Sabbath observance:

Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed (Ex. 31:16,17).

This use of the term "refreshed" at the close of this passage gives more understanding to God's "rest." For this is a term which is used throughout the Scriptures as meaning an uplifting of spirit, or a time of

¹⁹Cowan, op. cit., p. 12. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

²⁰Charles L. Feinberg, The Sabbath and the Lord's Day (New York: American Board of Missions to the Jews, [n.d.]), p. 15.

spiritual glorying.²¹ So it might be said that God's rest after completing the work of creation was a time of glorying in heaven for the finished masterpiece of creativity, for, "Behold, it was very good"(Gen. 1:31). This suggests a much higher motive and purpose for Sabbath observance than merely being rested physically. But these cannot be separated, as physical rest is vital for spiritual refreshment.

The fact that no "evening" or ending is given in the Scriptures for the seventh period of creation suggests also a much higher purpose for Sabbath observance than mere physical rest.

Hugh Miller, that great Geologist, remarks in substance, that while we find it recorded after each successive act of creation, "there was evening, and there was morning," it is not so said of the seventh day, "there was evening, and there was morning." What would be the most natural inference, but that the day was not yet ended?²²

The sixth period closed with an "evening" and the dawning or "morning" of the seventh period is indicated (Gen. 1:31). But there is no mention of a closing or "evening" of the seventh "day" or period. The work of creation was completed. A new era had dawned, which now included man. The seventh "day" or period of creation denoted not a curtain closing on a drama, denoting end, but merely a change of scenes, an entering into a

²¹Vide, Ex. 23:12; I Sam. 16:23; Job 32:20; Prov. 25:13; Acts 3:19; 27:3; Rom. 15:32; I Cor. 16:18; II Cor. 7:13; Philem. 7,20; et al.

²²Beardsley, op. cit., p. 39.

higher and more sublime drama than before:

God rested from the work that He had made, not from all work. The word Shabath [*italics in the original*] means resting from the work immediately preceding, because now complete. We have a very incomplete idea of God's Sabbath unless we realize that He therein entered upon a new and higher kind of work, and this constitutes the clearest and sublimest illustration of what the true Sabbath is.²³

Everything in the creation process anticipated something ahead, including the seventh "day" or period of God's rest. It was man's first full day of life:

Rev. R. N. Davies, D.D., says on this last point: "In the history of the world's creation it was the seventh day, but in the history of the human race it was the first full day. It was to Adam the 'first day of the week.' This was not accidental; it pointed to the future. Adam's first Sabbath was the first full day of his life."²⁴

This is an important principle in relation to the highest purpose of Sabbath. The Sabbath as an institution for Israel referred back to a time in the creation which denotes anticipation of something ahead as well as completion of that which was past. There is no indication that this reference back to the creation was meant to imply the Sabbath as an institution for man at the creation. This is entirely foreign to the Scriptures:

When it is assumed that the sabbath was imposed on man

²³Bishop H. W. Warren, Sabbath Essays, as quoted in Beardsley, ibid.

²⁴From the Central Christian Advocate, as quoted in Beardsley, ibid., p. 37.

at Eden, it is based on the supposition that this passage so teaches; which, however, the passage does not necessarily imply. And it should also be remembered that Genesis was not written until Moses' time, and, when seeking for Biblical evidence regarding the pre-Mosaic observance of the seventh day it will be found that, unlike other religious activities, such as prayer, circumcision (Cf. John 7:22), and sacrifices, the observance of which is recorded of that period, there is no mention of a sabbath observance from creation to Moses.²⁵

Remember Jehovah the Deliverer. While the Exodus record of the Fourth Commandment refers back to the creation, the record in Deuteronomy refers back to the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt as the basis for Sabbath observance:

But the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day (Deut. 5:14,15).

Morgan notes that ". . . it is interesting to observe that concerning the Sabbath the ground of the appeal is no longer God's resting during the creation but the people's position as redeemed from Israel's bondage."²⁶ The emphasis here is on the Israelites' relationship to God, the Deliverer.

²⁵Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 248.

²⁶G. Campbell Morgan, An Exposition of the Whole Bible (Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1959), p. 79.

The matter of the servant's rest is repeated a second time in this passage. The Israelites are to remember that they were once in bondage, and to give due rest therefore to their servants:

Moses adds another reason why the one day in seven should be sanctified, viz., that the servants might rest, and this is urged upon them on the consideration of their having been servants in the land of Egypt. We see therefore that God had three grand ends in view by appointing a Sabbath: 1. To commemorate the creation. 2. To give a due proportion of rest to man and beast. When in Egypt they had no rest; their cruel taskmasters caused them to labor without intermission; now God had given rest, and as he had showed them mercy, he teaches them to show mercy to their servants: "Remember that thou wast a servant." 3. To afford peculiar spiritual advantages to the soul, that it might be kept in remembrance of the rest [*italics in the original*] which remains at the right hand of God.²⁷

The Deuteronomy record of the Fourth Commandment seems to place more emphasis on man's relationship to God and to his fellow man than the Exodus record. But these two records compliment rather than contradict each other, and the total picture which they present enlarges the understanding of the purpose for Sabbath observance.

Remember Jehovah the Sustainer. Not only was God to be remembered as Creator and Deliverer, but He is to be known as a God who is an ever-sustaining Father to His children of Israel. This is seen in the teaching concerning the observance of the Sabbath. This eternal relationship is represented by the Sabbath which is given to Israel as a sign. This is

²⁷ Adam Clarke's Commentary, op. cit., p. 752.

mentioned in numerous places concerning the Sabbath, but nowhere as definite as in the following passage:

And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily ye shall keep my sabbaths: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am Jehovah who sanctifieth you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that profaneth it shall surely be put to death; for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day is a sabbath of solemn rest, holy to Jehovah; whosoever doeth any work on the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed. (Ex. 31:12-17).

The Sabbath was to be a sign between God and the children of Israel. Nothing is said anywhere in the Scriptures that the Sabbath was to be a sign between God and anyone else but the children of Israel. It was to be a sign "throughout your generations" (Ex. 31:13) "between me and the children of Israel forever" (Ex. 31:17). It was to be a perpetual covenant with the children of Israel (Ex. 31:16).

The Sabbath was instituted as a sign and covenant for Israel for a clearly stated purpose: "Verily ye shall keep my sabbaths: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am Jehovah who sanctified you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore . . . (Ex. 31:13,14). This is an expression of what is perhaps the grandest purpose for the institution of the Sabbath for Israel. This is that they might know

Jehovah as their God. This is also implied in other passages, such as the following: "Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father; and ye shall keep my sabbaths: I am Jehovah your God. Turn ye not unto idols, nor make yourselves molten gods: I am Jehovah your God (Lev. 19:3,4). The Scriptures reveal that God's actions are not without purpose, and one of the purposes of the instituting of the Sabbath for Israel was to instill in them a recognition of Him as God.

Scriptural Introduction to the Modes of Sabbath

In its etymology the word Sabbath bears no relation to the number or length of any period of time; it means simply rest [italics in the original] or cessation [italics in the original]. While Sabbath is generally associated with the seventh day by common usage, yet it does not mean seven, nor is it limited to one day. There are Sabbaths of weeks and of years in the Old Testament, and one Sabbath, the day of Atonement, separate from the seventh day.²⁸

Sabbath applied to a year or years. Every seventh year the

Hebrew farmers were to give their fields rest:

Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruits thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath unto Jehovah: thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyards (Lev. 25:3,4).

God was thorough in the scope of application of the principle of Sabbath or rest. It applied to the people, to the servants, to the cattle, and

²⁸Cowan, op. cit., p. 37.

here also to the land:

It was a sabbath unto the land (Lev. 25:2-7). In this sabbatical year the people subsisted on the surplus of the sixth year's crop which for this purpose had been divinely increased (Lev. 25:20-22), and the voluntary growth of the seventh, which was free to all comers and the beasts of the field (Lev. 25:5-7). In this year also, the law was publicly read that the people might be instructed as to its requirements, and a release of debts and of Hebrews held in bondage by their own people was made (Deut. 15:12). This was a Sabbath one year in length.²⁹

In addition to the regular forty-ninth year sabbatical year, a jubilee year was to be observed on the fiftieth year. This would make the total Sabbath of years of two years' length:

A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you; ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of the undressed vines. For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat of the increase thereof out of the field (Lev. 25:11,12).

" . . . it was a year of jubilee, when slavery and involuntary poverty were unknown in Israel, and with the seventh sabbatical year constituted a Sabbath two years long."³⁰

The term Sabbath was also applied to a seventy-year period, in reference to the seventy years of Israel's captivity under the Assyrians and Babylonians. Jeremiah had prophesied this period of captivity, even to the exact number of years: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

²⁹Ibid., p. 45.

³⁰Ibid., p. 46.

(Jer. 25:11). Another prediction is found which refers to the sabbaths of the land during this time:

And you will I scatter among the nations, and I will draw out the sword after you: and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste. Then shall the land enjoy its sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye are in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy its sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall have rest, even the rest which it had not in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it (Lev. 26:33-35).

At the end of this passage is reference to the Israelites' failure to keep the sabbaths of the land as the law had prescribed. In the Book of Chronicles is mention of this seventy year Sabbath for the land, also: "To fulfill the word of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths: for as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years" (II Chron. 36:21).

Sabbath applied to the feasts of Israel. The whole Twenty-third Chapter of Leviticus is devoted to the special feasts of Israel. These feasts are referred to as Sabbaths or "rest days" (Lev. 23:24) which must be kept, along with the seventh day weekly Sabbath.³¹ There are five special feasts described in this chapter, as follows:

1. Feast of Passover - Lev. 23:4-8 and Ex. 12:14-20. This also includes the Feast of Unleavened Bread, sometimes listed as a separate feast (Ex. 12:17 and Lev. 23:6).

³¹The Hebrew word in Lev. 23:24 is **חַשְׁבָּתִי**, hashabath; it is translated in the A.V. as "a sabbath" and as "a solemn rest" in the A.S.V.

2. Feast of Firstfruits - Lev. 23:9-14.
3. Feast of Pentecost - Lev. 23:15-21.
4. Feast of Trumpets - Lev. 23:23-25.
5. Feast of Tabernacles - Lev. 23:33-36, 39-43.

Chafer observes concerning the special Sabbaths, the feasts and special days of Israel:

It is equally erroneous to insist that the sabbath was always celebrated on the last day of the week. The Sabbath, but for necessary exceptions, was the seventh in a series of seven, whether days or years. Of necessity it often fell on other days of the week as well as Saturday. There were at least fifteen sabbaths which were fixed dates in their given month, and these sabbaths fell on those particular dates regardless of the day of the week.³²

Sabbath applied to the special days. Two of the special days or special Sabbaths of Israel deserve attention here. They are the Day of Atonement and the Day of Pentecost. The first to be considered is the Day of Atonement:

And it shall be a statute for ever unto you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and shall do no manner of work, the homeborn, or the stranger that sojourneth among you: for on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins shall ye be cleansed before Jehovah. It is a sabbath of solemn rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls; it is a statute for ever. (Lev. 16:29-31).

This special day is called a "sabbath of solemn rest" in Lev. 16:31 and also in Lev. 23:32. It was an annual event (Lev. 23:34) and the death

³²Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 251.

penalty was prescribed for those not observing it (Lev. 23:29,30). The Day of Atonement was to be from sunset to sunset, and so it set the order of the day for all the other Sabbaths as well:

The beginning and duration of the day of Atonement are of special interest in that the Scriptural measure of days is expressed therein: "In the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath (Lev. 23:32). And this time limitation applied to all other days in the calendar; they begin at sunset of one day and ended at sunset of the next day."³³

A blood offering was to be made on the Day of Atonement for the sins of the people. The meaning of a blood sacrifice is expressed as follows: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life" (Lev. 17:11):

The Talmud is in full agreement: "There is no atonement but by the blood," we read in "Yoma" (chapter 5-a). There can be no Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement, without Dom Kippur, blood of atonement. Are these instructions carried out today by the Jewish people? No! Why not? If you ask me that question, I would answer, "They do not take the two goats, kill one and send the scapegoat off, after the sins of Israel were typically laid on him, for the same reason they do not kill the Passover lamb at Passover time." They do neither because the sacrifice, the One toward whom these sacrifices and ceremonies pointed, has come and literally fulfilled the types. In the language of Scripture, these ceremonies were a shadow of things to come (Colossians 2:17); really of some One to come. As coming events cast their shadows before, the Messiah of Israel cast His shadow all through the Old Testament. Now that He has come, we look to the substance and not to the shadow.³⁴

³³Cowan, op. cit., p. 44. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

³⁴Coulson Shepherd, Jewish Holy Days (New York: Loizeaux Bros., 1961), p. 64. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

The second special day to be considered here is the Day of Pentecost. The word Pentecost is derived from the number fifty (pente) which was the number of days counted from the Passover time to the day on which the special meal-offering was to be given:

And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering; seven sabbaths shall there be complete: even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days: and ye shall offer a new meal-offering unto Jehovah (Lev. 23:15,16).

Thus the Day of Pentecost was, according to the law, on the "morrow after the sabbath" which would make it on the first day of the week, as this instruction is applied:

In this count of fifty days from Abib 16, the morrow after the sabbath, in the feast of the unleavened bread, there were seven Sabbaths on fixed monthly dates, and this brought the year to the feast of weeks, or Pentecost, as it was later called, and the fiftieth day, the morrow after the sabbath, was, therefore, the first day of the week, and was also a Sabbath.³⁵

Thus when the church was inaugurated on the Day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts, Chapter Two, it was planned by God with great care. While some argue concerning the exact day of the week of the great New Testament Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1), most Christian and many Jewish scholars hold that it fell on "the morrow after the sabbath" just as the Day of Pentecost was ordered in the law. There was no reason for it to be

³⁵Cowan, op. cit., p. 36. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

otherwise. This places the Old Testament Day of Pentecost in a unique position of being a remarkable type of a marvelous event of the New Testament. For it was on the Day of Pentecost that God poured out His Holy Spirit in a special way in the inauguration of the church, the body of believers in Christ.

Scriptural Introduction to the Observance of Sabbath

Much of the Old Testament teaching on the Sabbath concerns how it is to be observed. Many ordinances were given as a part of the law which gave instruction to the Israelites concerning how the Sabbath was to be observed. These ordinances include rules in addition to those already mentioned in the Ten Commandments: The terms of these Sabbath regulations also reveal much concerning the observance of Sabbath:

Significant terms connected with observance. The desire of God for Israel was that they would keep the Sabbaths as holy days. This indicates the spirit of worship which was supposed to be present in observing the Sabbath. This is expressed in the Fourth Commandment: "Remember . . . Observe . . . the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8 and Deut. 5:12). This is also expressed in other passages (Ex. 16:23; 31:14,15; Ex. 35:2).

It is clear that God expected the Sabbaths to be a break from the labor and hustle and bustle of the other six days. They were to be days of "solemn rest." This is found in many passages (Ex. 16:23,30; 31:15; 35:2; Lev. 23:3). Worshipfulness was to be the keynote of the Sabbaths as they

were told to "reverence my sanctuary" (Lev. 19:30 and 26:2). A "holy convocation" or assembly was a part of the Sabbath observation (Lev. 23:3).

Numerous rules concerning observance. Both records of the Fourth Commandment included instructions concerning servile labor on the Sabbath. The Israelites were to labor the other six days (Ex. 16:20,26; 20:9; 31:15; 35:2; Lev. 23:3; Deut. 5:13). They were not to labor on the Sabbath (Ex. 16:26; 20:10; Lev. 23:3; Deut. 5:14). A good illustration of this work relationship is seen in the giving of the manna to the Israelites as they were going southward on the Sinai Peninsula following their deliverance from Egypt:

And he said unto them, This is that which Jehovah hath spoken, tomorrow is a solemn rest, a holy sabbath unto Jehovah: bake that which ye will bake, and boil that which ye will boil; and all that remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not become foul, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that today, for today is a sabbath unto Jehovah: today ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, on the seventh day, that there went out some of the people to gather, and they found none. And Jehovah said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that Jehovah hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day (Ex. 16:23-29).

While the institution of the Sabbath as a Day of Worship did not come until the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai, here is given clear illustration of the principle of Sabbath, or "rest" from labor.

The children of Israel were to offer two male yearling lambs each

Sabbath for an offering unto God. These were to be lambs without blemish, and were to be offered in addition to meal and drink offerings (Nu. 28:9,10). They were not to kindle any fires on the Sabbath (Ex. 35:3). Except for the observing of offerings and convocations or assemblies, they were to remain at home (Lev. 23:3). The priests were given their special duties for the Sabbath (Lev. 24:3-9).

Penalties for violations of observance. The rules for observing the Sabbath were backed by penalties to be enforced if these rules were not followed. These penalties were severe, even including the penalty of death for certain violations: ". . . every one that profaneth it (the Sabbath) shall surely be put to death" (Ex. 31:14) and ". . . whosoever doeth any work on the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death" (Ex. 31:15): "The penalty for breaking the sabbath was absolute death. This was entirely in harmony with the whole purpose of the law whose penalty for transgression is death, and death only."³⁶

A good example of how this death penalty was carried out is the instance of the man found gathering sticks on the Sabbath. He was stoned to death, by God's commandment:

And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks upon the sabbath day. And

³⁶M. R. De Haan, Who Changed the Sabbath? (Grand Rapids: Radio Bible Class, [n.d.]), p. 18.

they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it had not been declared what should be done to him. And Jehovah said unto Moses, The man shall surely be put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp, and all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him to death with stones; as Jehovah commanded Moses (Num. 15:32-36).

One might speculate that the man was gathering sticks to build a fire, which was forbidden, or for some other purpose. But evidently God knew his motive, and saw his act as a clear violation of the law which had been given. This law stated the penalty as death:

Surely nowhere in Scripture can we find a clearer example of what the ministry of the law really is. It is the ministry of death to the sinner, for the law knows no mercy. It only knows justice, and death for the transgressor.³⁷

The death penalty was prescribed for breaking of the special Sabbaths as well as the regular seventh day Sabbath. At the Passover time it was the penalty for using leavened bread: ". . . for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel" (Ex. 12:15,19). On the Day of Atonement the death penalty was prescribed for anyone doing any manner of work: "And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any manner of work in that same day, that soul will I destroy from among his people" (Lev. 23:29,30).

³⁷Ibid., p. 21.

II. IN THE BOOKS OF PROPHECY

The theme for this second division of the Old Testament Study is: "SABBATH A SIGN" (Ezek. 20:12). The Prophetic Books include all of both the major and minor prophets. Their prophecy covers a wide range of time, including many periods of the Jews' history.

The Sabbath a Sign for Israel

The Prophetical Books echo and reinforce what is found in the Books of the Law concerning the Sabbath and the Day of Worship. There is not found the detailed teaching concerning the Sabbath that is in the Books of the Law. But there is considerable teaching on the Sabbath, especially on the observance of it by the Israelites, or rather, their failure to keep it.

The sabbath to be a sign. "Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth them" (Ezek. 20:12). Notice the way this passage echoes what is stated many places in the Books of the Law. It re-states two major points of the law concerning the Sabbath. The first of these is that the Sabbath was given as a sign between God and the children of Israel. The second is that this was done "that they might know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth them." The Prophetical Books make the identification of the recipients of the law just as personal as in the Books of the Law. Note the personal pronouns in this passage concerning the Sabbaths and the rest of

the law:

So I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them my statutes, and showed them mine ordinances, which if a man do, he shall live in them. Moreover, also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them . . . (Ezek. 20:10-12).

Who did God bring out of Egypt? It was certainly not the Gentiles, or anyone else but the Israelites. This personal emphasis is continued in the Verse which follows the passage just quoted: "But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: They walked not in my statutes, and they rejected mine ordinances . . . and my sabbaths they greatly profaned" (Ezek. 20:13).

Thus it is Israel with whom God entered into this covenant relationship. It was Israel that rebelled and rejected God's law, profaning the Sabbaths. This leads right into the next section, The Sign to Be for Israel:

The sign to be for Israel. The Sabbath was a sign for a delivered people: "So I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt" (Ezek. 20:10). It was for no one else. It reminded them of this deliverance (Deut. 5:15; Ezek. 20:10-12). This is a clear Scriptural principle which is often overlooked. It was seen in the introductions to both records of the Ten Commandments, in Exodus and Deuteronomy:

The Ten Commandments were not for all mankind, but for Israel alone. Proof of this fact is seen in the salutation or heading of the Ten Commandments: "I am the Lord thy God, which

hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exod. 20:2).³⁸

In the passages on the Sabbath in the law the personal nature of the addressing of the law to the Israelites was seen. A good example of this is the following passage. Note the personal reference, especially the personal pronouns:

Speak thou unto the children of Israel . . . a sign between me and you . . . that ye may know . . . Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath throughout their generations . . . a sign between me and the children of Israel. (Ex. 31:12-17).

Cowan makes the following observations concerning this passage:

The salient points of this passage of Scripture are: (1) These words were spoken to the children of Israel alone; no other people was present, no other nation was addressed or implied as the recipient of this command. (2) The Sabbath was to be kept as a sign between God and the children of Israel in all of the future of their history.³⁹

Jeremiah states: ". . . but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers" (Jer. 17:22). Who is to hallow the Sabbath as their fathers were commanded? The passage and its context identifies them as the Israelites and no one else. There is not one passage in all of the Scriptures which claims that the Sabbath was at the time of the giving of the law, or at any other time, imposed upon the Gentiles:

In this period the sabbath was rightfully in force. It was embodied in the law and the divine cure for its non-observance was likewise provided in the law of the offerings. In this

³⁸Feinberg, op. cit., p. 17.

³⁹Cowan, op. cit., p. 53.

connection, it is important to observe that the sabbath was never imposed on the Gentiles, but was peculiarly a sign between Jehovah and Israel (Exod. 31:12-17). Among Israel's sins, her failure to keep the sabbath and to give the land its rest, are especially emphasized.⁴⁰

In reviewing the passages of the Old Testament on the Sabbath, Feinberg observes that: "These passages are strikingly devoid of any ambiguity as to the people to whom the Sabbath belonged."⁴¹ This same author also states, under the heading, THE LAW FOR ISRAEL:

Law and grace are to be distinguished in regard to the respective groups to which each addresses itself. The law was addressed and given to one people and only one--Israel. Moses asks Israel: "And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" (Deut. 4:8). He specified further that "this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel; these are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt." (Deut. 4:44,45). The Lord Jesus in His upper-room discourse said: "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law." (John 12:25). Paul, in enumerating the advantages of Israel before Christ's ministry, declares that to them "pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." (Rom. 9:4,5). In spite of these clear and unequivocal statements of Scripture there are those who insist the law was meant for all mankind. To whom, now, is grace offered? Paul announces that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." (Ti. 2:11). Since God has concluded all "under sin" and since

⁴⁰Chafer, Major Bible Themes, op. cit., p. 219.

⁴¹Feinberg, op. cit., p. 20.

all have come short of the glory of God, the grace of God is manifested to all and is appropriated by "him which believeth in Jesus." All are under the same judicial sentence and the remedy offered is universal in its application. How different are the principles of law and grace!⁴²

While the law was given to and meant for Israel alone, it is also shown in the Scriptures that the principles underlying the law, which are eternal, apply for all of mankind. These principles were in force before the giving of the law, and would continue after the law would no longer be in force. Jesus made this clear as he brought out many of these principles during His earthly ministry. Perhaps the best examples of this are found in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:17-44).

The sign that was to come. "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold a virgin shall conceive, and bare a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). Here is a prophecy of a sign that was yet to come in the future. This sign is associated here with a person, a virgin-born son. Another passage explains that this child was to be born of the Jews as God's own doing, and that he would carry on in the line of David:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The

⁴² Ibid., p. 5.

zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this (Isa. 9:6,7).

Even the place of His birth was foretold: "But thou, Bethlehem, Ephratah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). Here is not only a prediction of the place of the Messiah's birth, but a statement of His eternal and everlasting nature, a clear affirmation of Deity. Two passages from the New Testament show that all of this was fulfilled in Christ:

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, And they shall call his name Immanuel; that is, being interpreted, God with us (Matt. 1:18-23).

Here Joseph is identified as of the house of David. According to the genealogy of Mary (Luke 3:23-38), she was also a descendant of David. The other passage explains that Jesus was born in Bethlehem because this was the city of the descendants of David:

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David;

to enroll himself with Mary, who was betrothed to him, being great with child. And it came to pass, while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn . . . For there is born unto you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:4-7,11).

God brought Jesus into the world in the earthly lineage of David.

Jesse was the father of David, therefore David was the shoot out of the stock of Jesse (I Chron. 2:12-15; Ruth 4:22,23; Matt. 1:5,6; Luke 3:32). "And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit" (Isa. 11:1). Israel was certainly not bearing fruit. But Jesus would be the branch out of the roots or descendants of David. The genealogy of Joseph is traced through David's son, Solomon (Matt. 1:2-16), while that of Mary is through another of David's sons, Nathan (Luke 3:23-38). Jesus was to be the fruit-bearer, the sign or "ensign" of the nations: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious" (Isa. 11:10).

Isaiah also declares that all this would be God's own doing: "And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss for them from the end of the earth; and behold, they shall come with speed swiftly" (Isa. 5:26). The same prophet points out that the coming sign would be for all people: "All ye inhabitants of the world, and ye dwellers on the earth, when an ensign is lifted up on the mountains, see ye; and when the trumpet is blown, hear ye"

(Isa. 18:3).

While the Sabbath was the sign for Israel, the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, the "ensign of the nations" is the sign for "all ye inhabitants of the world, and ye dwellers on the earth." He is to be a light to the Gentiles as well as a coming sign for Israel:

I, Jehovah, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles (Isa. 42:6). And also:

Yea, he saith, It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth (Isa. 49:6).

When Joseph and Mary brought the baby Jesus into the temple for dedication, Simeon picked up the child and spoke these words:

Now lettest thou thy servant depart, Lord, according to thy word, in peace; For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; A light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel (Luke 2:29-32).

Then Simeon blessed Joseph and Mary, "And said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against" (Luke 2:34). While the Sabbath was a sign for Israel, Christ would have a larger ministry than merely to the children of Israel. Isaiah speaks in other terms similar to that of Christ being a "light to the Gentiles" as he speaks of "a great light" and "the light shined" (Isa. 42:2). In Malachi is found this prophecy concerning the coming Messiah: "But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteous-

ness arise with healing in its wings; and ye shall go forth, and gambol as calves in the stall^P(Malachi 4:2). That Christ fulfilled this is seen in the references to Him as the "dayspring from on high" (Luke 1:78-80) and the "day-star" (II Pet. 1:19).

The Sabbath Profaned and Suspended

The law made the mandatory nature of Sabbath-keeping very clear, and reinforced it with the penalty of death for failure to keep it. The Books of Prophecy echo and reinforce the teaching of the law.

The sabbaths are mandatory. In the Books of the Law there are found numerous promises of blessing to those that keep the law and the Sabbaths as a part of that law. Along with these were warnings against failure to keep the law (Lev. 26:2-20). Both of these are also seen in the Books of Prophecy. Jeremiah repeats the demand of the law to not carry any burden on the Sabbath:

Thus saith Jehovah, Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work: but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers (Jer. 17:21,22).

Ezekiel repeats the duties of the princes and priests on the Sabbath and the obligation of the people to worship (Ezek. 45:17 and 46:1-12). He also declares that the people are to discern between the holy and the common and to "hallow my sabbaths" (Ezek. 44:23,24).

Isaiah presents God's promise of blessing for those who keep the Sabbath and do not profane it:

. . . Blessed is the man that doeth this . . . that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it . . . every one that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples (Isa. 56:1-8).

This is enlarged in another passage which presents a principle of Sabbath-keeping not stated elsewhere in the Scriptures. This is a beautiful passage, with the poetic wording of the prophet:

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, and the holy of Jehovah honorable; and shall honor it, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shall thou delight thyself in Jehovah; and I will make thee to ride upon the high places of the earth; and I will feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it (Isa. 58:13,14).

Jeremiah declares a royal reward for obedience and unquenchable fire for disobedience concerning the Sabbath:

And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith Jehovah, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but to hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter in by the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David . . . (Jer. 17:24-26).

But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden and enter in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched (Jer. 17:27).

The sabbaths are profaned. "Moreover this they have done unto

me: they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths" (Ezek. 23:38). What an indictment upon a people that have been delivered and blessed so greatly by God. Even though they had clear and definite instruction, Jeremiah declares: "But they hearkened not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, and might not receive instruction" (Jer. 17:23). Ezekiel rehearses how God had delivered the Israelites from Egypt and gave them the Sabbaths that they might know Him as their God (Ezek. 20:10-12). Then he continues:

But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they rejected mine ordinances, which if a man keep, he shall live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly profaned. Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them in the wilderness, to consume them (Ezek. 20:13).

Ezekiel continues to explain this rebellion (in Verses 13-16 and 18-24). This includes the prediction that God would scatter them among the nations because of their disobedience: "Moreover I swear unto them in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the nations, and disperse them through the countries" (Ezek. 20:23). The fulfillment of this has become a matter of history concerning the Jews, even to this day. Ezekiel shows that the rebellion was among even the princes and the priests: "Behold the princes of Israel . . . Thou hast despised my holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths" (Ezek. 22:6,8) and "Her priests have done violence to my law, and have profaned my holy things . . . and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them" (Ezek. 22:26):

Jerusalem Arraigned (22:1-31): Jerusalem is not guilty of minor lapses and an unintentional lack of good judgment, but of dreadful sin, a total depravity that has undermined "church and state." God has been debased into an idol, and His "holy things" have been despised. In consequence, man is also degraded. Every crime against society stalks about brazenly in bloody cruelty; every decency is flouted (22:1-16). Israel is therefore no longer silver that can be refined; it is a lump of worthless dross to be melted in the furnace of God's wrath (vv. 17-22). Nor is Israel's sin restricted to certain groups (22:23-31). All classes of society stand indicted: princes, prophets, priests, and people. Because of this total corruption God's mercy is at an end. Ezekiel sees the fire of His wrath poured out upon these evildoers.⁴³

Isaiah describes the rebelliousness of Israel as breaking the covenant which had been made with her: "The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant" (Isa. 24:5). Since Israel had broken the old covenant, a new one was promised which would be entirely different in approach from the covenant of law:

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband to them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the

⁴³Carl F. H. Henry (ed.), The Biblical Expositor (Phila: A. J. Holman Co., 1960), II, 242.

least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sins will I remember no more (Jer. 31:31-34).

This new covenant is to be an everlasting covenant: "For I, Jehovah, love justice, I hate robbery with iniquity; and I will give them their recompense in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them" (Isa. 61:8). This same thought is also found in other passages (Jer. 32:40; 50:5 and Ezek. 16:60). The blessings of this new covenant were to include the Gentiles as well as the Jews:

. . . For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. The Lord Jehovah, who gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him, besides his own that are gathered. (Isa. 56:7,8. See also Isa. 56:1-7; John 1:14-16; Eph. 2:11-19).

The sabbaths are suspended. "I will also cause her mirth to cease, her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths, and all her solemn assemblies" (Hosea 2:11). Here is a prophecy of judgment upon rebellious Israel, as represented by the harlot of Hosea (Hosea 1:2):

In the midst of this period of the law, Hosea predicted that, as a part of the judgments which were to come upon Israel, her sabbaths would cease (Hosea 2:11). This prophecy must at some time be fulfilled, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.⁴⁴

Isaiah relates the spurning of the Sabbaths by God because they had become an abomination. This is found in the opening portion of the Book

⁴⁴Chafer, Major Bible Themes, op. cit., p. 220.

of Isaiah which portrays rebellious Israel as more profane than the animals, that at least know their master, a people that are "estranged and gone backward" (Isa. 1:2-4).

What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? Saith Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies--I cannot away with iniquity and the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary of bearing them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood (Isa. 1:11-15).

This is followed by a call to repentance (Isa. 1:16,17): "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice; relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." The prophecy that the Sabbaths would cease was fulfilled in the captivity:

The cessation of the Sabbath and other solemn feasts came when Jerusalem was taken and destroyed by the Babylonian army, the temple was burned, and the king, priests and people were carried to Babylon. Some of the poor of the people were left to till the ground and keep the country from becoming a wilderness, but among the poverty-stricken and war-harassed people, without priest or prophet to instruct them and lead their devotions, it was no wonder that the Sabbath should be forgotten in Zion, and that the mirth and rejoicing of the feast days should cease.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Cowan, op. cit., p. 71.

"It is clear from Hos. 2:11 that the chastisement which was to fall on Israel, and which she is now experiencing, would be characterized by the cessation of all [*italics in the original*] her solemn feasts and sabbaths."⁴⁶ It is also clear that this was a result of the wrath of God upon the rebellious children of Israel. The poor example that Israel set before the surrounding nations caused them to mock her, and God would no longer permit this to continue, as He was being profaned:

Moreover, the impression of this unspiritual and hypocritical observance of the Sabbath and other sacred feasts upon the heathen was not good: "The adversaries saw her, and did mock at her sabbaths" (Lam. 1:7). It was better that the day be not kept, than that it should be made an occasion of mockery, and in His righteous judgment against sinful Israel it was not inconsistent with His holiness that God should say, "I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts" (Hos. 2:11). And thus the word of Jeremiah was fulfilled: "The Lord hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest" (Lam. 2:6).⁴⁷

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah" (Amos 8:11). Here God's spurning is complete, as He gives them up to confusion. He simply quits speaking to them and sends a famine of understanding unto them: "And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it" (Amos 8:12):

⁴⁶Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 262.

⁴⁷Cowan, op. cit., p. 70.

The prophet Amos, who prophesied in the kingdom of Israel about two hundred years before the times of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, exhibits the attitude of that nation toward the Sabbath, in the mercenary mood which led them to ask, "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances for deceit?" (Amos 8:5).⁴⁸

What a tragedy! Israel has had every opportunity, yet has rebelled in disobedience. So now God spurns Israel and lets her go into captivity, and causes all her Sabbaths to cease. This is a bitter day for Israel:

And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring sackcloth upon your loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning for an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day (Amos 8:10).

III. IN THE OTHER OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

This third division of Chapter Two includes the teaching on the Day of Worship which is found in the books of the Old Testament other than the Books of the Law and the Books of Prophecy. They are books primarily of history and devotion. The Book of Psalms is the main one referred to in this division, as is explained later. It includes the words for the theme of this division: "REST IN THE LORD" (Psalm 37:7). There is little in these books on the Sabbath as an institution. But there is much on the principles

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 69.

underlying the concept of Sabbath, and there is much pertaining to Worship.

The Sabbath Renewed

Israel was chastised by God for her rebellion by being taken into captivity in Babylon (Deut. 11:13-17; Zech. 7:8-14). The Scriptures reveal prophecies concerning a remnant to return and restore Jerusalem.⁴⁹ Upon returning, the law was read and affirmed again.

Affirmation of the law. Nehemiah records the reading of the law on the return to the site of Jerusalem after the captivity:

And they read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly; and they gave the sense, so that they understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto the people, This day is holy unto Jehovah your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law (Neh. 8:8,9).

Nehemiah explains that the people understood and rejoiced: "And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them" (Neh. 8:12).

In the years following Moses and the prophets questions arose concerning the interpretation of the law at various points, and who should answer them except those who were supposed to sit in Moses' seat? (Matt. 23:2). An extraordinary occasion for such instruction occurred after the restoration from the

⁴⁹Vide, Isa. 14:1-3; 44:28; 45:1-7; Jer. 30:10,11; 31:1-10; Ezek. 11:17-20.

Babylonian exile, when the general demand was made upon Ezra for the reading of the law and its explanation to the people (Neh. 8:1-8). This was necessary because of the seventy years' exile in Babylon, when the temple having been destroyed, its services and the feasts and Sabbaths were in abeyance, and a new beginning was made at the restoration. In this period are found the elements of those forces and movements which later became dominant in the development of Jewish life and character as found in the New Testament and subsequent times. The law of Moses was still the background of the national and religious life of the Jews, but the captivity and the restoration mark the beginning of those influences which have shaped and impressed Jewish life in later ages.⁵⁰

Renewal of the sabbath. Along with the rest of the law, the Sabbath was renewed: As Moses had "made known unto them thy holy sabbath," so now it was made known again to the Israelites upon their return from captivity (Neh. 9:14). In Neh. 10:29-31 is the record of the renewal of the seventh day weekly Sabbath. The people vowed "to observe and do all the commandments of Jehovah" (Verse 29). They agreed to not buy and sell on the Sabbath "and that we would forego the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt" (Verse 30). Also the provision was made for observing the Levites' portion "for the service of the house of our God" (Verse 32). Then is mentioned the provisions for the offerings, the feasts and the other "holy things" (Verse 33).

Mention needs to be made here of another later fulfillment of the predictions of restoration for Israel. For there is also found in Isaiah a

⁵⁰Cowan, op. cit., p. 77.

prediction of the restoration of the Sabbath in the Kingdom age, or after the return of Christ for His Church: "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Jehovah" (Isa. 66:23). The context of this passage is in the time of "the new heavens and the new earth" (Isa. 66:22). This is clearly understood from other Scriptures to be in the last days which are yet to come (See Rev. 21:1):

The prophets . . . also presented foreviews of the Sabbath in what is now called the "kingdom age," or the millenium, when Christ shall have returned with all His saints to reign over the purified earth. Isaiah speaks of that time when he says, "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord" (Isa. 66:23).⁵¹

Feinberg also makes a similar observation in commenting on Isaiah 56:2-7 and 66:23:

That the Sabbath will be reinstated shortly before the kingdom age (during the Great Tribulation, Matt. 24:20) and during the kingdom age is the testimony of the Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments.⁵²

Enforcement of the sabbath. The law was read. The people understood, and they vowed to carry out the commandments and ordinances of the law. But always there are those who will not follow law until it is enforced in a way that forces them to comply. This was true concerning

⁵¹Ibid., p. 74.

⁵²Feinberg, op. cit., p. 28.

the Sabbath. Nehemiah records that he noticed the Sabbath being violated.

Men were treading winepresses; burdens were being moved about, some for the purpose of buying and selling on the Sabbath (Neh. 13:15,16):

Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this you do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers this, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath (Neh. 13:17,18).

So Nehemiah had to take action to enforce the Sabbath and prevent this working and trading which was forbidden by the law. He even had to threaten the merchants who came to Jerusalem, but finally they responded and it is recorded that "From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath" (Neh. 13:19-22).

Worship in the Psalms

The Book of Psalms contains much on worship. There is much on obedience to God and His laws and ordinances in the Psalms. Jesus used David, the "sweet psalmist of Israel" (II Sam. 23:1), and author of over two-thirds of the Psalms, as an illustration in matters of worship and Sabbath observance (Matt. 12:3,4; 24-26; Luke 6:2-4). Yet there is almost nothing on the Sabbath as an institution in the entire Book of Psalms. The word Sabbath appears only once, and that is in a Title for Psalm Ninety-two: "A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath Day."

The terms of worship. The Psalms express the very highest plane

of worship and devotion to God. The word "Worship" is found sixteen times in the Psalms as used in reference to the worship of God. This is more than in any other book of the Bible. Daniel is next with the word Worship being found in it eleven times. Isaiah follows third with ten times. Here are some examples of the use of the term Worship:

1. Ps. 29:2 - "Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name; worship Jehovah in holy array."
2. Ps. 86:9 - "All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and they shall glorify thy name."
3. Ps. 95:6 - "Oh come let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker."
4. Ps. 99:9 - "Exalt ye Jehovah our God, and worship at his holy hill; For Jehovah our God is holy."

The word "Fear" as used in reference to the fear of or awesome worship of God is found in the Psalms fifty-seven times. This is more often than in any other book of the Bible. The Book of Proverbs follows with twenty, and Deuteronomy is third with nineteen times. Examples of this use of the word Fear are given here:

1. Ps. 19:9 - "The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring forever."
2. Ps. 111:10 - "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom."

Two other words deserve mention here in reference to their use in relation to worship. These are the words "Love" and "Honor." The word Love as used to refer to love of God or His word (or law) is found twenty times in the Psalms. This is more than in any other Book of the Bible. Deuteronomy is second with twelve, and there are no others with more than two such usages.

The word Honor, used in reference to God or His sanctuary, is found eight times in the Psalms. This is more than in any other book of the Old Testament, and is matched by the Book of Revelation in the New Testament.

The principle of rest. The Psalms are full of admonition to trust God and rest in Him. One passage is presented here to show this teaching of the Psalms:

Trust in Jehovah, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on his faithfulness. Delight thyself also in Jehovah; and he will give thee the desires of thy heart. Commit thy way unto Jehovah; Trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass. And he will make thy righteousness to go forth as the light, And thy justice as the noonday. Rest in Jehovah, and wait patiently for him: Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, Because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass (Ps. 37:3-7).

Many lessons can be learned from this Psalm, especially from this portion of the Psalm. These can be keynoted by four words which begin each major thought of this passage:

1. Trust - Verse 3 (Also Verse 5): Dwelling and sustenance promised.
2. Delight - Verse 4: Desires of heart given.
3. Commit - Verse 5: Righteousness and justice brought.
4. Rest - Verse 7: Patience and calmness learned.

In these are seen the ideals which underly the highest concept of Sabbath and of Worship. They form the principles which are behind what God meant in commanding Israel to observe the Sabbath.

The Ninety-fifth Psalm is another one which sums up the principle of resting or trusting in Jehovah. It also helps to set the stage for an

understanding of the New Testament or New Covenant concept of worship and rest. Included in it is the sentence upon Israel that because of her erring ways, she would not enter into God's rest:

O come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker: For he is our God, And we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To-day, oh that ye would hear his voice! Harden not your heart, as at Meribah, As in the day of Massah in the wilderness; When your fathers tempted me, Proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with that generation, And said, It is a people that do err in their heart, And they have not known my ways: Wherefore I swore in my wrath, That they should not enter into my rest (Ps. 95:6-11).

Thus the judicial decree that disobedient Israel was forbidden the "rest" or peace with God that would have been hers had she been obedient is given. The main points of this passage are as follows:

1. Call to Worship - Verse 6: Kneel before God our Creator.
2. Call to Obedience - Verse 7: Hear the voice of our God.
3. The Hardened Hearts - Verses 8 and 9: Hardness in spite of evidence.
4. The Forbidden Rest - Verses 10 and 11: Israel not to enter into rest. This is quoted in Hebrews 3:6-12 and 4:3-11 where the unbelief and error of Israel is used to illustrate those not entering into rest of soul; or the unsaved, who do not enter into God's rest.

Micah had stated: "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your resting-place; because of uncleanness that destroyeth, even with a grievous destruction" (Micah 2:10). Both Isaiah and Jeremiah bring out that there would be no rest for Israel because she would not listen to or heed God's Word to them:

To whom he said, This is the rest, give ye rest to him that is weary; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear. (Isa. 28:12) and in Jeremiah: Thus saith Jehovah, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls: but they said, We will not walk therein. And I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet; but they said, We will not hearken (Jer. 6:16,17).

The day of the Lord. "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner. This is Jehovah's doing; It is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which Jehovah hath made; We will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. 118:22-24). This is a key passage as it is tied in with its use in the New Testament. Peter, filled with God's Holy Spirit as he speaks to the hostile Council in Jerusalem after the healing of the lame man at the door of the temple, identifies both the stone and the builders who rejected it:

Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in him doth this man stand before you whole. He is the stone which was set at nought by you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved (Acts 4:10-12).

The Psalmist declares: "This is Jehovah's doing; It is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which Jehovah hath made; We will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. 118:23,24). What is the Lord's doing? This passage indicates that it is the exalting of the rejected stone that is His doing (Verse 22). What is the day which Jehovah hath made? It must be the day of the exalting of the rejected stone, or in other words, the day of the resurrection

of Christ. "We will rejoice and be glad in it" (Verse 24). Rejoice and be glad in what? In the resurrection day, according to this passage! How can this be done now, after so many years since the resurrection? It can be done by observing a time of rejoicing which will commemorate the resurrection day.

So here the Lord's Day, the "resurrection day" which is the "morrow after the Sabbath" of the first day of the week, which became the universal day of worship of the Christian church, is seen foreshadowed in the Old Testament. For it was on the Lord's Day that the early church met for worship in honor of the risen Christ and the resurrection life which He provides. This is considered further in the next chapters of this paper. But the importance of this for this Old Testament study is the observation that the Lord's Day was foreshadowed in the Old Testament:

With the subject of the Sabbath firmly fixed in our minds, the question of the Lord's Day is easily comprehended. First of all, it was a subject of Old Testament prophecy and typology. The Psalmist declares: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." (Psa. 118: 22-24). That this Scripture refers to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is the witness of the Holy Spirit Himself by the mouth of the apostle Peter in Acts 4:11. Moses writes in Leviticus 23:10,11: "When ye be come into the land which I gave unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it." Here is undoubtedly a type of Christ risen from the dead, and become the "firstfruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:20).⁵³

⁵³Ibid., p. 30.

IV. CHAPTER SUMMARY

There is found no formal teaching on worship recorded in Genesis. But there are several examples of worship which imply some oral instruction from God. The first formal instruction concerning a Day of Worship is found in the Ten Commandments, as recorded in Ex. 20:8-11 and Deut. 5:12-15. There the Israelites are instructed to observe the seventh day as their Sabbath. This was to be done in honor of Jehovah as Creator and Deliverer.

The term Sabbath is applied to events of varying time lengths and which fell on different days of the week. These are summarized here:

1. The Seventh Day Weekly Sabbath - Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15: This Sabbath is 24 hours long, or one day.
2. The Sabbath of the Day of Atonement - Lev. 16:29-34; 23:26-32: This fell on the 10th day of the 7th month, regardless of the day of the week. It was a 24-hour, or one day event.
3. The Sabbath of Pentecost - Lev. 23:15-21: With the regular weekly seventh day Sabbath, which was the previous day, the two Sabbaths totaled into a 48-hour period, or two days.
4. The Sabbath of the Seventh Year - Lev. 25:3,4: This was a Sabbath of the land, and was one year in duration.
5. The Sabbath of the Jubilee - Lev. 25:8-12: Including the regular seventh year Sabbath, or sabbatical year, along with the 50th year, or Jubilee year, this Sabbath was two years in duration.
6. The Sabbath of the Exile - Lev. 26:33-35; Jer. 25:11; II Chron. 36:21: This is a Sabbath of the land and took place while the Israelites were in exile in Babylon. It was 70 years in duration.

The Sabbath was to be a sign for the children of Israel. It was to be a perpetual covenant between them and Jehovah throughout their generations. It was given to Israel, and to them alone. There is nothing in the

Scriptures which teaches or implies that the Sabbath was for anyone but Israel. In contrast to this, another "sign" was prophesied which would be for all people.⁵⁴ This sign is identified as Christ, the Messiah, who was to be a "light to the Gentiles."⁵⁵

The Sabbaths foreshadowed in type the person of Christ, who fulfilled these types by His birth, teaching, death, resurrection and present intercession. This provides a background for understanding the words of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount: "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17).

⁵⁴Vide, Isa. 5:26; 7:14; 11:1,10; 18:3.

⁵⁵Vide, Isa. 42:6; 49:6; Luke 2:29-34.

CHAPTER III

A NEW TESTAMENT STUDY OF THE DAY OF WORSHIP

This chapter is a study of the Day of Worship as it is treated in the New Testament. It is divided into three main divisions, plus a Summary.

These are as follows:

- I. THE TEACHINGS AND EXAMPLES OF CHRIST
- II. THE TEACHINGS AND EXAMPLES OF PAUL
- III. THE OTHER NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING

These divisions represent corresponding sections of the New Testament. The Teachings of Christ are found primarily in the four Gospels. The Teachings of Paul are found primarily in his Epistles. The teachings of the remaining books of the New Testament are considered in the third section, Other New Testament Teaching.

I. THE TEACHINGS AND EXAMPLES OF CHRIST

The theme for this division is from the words of Christ as recorded in Mark 2:27: "THE SABBATH FOR MAN."

The Teachings of Jesus

The Old Testament includes many prophecies and types of the Messiah who was to come to Israel. The New Testament identifies Jesus Christ as this Messiah, or Christ. This is seen in His own words to the

woman of Samaria, at Jacob's well: "The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he (John 4: 25, 26).

This section on the Teachings of Jesus concerning the Day of Worship is considered under three headings: Concerning the Sabbath; Concerning the Law; and Concerning the Future.

Concerning the sabbath. Jesus gave no systematic teaching concerning any particular day of worship. However, He did give teaching concerning the Sabbath. On one occasion it is recorded that He was going through the grain fields with His disciples on one of the seventh day Sabbaths:

At that season Jesus went on the sabbath day through the grainfields; and his disciples were hungry and began to pluck ears and to eat. But the Pharisees, when they saw it, said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the sabbath. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was hungry, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and ate the shew-bread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, that on the sabbath day the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless? But I say unto you, that one greater than the temple is here. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord of the sabbath (Matt. 12:1-8).

These illustrations carried real meaning to the Jews of that day. Jesus was trying to show the Pharisees the error of imposing the letter of the law rather than showing mercy. "The ordinary rules for the observance of

the Sabbath gave way before the requirements of the temple; but there are rights here before which the temple itself must give way."¹ Jesus is inferring His own right as the Messiah of Israel . . . "For the Son of man is Lord of the sabbath." (Matt. 12:8). This statement follows the use of two Old Testament illustrations to show the critical Pharisees their error:

Jesus referred to that provision of the law for continual burnt offerings and for the placing of the shewbread on the table in the temple on the Sabbath. The continual burnt offering for each day was two lambs (Num. 28:3,4), and on the Sabbath this number was doubled, four lambs being the offering for the Sabbath day (Num. 28:9-10). The daily work of the priests was, therefore, not suspended on the Sabbath, but was actually doubled; it was the busiest day of the week for them. On this day, also, the priests made the shewbread and placed it on the table. Technically, the priests profaned the Sabbath, the law for that day being, In it thou shalt not do any work; but the service of the priests was largely increased on that day. And yet Jesus declared them blameless. They were doing the work to which God had assigned them, a sacred work, therefore necessary, and one to be distinguished from the gainful occupations of men in the common walks of life.²

The event of Jesus and His disciples going through the grainfields on the Sabbath and plucking the grain is also recorded in Mark 2:23-28. This passage includes another of the statements of Jesus concerning the Sabbath: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

¹Commentary on the Whole Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, [n.d.]), II, 39-40.

²Horace G. Cowan, The Sabbath in Scripture and History (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1948), p. 91. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

He taught that man was not to conform so much to the Sabbath as the Sabbath was to be adapted to the highest spiritual needs of man:

Here it is clearly taught, that those things which pertain to man's highest welfare, that is, his spiritual interests, are to be permitted on the Sabbath day; and this is a true and sure test as to the kind and extent of secular labor on the Sabbath day.³

Jesus was neither violating or spurning the law. He was actually getting underneath the letter of the law to the underlying principles. He was getting to the "meat" of the law:

The words of Christ with reference to the lordship of the Son of Man over the Sabbath day should not be taken as indicating that He regarded Himself as setting aside or nullifying the laws of Moses. That would be contrary to all that He had to say in regard to the Old Testament Scriptures. These words indicate that at all times the glory of Christ is the supreme consideration and takes precedence over the technicalities which may be involved.⁴

Concerning the law. "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17):

. . . These words suggest a boundary line on the different sides of which dwell people of different races, laws and customs. On the one side are Moses' disciples, who practice circumcision, animal sacrifices, temple or synagogue worship, and the Sabbath; on the other side are Christians, believers in Jesus Christ, whose

³H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1953), III, 150.

⁴James Oliver Buswell, A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 369.

circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God (Rom. 2:29);
 Whose sacrifice is that of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary,
 and who worship God in spirit and in truth on the Lord's Day.⁵

Jesus taught: "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets; I came not to destroy, but to fulfill"(Matt. 5:17). He continued: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (Matt. 5:18). Jesus fulfilled the law in His own life and person. Luke records this similar thought: "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail" (Luke 16:17):

But the law had not failed. It succeeded in doing what it was intended to do--reveal sin as a transgression and concern the sinner. It did its perfect work, and having done its perfect work, left all men under condemnation; but Jesus Christ came to do what the law could not do. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons"(Galatians 4:4,5).⁶

Immediately following the words of Jesus concerning His not coming to destroy, but to fulfill the law, He spoke these words: "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of

⁵Cowan, op. cit., p. 287. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original] .

⁶M. R. De Haan, Law or Grace (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965), p. 139.

heaven" (Matt. 5:20). Jesus had to deal with the letterism of the law as taught by the Scribes and Pharisees, and with all of the traditions which they had added to the law:

It is a well-known fact that in the intertestamental period Jewish legalists had elaborated many meticulous rules with regard to the keeping of the Sabbath. It was these rules and not the original commandment with which Jesus came in conflict in the course of His public ministry. It must be remembered that in this as in other matters, Jesus never claimed to be setting aside the laws of Moses, but to be interpreting them in accordance with their original intention. His statement, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27) is central in the understanding of all that He says on this subject.⁷

After several clashes with the Pharisees and Scribes, Jesus tells them, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do . . ." (John 8:44). Jesus knew the hearts of these hypocrites, and told the people and His disciples that they must exceed their kind of life, or they could never enter into the kingdom of heaven. Thus Jesus sharply undercuts the Scribes and Pharisees as the authorities on the matters of the law. At another time He gave an answer to a question of the Pharisees which revealed the true basis of all of the law:

But the Pharisees, when they heard that he had put the Saducees to silence, gathered themselves together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, trying him: Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, This is the great and

⁷Buswell, *op. cit.*, p. 368.

first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets (Matt. 22:34-40).

Here Jesus was quoting from the law, but not from any of the Ten Commandments (Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18). The Sabbath is not mentioned in these commandments, yet it was stressed so much under the law in the Old Testament. The Scriptures reveal that Jesus spent absolutely no time in promoting Sabbath-keeping, or in warnings against breaking the Sabbath. This is a vital observation for this study on a Day of Worship.

Concerning the future. It must be remembered that Jesus was born "under the law" (Gal. 4:4) and lived under the law during His earthly ministry. All of His teachings and examples must be understood in this light. But he looked beyond the time of His earthly ministry to the future. This future included this present age and the age of the end times which is yet to come. If the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath were important for this age, certainly Jesus would have made some instruction or provision for this, as He did for other of the principles of the Ten Commandments. Yet the very silence of Christ is of importance in this connection:

Before His death, the sabbath was one of the most important issues in the experience and ministry of Christ. However, it is both obvious and suggestive that He never mentioned that day in the upper-room discourse, nor is that day once mentioned as an obligation in all of His post-resurrection ministry. It is inconceivable that the sabbath, which was so vital a part of the Mosaic system, should be omitted from these great age-characterizing teachings of Christ, if it was the purpose of God that this Jewish

day should have any place in the present reign of grace.⁸

The silence of Christ here is of utmost importance in understanding the New Testament treatment of the Day of Worship. It is also significant that this silence is found throughout the entire New Testament, which suggests a concept which is exceedingly different from that of the Old Testament. Rowell asks a vital question:

Here comes a question of vital importance, Why is it that nowhere in the N.T. is it taught that the Fourth Commandment must be observed? And, further, Why is it that nowhere in the N.T. is failure to keep the Sabbath Day condemned as sin? And why is the fourth commandment itself not even once repeated in the N.T.?⁹

In one instance Jesus spoke words which took a prophetic look into the distant future: "And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on a sabbath" (Matt. 24:20). This passage refers to the end times, when the Sabbath would be renewed for Israel (Isa. 66:22,23 and Rev. 21:1). More specifically it refers to the flight of those who must remain on earth when the Great Tribulation begins. Here again the Sabbath is identified with Israel, and could not possibly have reference to the Christians who would be taken out at this time, thus would have no need to flee. "The Sabbath is a distinctive mark of Judaism, and it is not by accident that it is

⁸Lewis Sperry Chafer, Grace (Chicago: Moody Press, 1943), p. 254.

⁹J. B. Rowell, Seventh-Day Adventism Examined (Susanville, Calif.: Challenge Publishing Co., 1952), p. 42.

mentioned in connection with those who will be on earth during the tribulation (Matt. 24:20)."¹⁰ Jesus is referring to the prohibition against traveling on the Sabbath. They could not travel far without violating the law, so He says, "Pray that your flight be not . . . on the sabbath."

The Examples of Jesus

Jesus grew up under the law. So many things concerning His life reveal that which would be normal to any Jewish boy or man, such as His practice of worshipping in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

Synagogue visits. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read" (Luke 4:16). There are many references to Jesus going into the synagogue on the Sabbath. They are summarized as follows:

1. Five references merely state that He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath and taught--Mark 1:21; 6:2; Luke 4:16,31; 13:10.
2. In two of these cases an occasion of healing accompanied the teaching--Mark 1:23-25 and Luke 4:33-35.
3. In three places it mentions that He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath. No mention is made of teaching, but while there He performed healings--Matt. 12:9,10; Mark 3:1,2; Luke 13:11-13.

Much has been made of these synagogue visits. Some use these to insist that the Christian should observe the seventh day Sabbath because

¹⁰Gerald B. Stanton, Kept From the Hour (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1956), p. 70.

Jesus did during His earthly ministry:

Much confusion concerning the sabbath is due to a failure to recognize the peculiar character of the period represented by the Gospels. It should be remembered that Christ was first a "minister of the circumcision"; He was "made under the law"; and He lived and wrought under the law. The law did not pass at His birth. It passed at His death. During the days of His ministry, He recognized, kept, and enforced the sabbath as an integral part of the whole Mosaic system.¹¹

It is a distortion of the New Testament concept of a Day of Worship to insist that because Christ observed the Sabbath according to the Old Testament law, His example compels Gentiles today to observe the seventh day:

Christ was faithful to the whole Mosaic system, which included the sabbath, because that system was in force during His earth-life; but that obvious fact is no basis for the claim that a Christian who is under grace and living in another dispensation is appointed to follow Christ in His sabbath observance either in examples or precept.¹²

One author compares the Sabbath to the Passover, in reference to the keeping of it by Christians:

It is argued that since Jesus kept the Sabbath, Christians should do likewise. Did not Jesus also keep the Passover? Then by the same reasoning, Christians should observe the Passover, which would be a denial of Christ our Passover sacrificed for us.¹³

¹¹Chafer, loc. cit.

¹²Lewis Sperry Chafer, Major Bible Themes (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1937), p. 220.

¹³Rowell, op. cit., p. 43.

The Passover has been replaced for the Christian by the Lord's Supper. Is it not also in line with this that the Sabbath be replaced for the Christian by the Lord's Day? This is a question which deserves consideration, especially when one considers the other examples of that which Jesus experienced according to the law, such as circumcision (Luke 2:21).

Sabbath healing. The instances of healing in the earthly ministry of Jesus are numerous. His ability and authority to heal were not disputed. But when these healings took place on the Sabbath, immediately opposition and questions arose. Once when Jesus healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11) the Pharisees asked Him if it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath, "That they might accuse Him" (Matt. 12:10; Mark 3:2; Luke 6:7):

Jesus replied to the Pharisees question . . . by saying, I will also ask you one thing; is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? (Luke 6:9). They were discreetly silent to this question, knowing that the law licensed no evil nor the destruction of life. But when Jesus had healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath day, their narrow-minded adherence to their traditions led them to conspire with the Herodians to destroy Him.¹⁴

Jesus also asked them another very practical question concerning whether they would pull a beast from a pit on the Sabbath, which the law did allow. Since they could not object to this, Jesus said: "How much then is a

¹⁴Cowan, op. cit., p. 95. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

man of more value than a sheep! Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the sabbath day" (Matt. 12:12). Immediately he proceeded to heal the man.

Cowan observes concerning this passage: ". . . What assurance of man's worth in the sight of the Lord, and what evidence that the Sabbath was made for man!"¹⁵

On another occasion Jesus healed a woman who had been burdened with an issue of blood for eighteen years:

And the ruler of the synagogue, being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, answered and said to the multitude, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the day of the sabbath (Luke 13:14).

Jesus spoke out immediately with an answer for the ruler of the synagogue. This shamed His accusers and caused the people to rejoice for the wonderful things which He had been doing:

But the Lord answered him, and said, Ye hypocrites, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to the watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound, lo, these eighteen years, to have been loosed from this bond on the day of the sabbath? And as he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame: and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him. (Luke 13:15-17).

A man who had an infirmity thirty-eight years was healed by Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-18). The man had been laying on

¹⁵Ibid.

a bed, which was no longer needed when he was healed, so Jesus told him, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk" (John 5:8). But the Jews objected: "So the Jews said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath, and it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed" (John 5:10). When the Jews found out that Jesus had done the healing and had told the man to take up his bed and walk, they began to persecute Him:

And for this cause the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he did these things on the sabbath. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh even until now, and I work. For this cause therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only brake the sabbath, but also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God (John 5:16-18).

Lord's Supper. Jesus told His disciples: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15). Then He introduced something which was very different from the ceremonies of the Passover as prescribed by the law:

And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I shall not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he break it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you (Luke 22:14-20).

Here Jesus predicts His own death on the cross and likens the bread

to His own body which would soon be given or broken for the sins of man. Then He likens the "fruit of the vine" to His own blood which would soon be shed in His death on the cross. The blood here is associated with the New Covenant (Verse 20). Thus the death of Christ is seen as the pivotal point between the ages of law and of grace. The Passover was fulfilled personally by Christ as He became the sacrifice for the sins of every man, on the cross. This gives vital meaning to the words of Christ when He said that He had come to fulfill the law (Matt. 5:17) and the words of the Apostle Paul as he stated: "For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ" (I Cor. 5:7). Jesus told His disciples concerning that first "Lord's Supper": "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Thus He brought a change in the Passover from that which was prescribed by the law to that which He admonished His disciples to do. As the priest or mediator of the New Covenant (Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24) Jesus had the authority now that the law had served its purpose, to change the law: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). This is important to understand, for it is a New Testament principle which is of great significance when applied to the Day of Worship.

The Resurrection of Jesus

Jesus had been crucified on a Friday, the day of the preparation for the Sabbath (Luke 23:54). He was buried, or placed in a sepulchre, on that same day (Matt. 27:57-61; Luke 23:50-56). The women observed the

burial and prepared spices and ointments for the body (Luke 23:55,56). Then they rested on the Sabbath (Luke 23:56):

And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, brought spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, they come to the tomb when the sun was risen. And they were saying among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the tomb? (Mark 16:1-3).

The resurrection day. The Old Testament Scriptures had included predictions of the resurrection of Jesus.¹⁶ Now it had come to pass:

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, while they were perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel: and as they were affrighted and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying that the Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words (Luke 24:1-8. Also: Matt. 28:1-6; Mark 16:1-6; John 20:1-9).

Thus again Jesus had personally fulfilled the law and the prophets (Matt. 5:17). He also fulfilled His own numerous predictions of His death and resurrection.

¹⁶Vide, Ps. 16:10; 22:18; Isa. 52:13; 53:10-12.

The third day. Jesus had on many occasions predicted every element of His passion: His betrayal, false condemnation, crucifixion and resurrection: In each of these cases He foretold that it would be on the third day that He would be raised from the dead:¹⁷

From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up (Matt. 16:21).

By the Jewish manner of reckoning of days, it was the third day on which He did rise from the dead. They figured any portion of the day as a day. Jesus was crucified on Friday, which would be the first day of the three. He was, humanly speaking, laying in the grave on Saturday, which is the modern seventh day Jewish Sabbath. This would be the second day of the three. Then He arose on the first day of the week, or that which would correspond to the modern Sunday. This would be the third day of the three days, fulfilling the "third day" of all the predictions which He had made concerning His death and resurrection.

Some confusion has arisen over the time element of the words of Christ in Matt. 12:38-40 where He compares His own case to that of the time of Jonah's being in the belly of the whale: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40). The problem is with the "three days and three nights." But again the Jewish manner of

¹⁷Vide, Matt. 16:21; 17:22,23; 20:19; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:6-8.

reckoning of time provides the simple solution for this. This is well illustrated in the Scriptures in at least four instances, as here given:

1. Lev. 25:20-22 - Provision for food for the sabbatic year.
2. Gen. 42:17,18 - Joseph puts his brothers in ward.
3. I Kings 12:5,12 and II Chron. 10:5,12 - Jereboam appeals to Rehoboam.
4. Esther 4:16-5:1 - Esther's fast for the Jews.

In each of these instances the same is true. The time specified was "three days." Yet the events which showed completion of this period took place on the third day, in each case. For instance, in the latter instance of the four cited, Esther had told the Jews in Shushan to fast: "And neither eat nor drink three days, night nor day." Then it is recorded: "Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house" (Esther 4:16-5:1). Esther had obviously broken the fast during the third of the three days, and the third night was not actually involved in the fast.

There is, therefore, nothing incredible with our Lord's statement that He should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, although three times twenty-four hours are not required for the fulfillment of the period of burial, which was covered by the event which started on Friday, the first day, and was completed on Sunday, the third day.¹⁸

The first day. There is no question but what the Scriptures

¹⁸Cowan, op. cit., p. 130. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

teach that it was on the first day of the week that Christ arose from the dead. Each of the four Gospels records this event, and it is referred to frequently throughout the New Testament. One observation is made here concerning the reference to the day in relation to its place in the "week." In all of the numerous references to the seventh day being the Sabbath for Israel, there is not one single reference to it being specifically on the seventh day of the week. This no doubt was to allow for the many calendar changes and other changes in time designation which history reveals did take place during the time from Moses to the days of Christ. The seventh day was the seventh in a series, and could be applied to any series and still fulfill the seventh of the law for Israel. But in contrast to this, in the references to the resurrection of Christ, it is in nearly every case stated as the first day of the week. While there have been some calendar changes since the time of Christ, the use of the seven day week has not changed. So there is no problem in relating the first day of the week of the resurrection to a day of the modern week. Thus when the early church began worshipping on the Lord's Day, it was the first day of the week the same as it is today. It never was the seventh day, or the Jewish Sabbath, as some have claimed.

The four gospels are one in declaring that the Lord Jesus arose from the dead. This was declared to be on the first day of the week. The celebration of the first day of the week is in commemoration of this blessed event.¹⁹

¹⁹Charles L. Feinberg, The Sabbath and the Lord's Day (New York: American Board of Missions to the Jews, [n.d.]), p. 31.

II. THE TEACHINGS AND EXAMPLES OF PAUL

The theme for this division of the third chapter is from the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 6:14: "NOT UNDER LAW." The lack of mention of the term "Sabbath" is a feature of Paul's Epistles:

Upon examination of the direct injunctions and doctrinal teachings of the Epistles, it is discovered that the word sabbath is used but once, the term seventh day is mentioned in one passage only, and the legalistic observance of a day is referred to but once.²⁰

Another feature of Paul's Epistles is his definite teaching that the legal injunctions of the law are not binding on the Christians. The Sabbath is included in these:

Paul had quite distinctly laid down from the first days of Gentile Christianity that the Jewish Sabbath was not binding on Christians (Rom. 14:5 seq.; Gal. 4:10; Col. 2:16), and controversy with Judaizers led in process of time to direct condemnation of those who still kept the Jewish day (e.g. Council of Laodicea, A.D. 363).²¹

The Epistle to Romans

The word Sabbath is not found in this Epistle. But there is teaching which applies to a Day of Worship:

²⁰Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 258. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

²¹William R. Smith and Stanley A. Cook, "Sabbath," The Encyclopedia Britannica (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1911), XXIII, 960.

Unto the Lord. Paul applies the New Testament principle of love as applied to all of life to the Day of Worship: "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. He that regardeth the day regardeth it unto the Lord . . ." (Rom. 14:5,6).

This principle of love or mutual understanding and respect is refreshing compared to the cold legal demands of the law. This whole Fourteenth Chapter of the Book of Romans reveals Paul's concern that love temper all of a person's actions, so that one's beliefs do not harm or become a stumblingblock to someone else or a snare to oneself.

In these teachings Paul's anti-legalism is exactly consonant in principle with the teachings of Christ. Christ and Paul do not abrogate the law of the Sabbath; they give it its true meaning. Paul's words, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Rom. 14:5), are not antinomism. A man who truly loves the Lord and is fully instructed in the scriptural meaning and in the values of the Sabbath, and who realizes, too, his responsibility for his example, has liberty in applying the principle to the details of his life.²²

United in death. Paul provides a picture of the meaning of baptism in the Sixth Chapter of Romans. Here baptism is shown to illustrate the burial or doing away with the old man, the former self before receiving of Christ as Saviour. It also illustrates the rising up into newness of life in Christ, the resurrection life:

²²Buswell, op. cit., p. 371.

We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection (Rom. 6:4,5).

Thus, when a person goes down into the water they are illustrating and giving testimony of the burial of or break with the old life. When they rise up out of the water the illustration and testimony are that of walking in the new life, with the risen Christ. This new life is not structured by laws and legal demands, but a voluntary desire to honor the risen Christ. A day of Worship which does this is therefore in line with these New Testament principles. But it must never be imposed by law or legal demands, or the very purpose would be defeated. A voluntary observance of the Lord's Day would fulfill these New Testament principles. The seventh day Sabbath would in no way fulfill them, and in fact would be a denial of them:

The fourth chapter of Hebrews, quoting Genesis 2:2, states that the Sabbath prefigured the "rest", i.e. the new life, into which we enter by faith in Christ. Romans 6:4 teaches that this "rest" is based upon and guaranteed by the fact that Christ arose from the dead. The Old Testament Sabbath anticipated the resurrection of Christ. The Christian Sabbath celebrates the resurrection as an accomplished fact. If one should today literally celebrate the Passover, with the sprinkling of the blood, the act would logically imply a denial that the atonement has already been accomplished in history. Similarly, the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath logically implies the denial of the resurrection of Christ from the dead as an established historical fact.²³

²³ Ibid., p. 372.

Not under law. Paul also gives the declaration to the Christians that: "Ye are not under law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14). The full text of the context of this declaration is as follows:

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof; neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace (Rom. 6:12-14).

This sets forth a New Testament principle in clearly stated terms. Paul was writing to Christians (Rom. 1:6,7), and declared that they are not under the legal demands of the Old Testament law. Yet some will still try to place the Christian under the law, and will insist on the Sabbath of that law.

The Epistle to Galatians

Paul's Epistle to the Galatians does contain teaching on the observance of a day or days. These are understood to be days of worship. There is also much on the law and the Christian's relationship to the law.

Law is a curse. The law is holy, just and good (Rom. 7:12). But it puts the spotlight on sin and condemns man as a transgressor of the law. Therefore it is a curse to anyone who has not applied the blood of Christ to free themselves from this curse:

For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth

not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them. Now that no man is justified by the law before God is evident: for, the righteous shall live by faith; and the law is not of faith; but, He that doeth them shall live in them. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith (Gal. 3:10-14).

Paul, writing to the Galatian Christians, says: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13). Here is seen one of the great values of the death of Christ on the cross for the believer, freedom from the death-sealing curse of the law.

Also included in this passage is the "quicksand danger" of dabbling in the law: "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the law, to do them" (Gal. 3:10). This is a quotation of Deuteronomy 27:26. It expresses the thought which is also found in the Epistle of James: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all" (James 2:10). Who could ever keep all of the law perfectly? No one ever did or ever could, except Christ Himself. So everyone is guilty before God, and comes under the curse of the law and the sting of death (I Cor. 15:56). In another place Paul illustrates the "quicksand danger" of attempting to keep any portion of the law as a legal demand: "Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law" (Gal. 5:3). Could not this same principle, when applied to the Sabbath, suggest that if one insists on being

obligated to observe the seventh day Sabbath, then he is also obligated to observe all the other elements of the law, even the penalties concerning Sabbath-breaking? He could never keep all of the law, so by placing himself under the demands of any of it, he is placed under the curse of that law.

Law is beggarly. One can almost hear the heart-cry of the Apostle Paul as he pleads in questions to the Galatian Christians:

Howbeit at that time, not knowing God, ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods: but now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments, whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again? Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain (Gal. 4:8-11).

Luther observes the definiteness with which the Apostle Paul spoke against falling into bondage under the law: "We have St. Paul, who flatly forbids any one to be bound to holidays, feasts, and anniversaries of Moses (Galatians 4:10 and Colossians 2:16)."²⁴ This is rather severe in his analysis of Paul, for the Apostle never actually forbids these things. But he does urge and plead with his readers to heed the warnings and on their own change their ways.

The converted people of Galatia had been approached by Jewish proselyters who taught that except they kept the law of Moses they could not be saved; they should be circumcised, observe the Sabbath days, the new moons, and other

²⁴Martin Luther, Luther's Works, trans. Eric W. Gritsch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), XLI, 67.

feasts and sacred occasions. And the influence of the Judaizers was so potent that the Galatian Christians were in danger of being drawn away from Christ to Moses, or from the liberty of the gospel to the bondage of the law.²⁵

Paul did not want these Galatians to consider the day as having any merit in itself, or contributing to their salvation. He taught that their worship must be voluntary, out of a heart of love for Christ.

Law is profitless. Paul makes his plea even stronger in another passage, part of which has already been mentioned:

Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace. For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love (Gal. 5:2-6).

The law is profitless for several reasons, according to this passage. First, if they are to follow a part of the law, they must follow all of it . . . "a debtor to do the whole law." This places them in bondage to the law. Secondly, a regressing to the elements of the law cuts one off from Christ . . . "Ye are severed from Christ." Third, their position in grace is endangered . . . "Ye are fallen away from grace." Fourth, they would miss the hope of faith "working through love." What could be clearer than this concerning the Christian's relation to the law? Thus one's position

²⁵ Cowan, op. cit., p. 107.

in relation to observing of the seventh day Sabbath, which is a part of that law, is also clear. This is important to understand in this study of a Day of Worship.

The Epistle to Colossians

This is the only one of all the Epistles of Paul in which the term Sabbath is found. It also includes much on the Christian's relationship to Christ, and warns against things which would hinder in this.

Cross ends curse. The Second Chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians is a vital one for this study on a Day of Worship. Consider the following passage:

As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and builded up in him, and established in your faith, even as ye were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ: for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power: in whom ye were also circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him up from the dead. And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses; having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross (Col. 2:6-14).

The focal point of this passage is on the person of Christ. He is

to be received as a personal Saviour, then the receiver, as a believer in Christ, needs to walk in Him, being rooted deeply in Him and growing or being built up in Him. Then there is the warning concerning being led away or deceived by men's tradition and the ways of the world instead of after Christ, for He reveals the Godhead in Himself, therefore there is no better or higher place to center our devotion, than in Christ. Then this passage brings out that the believer, sharing in the resurrection life which Christ has made possible, is forgiven and made alive in Him. This has been made possible because the condemnation or the curse of the law, which casts its floodlight on sin, has been ended by the death of Christ as He was nailed to the cross. Again the cross is seen as the pivotal point for the change from the age of the law to the Christian age of grace. Thus for the Christian there is a definite change of allegiance. No longer is it to the law or the ways of the world, but to the risen Christ.

Judging is forbidden. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's" (Col. 2: 16,17). This is an important passage, and it is a key passage, especially in the area of a Day of Worship. First it is stated that the Christians are not to be judged, or accused, concerning certain elements of the law, including Sabbaths. Then follows the description of these elements of the law as only "shadows" as compared to the real which was to come, or

concerning the ministry and person of Christ, which they foreshadowed or predicted. Again Paul's heart-cry is felt as he unburdens his concern for the Colossian Christians:

Christian liberty in things non-essential is the lesson that apostle would impart to the Roman and Galatian Christians, and it was necessary to give the same truth to the Colossians, also, as similar conditions prevailed among them, Jewish proselyters having agitated their minds over meats and drinks and Sabbath days.²⁶

Christ replaces shadows. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's" (Col. 2:16,17). This passage is repeated here again and is considered more fully because of its importance, and also because of the actual use of the term Sabbath in it:

I think, if we have the patience to examine the subject carefully, that we should find the "Sabbaths" mentioned in the above named passages include all of the "Sabbaths" observed by the Jews, not even exempting the seventh-day Sabbath.²⁷

This observation is correct, and leads into the next consideration, that of the nature of these "shadows" in relation to that which they pre-figured or foreshadowed:

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Isaac H. Beardsley, The True Sabbath (Cincinnati: Cranston and Curts, 1892), p. 124.

When Paul said that the meat and drink offerings, the feast days, the new moons and the Sabbaths were a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ, he made a distinction between the temporary Mosaic dispensation and the everlasting gospel of the Son of God. A shadow faintly represents and exhibits imperfectly a body upon which the light shines; the shadow is an evidence of the reality of the body and that it is not far distant. The feasts, the sacrifices and the Sabbaths of the Jewish law were shadows of that which in the light of God's Word stood out clearly, and more substantial and enduring; they foreshadowed or typified the perfect body, Christ and His gospel. In the clear light of the Scriptures the body attracts and holds the gaze of men as the shadows failed to do.

Since my eyes were fixed on Jesus
I've lost sight of all beside;
So enchained my spirit's vision,
Looking at the Crucified.²⁸

This passage is important because of the many principles that it reveals concerning the relationship between law and grace. It suggests a comparison between the types or shadows of the Messiah, and the risen Christ, Himself. It also suggests a corresponding comparison between the seventh day Sabbath, the shadow, and the person of the risen Christ and a Day of Worship which honors Him in spirit and in truth:

When the substance is come we no longer need the shadow. If when walking we see a shadow overtaking us, our thought may be on the shadow; but when our friend catches up with us, we are no longer occupied with the shadow, but with our friend himself. So since Christ came, we are no longer occupied with the shadow of things to come, but with the glorious Person of our Lord

²⁸Cowan, op. cit., p. 109. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

and Saviour Jesus Christ, for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13).²⁹

III. THE OTHER NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING

The theme for this section is found in the first chapter of the Book of Revelation . . . "THE LORD'S DAY" (Rev. 1:10). This is a significant term in connection with a study of the Day of Worship:

The Lord's Day is the scriptural name of the first day of the week, otherwise called Sunday and the Sabbath. This name occurs once in the Bible, namely, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10). But its application to the usual day of Christian rest and worship is sustained by infallible witnesses. It is in a class with the Lord's supper (I Cor. 11:20), which is also found but once in the Scriptures, but for the scriptural authority of which there is abundant evidence.³⁰

The Resurrection Fellowship

This section could just as well have been entitled, "The Early Church." However, the Epistles of Paul, already considered, have included much that is of the early church. Also, the fellowship of the early Christians in the formative years of the church is in itself important. The primary Scriptural record of the early church is the Book of Acts. So

²⁹Rowell, op. cit., p. 51.

³⁰Cowan, op. cit., p. 98. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

this is where this section of the study begins:

The Lord's church. The Book of Acts: "Now therefore why make ye trial of God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" (Acts 15:10). This is an important passage when considered and understood in relation to the context in which it is found. First, a very important observation should be considered here. This is simply that the term Sabbath is used in the Book of Acts, which covers the early period of the Apostolic Church, in a very definite way, always in relation to the unbelieving Jews or of seeking them out:

The sabbath in the Book of Acts. The word sabbath is used nine times in the Acts, and wherever it is referred to as a day which is observed, it is related only to the unbelieving Jews, who, as would be expected, perpetuated, and who still perpetuate, the observance of the sabbath day. Not once in this Book is it stated, or even implied, that Christians kept a sabbath day. It is said that the Apostle Paul went into the synagogue of the Jews and reasoned with them every sabbath; but this can imply nothing more than that he took advantage of their gathering together on that day in order that he might preach to them. Such may be the experience of any missionary to the Jews to-day.³¹

In the Fifteenth Chapter of the Book of Acts is found the passage quoted at the beginning of this section concerning not putting an unbearable yoke on the new disciples of Christ. The context of this is the controversy

³¹Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 257. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

which arose over whether or not the Gentile converts must be circumcised.

"And certain men came down from Judaea and taught the brethren, saying,

Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved"

(Acts. 15:1). A dissention arose and a delegation was sent to Jerusalem to

determine what should be done. After considering what God had done already

among the Gentiles, Peter says:

Now therefore why make ye trial of God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they (Acts 15:10,11).

After further consideration and reference to the Scriptures, Peter's advice

was taken, and Paul says:

Wherefore my judgment is, that we trouble not them that from among the Gentiles turn to God; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood (Acts 15:19,20).

This is repeated in Verses Twenty-eight and Twenty-nine.

In the instructions or decrees from the Council in Jerusalem to the GENTILE BELIEVERS, Why was the Sabbath not even mentioned? The elders of the church had assembled to deal specifically with the keeping of the law, as we see in Acts 15:24, "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment." If ever there was a time to stress the keeping of the Sabbath-day, this was the time, and yet there is not the slightest reference to it in the instructions given from this Council. In contrast with the debated keeping of the law, Peter emphasized salvation by grace, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus

Christ we shall be saved, even as they." (Acts 15:11).³²

The silence concerning the Sabbath is exceedingly important in an understanding of the New Testament principles concerning the Day of Worship. For the very lack of instruction to keep Sabbath, even when the question of law-keeping was the main concern, is significant. It is clear that Sabbath-keeping simply was not a part of what was expected of the Christians of the early church, either by example or by instruction.

The Lord's rest. The Book of Hebrews:

For he that is entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works, as God did from his. Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, that no man fall after the same example of disobedience (Heb. 4:10,11).

This is an important passage from a vital New Testament Book. It is vital because it is a Book that forms a strong link between the Old and the New Testaments. It explains the types and shadows of the Old Testament in relation to the New Testament or New Covenant, and the New Testament fulfillment of them. It also sets forth the New Testament principles concerning law and grace very clearly. A careful reading of the Book of Hebrews would show the honest reader what the Scriptures actually teach on the relation of the law of the Old Covenant to the believer whose faith is in Christ, the "mediator of a new covenant" (Heb. 8:6; 9:15 and 12:24).

³²Rowell, op. cit., p. 45.

The Book of Hebrews was not included with the Epistles of Paul because of the probability of its being written by someone else, such as the Apostle Barnabas, or another of the Scriptural writers.

Chapters Three and Four of the Book of Hebrews present the principle of rest for the people of God . . . "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb. 4:9):

The sabbath under the law was a day. The sabbath under grace is a life. The law, even of the sabbath, was but "a shadow of good things to come," but Christ is now the Substance. The sabbath under grace knows no shadow. It is radiant with the glory of the resurrected Christ.

In Hebrews 4:1-16 there is a full revelation concerning the sabbath under grace. This whole message is gathered up in one brief portion of the passage: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his" (vs. 9,10). There is no reference in this Scripture to the rest into which the Christian enters at death. It is rather, "For we which have believed do enter into rest" (v. 3). It is the rest of "him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly" (Rom. 4:5), and the rest of the one who, "walking in the Spirit," discovers that he does not fulfill the lust of the flesh, and who enters into the realization of the provision through the indwelling Spirit that the whole will of God is to be fulfilled in him, rather than by him. This great blessing is not restricted to a sabbath day; it is an unbroken sabbath life. The sabbath of the law was, then, a day of absolute rest; the sabbath under grace is a life which is delivered from all works of the flesh since Christ has wrought, and is free from every dependence on the flesh since the Spirit has been given. No burden was allowed to be borne on the sabbath under the law; every burden is to be cast on the Lord in the sabbath of grace. The sabbath of the law was a day of rest for self; the sabbath of grace is a rest from self. It is a life which is to be lived to the glory and praise of Another. In the sabbath under the law, man was to cease from doing his own will for one day in seven; in the sabbath under grace the believer is to

be constantly and wholly yielded to God.³³

It might be said concerning the contrast of the two sabbaths that one is a day to be observed; the other a life to be lived. The sabbath under the law was a ceasing from labor and one's own will for a day. The sabbath of grace is a ceasing of dependence upon one's own works forever; and a surrendering of one's own will to God for every day. Thus as one rests in the Lord, he enters into the Lord's rest . . . "Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest" (Heb. 4:11a).

Another important passage in the Book of Hebrews is found in the Seventh Chapter. It is included in the following quotation:

That a change of law occurred at the revelation of the grace of God by Jesus Christ, is evident: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). This was the law of the succession of the priesthood from father to son in the tribe of Levi; but our Lord being of the tribe of Judah and having no successor, "because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Heb. 7:24), and He was not subject to death, for He rose again from the grave: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25).³⁴

While throughout the Book of Hebrews the emphasis is on the New Testament principle of resting in the Lord as compared to the Old Testa-

³³Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 294. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

³⁴Cowan, op. cit., p. 291. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

ment day of rest, the book is not without concern for a definite time of worship and fellowship among the Christians. In fact in the Tenth Chapter is found a clear admonishment concerning the assembling together as a group of believers:

The major question with many is not, Which is the true day for the Sabbath, but, How should it be kept? This applies to the Lord's Day, considered as a Sabbath, or a day of rest from labor and for the worship of God. Are there laws for its observance in the Bible or elsewhere? One biblical passage, which is in the form of an exhortation rather than a legal precept, is commonly recognized as a rule for Christian conduct on Sunday, or any other day on which meetings for worship are to be held: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Heb. 10:25). Without common consent for public meetings, and liberty for such meetings, the observance of the Lord's Day, or Sabbath, would fall into neglect, and it is an unwritten law among Christians, therefore, that they shall meet for the worship of their Lord on the Lord's Day.³⁵

And so it is that Christians are not given commandments of a legal nature concerning a day of worship or of how any such days should be observed. There is nothing of this nature in all of the New Testament. This is as it was meant to be in God's revelation. For the observance of the Lord's Day was to be an outworking of "the law written in hearts" of the New Covenant, rather than a slavish bowing to a precept of written law. It is clear that God expected the Christians to assemble together and here included an admonishment concerning a lack of this. But nowhere is there a demand for this, and

³⁵ Ibid., p. 313.

here lies a basic difference between law and grace. The law is demanding with penalties for failure to comply. Grace expects something of the person in response for what God has done through His love and grace. Thus the person who loves Christ as their personal Saviour has a personal reason for assembling with others of like faith. He has an inward purpose for sharing this fellowship, and also an inward enablement to please God in so doing, because he is giving of himself in worship of the risen Christ who makes that person righteous before God. "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread . . ." (Acts 20:7). This observance of the first day of the week is in keeping with the example of the risen Christ when He appeared to His disciples on the first day of the week and broke bread with them. Thus they continued to observe the breaking of bread as Christ had done when He admonished the disciples to "do this in remembrance of me." Today this observance of the Lord's Supper is practiced to commemorate the death of Christ, and the observance of the Lord's Day is practiced to commemorate the resurrection of Christ.

The Lord's Day. The Book of Revelation:

I John . . . was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet saying, What thou seest, write in a book . . . (Rev. 1:9-11).

This passage contains the term, "the Lord's day." This is the only place in the Scriptures that it is found:

The Greek in the above passage is *κυριακὴ ἡμέρα* -- kuriake hemera, the Lord's day. Kuriake is the adjective form of *κύριος* -- kurios, the noun--and occurs but twice in the Greek New Testament. It is found in Revelation 1:10, and in I Corinthians 11:20. In the last text Paul is speaking of the "Lord's Supper." If this word kuriake means the Lord Jesus Christ, as it certainly does in the last passage, it must mean the same in the former.³⁶

Cowan states the following concerning the Lord's Day:

The Lord's Day is so called because of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead on that day. It was the day on which Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, Salome, Joanna and other women came to the sepulcher with spices and ointments to anoint the body of the Lord, and found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher, which was empty, except for the discarded graveclothes and the watching angels. And the angels said to the women, "Ye seek Jesus, which was crucified, He is not here: for he is risen, as he said."³⁷

This one use of the term would have little meaning apart from the testimony of history concerning the use and understanding of this term in the early church. This will be considered more fully in the chapter entitled: "A HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE DAY OF WORSHIP." But it should be pointed out here that the term "Lord's Day" was the very one used universally by the early church from the very beginning to designate the first day of the week, or the Resurrection Day, as the day for Christian worship. So its use in the Scriptures in the Book of Revelation, written about A.D. 90-95, is signif-

³⁶Beardsley, op. cit., p. 91. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

³⁷Cowan, op. cit., p. 98. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

icant, for it reflects the common usage and understanding of this term in that time. "No deity of the heathen, no leader of men, has ever been honored with such a day But the Church on the Lord's Day has always worshipped her Lord Jesus Christ."³⁸

The next section of this Third Chapter will indicate the many events which took place on the first day of the week, from the resurrection of Christ through the remainder of the time period covered by the New Testament. It is seen that the use of the first day, rather than the seventh day, is highly significant in any consideration of a Day of Worship. It also reveals a clean break in the early church, as recorded in the New Testament, from the demands of the law for observance of the seventh day. Some continued to observe the seventh day, but were regarded as "weaker brethren,"³⁹ but the Scriptural demands for observance of any particular day, first or seventh, are nowhere to be found. The break from the demands of the law, including the seventh day Sabbath, is very clear throughout the New Testament, as has already been shown in this paper:

The manner in which the first day of the week should be observed is clearly indicated by the very name which is given to it in the Scriptures. Being the Lord's Day, it is to be lived

³⁸G. S. Gray, Eight Studies of the Lord's Day, p. 40, as quoted in Cowan, ibid., p. 112.

³⁹Justin Martyr, "Dialogue with Trypho," The Ante-Nicene Fathers, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), I, 218.

in that manner which will most honor and glorify the Lord. Whatever enters into the present relationship between the believer and his Lord, such as prayer, joyful worship, and service, will naturally characterize the observance of the day. Particular care should be exercised that no element of a Jewish sabbath be incorporated into the manner of the keeping of the Lord's day. Not only does such an intrusion create confusion in the mind as to the meaning and purpose of the day, but it is a co-mingling of the elements of law and grace, and this, it is certain, is not according to the mind of God. The two days are similar only in one respect: they both sustain the ratio of one particular day in seven. There is not the slightest reason for any combination of their respective features. Should this exhortation to watchfulness lest these days be confused seem to be extreme, it should be remembered that only thus can a believer stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, and not be entangled again in a yoke of bondage. Only thus can he be saved from violating the most precious aspect of his own relation to God under grace, and from disregarding the most vital injunctions of those Scriptures which condition his life under grace. Christians have been saved from the curse of the law by the death of Christ (Gal. 3:13). This marvelous deliverance has cost the sacrifice of the Son of God, and it cannot be an unimportant issue in the mind of God. The believer who would really keep the day in conformity to the revealed will of his Lord, should duly consider the fact that every aspect of the sabbath observance is purely legal, and related only to law, and that Christ has died to save from any complicity with the law. The observance of the Lord's day as recorded in the New Testament, is free from every relationship to the Jewish sabbath.⁴⁰

Along these lines, it is interesting to note the way the Old Testament ends compared to the closing of the New Testament. The Old Testament closes with a demand to keep the law of Moses (Mal. 4:4-6).

⁴⁰Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 282. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

Then a prophecy concerning the coming Messiah is given, the one whom shall "turn the heart" (Verse 6) . . . "lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

The last word of the Old Testament is "curse." Cursel This closes the book of the old covenant of the law to Israel. In this one word, "curse," the Holy Spirit sums up the ministry of the law--to condemn the sinner and teach him that he cannot be saved by the works of the law. But see the contrast in the way the New Testament closes. The dispensation of law ends in a curse--the dispensation of the grace of God through Jesus Christ ends as follows:

"He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen" (Rev. 22:20,21).⁴¹

The Resurrection Manifestations

A striking fact looms up as one reads the record of the early church as given in the Scriptures. This is the fact of frequent use of the first day of the week for the important events which molded the church in its formative days and years. This use of the first day begins immediately upon the resurrection of Christ, for on that very "first day of the week" Jesus made at least four significant appearances as the Risen Saviour:

EVENTS ON THE FIRST DAY. The first day of the week gains further significance when we note the important events that occurred upon it. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ has been mentioned. It was on the first day of the week that the Lord opened the Scriptures to the disciples going to Emmaus; it was on the first day of the week that Christ appeared to His disciples after His res-

⁴¹De Haan, op. cit., p. 75. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

urrection; it was on the first day of the week that the blessed Holy Spirit descended to abide with and in the Church; it was on the first day of the week that the Lord saved three thousand souls through the preaching of the Spirit-filled Peter; it was on the first day of the week that the disciples were wont to come together to break bread; it was on the first day of the week that the matchless and glorious revelation of Jesus Christ was given to John on the isle of Patmos. When we note how little we read of the first day of the week in the records of the Lord's earthly ministry and yet how much it comes into prominence after the death of Christ, are we not persuaded that this day is for the believer looking back at the cross as an accomplished fact?⁴²

Resurrection and appearances. That the resurrection of Christ was on the first day of the week is beyond dispute, as indicated by all four of the Gospels (Matt. 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18). Then all of the recorded appearances of the risen Christ in Judaea were also on the first day of the week. There is not one mention of an appearance of Christ on a seventh day of the week. This is certainly significant in considering the importance of observing of a Day of Worship. Jesus appeared first to the women, following the resurrection, on the first day of the week (Matt. 28:9,10; Mark 16:9; John 20:14-18). Then following this He began a series of appearances to the disciples:

Until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen: to whom he also showed Himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God (Acts 1:2,3).

⁴²Feinberg, op. cit., p. 32.

Of the Apostles, Paul records that the Risen Christ first appeared to Cephas, or Peter. This was on that resurrection day, before he had appeared to the rest of the disciples . . . "and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve" (I Cor. 15:5).⁴³ On "that very day" (Luke 24:13) Jesus appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-15; Mark 16:12). Then:

When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you (John 20:19).

This was the first appearance to the disciples as a group, and is clearly recorded as being on the same day as the resurrection (Mark 16:14-18; Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23). This makes in all four appearances on that same day as His resurrection, which was on the first day of the week. If the appearance to the women is divided into two appearances, one to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9-11; John 20:14-18) and one to the two Marys together (Matt. 28:1,8-10) this would make five appearances on the same day as the resurrection.

"And after eight days again his disciples were within, and

⁴³The word "twelve" here does not denote a specific number, but the "group of twelve" Apostles, as they are referred to throughout the New Testament. Actually, neither Judas nor Thomas was with the group at the first appearing to them in the upper room (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25).

Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you" (John 20:26). This second appearance to the disciples as they were assembled is recorded in John 20:26-29. This was one week later, also on the first day of the week, by the Jewish manner of reckoning of days. Many also include the ascension of Christ among the first-day events.⁴⁴ The ascension is recorded in the Scriptures in: Mark 16:19,20; Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:6-11.

There are four other appearances mentioned in the Scriptures.

The day of these appearances is not indicated in the Scriptures. They are as follows:

1. To the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias - John 21:1-23. The only clue given as to the time of this appearance is found in Verse Fourteen: "This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after that he was risen from the dead." This is one of two recorded appearances in Galilee.
2. To the disciples on the appointed mountain in Galilee - Matt. 28:16-20. Here is recorded the giving of the Great Commission. This is the second recorded appearance in Galilee.
3. To over 500 brethren at once - I Cor. 15:6. This could have been one and the same with one of the other Galilean appearances. It is thought by many to be at the time of His ascension. Beardsley states: "I believe, with many others, that the great gathering in Galilee, where over five hundred were present, was held on the first day of the Jewish week, though I can not prove it; neither can I prove that it was not."⁴⁵

It is clear that at least five of the resurrection appearances of

⁴⁴Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 274; and Chafer, Major Bible Themes, op. cit., p. 227.

⁴⁵Beardsley, op. cit., p. 102.

Christ were on the first day of the week. It is completely possible that as many as seven of these appearances, or even all of them, were on the first day of the week. At any rate, not one of them is recorded as being on a seventh day. This is especially significant when other New Testament events are found to be on the first day, following the resurrection of Christ.

Events that followed. Three events recorded in the Scriptures help to give understanding of how the first day of the week, or the Lord's Day, was observed. The first of these is recorded in the Book of Acts:

And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we tarried seven days. And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight (Acts 20:6,7).

Here is seen the practice of breaking of bread together on this particular first day of the week. Jesus had done this with His disciples during at least one of His resurrection appearances on a first day of the week. In this passage it is presented as something which they did as a regular thing: "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread . . ." (Acts 20:7a). That this was a regular practice of the early church is also attested to by histories and writings of those days, such as this from the Teachings of the Twelve Apostles: "And on the Lord's day . . . come together and break bread and give thanks

after confessing your transgressions."⁴⁶

More will be presented on this in the chapter entitled "A HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE DAY OF WORSHIP." A second event of importance is recorded in First Corinthians:

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come (I Cor. 16:1, 2).

Buswell furnishes the following observation:

That the Christians regarded the first day of the week as the appropriate day for Christian assembly is evident from New Testament usage. Paul arranged for churches to observe the first day of the week as the time for Christian assembly, for he writes to the church at Corinth, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Cor. 16:1,2). These words could hardly be understood without the assumption that there was a regular assembly on the first day.⁴⁷

Like the breaking of bread, the collections or offerings also had become a regular part of Lord's Day worship. This continued throughout the years of the early church, as recorded by historians and writers of those days.

Justin Martyr, writing in A.D. 140-165, states:

WEEKLY WORSHIP OF THE CHRISTIANS. And we after-

⁴⁶William F. Craies, "Sunday," The Encyclopedia Britannica (eleventh edition; Cambridge, England: University Press, 1911), XXVI, 94.

⁴⁷Buswell, op. cit., p. 370.

wards continually remind each other of these things. And the wealthy among us help the needy; and we always keep together; and for all things wherewith we are supplied, we bless the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Ghost. And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things, Then we all rise together and pray, and as we said before, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well to do, and willing, gives what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the orphans and widows, and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need. But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead.⁴⁸

The third event is the one in which the term "Lord's Day" is introduced, Scripturally. It is recorded in the Book of Revelation:

I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, What thou seest, write in a book . . . (Rev. 1:9-11).

⁴⁸Justin Martyr, "The First Apology of Justin," The Ante-Nicene Fathers, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), I, 185.

This reveals the nature of the worship of the Apostle John on that island in the Aegean Sea. Whether he was alone or not is not stated, but it appears that he was, for no others are mentioned. He was in the spirit. The Scriptures admonish the Christian to walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25) and to pray in the Spirit (Jude 20). John was doing this. It could be said that he was worshipping "in the spirit" when he received the wonderful revelation which is recorded in the Book of Revelation. This is an important principle for worship, that it be done in the Spirit. This is the only way that a person can really commune with God, and "worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). If John was in the Spirit on that Lord's Day, it behooves Christians of every age to worship in the Spirit on every Lord's Day.

Easter and Pentecost. Two other events of great historical importance should be given special consideration in a study such as this. These are the days of Easter and Pentecost, which are still observed by the Christian church everywhere. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, in discussing the Feasts of Israel, Pentecost did fall on the first day of the week, "the morrow after the sabbath" (Lev. 23:15-21). So it is highly significant that God chose to pour out His Spirit in such an unusual way in the inauguration of the Christian church, not on a seventh day, but on the first day of the week. This adds to the list of important events which took place on the first day of the week following the resurrection of Christ.

It was arranged in the great scheme of human redemp-

tion that Pentecost always came on the first day of the week. This was not accidental. It was God's plan to have it come on the day of our Lord's resurrection.⁴⁹

The other event, Easter, which is the annual holiday which commemorates the resurrection of Christ, is not mentioned as such in the Scriptures, except where *πάσχα* (pascha) is translated as Easter rather than as Passover, in Acts 12:4, in some translations:

The purpose of Easter was the annual celebration of the resurrection of Christ, but the date was considered from different points of view by the Jewish and Gentile Christians, the former associating the event with the time of the Passover, Nisan 14, and celebrating Easter on the proper day of the month, as they considered it, without reference to the day of the week. But the Gentile Christians, who had no interest in the Jewish feast, knowing that the resurrection occurred on the first day of the week, not only commemorated it weekly by their assemblies for worship, but observed the annual celebration also on Sunday. The former custom prevailed in Palestine, Syria and other parts of the East, where the Jews abounded, and the latter in the West, where the church was composed mainly of Gentiles. The adherents of the Jewish custom were called by their opponents, Quartodecimans, that is, Fourteeners, because of their observance of Easter on the fourteenth day of Nisan; and the controversy over the matter, which persisted for about one hundred years, is referred to as the Quartodeciman controversy.⁵⁰

It is interesting to note that in all of the controversy over the proper date for Easter, that there was no controversy in the early church over the weekly day of worship. This is true even in the councils, such as the Nicene Council, where legislation was enacted concerning a day of

⁴⁹Beardsley, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁵⁰Cowan, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

worship:

The Council of Nice merely settled the question of the proper time for the celebration of Easter, whether on the 14th of Nisan, regardless of the day of the week, or on Sunday, the day of Christ's resurrection, and decided in favor of Sunday. It recognized Sunday as the regular weekly day of Christian assembly and worship. The Sabbath did not enter into the council's discussions and actions.⁵¹

The two significant points here are that the Lord's day was so well recognized as the Christian day of worship and that the Council did choose the Lord's Day as the proper time for the observance of Easter. This showed a definite desire to make the break with the law clean concerning even the relation between a Christian day and a Jewish feast which foreshadowed it. This is significant because actually the Passover was fulfilled in a person, the Lord Jesus Christ, and not in a day . . . "For our pass-over also hath been sacrificed, even Christ" (I Cor. 5:7). Therefore the connecting of Easter with a Jewish feast in any way tended to obscure the personal fulfillment of the Jewish Passover in Christ. Easter, on the other hand, apart from its Jewish counterpart, commemorates clearly the resurrection of Christ, and is naturally more easily understood when observed on the day of the resurrection, the first day of the week.

The Resurrection Life

This New Testament study has revealed that the New Testament

⁵¹Ibid., p. 206.

concept of Sabbath is very different from that of the Old Testament. It was seen that this New Testament concept centers around the principle of a life lived which is resting in Christ and His saving grace. This is in contrast to a day observed because of the demands of the law. This New Testament concept could well be summed up in the words of Jesus to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die . . ."
(John 11:25,26).

Christ the day star. "And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts" (II Pet. 1:19). The Old Testament had predicted the "Sun of righteousness" (Malachi 4:2). This was fulfilled in Christ "the dayspring from on high" (Luke 1:78) who "Shall visit us, To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death; To guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:78b, 79). Christ is the light of the world, the light of the "children of light, and children of the day" (I Thess. 5:5). Therefore the Christian must walk in the light of Christ and not in the shadow of the law. This even helps to determine the bounds of a Day of Worship. Under the law the Sabbath was to be from sunset to sunset. But Christ arose early on the first day of the week. The Sabbath now stands only for the day of His entombment in death. Therefore the Lord's Day should begin in the morning, even as the thing

which it commemorates took place in the morning:

The first Lord's day was the pattern of all the Lord's days that should follow. It began "very early in the morning," when the risen Lord said, "All Hail" (lit. rejoice)! It continued with His precious fellowship, and closed with His benediction of peace. From that early morning to its close it was a day of worship, activity, and joy. The sabbath, on the other hand, with no less symbolic significance, began with the setting sun, which spoke of complete cessation of activity, and of perfect rest.⁵²

Christ our circumcision. Note the following Scripture passage:

In whom we were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead (Col. 2: 11,12).

The circumcision "not made with hands"! What a picture this is of the difference between the Old and the New Covenant. Circumcision was the outward mark or sign of a Jew under the law (Gen. 17:10-14). This in one sense pre-figured the baptism of the believer as a sign or testimony of their faith in Christ.

Thus with this new relationship there is no need of the shadows which pre-figured the real . . . "where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11).

⁵²Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 271.

The believer is also said to be "circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." Therefore, since the flesh, the one thing the law proposed to control, is, in the sight of God, put away, there is no need of the law. The Jewish child was circumcised on the eighth day, which was the first day of a new week following the passing of a completed week. The circumcision on the eighth day, or first day of a new week, typified the deliverance from the old creation which would be accomplished for believers through the resurrection of Christ from the dead; for in that death He bore all the curse of the old creation. For this reason the believer under grace is not called upon to celebrate any aspect of the old creation, which was represented by the sabbath (Col. 2:11). The one who is saved has been "buried with him in baptism, wherein (the baptism) also ye are risen with him through faith of the operation of God (his own faith in God's power), who hath raised him from the dead."⁵³

Christ's new creation. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). The New Testament principle of the new birth (John 1:12,13; 3:1-8) is clearly described as a new creation in Christ. The full text of the above passage would include the context of the verses just previous to it, as well:

But God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus: for by grace have ye been saved through

⁵³Ibid., p. 258.

faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:4-10).

Here is clear statement of the New Testament principle of grace.

"For by grace have ye been saved through faith. . . not of yourselves . . . not of works . . . For we are his workmanship . . ." (Eph. 2:8-10). "It is the gift of God" . . . "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 2:8 and Rom. 6:23).

There is no room for pride in any of this, for it is:

Not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour (Titus 3:5,6).

There is also no room for the law in this new creation in Christ . . ."For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17):

When Christ arose from the dead, Christianity was born, and the new creation was brough into existence. There is nothing in the old order for the believer. He stands on resurrection ground. He belongs only to the new creation. God is faithful to all that He has wrought in Christ and He, according to His Word, will not suffer the child of the new creation to go back and celebrate the beginning of the old and fallen creation from which His child has been saved through infinite riches of grace. If the children of grace persist in relating themselves to the old creation by the observance of the sabbath, it is evidence of their limitations in the knowledge of the Word and will of God; it is to fall

from grace (Gal. 5:4).⁵⁴

The new creation is expressed also in other passages, such as the following: "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). Here again is the picture of a man remade by Christ . . . "created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Eph. 4:24).

But what does all this have to do with the Day of Worship? It is to help bring an understanding of the true Scriptural view of the believer's relation to the law. This involves his relation to the Sabbath as a day of worship; and on the other side of the coin it involves his relationship to the risen Christ as his personal Saviour and Lord. What will most honor this risen Christ, in connection with a Day of Worship? Certainly observing the Sabbath on a seventh day would be a denial of rather than an honoring of, the risen Christ and His power of redemption. But a sincere, Spirit-led worship of the Lord on the Lord's day is in full recognition and testimony of the resurrection of Christ, which wrought victory over death for Him, and therefore for those that believe in Him:

As God's rest on the seventh day of the creation week proclaimed a finished creation, and the cessation of manna on the seventh day from its first appearance signified a complete provision for a nation's need of food, so the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ on the first day of the week proclaimed a finished redemption and a full provision of the Bread of Life

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 273.

for all hungry souls, making that day truly one to be kept
holy unto the Lord.⁵⁵

IV. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Jesus was born a Jew, thus lived under the law during His earthly ministry (Gal. 4:4). He is identified as the virgin-born child of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20-23). He is also identified as the Christ or Messiah, the Son of God (John 4:25, 26; 20:30, 31). It is recorded concerning Him: "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). He taught that He did not come to destroy, but to fulfill the law (Matt. 5:17, 18). He quoted or touched upon the other of the Ten Commandments, yet He never quoted or made reference to the Fourth Commandment. He gave no commandment concerning the Sabbath, but did give teaching concerning the basic principles underlying Sabbath, as summarized here:

1. That He, the Son of man, is lord of the sabbath--
Matt. 12:8.
2. The sabbath was made for man, not man for the
sabbath - Mark 2:27.
3. It is proper to do good on the sabbath, even when
it involves labor - Luke 6:9, 10.

By His teachings and examples, Jesus indicated that the Sabbath was to be adapted to the highest spiritual needs of man.

⁵⁵ Cowan, op. cit., p. 308.

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, replacing the Jewish Passover. In so doing, He related His death and the blood to be shed in this death to the New Testament or New Covenant (Luke 22:20). The Passover sacrifice was therefore personally fulfilled by Christ in His death on the cross (I Cor. 5:7). He had predicted His own death and resurrection, and this was fulfilled as He was crucified and arose on the first day of the week.

The Apostle Paul, in his Epistles, makes it clear that the believer is not under the law, but under grace (Rom. 6:14). He taught that the law could not justify or save (Gal. 3:11), and that the ministry of the law is one of death and condemnation, bringing only a curse upon man (I Cor. 15:56; Gal. 3:10). But Christ has redeemed the believer from this curse of the law by His death on the cross (Col. 2:13,14). Therefore Paul was concerned because the Galatians were returning to the bondage to the law and observing days and seasons and years (Gal. 4:9-11). He warns them that by doing such as this they are ". . . severed from Christ . . . fallen away from grace . . ." (Gal. 5:2-4).

Paul also taught that the believer was not to be judged according to the elements of the law, including the Sabbath, which he includes as one of the things which were "a shadow of things to come" (Col. 2:16,17). This passage is the only mention of the term Sabbath in all of Paul's Epistles. Concerning a Day of Worship, he taught mutual respect, or that a particular day should not be imposed on anyone, Jew or Gentile, by any legal demands,

but "let each man be fully assured in his own mind" (Rom. 14:5). Also that whatever day is observed, it should be done "unto the Lord" (Rom. 14:6).

The nature of the New Covenant is explained in the Book of Hebrews, where Christ is described as the priest or mediator of this new covenant (Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). Because of the change in priesthood, "there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). The first council of the early church is recorded in the Fifteenth Chapter of Acts. It was called because of the question of law-keeping, yet the Sabbath was neither mentioned nor deemed necessary (Acts 15:10,11,19,20). The seventh day Sabbath foreshadowed the eternal rest in God through Christ, described as "a sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb. 4:8-11). The early Christians began worshipping on the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10) because of the emphasis Christ placed upon this day in His resurrection and appearances, and because of the example of the Apostles (Acts 20:6,7; I Cor. 16:1,2). The seventh day Sabbath represented the old creation of the world (Ex. 20:11) while the Lord's Day represents the new creation in Christ made possible by His resurrection (II Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10; 4:24).

CHAPTER IV

A BIBLICAL STUDY OF LAW AND GRACE

Probably the greatest contrast in the Word of God is that which exists between law and grace, yet it is the one that is least understood and most often confused.¹

This quotation points out the purpose for this chapter. It is not a thorough study of the topic of law and grace. It is a brief study intended to bring out some principles which underly the question concerning the Day of Worship which were not considered in the previous chapters. This chapter is divided into three main divisions, plus a summary, as follows:

- I. UNDER THE OLD COVENANT
- II. UNDER THE NEW COVENANT
- III. THE DAY OF WORSHIP

The latter of these deals specifically with the Day of Worship as understood in the light of the principles of law as compared to grace.

I. UNDER THE OLD COVENANT

It would not be practical to call this division "Under the Old Testament" because it is the New Testament which gives the full light on the purpose and place of the law of the Old Testament. The complete picture

¹Charles L. Feinberg, The Sabbath and the Lord's Day (New York: American Board of Missions to the Jews, [n.d.]), p. 2.

which shows the contrast between the principles of law and of grace is only seen as the New Testament revelation is unfolded.

Because this is not a thorough study of the topic of law and grace, it is suggested that if the reader desires to pursue this topic further, the following two books be used:

1. Grace, by Lewis Sperry Chafer. This is a very thorough and valuable book on the topic of law and grace, and stands as a classic work in this field.²

2. Law or Grace, by M. R. De Haan. This is a new book, published in 1965. It is extremely helpful and readable, containing some of the excellent illustrations which Dr. De Haan was noted for.³

Two small booklets are also very useful in this area. They are The Sabbath and the Lord's Day, by Charles L. Feinberg, and What Was the Sabbath and What Is the First Day of the Week by Charles Stanley. The bibliographical information for these is found in the Bibliography.

The law a covenant of human works. Everything about the law pointed to works that needed to be done to satisfy the demands of that law. This was true concerning the Sabbath, as a portion of the law.

Many in their zeal to keep the Sabbath forget that it is not an isolated factor in a religious code, but is an integral part of a legal system. The infringement of this law in any particular meant the penalty of death. In Numbers 15:32-36 we read of the incident where a man who gathered sticks on

²Lewis Sperry Chafer, Grace (Moody Press, Chicago, 1943).

³M. R. De Haan, Law or Grace (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965).

the Sabbath was stoned to death. This would have been the penalty for one lighting a fire on the Sabbath.⁴

The Sabbath is in the same category as the committing of adultery, which is prohibited by the Seventh Commandment. For the penalty of death was prescribed for this, also (Deut. 22:22-27):

The sabbath was inter-related with the law, just as it is embodied in the heart of the Decalogue. The exact manner of its observance is revealed only in the teachings of Moses, and since the law was a covenant of human works, the sabbath was the divine provision for rest under that covenant.⁵

The works were the acts of doing what the law demanded. In relation to the Sabbath, this meant many ceremonial duties as well as the observance of the day itself. There were sacrifices and offerings, and many special duties of the people as well as the priests. These were all prescribed by the law, with rigid penalties for failure to carry them out. The Scriptures made no distinction between the "works" of keeping the day, not working on it, and the other "works" of offering the sacrifices and other duties of the Sabbath. The death penalty was given for profaning the Sabbath (Ex. 31:14). It was given for doing "any work" on the Sabbath (Ex. 31:15; 35:2; Num. 15:32-36). It was given for using unleavened bread on the Passover, also called a Sabbath of Israel (Ex. 12:15,19). It was given for failure to "afflict the soul" on the Day of Atonement, another special

⁴Feinberg, op. cit., p. 20.

⁵Chafer, op. cit., p. 253.

Sabbath of Israel (Lev. 23:29). So it is clear that the death penalty was for the ceremonial "works" of the law as well. Today some attempt to distinguish between the "moral law" and the "ceremonial law." The Scriptures reveal no such distinction, for they are all "works" done to meet the demands of the same law.

Can modern Gentile Sabbath-keepers evade this issue and declare their innocence before the law? They do make a distinction between what is called the "moral law" and the "ceremonial law." Suffice it to say that the Scripture knows of no such distinction.⁶

The law a covenant of definite time. "According to the unmistakable testimony of Scripture the law (by which we mean the Mosaic system of statutes, ordinances, and commandments) had a definite beginning in point of time and also a definite termination."⁷ "What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise had been made . . ." (Gal. 3:19). This is one of many passages which could be used, in both the Old and New Testaments to show the clear Scriptural teaching concerning when and how the law began and when it would end, and why. This passage is very clear. Paul asks a question, "What then is the law?" and follows it with the answer:

Notice the three things which are clearly stated in this answer of Paul, "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come," Notice these three parts of the answer:

⁶Feinberg, loc. cit.

⁷Ibid., p. 3.

1. The beginning of the law--it was added--added, of course, to something which must have existed before.
2. The end of the law--it was added till the seed should come. The law had not only a beginning but its ministry was until the seed should come.
3. The purpose of the law--It was added because of transgressions. Literally we may read this, "in order to reveal sin as a transgression." Before the law was given, there was no transgression of the law. There was sin and there was rebellion, but it was not a transgression of the law which had yet been given. Clearly and plainly Paul asserts in Romans 4:15, "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression" (Romans 4:15).⁸

The transgression was evident from the fall of man in Eden all through the rest of his history. "And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). The rebelliousness and murmurings of the children of Israel as they reached Sinai is also recorded throughout the Scriptures. So God added the law to His oral revelation, making it binding on the Israelites to whom it was given. He also included in this law the penalties for failure to meet the demands that the law made. This law had a definite point of termination:

Paul tells us in Galatians that the law "was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." (Gal. 3:19). The seed is explained to us when the Scripture states: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but

⁸De Haan, op. cit., pp. 22-22. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." (Gal. 3:16). The termination of the law, then, occurred with the death of Christ on Calvary.⁹

The Apostle Paul also provides another look at the law in this same Third Chapter of his Epistle to the Galatians. It shows another purpose of the law, and also indicates the same termination of the law:

But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor (Gal. 3:23-25).

The Greek word translated as "tutor" here is translated in the Authorized Version as "schoolmaster." The Greek word is the word *παιδαγωγός* (paidagogos), which means literally a "child-trainer." The law was child-training the children of Israel by showing them their sinfulness, that they might see their need of a Saviour. All through the law were found predictions of Christ, the Messiah of Israel. The shadows of the law, which included the Sabbaths, all pointed ahead to the substance, which is Christ (Col. 2:16,17). Then when Christ came, even Israel was no longer under the child-trainer . . . "But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor" (Gal. 3:25). The next verse continues, as Paul addresses the Galatian believers: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26):

Israel then was kept under the law until Christ should come, and then the law ceased to exercise its power and

⁹Feinberg, op. cit., p. 4.

authority over those who believe. The true believer in Christ in this dispensation is not under the law as a paidagogos or taskmaster, but is a son of God under grace. The believer has graduated and is now ready to go to work. School is out for the Christian. The son now takes his place in his Father's business, and does joyfully and gladly and eagerly that which he was commanded to do under the law with its threatenings and penalties. After faith is come, says Paul, we (Jews) are no longer under the schoolmaster.¹⁰

If Israel is no longer under the law, and the Gentiles never were under the law, then who in the world would still be under the law? The Scriptures make it clear that

The Law as an active force has ceased to exist, because the death of Christ fulfilled all the requirements of the law. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. 10:4).¹¹

This is not to say that the law is without any ministry, for it always maintains its ministry of death. But it has ceased as a means of justification for the believer . . . "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4). This leads right into the next section, entitled, "The law a covenant of death in sin."

The law a covenant of death in sin. Everything about the law had the taste of death for sinful man. Even when the law was being given, the people were forbidden to touch the mountain of Sinai. Boundaries were to

¹⁰De Haan, op. cit., p. 97. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

¹¹Feinberg, loc. cit.

be set, and God spoke to Moses: "Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death" (Ex. 19:12). The death penalty was the punishment for failure to meet the demands of many portions of the law. But deeper than this, spiritual death and eternal punishment in separation from God was the destiny of sinful man. And the Scriptures teach that . . . "All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23): "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned" (Rom. 5:12. "and . . . sin, when it is fulgown, bringeth forth death (James 1:15b).

Other Scriptures show the ministry of the law in relation to sin and death . . . "The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law" (I Cor. 15:56). Sin deals the death-sting. The law exposes, defines and imputes sin . . . "For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). The law puts the spotlight on sin and gives sin the power or strength of being a transgression of the written law of God. Thus the law serves as cross-examiner, judge and executioner, speaking in legal terms. Paul illustrates this in his own life in a graphic way, seeing himself as one once condemned in sin:

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet: but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting: for apart from the law sin is dead . . . So that the law is holy, and the commandment

is holy, and righteous, and good. Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shown to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good; --that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful (Rom. 7:7, 8, 12, 13).

Here is seen the ministry of death that the law has. This is seen in the words of Paul as he compares this ministry of death and condemnation to the glorious ministry of righteousness in Christ:

But if the ministration of death, written, and engraven on stones, came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look stedfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face; which glory was passing away: how shall not rather the ministration of the spirit be with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation hath glory, much rather doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory (II Cor. 3:7-9).

The ministry of grace, or that of righteousness in Christ, is a ministry of life rather than death. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:1, 2). This is possible because Christ died for the sins of man, as the substitute and final sacrifice for all those sins. He became at the time of His death sin and a curse that man might be freed from that sin and that curse, if he would believe in Christ and accept Him in faith. He tasted of death for every man:

But we behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for every man (Heb. 2:9).

This is expressed very simply in another comparison from Paul's Epistle to the Romans: "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

One might say then that all this implies that the law is useless today. Far from it. But it must be made clear that it can only serve as a minister of death, for "no man is justified by the law before God"(Gal. 3:11. Also see: Rom. 3:20 and Gal. 2:16):

For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them. Now that no man is justified by the law before God, is evident: for, The righteous shall live by faith; and the law is not of faith; but, He that doeth them shall live in them. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (Gal. 3:10-14).

The ministry of the law is to the unrighteous only. The believer has appropriated the righteousness of Christ, so that the law has no place in his life. But it has the ministry of death to the unbeliever. It must be kept in mind that the believer is not justified or made righteous by his own works or goodness, for it is only as he has received the grace of God poured out through Christ:

But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by his grace, we

might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:4-7).

The present ministry of the law is summed up in a passage in Paul's letter to Timothy, as follows:

As knowing this, that law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men, for men-stealers, for liars, for false swearers, and if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine (I Tim. 1:9,10).

De Haan observes concerning this passage:

But there is none righteous, so who is it then for? The answer is devastating. It is for sinners, profane, murderers, whoremongers, thieves, liars, and the like. If you are guilty of any of these, you have reason to fear the law, for it condemns you.¹²

As can be seen, the contrasts between the ministries of law and of grace are great. They are also exceedingly important to understand, especially in relation to a study of the Day of Worship. This will also be seen in the next division of this paper, from a somewhat different perspective.

II. UNDER THE NEW COVENANT

While the previous division could not have properly been entitled "Under the Old Testament," this division could just as well be entitled:

¹²De Haan, op. cit., p. 71.

"Under the New Testament." For Christianity, the religion of "grace" is basically a "New Testament" religion. It is unique in comparison to all the other religions of the world:

Christianity stands uniquely alone, distinct and different from all the religions on earth. The major difference lies in the fact that every religion, without exception, is a system of human works, while historic Christianity, as found in the Bible, is a Gospel of divine grace. In the human system of works man is ever attempting to do something to satisfy the righteous demands of a holy God and thereby save himself. In the divine Gospel of grace, God in Christ has done all to save man. He who fails to see this distinction is in error.¹³

The New Testament introduces new terms, such as: Law of Faith, Law of Christ, Law of Love, Law of Life and Law of Liberty. These are placed in contrast to, rather than aligned with, the Jewish law of the Old Testament. This is indicated as this study continues. This division of Chapter Four is divided into three sections, as follows: The Law of Faith; The Law of Love; and The Law of Liberty:

The law of faith. "Where is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay; but by a law of faith. We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law" (Rom. 3:27,28). Here the Old Testament law is the law of works, and is contrasted with the "law of faith." This is explained further in another of Paul's Epistles: "Now that no man is justified by the law before God, is

¹³Ibid., p. 5.

evident: for, The righteous shall live by faith; and the law is not of faith; but He that doeth them shall live in them" (Gal. 3:11,12). It is also stated that, "Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4). The law has ceased as having any active part in justifying any-one. It is ended for the believer. Paul makes this clearer, perhaps, in this passage:

For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. I do not make void the grace of God: for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought (Gal. 2:19,20).

Here the words of Paul should humble even the proudest heart . . .

"the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me." Christ did actually suffer unjust accusation and the agonies of death for each one as an individual . . . "and gave himself up for me." Thus when one believes in Christ and receives Him into their lives, they appropriate in faith individually that which Christ did in person for every man.

As a result the believer today is "free from the law" (Rom. 8:2); "delivered from the law" (Rom. 7:6); and "dead to the law" (Gal. 2:19). The law is not dead, but we are dead to the law. The law is very much alive. It is still the expression of God's perfect holiness and judgment upon the sinner, But for the believer the penalty has been borne by Christ, and now we serve the Lord, not out of fear of judgment and punishment, but because of love for our Saviour and for such a great salvation.¹⁴

¹⁴Ibid., p. 35.

De Haan later adds:

Dead to the law! What a startling, amazing statement, "dead to the law." Paul does not say the law is dead. Far be it from Paul to claim the law is dead. Full well he knew its power over him before his conversion. The law is very much alive today in cursing and condemning sin and threatening judgment to the transgressor. The law is still the ministry of wrath upon the sinner. All-inclusive are the words of Ephesians 5:6, "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things (the sins mentioned in the previous verse) cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph. 5:6).¹⁵

But there certainly has been a great change in the law, or perhaps it would be better to say that there has been a change in that to which one's allegiance should be given. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). This change is seen as one observes the change in the institutions of the law, such as the eating of meats, circumcision, the seventh day Sabbath, and the Passover. Sometimes it is overlooked that these changes did not come by commandment, but by example and Scriptural teaching:

Our authority for the change from the institutions of the old dispensation to those of the new does not come so much by the explicit commands of the apostles as by their examples. We have Christ's distinct command to be baptized, but neither His nor His apostles' command to discontinue circumcision. Yet the apostles taught that circumcision was not necessary to salvation, and under that principle it ceased. We have no command from either Christ or apostles to cease the observance of the Passover. Christ gave command to His apostles to observe the Lord's

¹⁵Ibid., p. 87.

Supper; but He did not give that command to all believers nor did His apostles. We infer the duty and privilege of all Christians to observe it from the example of administering it to all Christians of their time, which indicates their understanding of Christ's original command to observe it. In such things apostolic example is equal to command. We have no inspired command to cease offering sacrifices; but from the principles set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and from the example of the apostles, and of the Christians under their instructions, in finally omitting sacrifices altogether, we conclude that it would be wrong in us to offer sacrifices as under the old dispensation. By parity of reasoning, if the first day takes the place of the seventh, we shall not find a command to cease observing the seventh, and shall find inspired example [*italics in the original*] in keeping the first day, rather than distinct command to keep it.¹⁶

A good illustration of this principle is found in the change from the law's demand concerning forbidding the eating of certain meats. Paul speaks to Timothy concerning those that would depart from the faith in the "later times," forbidding to marry:

. . . and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer (I Tim. 4:3-5).

The next verse continues: "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed until now" (I Tim. 4:6). Here Timothy is admonished to teach these things, not

¹⁶Horace G. Cowan, The Sabbath in Scripture and History (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1948), p. 295.

to demand them. No commandments as such are involved in any of this, and yet it is observed as Paul taught it among the vast majority of Christians today.

The law could not justify or save the sinner. It never could do that, and certainly cannot now be given the power to do so by those who would want to grant this authority to the law:

Yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Gal. 2:16).

It is clear that it is the Grace of God that saves: "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph. 2:8,9). It is also this relationship of grace through faith which keeps a person, as Paul testifies in this passage: ". . . I know him whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12). This is made clearer in another passage:

And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouable before him: if so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; whereof I Paul was made a minister (Col. 1:21-23).

Where is there anything here concerning works or the keeping of the law? It just is not found as a demand in either the saving of a person or of the assurance that a believer has if he continues in this relationship of

faith. God expects works of the believer, but they are never demanded of him, as the law would place demands on people. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

"But if it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11:6). There are multitudes of sincere believers who imagine that we are saved by grace, but then after we are saved we must be kept saved by our perfect behaviour and observing the law of God without one transgression. But this nullifies the whole blessing of salvation, for who are they who can say that they continuously and uninterruptedly live a perfect sinless life in full obedience to God's law, even after they are saved? Is there a day in your life when you can say, "This day I have not sinned in thought or word or deed. I have lived in perfect obedience, doing everything which God has commanded and have not come short of any of the law's requirements, and perfect demands of holiness"?¹⁷

The law of love. In the Gospel of John are recorded these words of Jesus:

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you (John 15:11,12).

Here Jesus is obviously not speaking about the Ten Commandments or any portion of the Old Testament law. In fact He identifies His commandment. . .

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another." In the First Epistle

¹⁷De Haan, op. cit., p. 126.

of John these words are recorded:

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God; and whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he gave us commandment (I John 3:21-23).

Again, there is no reference here to the Mosaic law or any part of it as law. He refers again to the principle of love, which is found in the law, but states it as Christ's commandment. This is amplified in the incident where the Pharisees attempted to trip Jesus up with a question: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" His answer was clear:

And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets (Matt. 22:34-40).

Here Jesus is quoting from the Old Testament Scriptures (Deut. 6:4 and Lev. 19:18). But He does not call this "law" as such. In fact, He clearly states that upon these two commandments the whole law is upheld. He did not quote any of the Ten Commandments, and He did not say, "I'll give you the death penalty if you don't love your neighbor." He elevated the principle of love of God and of one's fellow man to the highest level of truth, and claimed that all of the Old Testament teaching, of both the law and the prophets, is upheld by it.

Paul's Epistles continue this theme set forth by Christ. In his

Epistle to the Romans one reads:

Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law (Rom. 13:8-10).

"Love, then is the fulfilling of the law; the more love, the less law: and the less love, the more law is needed. All the requirements of the law are met where love rules and controls."¹⁸ In his Epistle to the Galatians, Paul amplifies on this principle of love:

For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (Gal. 5:13,14).

Just a few verses later Paul states:

Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. 6:1,2).

What a contrast is seen between these admonitions and the demands of the law!! What a contrast is seen between the demanding letter of the law and the principle of love that was underneath all of it!! What a contrast is seen between the way of law and the way of grace!!

The believer is under a new law given to us by the Lord

¹⁸Ibid., p. 134.

Jesus Himself. It is indeed called the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2). It is the law of love in contrast to the law of commandments. Paul says in Galatians 2:19, "I am dead to the law, that I might live unto God."¹⁹

James adds these words to those of the Apostle Paul: "Howbeit if ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well" (James 2:8). Concerning the fulfillment of the law, Paul adds these words:

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Rom. 8:3,4).

This principle of the fulfillment of the law in us is summed up in the following statement by Dr. De Haan:

Fulfilled in us! It does not say by us. Our failure to do this has been proven by God's holy law. This the law was unable to do! Before we were saved we were condemned, having come short of God's righteousness; and He, seeing our lost condition, made a way by which we might be counted righteous in the eyes of the law. This is an imputed righteousness provided by the Lord Jesus Christ. He died to pay the penalty of the law; then He arose to take His own righteousness and clothe the believer with it. The penalty for sin is paid, and now because we are in Christ, God looks upon the believer as righteous, complete and perfect. We are justified. He accepts what Christ has done for us, and reckons it to our account, and now as He sees us in Christ, we are, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of

¹⁹Ibid., p. 131. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

his grace" (Eph. 1:6,7).²⁰

The law of liberty. "But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing" (James 1:25):

We might go on to show that while we are delivered from the law of commandments given by Moses, we are not left without law; we are not lawless, but are placed under another higher, more glorious law--the law of love, called also the "perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25).²¹

This "law of liberty" is also mentioned in James 2:12: ". . . judged by a law of liberty."

These are definitely New Testament principles. A man is saved to serve. This service neither saves nor keeps him. But it is expected of the saved individual, and God promises a blessing for this service. Paul states this principle of liberty or freedom to serve in this way: "And being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:18). This freedom is a work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer . . . "Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Cor. 3:17). Or, as Paul states in another place: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). But the Scriptures provide teaching to check any

²⁰Ibid., p. 110. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original] .

²¹Ibid., p. 132.

tendency to abuse this freedom. Paul states: "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not" (I Cor. 10:23):

"I am not under the law," says Paul. "All things are lawful for me." Four times in this one epistle he makes that statement--"All things are lawful to me." Paul says, "As far as the law is concerned, I am free." Now don't misunderstand this statement. Paul was not free to do as he pleased, but he was free to please God! The law of love has no limitations. It does more than the law of commandments ever required.²²

The Scriptures reveal a dual concern in possible misuse of the liberty under grace. One is the concern lest they become ensnared again in the demands of the law:

For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage . . . Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:1,4).

The other concern is that this liberty be misused for the gratification of the flesh: "For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another" (Gal. 5:13). Paul states this also: "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak" (I Cor. 8:9). The whole Fourteenth Chapter of Romans is devoted to teaching concerning the believer not permitting anything, even his own doctrine, to

²²Ibid., p. 149.

become a stumblingblock to someone else. This should humble the careless Christian, or the arrogant Christian, or the legalistic Christian, or any Christian who is not carefully "walking in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:24-26).

III. THE DAY OF WORSHIP

The distinction between the reign of law and the reign of grace is at no point more sharply drawn than in the question of the observance of the seventh day of the week or the first day of the week; for those two days are symbolic of the dispensations to which they are related. Likewise, at no point is personal religious prejudice, which is born of early training and sentiment, more assertive than on the sabbath question.²³

So this third division of Chapter Four focuses in specifically on the Day of Worship.

The absence of a commandment. There is a danger in trying to make the Lord's Day a counterpart of the seventh day Sabbath for this age or dispensation. The two days are totally unrelated, for they stem from different sources and have different purposes, entirely, each representing the age or dispensation for which they were intended:

These two days, typical of two opposing governing principles and two great dispensations, are absolutely unrelated. Of the whole Decalogue, it is the sabbath-day commandment only which is not [italics in the original] carried forward in any manner whatsoever into the reign of grace, nor could it be. Failure to base the distinction between these age-representing days upon the essential character of their

²³Chafer, op. cit., p. 244.

respective relationships--pure law and pure grace--is resulting in an almost universal confusion of mind on the subject among Christians, and this, in turn, provides the opportunity for present-day legalists to promote their Christ-rejecting heresies.²⁴

A careful Scriptural study of the Ten Commandments and the related teaching throughout the rest of the Scriptures reveals some very important things. One of these was brought out in the quotation above. This is that the Fourth Commandment is the only one not carried over in any positive admonition or instruction in the New Testament. All of the others, without exception, are affirmed by quotation or confirming teaching concerning them. But one finds nothing like this on the Fourth Commandment in the New Testament. In fact, the opposite is true, for there are admonitions against observing days and seasons and years as prescribed by the law. The Fourth Commandment is dealt with in an entirely different way than the others throughout the New Testament. When lists of commandments are quoted, it is never included among them. All the others of the Ten Commandments are affirmed in some definite way, but there is not one New Testament affirmation of the Fourth Commandment:

Every moral principle contained in the ten commandments has been reiterated under grace by the Spirit in the form of an exhortation with the single exception, mirabile dictu, of the commandment to keep the Sabbath. The commandment to have but one God is reiterated in Paul's statement: "There is one God" (I Tim. 2:5). The second

²⁴Ibid., p. 245.

commandment is found in the exhortation: "Neither be ye idolators" (I Cor. 10:7); the third: "But above all things, my brethren, swear not" (James 5:12); the fourth is nowhere in the New Testament; the fifth: "Honor thy father and mother" (Eph. 6:2); the sixth: "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (I John 3:15); the seventh: "whore-mongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4); the eighth: "Let him that stole steal no more" (Eph. 4:28); the ninth: "Lie not one to another" (Col. 3:9); the tenth: "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you" (Eph. 5:3). Does it not show the perversion of thinking of some men that they should lay most stress on the fourth commandment when it is totally done away by God?²⁵

Many more Scriptures could be added to those listed for each of the commandments in the above quotation. Dr. Rowell states how many references there are to the duties of each of the commandments, as given in the following quotation:

While the duty or sin covered by each of the OTHER NINE COMMANDMENTS is directly named many times in the New Testament, WHY IS IT that the DUTY TO KEEP THE SEVENTH DAY is not once mentioned? The duty of man to worship the Lord God only, as taught in the first Commandment, is found no less than fifty times in the New Testament; Idolatry, as in the second Commandment, is condemned twelve times; Profanity, the third, condemned four times; Honour thy father and mother, the fifth, is taught six times; Murder, the sixth, is condemned six times; Adultery, the seventh, is condemned twelve times; Theft, the eighth, is condemned six times; False Witness, the ninth, is condemned four times; and Covetousness, the tenth, is condemned nine times.²⁶

²⁵Feinberg, *op. cit.*, p. 27. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

²⁶J. B. Rowell, Seventh-Day Adventism Examined (Susanville, Calif.: Challenge Publishing Company, 1952), p. 42.

Thus the New Testament reveals a marked contrast in the treatment of the Fourth Commandment and that of all of the other nine. There are certainly reasons for this difference. First, the Sabbath, along with the sacrifices and offerings connected with it, were types or "shadows" of the later fulfillment in Christ (Col. 2:18). Secondly, the seventh day Sabbath was for a specific people only, the children of Israel (Deut. 4:44,45; 5:1-3,6; Rom. 3:19; 6:14). Third, it was for a definite age or dispensation, that of the law (Jer. 31,32; Gal. 3:19,23-25). Fourth, the Sabbath was for a definite purpose as a sign for Israel (Ex. 31:12-17; Ezek. 20:12); which was replaced by the sign or ensign for all nations, Jesus Christ.²⁷

There is, therefore, no place for the seventh day Sabbath in the age of grace. Jesus did, however, teach the principles underlying the Sabbath, and He gives instructions for worship. But not once is the duty of keeping the Sabbath taught in the New Testament. But there is certainly very clear admonition against observing of days and seasons and years as set forth in the law (Gal. 4:9-11). Also, there is instruction against being judged concerning a Sabbath or new moon or feast day (Col. 2:16). John Calvin, in his comments on the Fourth Commandment, observes the typical nature of that commandment:

But as this commandment stands in peculiar circumstances apart from the others, the mode of exposition must

²⁷Vide, Isa. 5:26; 7:14; 11:10; 18:3; Matt. 1:18-23; Luke 2:29-34.

be somewhat different. Early Christian writers are wont to call it typical, as containing the external observance of a day which was abolished with the other types on the advent of Christ. This is indeed true; but it leaves the half of the matter untouched. Wherefore, we must look deeper for our exposition.²⁸

The absence of any commandments. It is highly significant that There is not a trace of written command concerning the keeping of the Lord's Day, as well as the seventh day, in the New Testament. There is plenty of emphasis on the first day of the week in the resurrection ministry of Christ. And the Apostolic examples of the observance of the first day of the week for worship are recorded in the Scriptures as well as in history. But there is no written commandment concerning the observance of the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, in the New Testament:

Since it is all of grace, a written requirement for the keeping of the Lord's day is not imposed, nor is the manner of its observance prescribed. By this wise provision, none are encouraged to keep the day as a mere duty; it is to be kept from the heart. Israel stood before God as immature children under tutors and governors and needing the commandments which are given to a child (Gal. 4:1-11); while the Church stands before God as adult sons. Their life under grace is clearly defined, but it is presented only as the beseechings of God with the expectation that all shall be done willingly (Eph. 4:1-3; Rom. 12:1,2). There is little question as to how a well-instructed, Spirit-filled believer (and the Scripture presupposes a normal Christian to be such) will be occupied on the day which commemorates Christ's resurrection and the new Creation. If perchance the child of God is not

²⁸John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. Henry Beveridge (London: James Clarke & Co., 1953), I, 339.

yielded to God, no un-willing observance of a day will correct his carnal heart nor would such observance be pleasing to God. The issue between God and the carnal Christian is not one of outward actions, but of a yielded life.²⁹

The emphasis placed on the first day of the week stands out in the resurrection ministry of Christ and in the practice of the early church:

Beginning with the resurrection, and following it, every event recorded in the New Testament which had important religious significance fell on the first day of the week, or the Lord's day. No greater emphasis through events could be given to this new day than that found in the teachings of grace, and, added to this, is the fact that in these same Scriptures the sabbath day is wholly set aside. If it be claimed that there is no direct commandment for the keeping of the Lord's day, it should be observed that there is explicit command against the observance of the sabbath day, and that the lack of commandments concerning the Lord's day is both in accordance with the character of the new day, and the entire order of grace which it represents and to which it is related.³⁰

There is little doubt that the Lord's Day is cradled in the liberty of the age of grace, even as the Sabbath was cradled in the demands of the Decalogue. Someone has said that the Lord's Day, therefore, is not so much an institution, but an inspiration! This is perhaps very close to the truth. At any rate, the incentive for observance of the two days is totally different. For the incentive for the observance of the Sabbath was to satisfy the law, while the incentive for worshipping on Sunday is out of an inward

²⁹Lewis Sperry Chafer, Major Bible Themes (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Assn., 1937), p. 229.

³⁰Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 272. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

desire to honor the risen Christ.

The absence of legal demands. Certainly the lack of definite commandments concerning the observation of the Lord's day is significant, as has already been mentioned. And the importance of the examples of Christ and His Apostles is also to be taken into consideration concerning worship, and especially concerning a Day of Worship. This has already been considered. But consider also the nature of the Apostle John's worship on the Lord's Day on the island of Patmos. It is recorded that, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The importance of worshipping in the Spirit cannot be over-emphasized, for it is the key to Lord's Day worship as God intended for it to be: This is a primary principle of worship in the age of grace, for "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). The two verses previous to this one indicate that God seeks those who will worship Him, as true worshippers, in spirit and in truth. Notice that there is no legal demand for this, but the holy seeking of God for such to worship Him:

Thus the Old Testament fixes the Sabbath day as a time of worship and communion with God. It is a cessation of labor, whether of the body or the mind, in order to permit time for spiritual things. Our Lord gives us in the New Testament, two principles also, which parallel the twofold aspect of the Sabbath as found in the Old Testament. The first has reference to the holiness of the day, God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Here the true inwardness of the Sabbath is seen--a spiritual rest of the soul, from which flows that worship which is in Spirit and truth. The second, concerns man's interests, And he said

unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27,28). Here it is clearly taught, that those things which pertain to man's highest welfare, that is, his spiritual interests, are to be permitted on the sabbath day; and this is a true and sure test as to the kind and extent of secular labor on the Sabbath day.³¹

Yes, the worshipping of God in spirit and in truth is the highest form of worship that man can enter into. The grace of God enables one to enter into this kind of worship. Legal demands in the form of commandments would actually be a hindrance to this free spirit of worship. It is a high privilege to worship in such a manner, unhampered by the meticulous demands of the law, or any commandments, for that matter:

The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Between law and grace there is the difference between a command and privilege; the former requires that an act be performed under penalty for disobedience: the latter is a right freely given and entered into with confidence in and gratitude to the giver. The Sabbath under the law was guarded by the penalty of stoning for violation; the Lord's Day under grace offers the privilege of rest from labor, which the believer in Christ gratefully receives, and of the opportunity for worship, a token of a higher rest for the soul through faith in Christ alone. And that the Lord's Day thus kept is truly a Sabbath unto the Lord, who rose from the dead on that day, as well as a cessation from labor of body and mind, and a refreshment of spirit in the worship of the Lord, is the accepted faith of all who are saved by grace, whose joyous testimony is:

"How sweet a Sabbath thus to spend,

³¹H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1953), III, 150. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

In hope of one that ne'er shall end."³²

IV. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Scriptures present the Sabbath as an integral part of a legal system, and not an isolated idea. No distinction is made between the moral and the ceremonial in the law in its demands for obedience. The death penalty is given for violations of either area of the law.

The Mosaic law had a definite point of beginning and termination. (Gal. 3:19). It was added because of transgression and would then continue in force until "the seed" or Christ would come (Gal. 3:16). More specifically, the law was in force until the death of Christ, when it was ended as a demanding force for the believer (Rom. 10:4; Col. 2:14).

Christianity is unique in comparison to all of the other religions of the world. For it is a Gospel of grace rather than a system of works, as all of the others are. It is the only one that offers a Saviour for forgiveness of the sins of man.

The New Testament introduces such terms as : Law of Christ; Law of Liberty and Law of Love. These are seen in contrast to the law of condemnation and death of the Old Testament. The Law of Liberty (James 1:25; 2:12) is the principle of being free through the Holy Spirit and truth

³²Cowan, op. cit., p. 297. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

(John 8:32; Rom. 8:2; II Cor. 3:17), and therefore free to serve God (Rom. 6:18; Gal. 5:13). This freedom is not to be misused for self or lust (I Cor. 8:9; 10:23; Gal. 5:15). It must be guarded so that one will not become entangled again in bondage to the law (Gal. 5:1-4). The Christian is not to live by the old law of carnal commandments, but by the Law of Love, as commanded by Christ (John 15:11,12). This has nothing to do with any of the Old Testament law, but with one's relationship to Christ (I John 3:21-23). Christ taught that the principle of love for God and love for one's fellow man undergirds all of the law (Matt. 22:34-40). The New Testament teaches that love is the fulfillment of all the law.³³ It is fulfilled in us, not by us (Rom. 8:3,4). That is, it is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which fulfills the law, not our own works or goodness or obedience (Rom. 5:5).

The Fourth Commandment is the only one of the Ten Commandments not carried over into the New Testament either by quotation or by any positive admonition concerning its duties. This New Testament de-emphasis is significant, and is in sharp contrast to the emphasis given to the Fourth Commandment by modern Sabbatarians. This contrast is greatly reinforced by the New Testament admonitions against the observing of days and seasons and years, as prescribed by the law.

³³Vide, Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:13,14; 6:1,2; James 2:8.

Legal demands concerning any day of worship are simply not found in the New Testament. The worship of God under grace is a privilege rather than a duty to satisfy the law. Thus the Christian observes the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, not because of any written command to do so, but out of love for, and an inward desire to honor, the risen Saviour. As John was "in the spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10), so each Christian should worship God in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24) on each Lord's Day.

CHAPTER V

A HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE DAY OF WORSHIP

Probably no question in all the range of practical theology is more muddled in the popular mind than is the sabbath question. On this subject, as on many others, it sometimes happens that men speak with ardor and assurance in proportion to their prejudices and their lack of knowledge.¹

There is certainly much truth to this statement. This compels the one who really wants to know the full truth of the matter to seek earnestly and honestly before stating dogmatic opinions. The history of the Sabbath is a muddled record, as it has been presented by certain writers merely to defend their views. But the true history of the Sabbath, while presenting some minor uncertainties, is far from a muddled record. This chapter is a summary of the history of the Day of Worship, which includes a history of the Sabbath. It is divided into three main divisions, plus a Summary, as given here:

- I. THE OLD TESTAMENT PERIOD
- II. THE EARLY CHURCH PERIOD
- III. THE LATER CHURCH PERIOD

The scope of each of these periods will be explained in the introduction to each of these divisions.

¹J. J. Taylor, The Sabbatic Question (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1914), p. 5 [Forward].

I. THE OLD TESTAMENT PERIOD

Much of this period was covered in the "Old Testament Study."

But even in that study reference was made to areas which were not specifically covered in the Scriptures. These are areas of history such as the Sabbath before Moses and the Inter-Testament Period. These will be included in their proper place in this division of Chapter Five.

The two theories. As one reads the literature on the history of the Sabbath, two main views stand out in relation to the pre-Mosaic Sabbath. These are indicated by Chafer:

The Period from Adam to Moses. Two theories obtain concerning the question of sabbath observance during this period. There are those who contend that the sabbath was committed to man in Eden, and there are those who contend that the sabbath was given to Israel only, at the hand of Moses.²

The statements of both of these views are presented here. First, Crafts represents those that hold to a pre-Mosaic Sabbath. He states as follows: "Recent archaeological discoveries in Assyria, China and elsewhere bring us new materials for the argument from Pagan traditions for the division of time by weeks and Sabbaths at the very beginning of human history."³

²Lewis Sperry Chafer, Grace (Chicago: Moody Press, 1943), p. 247. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

³Wilbur F. Crafts, Sabbath for Man (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), p. 1.

The Encyclopedia Britannica records the following:

THE BABYLONIAN AND ASSYRIAN SABBATH. --The Babylonian calendars contain explicit directions for the observance of abstention from certain secular acts on certain days which forms a close parallel to the Jewish Sabbatical rules.⁴

Secondly, there are those that feel that the giving of the Sabbath to Israel at Sinai was the introduction of it to all mankind:

Period from Adam to Moses. It is recorded that God rested at the close of His six creative days (Gen. 2:2,3; Exod. 20:10,11; Heb. 4:4); but there is no intimation in the Word of God that man was appointed to observe, or even did observe, a sabbath until Israel came out of Egypt. The Book of Job discloses the religious life and experience of the patriarchs, and though their various responsibilities to God are therein discussed, there is never a reference to a sabbath-day obligation. On the other hand, it is distinctly stated that the giving of the sabbath to Israel by the hand of Moses was the beginning of sabbath observance among men (Exod. 16:29; Neh. 9:10-12; Ezek. 20:12).⁵

One of the early church fathers, Justin Martyr, in his "Dialogue with Trypho," gives some light here. He states in a chapter entitled:

CIRCUMCISION UNKNOWN BEFORE ABRAHAM. THE LAW WAS GIVEN BY MOSES ON ACCOUNT OF THE HARDNESS OF THEIR HEARTS: ". . .

Moreover, all those righteous men already mentioned, though they kept no

⁴William R. Smith and Stanley A. Cook, "Sabbath," The Encyclopedia Britannica (eleventh edition; Cambridge, England: University Press, 1911), XXIII, 961.

⁵Lewis Sperry Chafer, Major Bible Themes (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1937), p. 219. [Underscoring used to indicate italics in the original].

Sabbaths, were pleasing to God" ⁶ This implies no Sabbath, at least as a religious institution, before the time of Moses.

Statements and arguments can be piled on top of these. But it seems that after all of them are considered, one does not yet know for certain which is right. This statement from The Jewish Encyclopedia sums it up rather well: "The origin of the Sabbath, as well as the true meaning of the name, is uncertain." ⁷ It does seem clear that the term Sabbath was understood and used prior to its use in the law:

The word "Sabbath" was in use from 500 to 700 years among the Accadians, Hindus, and others before Moses first used in the Bible. With them "Sabbath" meant the legally-appointed rest-day. These rest-days were sometimes 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 days apart. So when Moses brings that word into the Bible, he explains its Biblical length by saying "Sabbath day" or "Sabbath year." ⁸

It is also clear that the seventh day Sabbath of the Law, as an institution, was not known until the time of Moses. This was considered in the Old Testament Study where the instance of the manna and the Sabbath, as recorded in Exodus, Chapter Sixteen, was discussed. There it was pointed out that any previously existing Sabbath was not necessarily before their own

⁶Justin Martyr, "Dialogue with Trypho," The Ante-Nicene Fathers, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), I, 204.

⁷Julius H. Greenstone, "Sabbath," The Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1905), X, 590.

⁸Samuel Walter Gamble, Sunday, the True Sabbath of God (Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye, 1900), p. 75.

generation. It would have been before the giving of the law at Sinai, but yet under Moses, as he led them southward to Mt. Sinai. Therefore it is certainly proper to refer to the Sabbath of the Old Testament law as "Mosaic" in its origin.

The Sabbath was instituted, then, at Sinai, under Moses. And it was instituted by God for purposes which were clearly stated in the law. Besides the weekly Sabbath, there were the other Sabbaths, the feasts and special years prescribed by the law. Together these made up the calendar for Israel:

ISRAEL'S CALENDAR OF SACRED SEASONS. God's provision of a set calendar for Israel's year was calculated to keep the nation occupied with God. It is obvious that by the time all observances were kept there would be little time left for the people to attend the carnivals of foreigners. But the calendar had more than a negative purpose. These events were a constant reminder of religious truth and of God's providence in Israel's history. They were designed to keep her conscious of her high destiny in the world. The system of sabbaths--weekly, yearly, and every fiftieth year--had bound up in it a provision for a normal balance of work and rest, and of secular and holy. These sabbaths served as periodic breaks in undesirable trends toward worldliness, monopoly, and slavery. The history of nations reveals that something is needed periodically to keep the social order from being taken over by certain persons and classes who were born to places of advantage, and to provide release for others whose very lives are threatened with slavery.⁹

The new sects. The "Old Testament Study" covered the time

⁹Loyal R. Ringenberg, The Word of God in History (Butler, Indiana: The Higley Press, 1953), p. 89.

through the return from the Babylonian captivity under Ezra and Nehemiah. It was mentioned that the Sabbaths had been renewed after the reading of the law to the Jews at the time of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Following this time of the return from captivity, as recorded in the Scriptures, there is a 400-year period of history not covered specifically anywhere in the Scriptures, either Old or New Testament. It is commonly called the Inter-Testament Period. It is of importance for this study because of the significance of developments during this time which shaped the Sabbath observance of the Jews at the time of the coming of Christ. Many customs and practices developed which Jesus had to deal with all during His earthly ministry. Many persons and movements were behind all of these. Perhaps the most significant ones of these were the three sects which arose during the Inter-Testament Period. These were the Essenes, the Scribes, and the Pharisees.

The Essenes were an ascetic group that were extremely pious and strict. Their observance of the law was extremely legalistic and slavishly loyal. Josephus tells of how they would not even prepare their own place for a toilet on the Sabbath, but always had it dug in advance:

Moreover, they are stricter than any other of the Jews in resting from their labours on the seventh day for they not only get their food ready the day before, that they may not be obliged to kindle a fire on that day, but they will not remove any vessel out of its place, nor go to stool thereon. Nay, on other days they dig a small pit, a foot deep, with a paddle (which kind of hatchet is given them when they are first admitted among them); and covering themselves round with a garment, that they may not affront the Divine rays of light, they ease themselves into that pit, after which they

put the earth that was dug out again into the pit.¹⁰

The scribes were the copyists of the Scriptures. But they also were interpreters of the law of the Scriptures, and because of this became the authority on matters of the Jewish law. They developed a complex system of rules in order to administer the law as they felt it should be done. This proved to be an extremely legalistic approach which robbed the law of its intended purpose:

The "Words of the Scribes," now used as a technical phrase for these decisions, were honored above the law. The first step was taken toward annulling the commandments of God for the sake of their own traditions. The casuistry became at once subtle and prurient, evading the plainest duties, tampering with conscience (Matt. 15:1-6; 23:16-23).¹¹

This system of verbal rules and legalistic decisions included in great detail the observance of the Sabbath. So it is no wonder that Jesus had to deal severely with the religious leaders of His day on their misuse of the Sabbath. For the "traditions of the elders" which were in force in His day grew out of the "words of the Scribes" and other such legalistic rules and regulations.

The Pharisees were the elite of the Jewish religious leaders.

¹⁰Flavius Josephus, "Wars of the Jews," The Works of Flavius Josephus, trans. William Whiston (Philadelphia: The John Winston Co., n.d.), p. 675.

¹¹Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (New York: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1903), p. 100.

They were wealthy and influential. They adopted the "traditions of the elders" as their manner of interpreting and administering the law. The Sabbath was deeply involved in their way of doing:

At the same time the Jewish Sabbath was hedged around by many national and ceremonial restrictions, which were not intended to be permanent, but were gradually made so prominent as to overshadow its great moral aim, and to make man sub-servient to the sabbath instead of the sabbath to man. After the exile and in the hands of the Pharisees it became a legal bondage rather than a privilege and benediction.¹²

The extremes to which the Sabbath was enslaved by legalistic bondage to rules and ceremonies is seen by the way Sabbaths were observed even during battle and during sieges:

One of the most unwise precepts of the scribes and disastrous in its effects, was that which forbade the bearing of arms and fighting, whether in offensive or defensive warfare on the Sabbath. To wield weapons in battle would involve the bearing of burdens unlawful on the Sabbath, and activity inconsistent with Sabbath rest, and, perchance, the traveling of more than the limited Sabbath day's journey.¹³

This rigid view of the Sabbath proved disastrous on many occasions. In the war for liberty against the Greek King Antiochus Epiphanes, of Antioch, at least a thousand Jews of all ages and sexes had hidden in caves in the wilderness. When they refused to come out on the Sabbath and fight for their freedom and their lives, they were slaughtered unmercifully. One

¹²Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1887), I, 477.

¹³Horace G. Cowan, The Sabbath in Scripture and History (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1948), p. 85.

aggressive group of the Jews, the Maccabees, saw that this could lead to the end of the Jewish nation, and used their leadership influence to encourage the people to fight in self-defense on the Sabbath. They could see nothing in the law to prohibit this. So the Jews did fight courageously in defense on the Sabbath, but still refused to wage any offensive warfare on the Sabbath. Pompey took advantage of this in the siege of Jerusalem in 63 B.C. He set to work on the Sabbaths erecting huge towers and other tools and engines of war to use the next days. For he knew that he would have no opposition on the Sabbath. He would never attack the city on the Sabbath, for the Jews would then fight in defense, but put his men to work preparing for the attack on the next day. Josephus records that even though Pompey took the city and slaughtered hundreds of the people, he did admire the Jews' religious fortitude:

Now here it was that, upon the many hardships which the Romans underwent, Pompey could not but admire not only at the other instances of the Jew's fortitude, but especially that they did not at all intermit their religious services, even when they were encompassed with darts on all sides; for, as if the city were in full peace, their daily sacrifices and purifications, and every branch of their religious worship, was still performed to God with the utmost exactness. Nor indeed when the temple was actually taken, and they were every day slain about the altar, did they leave off the instances of their Divine worship that were appointed by their law.¹⁴

Josephus records how the priests kept on with their sacrifices,

¹⁴Josephus, op. cit., p. 618.

even when they were being smitten with swords. All this would seem very commendable except for a very revealing background to it all. Josephus and other historians tell of what corruption there was among these priests and religious leaders of the Jews, including immorality of all sorts. So the outward allegiance to the law was just that, and not really a heartfelt devotion to God. If they had been that steadfast in real devotion to God, no doubt He would have intervened for them. But actually, they were carrying out His law in the letter and not in the spirit, and underneath were, as Jesus called them, "whited sepulchres." Agrippa saw their hypocrisy and spoke against them in a speech, as Josephus records, warning them of the need to change, or be destroyed. He asks: "How can you call upon God to assist you, when you are voluntarily transgressing against his religion?"¹⁵ What a commentary on the days leading up to the time of the coming of Christ.

The new rules. Rules were added to rules concerning the Sabbath, until they became a burden to one and all:

In Palestine the approach of the Sabbath was announced by six trumpet blasts, with an interval after each blast, to give workers a succession of warnings to cease from their labors (Orah Hayyim, 256; "Yad," l.c. V. 18 et seq.).¹⁶

This must have all been very dramatic. But behind the drama was the tragedy of it all. The trumpet blasts were to be used to announce the assemblies and

¹⁵Ibid., p. 692.

¹⁶Greenstone, op. cit., p. 595.

the special days and feast of Israel (Lev. 23:24; Num. 10:1-10). But now they were actually solemn warning of unbearable Sabbath restrictions for the Jews. For the Scribes had added to the law their "words" and the Pharisees had added to these, until it had become a hodge podge of legalistic demands which robbed the Sabbath of its intended purpose and beauty. Some of these Sabbath Day Rules are very interesting, and are mentioned here as recorded in The Jewish Encyclopedia:

1. Water Limitation: Only so much water might be poured out on the Sabbath as four ells square of ground would absorb ('Er. I. 2; IV. 1, 5; X. 4, 5). How these four ells should be measured is also a matter of serious inquiry ('Er. IV. 5, 6).
2. Noise Limitation: The Puritan character of the rabbinical Sabbath is shown in the aversion, deducible from some laws, to loud noises (Instance Simeon ben Yohai's reproof of his mother for loud talking), clapping of hands, striking with a hammer, trumpet-calls, and music (Löw, l. c. II. 355).
3. Death Penalty: The penalty for intentional violation by work is excision ("karet"); if there were witnesses to the act and the legal warning ("hatra'ah") had been given, the penalty was stoning." They had taken the death penalty prescribed by the law and abused it, applying it at the desire of the priests for whatever they felt was "work" on the Sabbath.
4. Motive Determines: The motive, however, is decisive in cases where one act was intended and another of different scope is accidentally performed. Where two men perform one piece of work (e.g., carry a beam) in common, but each alone does less than would render him liable, and it is within the power of either to do it alone, both are exempt. But where the work exceeds the strength of each alone, and it is necessary to do it together, both are guilty. Work which destroys merely ("mekalkel") does not entail a penalty; but destruction preliminary to building is forbidden.¹⁷

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 592-594.

These rules were relaxed, to a certain extent, when there was serious illness or childbirth, so the Scribes must have had a little heart to them!!

But whenever there was danger to life, or where a Jewish woman was in the throes of childbirth, the Sabbath law was set aside (Shab. XVIII. 3). In the case of one dangerously sick, whatever was ordered by a competent physician might be done regardless of the Sabbath; but it had to be done by pious and prominent Jews, not by non-Jews ("Yad," 1. c II. 1-3).¹⁸

One wonders how a Gentile servant woman whose lot it was to give birth on a Sabbath might fare under these rigid restrictions. Perhaps the Scribes told them to wait until after the Sabbath!! This reminds one of the farmer in the Willamette Valley of Oregon who had a large flock of sheep during the war, when things classified as "critical" for the war effort were restricted, and written application had to be made to the "O.P.A.," a government agency, to obtain them. A few weeks before lambing season this farmer had made a request to purchase several large pieces of tarpaulin to make temporary sheds for his sheep while lambing. Soon he received a letter in the mail from an official of the Office of Price Administration reminding him that this canvas was classified as critical, and that he should put off lambing season!!

Some interesting customs also developed with the over-emphasis on details for the Sabbath:

¹⁸Ibid., p. 596.

Change of garments was also deemed essential to a proper observance; white Sabbath garments are mentioned in Shab. 25b. Every person should have at least two sets of garments, one for week-days and another for the Sabbath (Ref. - Yer. Peah 21b).¹⁹

This would seem perfectly natural except that it was made a matter of law, and often the poor could not comply, so were frequently not welcome in the synagogue on the Sabbath. An unusual tradition which developed concerning Sabbath observance is the following:

Two angels, one good, the other evil, accompany every Jew on the Sabbath eve from the synagogue to the house. If the Sabbath lamp is found lighted and the table spread, the good angel prays that this may be the case also of the following Sabbath, and the evil angel is compelled to say "Amen" to this; but if no preparations for the Sabbath are seen, the evil angel pronounces a curse, and the good angel is compelled to say "Amen" (Ref. - Talmud, Shab. 119b).²⁰

It was evident that the details of preparation became of more importance than the worship of the Sabbath. Often because of fear of being unprepared and yet of not daring to miss the Sabbath eve synagogue service on Friday evening, a family would leave one of their members home with the instruction to finish the preparation, but stay away from windows, so no one could see them. Feinberg sums up some of the Talmudic teachings concerning Sabbath Regulations, which had been developed by the Scribes and Pharisees:

That there was a need for the Lord to remind the

¹⁹Ibid., p. 590.

²⁰Ibid., p. 589.

Pharisees that the Sabbath was for man and not vice versa, can be seen from some of their regulations concerning the Sabbath (Seder Mo'ed, Massecheth Sabbath). The Talmud teaches that Rabbi Jehudah said: "If a man stepped into loam, he should wipe his feet on the ground and not on a wall." But Rabha said: "Why should he not do that, because it might be presumed that he plasters the wall and is engaged in building? Nay: this is not ordinary building (but more like field work). On the contrary: If he wipe his feet on the ground he may perchance smoothen out an incavation, hence he should rather wipe his feet on the wall. For the same reason, he should not wipe his feet on the side of an incavation, lest he smoothen it out." The rabbis taught that a small man should not wear a large shoe, lest it fall off and he be compelled to carry it on the Sabbath. He may, however, wear a large shirt, since there is no fear of his taking that off and carrying it. A woman should not go out with a torn shoe on the Sabbath, lest she be laughed at and carry the shoe. She also must not accept Chalitza (Deut. 25: 5-10) in such a shoe; but if she did so, the Chalitza is valid. If a person were in one place, and his hand filled with fruit put forth into another, and the Sabbath overtook him in this position, he would have to drop the fruit, since if he withdrew his full hand from one place to another, he would be carrying a burden on the Sabbath. Women are forbidden to look into a mirror on the Sabbath, because they might discover a white hair and try to pull it out, which act would be a grievous sin. A raddish may be dipped into salt, but not left in too long, since this would be similar to making pickle. If on the Sabbath a wall had fallen on a person, and it were doubtful whether he were under the ruins, whether he were alive or dead, a Jew or Gentile, it would be duty to clear away the rubbish sufficiently to find the body. If the person were not dead, the labor would have to be continued; but if he were dead, nothing further should be done to extricate the body. And we could go on (for this is not even one insignificant part of the Sabbath regulations).²¹

To show how far this legalism was carried, it was actually

²¹Charles L. Feinberg, The Sabbath and the Lord's Day (New York: American Board of Missions to the Jews, [n.d.]), p. 23.

claimed that fulfilling all of these regulations would give merit before God, and sins would be forgiven on account of this: "He who honors the Sabbath with the preparation of delightful things will receive all that his heart desires: his portion will be limitless, and his sins will be forgiven."²²

The synagogue was an institution which developed during the Inter-Testament Period, and soon became universal throughout all of the lands where the Jews inhabited. The form of synagogue service as seen in the New Testament, was developed also during this time. The reading of the law played an important part in the service:

The characteristic feature of the Sabbath-morning service is the Reading from the Law. The taking out of the scroll from the Ark and the replacing of it are usually accompanied by the chanting of various hymns and psalms. After the scroll is replaced the Musaf prayer is recited.²³

The Ark in a synagogue is a small replica of the ark in the tabernacle, as described in the Book of Numbers and Leviticus. In addition to the reading from the law, portions of the Talmud were read, and this included the Rabbinical interpretations of the law and all of the numerous regulations connected with them. These were not the law of the Scriptures, but many sincere Jews could not see the difference. So they dutifully tried to heed all of the "traditions of the elders" and in so doing the real meaning

²²Greenstone, op. cit., p. 602.

²³Ibid., p. 601.

and purpose of the law was obscured. Is it any wonder that Christ had to deal with the Scribes and the Pharisees in the manner that He did?

II. THE EARLY CHURCH PERIOD

Much of this period is covered in the New Testament, so was considered in the "New Testament Study." However, the history of the early centuries of the Christian church is only begun in the Scriptures, and it is very important for a study on the Day of Worship. This division of Chapter Five is divided into three sections: The First Two Centuries; The Next Two Centuries and The Decrees and Councils:

The first two centuries. Perhaps there is nowhere in the whole Sabbath question where facts have been so distorted and covered up by certain groups as in the history of the Day of Worship of the Christian Church in the early centuries of the church. The historians are one in declaring that the Lord's Day or Sunday was the universal day of worship for the Christian church from Apostolic times, as recorded in the New Testament, onward. It was not as universal among the Jewish converts, but even with them it gradually became the accepted day of worship. The only ones claiming anything different from these clear facts of history are the proponants of the seventh day Sabbath of today. It is the purpose of this section of the study to show what actually did take place in those early days and years of the Christian Church. Here is a list of represent-

ative statements from reputable historical sources of information on this period:

1. Jewish Encyclopedia: "Thus while the Petrine partizans continued to assemble for worship on the Sabbath (Acts ii. 1, iii 1, et al.), in non-Jewish Christian circles the first day of the week came to be marked by longer worship than usual and by collection of gifts (I Cor. xvi. 2; comp. Acts xx. 7)." ²⁴

2. Schaff - History: "The Lord's Day took the place of the Jewish Sabbath as the weekly day of public worship. The substance remained, the form was changed. The institution of a periodical weekly day of rest for the body and the soul is rooted in our physical and moral nature, and is as old as man, dating, like marriage, from paradise. This is implied in the profound saying of our Lord: 'The Sabbath is made for man.'" ²⁵

3. Mosheim - History: "The first Christians assembled for the purpose of divine worship, in private houses, in caves, and in vaults, where the dead were buried. Their meetings were on the first day of the week; and, in some places, they assembled also on the seventh, which was celebrated by the Jews." ²⁶

4. Latourette - History: "Already in the second century the chief day of worship and of the celebration of the Eucharist was Sunday, and the reason given was that it was on this first day of the week, 'The Lord's Day,' that Christ had been raised from the dead" ²⁷

5. Catholic Encyclopedia: "Sunday was the first day of the week according to the Jewish method of reckoning, but for Christians it began to take the place of the Jewish Sabbath in Apostolic times as the day set apart for the public and solemn worship of God." ²⁸

²⁴Ibid., p. 603.

²⁵Schaff, loc. cit.

²⁶Johann Lorentz von Mosheim, Church History (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, [n.d.]), I, 68.

²⁷Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953), p. 198.

²⁸T. Slater, "Sunday," The Catholic Encyclopedia, eds., Charles G. Haberman, et al. (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1912), XIV, 335.

6. Encyclopedia Britannica: "There is no evidence that in the earliest years of Christianity there was any formal observance of Sunday as a day of rest or any general cessation of work. But it seems to have from the first been set apart for worship."²⁹

Here it is pointed out that the Lord's Day early became the day of worship for the Christian church. But it could not be set aside as a day of rest because there was no legal provision for this: ". . . it is enough to observe here that this practice is naturally and even necessarily connected with the religious observance of the Lord's day as a day of worship and religious gladness, and is in full accordance with the principles laid down by Jesus in His criticism of the Sabbath of the Scribes. But of course the complete observance of Sunday rest was not generally possible to the early Christians before Christendom obtained civil recognition."³⁰

Many other historical sources could also be quoted. They would merely confirm that which has already been presented here. It is just as the great historian, Philip Schaff says:

The celebration of the Lord's Day in memory of the resurrection of Christ dates undoubtedly from the apostolic age. Nothing short of apostolic precedent can account for the universal religious observance in the churches of the second century. There is no dissenting voice.³¹

In addition to these historical sources, the many writings of the early church fathers bear the same testimony concerning the universal observance of the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, as the Day of Worship of the Christian church. They also affirm that it was observed

²⁹William F. Craies, "Sunday," The Encyclopedia Britannica (eleventh edition; Cambridge, England: University Press, 1911), XXVI, 94.

³⁰Smith and Cook, op. cit., p. 960.

³¹Schaff, op. cit., II, 201.

from Apostolic times onward. They are a primary source of information because their lives were contemporary with the times being considered:

And when the Gentiles became predominant in the Church, through the expansion thereof of the Roman Empire and beyond, the Christian observance of the Sabbath ceased, and the Lord's Day became universally the day of assembly and worship by the followers of Christ. That this was done in honor of the resurrection of Christ from the dead on that day, is the testimony of the fathers from about the beginning of the second century.³²

Many of the writings of the early church fathers have been known since their own time, while others have been more recently discovered, such as those found by the Dead Sea in the 1940's: "Recent discoveries of 'The Teaching of the Apostles' shortens and simplifies the argument for change of Sabbath."³³ Included here are some representative quotations from the numerous writings of the early church fathers:

1. Barnabas - Epistle, A.D. 100: Comments on Isaiah 1:13: "Your new moons and your Sabbaths I can not endure." Ye perceive how he speaks: Your present Sabbaths are not acceptable to me; but that is which I have made; namely, this: when giving rest to all things, I shall make a beginning of the eighth day; that is, a beginning of another world. Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day on which Jesus rose again from the dead."³⁴

2. Ignatius - Ad Magnesians, A.D. 107: "If, then,

³²Cowan, op. cit., p. 170.

³³Crafts, op. cit., p. 1 [Preface].

³⁴Barnabas, "Epistle of Barnabas," The Ante-Nicene Fathers, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), I, 146.

those who were conversant with the ancient Scriptures came to newness of hope, expecting the coming of Christ, let us therefore no longer keep the Sabbath after the Jewish manner, and rejoice in days of idleness; and not eating things prepared the day before, nor using lukewarm drinks, and walking within a prescribed space, nor finding delight in dancing and plaudits which have no sense in them. Let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all days."³⁵

3. Didache or Teachings of the Twelve Apostles - A.D. 120-140: "And on the Lord's day of the Lord (*ΚΑΤΑ ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗΝ ΚΥΠΛΟΥ*) come together and break bread and give thanks after confessing your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure."³⁶

4. Martyr - Dialogue, A.D. 140-165: "But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ, our Saviour, on the same day rose from the dead. For he was crucified on the day before that of Saturn; (Saturday); and on the third day, after that of Saturn, which is the day of the sun, having appeared to his apostles and disciples, he taught them these things which we have submitted to you for your consideration."³⁷

5. Dionysius of Corinth - A.D. 170: Cowan gives the following: "Further witness for the observance of the Lord's Day in the early church is found in a letter of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, to Soter, Bishop of Rome, about A.D. 170, in which he said, 'Today we kept the Lord's holy day, in which we read your letter!'. "³⁸

6. Clement of Alexandria - A.D. 194: Chafer gives the following: "Clement of Alexandria, 194 A.D., says: 'The old

³⁵Ignatius, "Ad Magnesians," The Ante-Nicene Fathers, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), I, 62.

³⁶Craies, op. cit., p. 94.

³⁷Martyr, op. cit., p. 186.

³⁸Cowan, loc. cit.

sabbath day has become nothing more than a working day."39

7. Bardanes, of Edessa, in Syria - A.D. 180: Cowan gives the following: "Bardanes belonged to the sect of the Gnostics, which was then numerous in the East . . . the declaration of Bardanes, their leader, that as Christians they kept the first day of the week, shows that the observance of the Lord's Day was general in the East, as well as in the West, and that among both orthodox Christians and schismatics."40

8. Irenaeus - Against Heresies, A.D. 140-202: Cowan gives the following: "The churches in Gaul, under the superintendence of Irenaeus, agreed upon a synodical epistle to Victor, Bishop of Rome, in which occurred words something to this effect, 'The mystery of the Lord's resurrection may not be celebrated on any other day than the Lord's Day, and on this alone should we observe the breaking of the Paschal fast.'"41

9. Apostolic Constitutions - A.D. 150-200: "Assemble yourselves together every day, morning and evening, singing psalms and praying in the Lord's house. And on the day of our Lord's resurrection, which is the Lord's day, meet more diligently, sending praise to God that made the universe by Jesus, and sent Him to us, and condescended to let Him suffer, and raised Him from the dead. Otherwise what apology will he make to God, who does not assemble on that day to hear the saving word concerning the resurrection, on which we pray thrice standing, in memory of Him?"42

In the reading of these and others of the writings of these early church fathers, it is seen that they all agree in their testimony concerning the observance of the Lord's Day in the early church, beginning in Apostolic times. It is clearly shown that the Lord's Day was not regarded as a

³⁹Chafer, Grace, op. cit., p. 279.

⁴⁰Cowan, op. cit., p. 178.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 177.

⁴²Isaac H. Beardsley, The True Sabbath (Cincinnati: Cranston & Curts, 1892), p. 141.

continuation of, but a definite substitute for the seventh day Sabbath of the law:

The fathers did not regard the Christian Sunday as a continuation of, but as a substitute for, the Jewish Sabbath, and based it not so much on the fourth commandment, and the primitive rest of God in the creation, to which the commandment expressly refers, as upon the resurrection of Christ and the apostolic tradition.⁴³

The next two centuries. This section includes the period of time from approximately A.D. 200 to A.D. 400. This period would include the three councils: Council of Eliberis, A.D. 305; Nicene Council, A.D. 325; and the Council of Laodicea, about A.D. 363. But these councils are important enough that they will be considered separately in the next section of this paper. The writings of the church fathers of this period are just as conclusive as the ones previously quoted, concerning the observance of the Lord's Day by the Christian church:

1. The Teaching of the Apostles - A.D. 200: "The apostles further appointed: On the first day of the week let there be service, and reading of the Holy Scriptures, and the oblation; because on the first day of the week our Lord rose from the place of the dead."⁴⁴

2. Tertullian - Writings, A.D. 202: Schaff gives the following: "Tertullian, at the close of the second and beginning of the third century, views the Lord's day as figurative of rest from sin and typical of man's final rest, and says: 'We have nothing to do with Sabbaths, new moons or the Jewish festivals, much less with those of the heathen. We have our own solemnities, the Lord's Day, for instance, and Pentecost. As the heathen confine themselves to their festivals and do not observe

⁴³Schaff, op. cit., p. 202. ⁴⁴Beardsley, op. cit., p. 143.

ours, let us confine ourselves to ours, and not meddle with those belonging to them.' He thought it wrong to fast on the Lord's Day, or to pray kneeling during its continuance."⁴⁵

3. Origen of Alexandria - A.D. 185-253: Cox gives the following: ". . . the perfect Christian, who continually lives in the words, and works, and thoughts of the Word of God, his natural Lord, continually lives in His day, daily keeps the Lord's Day."⁴⁶

Beardsley adds this quotation: "Origin said (220 A.D.): 'We ourselves are accustomed to observe certain days, as for example, the Lord's Day.'"⁴⁷

4. Cyprian of Carthage - A.D. 270: Cowan gives the following: "Cyprian, bishop of Carthage in North Africa, A.D. 253, was a man of distinguished learning and piety, noted for his benevolence to the poor, and as a martyr for the faith of Christ . . . Of this great leader, the 'Advent History of the Sabbath' (1912), says, 'The next father offering an argument for Sunday is Cyprian.' Hence there is no doubt that Cyprian kept the Lord's Day and defended it. He said, 'Because the eighth day, that is, the day after the Sabbath, was to be that on which the Lord should rise again, and should quicken us, and give us circumcision of the Spirit; the eighth day, that is, the first day after the Sabbath, and the Lord's Day which went before in the figure.'"⁴⁸

5. Commodian - A.D. 270: "We keep the Lord's Day as a day of joy, because of him who rose thereon."⁴⁹

6. Anatolius, bishop of Laodicea, Asia - A.D. 270: Cowan offers the following: "It was no novel proposition or questionable expedient, therefore, when Anatolius announced among his episcopal canons: '7th. The obligation of the Lord's resurrection binds us to keep the Paschal festival on the Lord's Day . . . 10th. The solemn festival of the resurrection of the Lord can be celebrated only on the Lord's Day . . . 16th. Our regard for

⁴⁵Schaff, op. cit., p. 204.

⁴⁶Robert Cox, The Literature of the Sabbath Question, as quoted in Cowan, op. cit., p. 181.

⁴⁷Beardsley, loc. cit.

⁴⁸Cowan, op. cit., p. 182.

⁴⁹Ibid.

the Lord's resurrection which took place on the Lord's Day will lead us to celebrate it on the same principle."⁵⁰

7. Victorinus, bishop of Petabio - A.D. 300: "On the former day we are accustomed to fast rigorously, that on the Lord's-day we may go forth to our bread and giving of thanks. And let the parasceve become a rigorous fast, lest we should appear to observe any Sabbath with the Jews, which Christ himself, the Lord of the Sabbath, says by his prophets that 'his soul hateth; ' which Sabbath he, in his body, abolished."⁵¹

8. Peter, bishop of Alexandria - A.D. 300: Chafer states the following: "Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, 300 A.D., says: 'We keep the Lord's Day as a day of joy because of him who rose thereon."⁵²

Here again, many other quotations from the church fathers of this period could be quoted. They would merely confirm what has already been stated by those quoted, concerning the observance of the Lord's Day in the Christian church of this period.

As has been mentioned, the Jewish Christians did cling to the Sabbath in addition to the Lord's day, honoring both. Some were stronger in following the ceremonies of the law than others. "Besides the Christian Sunday, the Jewish Christians observed their ancient Sabbath also, till Jerusalem was destroyed. After that event, the Jewish habit continued only among the Ebionites and Nazarenes."⁵³ Here Schaff has mentioned two things of importance. First, that the Jewish Christian observance of the seventh day Sabbath continued until the destruction of Jerusalem. Other

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 183.

⁵¹Beardsley, op. cit., p. 148.

⁵²Chafer, Grace, loc. cit. ⁵³Schaff, op. cit., I, 479.

historians also bear out this, that in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D. was the undercutting of all that was Jewish tradition in the eyes of the Christians, either Jewish or Gentile. However, there were always a few Jewish Christians, and an even fewer number of Gentile Christians, who held to the seventh day Sabbath and other Jewish customs. The second thing mentioned by Schaff is the two sects that did continue to observe Jewish customs, the Ebionites and Nazarenes. The Nazarenes were a small and relatively insignificant sect of followers of a view that:

Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, and that his teachings are superior to those of Moses and the prophets, but that Christians of Jewish descent should observe the Jewish laws of circumcision, Sabbath observance, and foods.⁵⁴

This sect bears no relation to the modern denomination of Christians called the Church of the Nazarene, which is entirely orthodox in its doctrines. The other sect, called the Ebionites, was larger and more influential. Eusebius, an historian of that age, records this concerning the Ebionites:

These are properly called Ebionites by the ancients, as those who cherished low and mean opinions of Christ. For they considered him a plain and common man, and justified only by his advances in virtue, and that he was born of the Virgin Mary by natural generation. With them the observance of the law was altogether necessary, as if they could not be saved only by faith in Christ and a corresponding life. Others, however, besides these, but of the same name, indeed avoided the absurdity of the opinions maintained by the former, not denying that the Lord was born of the Virgin by the Holy Ghost, and yet in

⁵⁴Latourette, op. cit., p. 121.

like manner, not acknowledging his pre-existence, though he was God, the word and wisdom, they turned aside into the same irreligion, as with the former they evinced great zeal to observe the ritual service of the law. These, indeed, thought on the one hand that all the epistles of the apostles ought to be rejected, calling him [here Eusebius is evidently referring to the Apostle Paul] an apostate from the law, but on the other, only using the gospel according to the Hebrews, they esteem the others as of but little value. They also observe the Sabbath and other discipline of the Jews, just like them, but on the other hand, they also celebrate the Lord's days very much like us, in commemoration of his resurrection. Whence, in consequence of such a course, they have also received their epithet, the name of Ebionites, exhibiting the poverty of their intellect. For it is thus that the Hebrews call a poor man.⁵⁵

The decrees and councils. As was previously mentioned, there were certain legal decrees and important councils of the period from A.D. 200 to A.D. 500 that deserve special mention. This is because they have a definite bearing on the topic of the Day of Worship. It has been claimed that it was these councils that changed the Sabbath to Sunday, but as has been shown, the Lord's Day had been observed from Apostolic times as the day of worship among the Christians. As Schaff observes: "We see then that the ante-Nicene church clearly distinguished the Christian Sunday from the Jewish Sabbath, and put it on independent Christian ground"⁵⁶

The conversion of the great Roman Emperor, Constantine, in

⁵⁵Eusebius Pamphilus, The Ecclesiastical History, trans. Christian Frederick Cruse (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955), p. 112. [Par-
enthetical comment added for clarity].

⁵⁶Schaff, op. cit., II, 205.

A.D. 312, had a monumental influence on Christianity. "Constantine's edict of toleration, A.D. 313, was followed by others still more favorable to Christianity, of which that of A.D. 321, which provided for Sunday rest for certain portions of his subjects, is the most notable."⁵⁷ The content of this edict is as follows:

On the venerable day of the sun let the magistrates and people residing in the cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in the work of cultivation may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost.⁵⁸

All that Constantine did was to provide legal sanction for the day of worship that had for three centuries been observed by those of the Christian faith, which he had come now to embrace. This ended the persecution of the Christians by the Roman Empire, and actually completely reversed the position of Christianity. For from Constantine's time onward, Christianity was fostered by the Roman Empire, rather than persecuted by it. One may properly debate the true value of making the observance of Sunday a legal duty, as was the result of Constantine's decree, but there is no doubt that this decree was the first legal recognition of Sunday observance:

The earliest recognition of the observance of Sunday as

⁵⁷Robert Cox, The Literature of the Sabbath Question, as quoted in Cowan, op. cit., p. 191.

⁵⁸Cowan, op. cit., p. 191.

a legal duty is a constitution of Constantine in 321 A.D., enacting that all courts of justice, inhabitants of towns, and workshops were to be at rest on Sunday (VENERABILI DIE SOLIS), with an exception in favour of those engaged in agricultural labor.⁵⁹

The three Church Councils of this period hold a special interest and importance for this study because of their considerations concerning the Day of Worship. While they did not legislate Sunday rest as a legal obligation, they did place this obligation on Sunday worship:

1. The Council of Nice, held in Nicaea, in Asia Minor, A.D. 325: "The Nicene Council, A.D. 325, speaks of the Lord's Day, but not as a thing newly invented, or which had its title questioned. It only says that on that day and during Pentecost, persons are to pray standing--a custom more or less prevalent already."⁶⁰

2. The Council of Eliberis - A.D. 305: "The Council of Nice was the only general council of the early church which enacted any legislation concerning the Lord's Day, and its mention of it was brief; this was not a question that disturbed the peace of the Church at that time, and required but little attention. But several local or provincial councils adopted canons relative to the proper observance of the day, about this time. Speaking of these, Hessey says that the council of Eliberis, A.D. 305, 'Very strenuously promotes religious worship on the Lord's Day, and threatened suspension from communion from any person living in a town who shall absent himself for three Lord's Days from church.'"⁶¹

3. The Council of Laodicea, held in Laodicea, in Asia Minor - A.D. 363: "The act of the Council of Laodicea that is of special interest in regard to the Sabbath and the Lord's Day, and that has been the butt of criticism by the modern seventh-

⁵⁹Craies, op. cit., p. 95.

⁶⁰James Augustus Hessey, Sunday: Its Origin, History, and Present Obligation (London: University of Oxford, 1860), p. 63.

⁶¹Cowan, op. cit., p. 203.

day advocates, is the twenty-ninth canon, as follows: 'Christians ought not to Judaize and to rest on the Sabbath, but to work on that day; but preferring the Lord's Day should rest, if possible, as Christians. Wherefore, if they shall be found to Judaize, let them be accursed from Christ.'"⁶²

None of the enactments of these councils could be construed to serve as changing the Sabbath to Sunday. They merely provided council affirmation to practices already long in existence. Their actions could certainly be considered Sabbatarian in the enactment of enforced Sunday worship and prohibitions against observing the Jewish Sabbath. These two enactments were the first of their kind in important Councils of the early church.

III. THE LATER CHURCH PERIOD

This division of Chapter Five actually includes three periods. These three periods form the three sections of this division, as indicated here: The Middle-Ages Period; The Reformation Period and The Modern Period:

The Middle-Ages period. As history moved on, and the Middle-Ages came, the practice of the observance of the first day of the week as the day of worship for the Christians continued. This was done as it had been for five centuries. But gradually changes in the approach to this

⁶²Ibid., p. 204.

observance developed. Instead of being based primarily on a commemoration of the resurrection, as was done in the early centuries of the Church, there slowly grew an emphasis on the Lord's Day as a legal duty, and more and more the Fourth Commandment of the Jewish law was used as a point of reference for observance of a day of worship. This change was gradual, and many factors and influences entered into it.

It was not the act of any one ruler, civil or ecclesiastical, or the decision of any one council that established the law and custom of the Sabbath day now prevalent. By no means may the censure, if it be a cause of censure, be laid upon Constantine or the early bishops and councils of the Church, whose acts and precepts were a part of the progressive thought and practice of the Christian centuries.⁶³

What might be termed Sabbatarian, or a legally enforced sabbath-rest, had roots in decrees such as those of Constantine, and in the deliberations of the early Church Councils, but it actually never developed to a great extent until the sixth century and later:

I have contended that the Ancient Church considered it (the Lord's Day) to be a day of obligation, quite independently of any connection with the Sabbath, on purely Christian grounds--that it was not until after the fifth century that this view was materially impaired; and that it was not until toward the end of the sixteenth century that a Sabbatarian origin was formally proposed instead.⁶⁴

During the sixth century there were those who promoted the seeds of the Sabbatarian view, although this was certainly not the general view

⁶³Ibid., p. 211.

⁶⁴Hessey, op. cit., p. 226.

of the Church. This statement in The Catholic Encyclopedia shows this:

The express teaching of Christ and St. Paul prevented the early Christians from falling into the excesses of Jewish Sabbatarianism in the observance of the Sunday, and yet we find St. Caesarius of Arles in the sixth century teaching that the holy Doctors of the Church had decreed that the whole glory of the Jewish Sabbath had been transferred to the Sunday, and that Christians must keep the Sunday holy in the same way as the Jews had been commanded to keep holy the Sabbath Day.⁶⁵

Perhaps one of the most influential in the promotion of this Sabbatarian view was the great Emperor Charlemagne. He was the powerful Emperor of the West, or what had been the whole western areas of the Roman Empire. In A.D. 800, he issued a law which stated:

We do ordain, as it is required in the law of God, that no man shall do any servile work on the Lord's Day; namely, that they employ not themselves in works of husbandry, making hay, fencing or hedging, grubbing or felling trees, digging in the mines, building houses, planting orchards; and they do not go a hunting in the fields, or plead in courts of justice; that the women weave not or dress cloth, do no needle work or card wool, or beat hemp, or wash linen openly, or shear sheep; but that they all come to church to magnify the Lord their God, for those good things, which, on this day, He bestowed on them.⁶⁶

Soon laws began to be formulated along with church regulations, that had a definite Sabbatarian flavor. The simplicity of the appeal for the Lord's Day of the early church began to be obscured. Frequent references were made to the law as the reason for observing the Sabbath. More and more the term Sabbath began to be used to mean the Christian day of

⁶⁵Slater, loc. cit.

⁶⁶Crafts, op. cit., p. 556.

worship, which was Sunday. Few would confuse this Sabbath with a Saturday Sabbath, but many were confusing a principle of law with that of grace. Until Luther, during the Reformation, and later Calvin, re-emphasized the principles of grace, they were overshadowed during these years by the emphasis on the law. The terms "law of God" and "law of the Church" began to be used interchangeably, as if they were the same. The Church greatly influenced the laws of the lands, so "law" in general became the motive rather than that which is from the heart, as it should be under the principles of grace as taught in the New Testament.

From the eighth century the law began to be formulated as it exists at the present day, and the local councils forbade servile work, public buying and selling, pleading in the law courts, and the public and solemn taking of oaths. There is a large body of civil legislation on the Sunday rest side by side with the ecclesiastical. It began with an Edict of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, who forbade judges to sit and townspeople to work on Sunday.⁶⁷

While the term Sabbath was being used more frequently, it was clearly understood to be in reference to the "Christian Sabbath," which was universally the first day of the week, or Sunday. This must be understood, and is often overlooked in quoting from the literature of this period. No record is found of any significant number of people, or any groups of Christians, observing the seventh day Sabbath. This was not an issue of the day. Many times those who are today promoting the seventh

⁶⁷Slater, op. cit., p. 336.

day will quote from the literature of this period, where it mentions someone "observing the Sabbath," and the impression is given that this was the Jewish seventh day. But of course it was not. So it can be seen why the whole facts of history need to be presented, rather than merely inferences or partial facts. For an entirely different light is shed upon the day of worship of the Middle Ages when all the facts are plainly presented.

The Reformation period. Someone has referred to the Reformation Period as the "rescue period." There is certainly a lot of truth in this, as the church and its day of worship needed to be rescued from the demands of the "law" and the New Testament principles of grace needed to be re-stated and put into practice. But the seeds of Sabbatarianism had already been sown, and had taken root and sprouted, so the reform or "rescue" was not as complete as if it had not needed to overcome the Sabbatarian influence.

The two great "emancipators" of the reformation, when it comes to the re-stating of the principles of grace as opposed to "law" were Martin Luther and later John Calvin. This statement of Luther shows his convictions on this:

Moses is dead and buried by Christ, and days or seasons are not to be lords over Christians, but rather Christians are lords over days and seasons, free to fix them as they will or as seems convenient to them. For Christ made all things free when he abolished Moses. However, we will let things remain as they now are, since no peril, error, sin, or heresy is involved, and we are averse to changing anything needlessly or at our own personal whim, out of consideration for others who observe

Easter at the same time as we do. We know that we shall attain salvation without Easter and Pentecost, without Friday and Sunday, and we know that we cannot be damned--as St. Paul teaches us--because of Easter, Pentecost, Sunday, or Friday.⁶⁸

One could well debate whether or not Luther went too far in his denunciation of the law and works, but he must be understood in view of what he was facing in his day, and the "emancipation" which needed to be done. It should also be pointed out that the issue between law and grace did not actually include a concern over the observance of the seventh day. It simply was not observed in those days apart from the normal Jewish observation of their own Sabbath. So when Luther debates concerning the observance of the law, nothing is brought up in challenge of a seventh day. It simply was not a part of the issue. His challenge was with the Sabbatarian teaching concerning imposing the law of Moses on the "Christian Sabbath," or the first day of the week. This must be clearly kept in mind. He certainly does take issue with the Sabbatarians and their emphasis on the law:

Well, then, begin, anyone who wants to or can, to bring Christendom into conformity with this council; I shall then be glad to follow. If not, I want to be spared the screams of Councils! Councils! You neither heed the councils nor the fathers! Or I will counter with cry, "You yourselves do not heed the councils or the fathers, since you disdain even the supreme council and the supreme fathers, the apostles. Do you think I should or must heed councils and fathers you your-

⁶⁸Martin Luther, Luther's Works, trans. Eric W. Gritsch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), XLI, 67.

self do not as much as touch with one finger?" I would only say, as I said to the Sabbatarians, that they should keep their Mosaic law first, and then we would keep it too. But now that they neither keep it nor are able to keep it, it is ridiculous that they expect us to keep it.⁶⁹

John Calvin was the other great "emancipator" of the Reformation period. He had to deal with the same sort of thing Luther had dealt with, only in another geographic area and at a somewhat later time. He defended the Christian observance of the Lord's Day as a response of the heart in grace rather than because of the law's demand. He also had to defend the observance of the "Christian Sabbath" against those who challenged him with the charge that the Christians were doing the very thing he was speaking against when they observed a day of worship. He stresses the importance of having order in the church:

Religious meetings are enjoined us by the word of God; Their necessity, experience itself sufficiently demonstrates. But unless these meetings are stated, and have fixed days allotted to them, how can they be held? We must, as the Apostle expresses it, do all things decently and in order (I Cor. xiv. 40). So impossible, however, would it be to preserve decency and order without this politic arrangement, that the dissolution of it would instantly lead to the disturbance and ruin of the Church. But if the reason for which the Lord appointed a Sabbath to the Jews is equally applicable to us, no man can assert that it is a matter with which we have nothing to do. Our most provident and indulgent Parent has been pleased to provide for our wants not less than for the wants of the Jews. Why, it may be asked, do we not hold daily meetings, and thus avoid the distinction of days? Would that we were privileged to do so! Spiritual wisdom undoubtedly

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 28.

deserves to have some portion of every day devoted to it. But if, owing to the weakness of many, daily meetings cannot be held, and charity will not allow us to exact more of them, why should we not adopt the rule which the will of God has obviously imposed upon us?⁷⁰

Both Luther and Calvin often referred to the Church Fathers to show how God had led them in certain directions which revealed His will. Calvin applies this to the observance of the Lord's Day in the last sentence of the above quotation. He continues this discussion, attempting to show that the Christians are not Judaistic in their observance of the Lord's Day:

I am obliged to dwell a little longer on this, because some restless spirits are now making an outcry about the observance of the Lord's Day. They complain that Christian people are trained in Judaism, because some observance of days is retained. My reply is, That those days are observed by us without Judaism, because in this matter we differ widely from the Jews. We do not celebrate it with most minute formality, as a ceremony by which we imagine that a spiritual mystery is typified, but we adopt it as a necessary remedy for preserving order in the Church.⁷¹

Luther and Calvin were in complete agreement in their view of Christ's abolishing the law of Moses as far as its having any demand or hold on the Christians. Calvin often referred to the principles of the law, and made every attempt to teach the difference between these and what he referred to as "the ceremonies of the law." He applies this approach to the observance of a day of worship, as seen in the following quotation:

⁷⁰John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. Henry Beveridge (London: James Clarke & Co., 1953), I, 342.

⁷¹Ibid.

They [the Israelites] did not desist from manual labor on the ground of its interfering with sacred study and meditation, but as a kind of religious observance; because they dreamed that by their cessation from labor, they were cultivating the mysteries which had been of old committed to them. It was, I say, against this preposterous observance of days that the Apostle inveighs, and not against that legitimate selection which is subservient to the peace of Christian society. For in the churches established by him, this was the use for which the Sabbath was retained. He tells the Corinthians to set the first day apart for collecting contributions for the relief of their brethren at Jerusalem (I Cor. xvi. 2). If superstition is dreaded, there was more danger in keeping the Jewish Sabbath than the Lord's day as Christians do now. It being expedient to overthrow superstition, the Jewish holyday was abolished; and as a thing necessary to retain decency, order, and peace, in the Church, another day was appointed for that purpose.⁷²

While the controversy with the Sabbatarians continued, the matter of civil law never seemed to be contested, in relation to its being Judaistic. In fact it was deemed necessary during the Reformation by both Catholic and Protestant that the Lord's Day be enforced by civil law. Luther had nothing to do with this directly, but it seems that Calvin favored civil law to enforce Sunday worship: "At the Reformation it was thought necessary to enforce the observation of Sunday by the state in face of the question mooted at the time as to the divine or merely human institution of the day as a holy day."⁷³

The modern period. This is the period from the time of the

⁷²Ibid., p. 343. [Parenthetical note added for clarity] .

⁷³Craies, loc. cit.

Reformation to the present days. It can only be touched upon in this study, so only the significant things concerned with the immediate topic will be included.

Following the Reformation, civil laws became more predominant for enforcing the Lord's Day. This was especially true in Britain under the influence of the Puritans: "After the Reformation, under Puritan influence, many laws were passed in England whose effect is still visible in the stringency of the English Sabbath. Still more is this the case in Scotland,"⁷⁴ However, in the eighteenth century rationalism did curtail somewhat the effectiveness of the civil laws on Sunday observance. But it is interesting to note that rationalism hit harder at Judaism, with its seventh day Sabbath, than it did on the Christian observance of the Lord's Day. The whole life of Judaism suffered more than did Christianity:

The rationalism of the eighteenth century attacked the premises of all religion. In this general assault on all religious belief Judaism suffered the largest number of casualties, proportionately speaking. "Judaism emphasizes acts, rituals, habits, a way of life. Christianity, in contrast, places more emphasis on beliefs and doctrines." Judaism "taught a fairly rigid set of rituals to cover one's entire life. This rigidity permitted no defence in depth, so to speak. Once one had found . . . that it was more convenient to work on Saturday, or to shave, or to abandon traditional dress, one had no body of doctrine to fall back upon which could explain to one what remained really important in Judaism . . . Under

⁷⁴Slater, loc. cit.

these circumstances, an entire way of life disintegrated."⁷⁵

Another highly significant development in this period is the new emphasis on Sabbatarianism, and a new direction which it took. Up until the seventeenth century the issue was not concerning the difference between the seventh or the first day of the week for a day of worship. This seldom cropped up as an issue. But in the seventeenth century Sabbatarianism took an entirely new and different direction with the appearance of groups which fostered worship on the seventh day of the week instead of the first:

"Judaistic sabbatarianism has reappeared among post-reformation groups such as the Seventh-day Baptists, 1671, and the Seventh-day Adventists, 1845."⁷⁶ Actually, the Adventists or Millerites were organized in 1845, as the date is given above. But they did not organize as Seventh-day Adventists until 1860. This is because the original Adventist movement, the followers of William Miller, had for some time even before 1845 been challenging the rest of the churches for their lack of teaching on the second advent of Christ. This was the first foundation stone for their new religion. The seventh day Sabbath was a later addition, and became the second foundation stone of the movement which later became the Seventh-day Adventists:

⁷⁵ Arthur W. Kac, The Rebirth of the State of Israel (Chicago: Moody Press, 1958), p. 148.

⁷⁶ J. Barton Payne, "Sabbatarianism," Baker's Dictionary of Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 464.

Equally arbitrary is the choice of the second foundation stone of S.D.A. According to Nichols it was "Father Bates," one of the early converts to Millerism, and a captain at sea, whose "light was the seventh-day Sabbath." Elder James White (the S.D.A. Church had been organized in 1860 and Elder White wrote this in 1868) endorsed the view of Bates and others. To him the "three messages symbolize the three parts of the genuine movement," that is, the genuine advent movement as begun by Miller.⁷⁷

The third foundation stone for the new movement, or "third angel's message," was the idea of the heavenly tabernacle. This is explained in the following chapter which deals with the teachings of the seventh-day groups.

One of the claims of the seventh-day groups has been that the Pope of Rome changed the Sabbath to Sunday. But nowhere in history is such found to be the case:

As for the pope issuing a decree that Sunday should be observed as the Sabbath, the question naturally arises, What pope? And nowhere down the line of those who have been named as popes by the Roman Catholic Church, can one be designated as the author of such decree. The pope did not establish Sunday observance in the church. The Catholic faith is that "the observance does not rest on any positive law, of which there is no trace. Sunday is of merely ecclesiastical institution, dating however from the time of the apostles."⁷⁸

This will also be considered more in the next chapter of this

⁷⁷Jan Karel Van Baalen, The Chaos of the Cults (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), p. 206.

⁷⁸Cowan, op. cit., p. 207.

paper, where the claims of the seventh-day groups are dealt with.

Following the great revival led by Wesley and the Methodists in England, there was a renewed interest in church attendance. There was also a strong reform movement among the evangelists, which included stricter observance of the Lord's Day:

Evangelicals were active in promoting a stricter observance of Sunday and in seeking to curb the gambling, duelling, and cruel sports which were then prevalent. They also strove to regulate child labor in the newly emerging factories and to protect the boys employed as chimney sweeps. They promoted the education of the masses. They objected to the immoral character of current eighteenth century fiction.⁷⁹

But along with all of this came more and more regulations for the Sabbath. The very groups which were formed to promote the observance of Sunday worship became the ones to drive this into an extreme which closely paralleled the way the Scribes had built regulations around the Jewish Sabbath before the time of Christ. One of the main groups that did this was called The Society For The Observance of the Christian Sabbath:

At the beginning of the Church's history the Lord's Day was celebrated with joy and thankfulness and in spiritual activity. Later, when such groups arose as The Society For The Observance Of The Christian Sabbath, then regulations were added which caused it to conform (witness the Scotch and Puritan Sabbath) more and more to the Jewish Sabbath. There was an adding on to the Lord's Day, just as there had been to the Sabbath by the Pharisees. Men are determined, it seems, to gain merit before God by their works. But let it be remembered that no Old Testament regulations concerning the Jewish

⁷⁹Latourette, op. cit., p. 1032.

Sabbath can teach us how to keep the Lord's Day, because the Church period and its rule of life for the believer were not foreseen in Old Testament times, and because the New Testament does provide a rule of life under grace that teaches us how to keep all the days in the week. Paul says: "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it"; "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Rom. 14:5; Col. 3:17).⁸⁰

This quotation includes two Scripture passages. The latter one presents a principle which should serve as a check and a guide concerning not only the choice of a day of worship, but how it is observed. This passage states: "And whatever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:17). Does the day of worship one chooses really honor the name and person of Christ, or does it merely heed the precepts of the law? Does the use of this day really honor Christ as Lord, or does it merely satisfy one's own whims and desires? These are important questions, which should not be taken lightly.

IV. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The term Sabbath was known and used before the time of Moses. It was understood to be a rest-time of varying periods of time and of varying

⁸⁰Feinberg, op. cit., p. 34.

means of observance. But the Sabbath as an institution, with a designation of the seventh day and all of the offerings and regulations connected with it, was not given until the time of Moses. Therefore it is proper to call the Sabbath of Israel a Mosaic institution.

During the Inter-Testament period there arose such sects as the Essenes, Scribes and Pharisees. Their influence on the interpretation of the law had a great influence on the observance of the Sabbath. They added rules to the ordinances of the law and enforced them in such a legalistic way that this overshadowed the principles of the law, especially concerning the Sabbath. Christ had to deal with this condition during His earthly ministry.

In the early centuries of the Christian church the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, became the universal day of worship. This is the testimony of both the historians and all of the church fathers of that period. The conversion of Constantine brought legal recognition to this Lord's Day observance, and added enforcement of the first day of the week as a day of rest. The early Councils of the Church affirmed the observance of the Lord's Day, and one of them, the Council of Eliberis, added enforcement of the first day of the week as a time of worship. The Council of Laodicea denounced Judaizing and any observance of the Jewish Sabbath.

From the sixth century onward there was a Sabbatarian influence which promoted legal enforcement of the Lord's Day. The observance of the Jewish seventh day among the Christians had disappeared, and did not appear

again until after the Reformation. During the Reformation Martin Luther and later John Calvin opposed the Sabbatarian influence and taught the Biblical doctrine of grace and a break with the law of the Old Testament, for the Christian. Luther struck hard at works as having any merit for any part of salvation. Calvin stressed the observance of the Lord's Day for decency and order in the church. Civil and ecclesiastical laws developed side-by-side, including many which enforced the Lord's Day.

The Sabbatarian influence continued, often using the teaching of the Jewish law concerning the Sabbath to make their appeal for what they termed the "Christian Sabbath," or the Lord's Day. This was seen especially in the Puritan approach to the Sabbath in England and Scotland. It was strongly promoted by such groups as The Society for the Observation of the Christian Sabbath. Following the Reformation a new direction was added to the approach of the Sabbatarians among two groups. This was the return to the Galatian error of observing of "days" according to the law (Gal. 4:8-10). The Seventh-day Baptists were the first of these groups to appear. They were organized in 1671, and taught that the Christians should worship on the seventh day of the week. Later, in 1845, the Seventh-day Adventists were organized, and promoted the same idea. The next chapter of this paper deals with the teachings of these seventh-day groups.

CHAPTER VI

AN ANALYSIS OF SEVENTH-DAY GROUP TEACHINGS

This study thus far has been a series of Biblical Studies followed by a chapter which was an Historical Study of the Day of Worship. Very little mention has been made directly to the teachings of the groups which foster the observance of the seventh day Sabbath as the proper Day of Worship. This has been reserved for this present chapter. So it is the scope of this chapter to consider the teachings of the seventh-day groups in relation to the Day of Worship. The major seventh-day group is the Seventh-Day Adventists, so their teaching is considered predominantly in this chapter. However, there are other seventh-day groups, such as the Seventh-Day Baptists, the Seventh-Day Christians and certain individuals and small movements and groups, which will be referred to some in this chapter. The contents of this chapter is divided into three divisions, with headings as follows:

- I. THEIR THEOLOGICAL APPROACH
- II. THEIR HISTORICAL APPROACH
- III. THEIR APPROACH EVALUATED

I. THEIR THEOLOGICAL APPROACH

This is considered under three headings which cover the

three sections of this division of Chapter Six: These headings are: The Exalting of the Law; The Emphasis of a Commandment and The Keeping of the Sabbath.

The exalting of the law. As one reads the Seventh-Day Adventist writings, they find frequent comments like the following:

The great sin of the Jews was their rejection of Christ; the great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. The precepts of Jehovah would be despised and set at naught.¹

This sounds very innocent on the surface, but there is much more behind such a statement, such as the following: "In order to be prepared for the judgment, it is necessary that men should keep the law of God. That law will be the standard of character in the judgment."² It must be understood in all of these Adventist writings that what is referred to in the general term of "law of God" actually means specifically the Mosaic law. Numerous other quotations would show also that law-keeping is one of the requirements for salvation in the Adventist viewpoint. Yet the Scriptures declare that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified," and "if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought" (Gal. 2:16,21).

¹Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1888), p. 22.

²Ibid., p. 498.

The Adventists teach that the Mosaic law is binding on all men of all ages:

No error accepted by the Christian world strikes more boldly against the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the dictates of reason, none is more pernicious in its results, than the modern doctrine, so rapidly gaining ground, that God's law is no longer binding upon men.³

"The Sabbath was not for Israel merely, but for the world. It had been known to man in Eden, and, like the other precepts of the Decalogue, it is of imperishable obligation."⁴

The implication here is that the principle that the Mosaic law is not binding on Gentiles of this age is a new idea. But actually, it is a Scriptural principle of both the Old and New Testaments. The Scriptures declare that the law was given through Moses for a specific purpose, a specific age and a specific people, Israel. From such quotations as these can be seen the lack of understanding of the purpose of the law. It also denies the Scriptural teaching that the Mosaic law had a beginning and termination, in points of time: "What then is the law? It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come . . ." (Gal. 3:19).

The disastrous results of the prevalent custom of borrowing certain features from Judaism, including its sabbath, and intro-

³Ibid., p. 659.

⁴Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898), p. 257.

ducing them into Christianity cannot be too strongly emphasized. This error carries with it the obligation to keep the law in its totality, disregards one of the most vital accomplishments of Christ at His death, and creates a condition of hopeless confusion in all matters related to the right division of the Scriptures.⁵

Chafer here notes the obligation of keeping the totality of the law, if one chooses to yield to part of it. One becomes "a debtor to do the whole law" (Gal. 5:3. See also: Gal. 3:10 and James 2:10). Thus the question is placed properly before the advocates of the seventh day Sabbath: "How much of the rest of the law do you ignore or violate?" Jesus is the only one who ever kept the law perfectly, and it is sheer vanity to even suppose that one can do the same as He did. Jesus also personally fulfilled the law:

Our Lord declared, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17). Neither can "the law" spoken of there be limited to the Ten Commandments. Our Lord came to fill out the fulness of His Law, His Word, His Will. Thus He fulfilled the Moral Law, by His perfect obedience; the Ceremonial Law, being the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world; and He met the full penalty of the broken law, as He gave Himself a Substitute for the sinner.⁶

Jesus also declared: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (Matt. 5:18). Till what be accomplished? Certainly not what man does, but what Christ has done and is now doing.

⁵Lewis Sperry Chafer, Grace (Chicago: Moody Press, 1943), p. 298.

⁶J. B. Rowell, Seventh-Day Adventism Examined (Susanville, Calif.: Challenge Publishing Company, 1952), p. 46.

Despite the Adventist teaching to the contrary, these words of Christ have nothing to do with man keeping Sabbaths or any other elements of the Mosaic law. Here the Adventists have fallen into a theological error of confusing just how the law would be fulfilled and who would fulfill it. The New Testament teaching concerning the fulfilling of the law is that love is the fulfilling of the law, and it is accomplished in or through Christ, not by man (Rom. 8:3,4; 13:8-10).

The Adventists use a subtle play on words in making this all apply to the keeping of the Ten Commandments. This is seen in the Adventist writing by Maxwell, in a chapter entitled: "How Can One Know the True Church?" The fourth on his list of answers to this question is as follows:

4. IT WILL REGARD THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AS THE HOLY LAW OF GOD. "By this we may be sure that we know him," says the apostle John, "If we keep his commandments. He who says I know him but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps his word, in him truly love for God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in him: he who says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked" (I John 2:3-6, R.S.V.).⁷

The error here is simply one of mixing the New Testament principle of love with the Old Testament principle of law, and implying that they are the same. That such New Testament passages have no reference to the Mosaic law is made clear in I John 3:23: "And this is his commandment,

⁷ Arthur S. Maxwell, Your Bible and You (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1959), p. 364.

that we should believe in the name of his son Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he gave us commandment." A similar misuse of Scripture is seen in Maxwell's use of Isaiah 42:21 to claim that Jesus came to "magnify the law":

The commandments of God are seen in a new light. No longer do they seem legalistic or burdensome. He now counts it a privilege to live in harmony with God's revealed will. With Jesus he desires to "magnify the law and make it honorable" (Isaiah 42:21).⁸

This passage in Isaiah actually has reference to what God was doing with the rebellious Israelites (Isa. 42:18-25). Mrs. White used the same Scripture in Isaiah where she writes: "Jesus had come to 'magnify the law, and make it honorable.' He was not to lessen its dignity, but to exalt it."⁹ No doubt this is where Maxwell got his idea. At any rate, he carries his view even further in the following:

Our Lord not only kept the commandments while He was here on earth, but He suffered the extreme penalty in man's stead in order to uphold and magnify their external authority.¹⁰

This quotation is actually the caption for a picture on the opposite page. It is a picture of the crucifixion of Christ with a huge replica of the tables of the Ten Commandments showing behind the scene. One might

⁸Ibid., p. 163.

⁹White, The Desire of Ages, op. cit., p. 179.

¹⁰Maxwell, op. cit., p. 355.

well ask if this isn't a bit strange in view of the Scriptural teaching concerning the Mosaic law and the death of Christ:

Having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross . . . Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's (Col. 2:14, 16).

The emphasis of a commandment. Maxwell expresses the Adventist view very clearly in the following statement:

While the manna was still falling, God declared His will for Israel and all mankind in His Ten Commandments. And in the heart of this sacred law he said, "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" (Exodus 20:8-10).¹¹

The next page of Maxwell's book shows a multitude gazing at a replica of the tables of the Ten Commandments. Jesus is in the midst, pointing at the tables, and a spot of light is focused right on the Fourth Commandment. Thus that commandment is emphasized over the others. Maxwell is merely echoing the prophetess of Adventism, Mrs. White, who proclaims:

The Lord commands the same prophet, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples." (Isa. 8:16, 20). The seal of God's law is found in the fourth commandment. This only, of all the ten, brings to view both the name

¹¹Ibid., p. 349.

and the title of the Lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the Decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given. When the Sabbath was changed by the papal power, the seal was taken from the law. The disciples of Jesus are called upon to restore it, by exalting the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to its rightful position as the Creator's memorial and the sign of His authority.¹²

Again, when one reads the passage in Isaiah referred to, they might well wonder how Mrs. White could find any connection to Jesus and His disciples. But this is secondary to the emphasis being made on one particular commandment. In examining just how this idea of hers began, it is quite clear that it began with her great vision of the ark in heaven: Van Baalen, in his Chaos of Cults, brings this out rather clearly:

In one of her frequent visions Mrs. White saw the ark in heaven, for surely there must be an ark in heaven's counterpart of the tabernacle. In the ark she saw the two tables of stone which contained the Ten Commandments; and as she looked, behold, the Fourth Commandment stood out above the others, for it was surrounded by a halo of light. With the incontrovertible logic of a woman, Mrs. White concluded that this commandment needed attention above its fellows. It had been neglected more than the other nine. How? It was evident. The Sabbath had not been kept holy. It had, in fact, been destroyed. A nasty Sunday, with wicked New England "blue laws," had been substituted for the Lord's Sabbath.¹³

Mrs. White shared her vision with others of her fellow Millerites,

¹²White, The Great Controversy, op. cit., p. 516.

¹³Jan Karel Van Baalen, The Chaos of Cults (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), p. 210.

as the followers of William Miller had come to be called, and they took it over immediately. This was especially true of one sea captain named Bates, who claimed that his light was the "seventh-day Sabbath."¹⁴ Van Baalen also tells of how one prominent Adventist evangelist used to refer to the failure to keep the Fourth Commandment as the unpardonable sin: "Evangelist D. E. Venden in his mimeographed lectures even refers to refusal to observe the seventh day as 'the unpardonable sin,' with reference to Matthew 12:32 and Hebrews 6:4."¹⁵

But Dr. Rowell asks the Adventists a vital question in connection with their view of the Fourth Commandment: "If, as the S.D.A. affirm, the keeping of the Seventh Day is IMPERATIVE, Why did Christ not once command it? And why did the Apostles not command it, nor condemn its non-observance? Why this omission?"¹⁶

The Sabbath was regarded as the sign of special power, by the Adventists: "So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator's power."¹⁷ This is explained to be the sign of special power of Christ as Creator and Sanctifier:

For, speaking of Israel, He said, "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"--make

¹⁴Ibid., p. 206.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 229.

¹⁶Rowell, op. cit., p. 43.

¹⁷White, The Desire of Ages, loc. cit.

them holy. Ezekiel 20:12. Then the Sabbath is a sign of Christ's power to make us holy. And it is given to all whom Christ makes holy. As a sign of His sanctifying power the Sabbath is given to all who through Christ become the Israel of God.¹⁸

A careful reading of the passage quoted from Ezekiel will show that it is one of the many passages which indicate that the Sabbath was given to Israel, and to Israel alone. But the major point here is the mention of the Israel of God. This is found elsewhere in Adventist writings and is always used to describe the select faithful who observe the seventh-day Sabbath. Somehow this seems to imply that the Seventh-Day Adventists are in the same boat with the Jehovah's Witness, whose claim was that they were the 144,000 of the Book of Revelation. Yet a careful reading of the passage concerning them in Rev. 7:4-8 shows the 144,000 clearly to be of the tribes of Israel!!

Mrs. White, referring to Isaiah 58:13,14, says: "To all who receive the Sabbath as a sign of Christ's creative and redeeming power it will be a delight. Seeing Christ IN IT, they delight themselves in Him."¹⁹ Some words were underlined and capitalized in this quotation, here, to show the difference between what the Adventists teach and what the Bible teaches when it declares: "But as many as received Him, to them gave he

¹⁸Ibid., p. 263.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 264. [Underlining and capitalization not in the original].

the right to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name" (John 1:12). The Scriptures are clear that one becomes an heir to heaven, a son of God, not by receiving an "it" such as a Sabbath commandment, but by receiving of Christ as one's personal Saviour, then walking in Him (Col. 2: 6,7).

The keeping of the sabbath. Maxwell, the Adventist writer, gives the following:

It is inconceivable that Jesus could have made a mistake over which was the proper day. On one occasion He said to the Pharisees, "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28). By this He declared His authorship of it, His full knowledge of its meaning and purpose, and the correctness of the day to be observed.²⁰

Outwardly this statement seems very fine. But the implication in all such statements in Adventist writings is that all men today should keep the same day for worship that Christ did, the seventh-day Sabbath. This implication completely by-passes the simple and obvious fact that Jesus had to observe the seventh-day, because He was "born under the law" (Gal. 4:4). But by His death He ended the power of the law. So there is no connection between His observance of the seventh day and any demand on Gentiles of this age observing it.

Jesus did keep the seventh-day Sabbath as any Jew of His day would. The Adventists claim that His charge before Pilate was the breaking of the

²⁰Maxwell, op. cit., p. 352.

Sabbath law: "The Lord of the Sabbath was arraigned before an earthly tribunal to answer the charge of breaking the Sabbath law."²¹ But an examination of all the Scriptures concerning this reveal that the Sabbath was not even mentioned. His charge was claiming to be the King of the Jews (John 18:33-38 and 19:19-22, etc.).

Another seventh-day group, the Seventh-Day Baptists, has shared some of the views of the Adventists, only on one they went even further than the Adventists even did:

The first distinctive expression of view out of harmony with the universal belief of the Church concerning the days in question, was that of Rev. A. H. Lewis, D.D., LL.D., a prominent leader of the Seventh-Day Baptist Church of the last century, who advanced the theory that the crucifixion of Christ took place on Wednesday and His resurrection on Saturday, or the Sabbath, as he preferred to call it.²²

Writings of the Seventh-Day Baptists show how readily they accepted this view because it permitted them to honor the resurrection of Christ and still maintain their seventh-day Sabbath. In 1888 Lewis wrote, referring to a previous writing:

About 1865, the writer published the proposition that Christ's entombment occurred on the evening of the fourth day of the week, and His resurrection before the close of the Sabbath, and not upon the first day of the week. This proposition met with a storm of criticism by some, and careful consideration by others. This interpretation has gained ground

²¹White, The Desire of Ages, op. cit., p. 185.

²²Horace G. Cowan, The Sabbath in Scripture and History (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1948), p. 118.

steadily, until the highest authorities in New Testament criticism now support it.²³

Investigation of these claims reveals that they are only partially true. His views were gobbled up by his own group, but naturally they were opposed by the Church in general. However, this was the hayday of the higher critics, so some of them did snatch this up as another firebrand to use in their undermining of the inspiration and accuracy of the Scriptures. But that it was even highly regarded by a few of the "highest authorities in New Testament criticism" is doubtful. At least it is hardly mentioned in their works.

In the first section of this division of Chapter Six it was mentioned that Maxwell listed a "Regard for the Ten Commandments" as a sign of the true church. This was in a chapter entitled, "How Can One Know the True Church?" The very next item following the one on the Ten Commandments is as follows:

5. IT WILL OBSERVE THE SEVENTH DAY AS GOD'S SABBATH. It is inconceivable that God's true church could keep any other day than His day. And His day, as your Bible clearly points out, is the seventh day.

Observance of the seventh day is, in fact, an outstanding sign of the true church. "It is a sign," God says, "between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you" (Exodus 31:13).²⁴

²³A. H. Lewis, Biblical Teachings Concerning the Sabbath and the Sunday, p. 57. [No other bibliographical information available].

²⁴Maxwell, op. cit., p. 365.

Here is another gross misuse of an Old Testament Scripture.

The full text of this verse is:

Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying,
Verily, ye shall keep my sabbaths: for it is a sign between
me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know
that I am Jehovah who sanctifieth you (Ex. 31:13).

What could be clearer than this, that the Sabbath was a sign or a
covenant between God and the children of Israel? Where does this in any
way include or imply others than the children of Israel?

II. THEIR HISTORICAL APPROACH

The contents of this second division of Chapter Six are presented
under three headings, which denote the three sections of this division: The
Blaming of the Pope; The Hiding of Truth; and The Adding to Truth:

The blaming of the pope. Mrs. Ellen White, the Adventist
prophetess, gives the following:

To secure worldly gains and honors, the church was led
to seek the favor and support of the great men of earth; and
having thus rejected Christ, she was induced to yield allegiance
to the representative of Satan, --the bishop of Rome.²⁵

That this statement bears some truth is of little doubt. But there is much
more behind such a statement from a Seventh-Day Adventist writer. For not
only is Rome linked in prophecy with the "beast" of the Books of Daniel and

²⁵White, The Great Controversy, op. cit., p. 56.

Revelation, but the United States is earmarked also:

In contrast to those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus, the third angel points to another class, against whose errors a solemn and fearful warning is uttered: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God" (Rev. 14:9,10).²⁶

But the beast with lamblike horns was seen "coming up out of the earth." Instead of overshadowing other powers to establish itself, the nation thus represented must arise in territory previously unoccupied, and grow up gradually and peacefully. It could not, then, arise among the crowded and struggling nationalities of the Old World, --that turbulent sea of "peoples, and multitudes and nations, and tongues." It must be sought in the Western continent.

What nation of the New World was in 1798 rising into power, giving promise of strength and greatness, and attracting the attention of the world? The application of the symbol admits of no question. One nation, and only one, meets the specifications of this prophecy; it points unmistakably to the United States of America.²⁷

Space will not permit discussion here on the merit of the first part of this prophecy, concerning Rome's being the great "beast" of prophecy. This was nothing new with Seventh-Day Adventism. However, it must be said that the Seventh-Day Adventist use of the Scriptures concerning this prophecy and Rome is rather arbitrary and lacking in coherence. It cannot be said that it is completely in error. Only time will bear this out, whether or not Rome fulfills as much of the prophecy as is claimed.

But when it comes to the earmarking of the United States by the

²⁶Ibid., p. 500.

²⁷Ibid., p. 502.

use of prophecy in Daniel and Revelation, it is an entirely different matter. For here is found a wierd type of logic which is similar in its type to that of the Mormons and the British Israelites. The Seventh-Day Adventist ear-marking of the United States in this manner is impressive to readers who have not studied prophecy carefully, but it is actually entirely speculation and opinion on the part of Mrs. White. And it is certainly "adding to" the Scriptures, which was warned against in Rev. 22:18,19. To put the Adventist claim into its historical perspective, as they see it, the following quotation is given:

It has been shown that the United States is the power represented by the beast with lamblike horns, and that this prophecy will be fulfilled when the United States shall enforce Sunday observance, which Rome claims as the special acknowledgment of her supremacy.²⁸

This prophetic branding of the United States became quite a tool for firing-up the Seventh-Day Adventists in the past, but has lost its influence in recent years. However, it crops up in the Adventist periodicals and papers rather frequently, as cited by Gerstner: "Uncle Sam becomes a dragon when he makes Sabbath laws; the Adventists work earnestly against laws that would protect our American Sunday."²⁹

Throughout the Adventist literature is the charge that the Pope changed the Sabbath to Sunday. But it would be well to ask them just which

²⁸Ibid., p. 653.

²⁹John H. Gerstner, The Theology of the Major Sects (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 26.

Pope is supposed to have done this? They nor anyone have been able to show where any Pope ever actually did this:

Because there is not a shred of historical proof that the Pope changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday, Seventh-Day Adventist leaders have descended to shameful dishonesty in their effort to fabricate evidence calculated to bluff the people.³⁰

Dr. Rowell has stated a tragic truth, and has not in the least bit understated it. He has tabulated a good number of these fabrications into his booklet entitled Seventh-Day Adventism Examined. He provides photocopies and other evidence to show how the Adventists have misquoted Philip Schaff, the historian; Rev. P. Geirmann, a Roman Catholic theologian and a letter from C. F. Thomas, Chancellor, to Cardinal Gibbons, as recorded in Gibbons' writings. He also shows how they have misused numerous Scripture passages to promote their doctrine.

A generalization, typical of the writings of Mrs. White, concludes that the Roman Catholics do claim that they have changed the Sabbath:

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.³¹

While Mrs. White draws much more in such generalizations about these Catholic claims, by inference, than her resource material would allow, yet she has pointed out a truth in this matter. There have been those

³⁰Rowell, op. cit., p. 5.

³¹White, The Great Controversy, op. cit., p. 510.

that have boasted that their church, the Roman Catholic Church, was responsible for the change in the Sabbath. But most of the Catholic sources merely add the authority of the church to that of the Apostles and Scriptures.

A sample of this is presented here:

1. In a chapter entitled "The Commandments of God" in the Text Book on the Catholic Religion, by Charles M. Smith, the Fourth Commandment is dealt with as follows: "FOURTH LAW--To transmit His teachings and channels of grace, not only to one, but to all ages, our Lord organized a Church or spiritual society, to which He gave this ample authority: 'He who hears you hears Me and he who despises you despises Me.' That Church thus sums up the three laws--of reason, of Christ, of the Decalogue--and adds to them her own authority: 'Hear Mass on Sundays and Holydays.' Nor are there such qualifications as 'Except when you do not feel like it, except in summer, winter, or when too indolent to comply.'"³²

2. Following the statement given above are two questions, with answers, which are included here:

"336. IN THE OLD LAW WHY DID GOD COMMAND THE SABBATH TO BE KEPT HOLY? Because, according to Exodus, xx, 11, He completed the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh.

"337. IN THE NEW LAW, WHY DO WE KEEP HOLY THE FIRST DAY INSTEAD OF THE SABBATH OR SEVENTH DAY? We do so on the authority of the Apostles and the earliest Church. The Apostles selected Sunday on which to hold their Christian assemblies, because Christ rose from the dead on Sunday, and because the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles on Pentecost Sunday. (Acts, ii, 4.) The problem of detaching converted Jews from observing the now void Mosaic law was also a reason."³³

So this Adventist claim has good grounds. But they make more

³²Charles M. Smith, Text Book on the Catholic Religion (Portland, Oregon: The Catholic Truth Society of Oregon, [n.d.]), p. 62.

³³Ibid.

of it than is merited. Repeatedly in their writings is found such bits as this:

"What then is the change of the Sabbath, but the sign, or mark, of the authority of the Roman Church--'the mark of the beast'?"³⁴

The hiding of truth. Mrs. White says:

Protestants now urge that the resurrection of Christ on Sunday made it the Christian Sabbath. But Scripture evidence is lacking. The observance of Sunday as a Christian institution had its origin in that "mystery of lawlessness" (II Thess. 2:7, R.V.), which, even in Paul's day, had begun to work.³⁵

Here again is one of Ellen White's many generalizations. But it is also covering up for a great deal of truth. The ambiguity of such statements is typical of the Adventist writings. Sometimes rather than cover up a truth, they will just explain it away to fit their doctrine, as Maxwell does with the meeting at Troas, as recorded in Acts 20:6,7. It clearly states: "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread" (Acts 20:7). But Maxwell says, it "must have been held on Saturday night as time was reckoned in Paul's day."³⁶

A good example of bringing out only one part of the picture is seen in Maxwell's statement on the Church Council in Jerusalem, as recorded in Acts, Chapter Fifteen:

³⁴White, The Great Controversy, op. cit., p. 511.

³⁵Ibid., p. 60.

³⁶Maxwell, op. cit., p. 356.

Perhaps the first council of the Christian church changed the day? No. The report of this council is given in Acts 15, but it contains not a word on the subject. If any delegate had proposed anything so momentous as altering the Sabbath from the seventh to some other day the matter would surely have been mentioned.³⁷

This evades the major issue of the council, and it also implies that they were then observing the seventh-day Sabbath. However, in the first place, the Apostles were already meeting for worship on the first day of the week, and secondly, the very matter of the keeping of the law did come up in the Council. In fact, that is why it was convened. It was the definite decision of the Council not to impose the yoke of the law upon the Gentile Christians (Acts 15:8-11). So their decision continued, that they should not instruct the Gentiles any more than "that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood" (Acts 15:20). There was no mention of keeping the Sabbath along with the things they should abstain from, for this was not even an issue, even when the topic was on the keeping of elements of the law.

Mrs. White falsifies the record of the observance of the Lord's Day in the first centuries of the Christian church in her statement, as follows:

In the first centuries the true Sabbath had been kept by all Christians. They were jealous for the honor of God, and believing that His law is immutable, they zealously guarded the sacredness of its precepts.³⁸

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸White, The Great Controversy, op. cit., p. 58.

The entire testimony of the church fathers is in complete opposition to the implication of this claim. For it is clear that it was the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, that was observed from Apostolic times onward, rather than the Sabbath, or seventh day. This kind of misrepresentation has certainly hurt the reputation of the Adventist in the eyes of honest people:

More damaging to the cause of Seventh-Day Adventism than any objections of critics, are the historical inaccuracies, the falsified quotations, and the seemingly deliberate intention to deceive unthinking people, the perpetration of which some Seventh-Day Adventist leaders are guilty.³⁹

This false claim of Mrs. White that not the Lord's Day, but the seventh-day Sabbath, was kept as a day of worship in the early church appears constantly in all of the Adventist writings. Other Adventist writers seem to echo her claim, while perhaps changing the words a bit. Many other quotations could be given to illustrate this.

The adding to truth. The Millerites had miserably failed in their calculations of the date for the return of Christ. William Miller had deduced from Daniel 8:14 and other prophecies that Christ would return on October 22, 1844. When Christ did not return then, the Millerites were left in dissolusionment. But Mrs. Ellen G. White, the wife of Elder White, came to the rescue with a new scheme which got them off the hook and proclaimed herself as their new Prophetess:

³⁹Rowell, loc. cit.

Mrs. White desired to vindicate the movement which Miller had inaugurated. Hence her predicament. She found a way out of the difficulty. Miller, so she maintained with a woman's love for the last word, had indeed been correct. If Daniel 8:14 showed that Christ must have returned in 1844, well, then He did return in 1844. And if He had not returned to this earth, well, then He had returned somewhere else. In other words, the sanctuary mentioned in Daniel 8:14--"then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," was not on earth. Where was it then? In heaven, of course.⁴⁰

The basic error of both Miller and White was their claim that Dan. 8:14 taught that Christ would return in 1844. They were simply not familiar with the terms of prophecy enough to understand Daniel's 'prophetic days,' so they deduced something which was merely their own idea, entirely. Naturally it did not come to pass.

At any rate, Mrs. White had a vision. It set the stage for the whole future of the Adventist movement. She states:

The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament. (Rev. 11:19). The ark of God's testament is in the holy of holies, the second apartment of the sanctuary. In the ministration of the earthly tabernacle, which served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things," this apartment was opened only upon the great day of atonement, for the cleansing of the sanctuary. Therefore the announcement that the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His testament was seen, points to the opening of the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, in 1844, as Christ entered there to perform the closing work of the atonement.⁴¹

Now, anyone who is familiar with the Scriptural prophecies realized that the

⁴⁰Van Baalen, op. cit., p. 208.

⁴¹White, The Great Controversy, op. cit., p. 495.

passage in Revelation, Rev. 11:19, has reference to the end times which are still in the future, and not to an event which is claimed to have taken place in 1844. The heavenly tabernacle idea of Mrs. White's formed the third foundation stone of Adventism.

The teaching on the ark in heaven is vague and lacks any Scriptural point of reference which could fit such a scheme, but certain things are clear concerning it. One of these is that the "temple of God was opened in heaven" for just a short time. It is not stated just how long. Then it was closed. Van Baalen notes:

This speculation was duly rounded out with the assertion that when Christ had entered the heavenly sanctuary, the door was closed. After that no one could be saved except by receiving the heavenly sanctuary dogma. This, in other words, was a polite way of saying that which many sects have said: "Unless you accept our doctrine there is no hope for you. We alone have the truth."⁴²

It was in this vision that Mrs. White saw the tables of the law with the Fourth Commandment emphasized with a halo of light around it. These tables of the law were supposed to be the originals that were given on Mt. Sinai:

The law of God in the sanctuary in heaven is the great original; of which the precepts inscribed upon the tables of stone, and recorded in the Penteteuch, were an unerring transcript. Those who arrived at an understanding of this important point, were thus led to see the sacred, unchanging

⁴²Van Baalen, op. cit., p. 210.

character of the divine law.⁴³

An interesting teaching of Mrs. White is her claim that if all the Millerites had accepted her dogma of the heavenly sanctuary in 1844, Christ would have long ago come again:

The history of ancient Israel is a striking illustration of the past experience of the Adventist body. God led His people in the Advent Movement, even as He led the children of Israel from Egypt. In the great disappointment their faith was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Had they still trusted to the guiding hand that had been with them in their past experience, they would have seen of the salvation of God. If all who had labored unitedly in the work of 1844, had received the third angel's message and proclaimed it in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts. A flood of light would have been shed upon the world. Years ago the inhabitants of the earth would have been warned, the closing work completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of His people.⁴⁴

But since the Adventists had not all accepted Mrs. White's dogma, Christ was unable to come "years ago"!! So the Adventists had to work out a scheme for His coming in the future. Here it is:

1. The little black cloud: "Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man's hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour, and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it as it draws nearer the earth, becoming lighter and more glorious, until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror."⁴⁵

⁴³White, The Great Controversy, op. cit., p. 496.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 522.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 722.

2. The Decalogue revealed: "While these words of holy trust ascend to God, the clouds sweep back, and the starry heavens are seen, unspeakable glorious in contrast with the black and angry firmament on either side. The glory of the celestial city streams from the gates ajar. Then there appears against the sky a hand holding two tables of stone folded together. Says the prophet, 'The heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself.' (Ps. 50:6). That holy law, God's righteousness, that amid thunder and flame was proclaimed from Sinai as the guide of life, is now revealed to man as the rule of judgment. The hand opens the tables, and there are seen the precepts of the Decalogue, traced as with a pen of fire."⁴⁶

So then, according to the Adventists, the Ten Commandments will be revealed in heaven. But it will be too late for those who have not kept the Fourth Commandment:

The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least among them, have a new conception of truth and duty. Too late they see that the Sabbath of the Fourth commandment is the seal of the living God. Too late they see the true nature of their spurious sabbath, and the sandy foundation upon which they have been building.⁴⁷

One can just visualize the picture of this unusual event, or whatever the scheme may be called. Mrs. White describes it further:

The Israel of God stand listening, with their eyes fixed upward And when the blessing is pronounced on those who have honored God by keeping His Sabbath holy, there is a mighty shout of victory.⁴⁸

Maxwell refers to this "blessing" in the following way:

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 721.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 722.

⁴⁸Ibid.

Significantly this blessing is repeated in the final benediction in your Bibles: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).⁴⁹

Even as recent an author as Mr. Maxwell is (His book was published in 1959), he failed to check on one very important item. The verse he refers to, Rev. 22:14, is found thus in the Authorized Version of the Bible, but not in the newer translations. This is because it is an entirely different form in the most ancient and most reliable Greek texts. So it is translated in the newer translations, as in the American Standard Version, as: "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city." However, even if the term "commandments" is used in this passage, it would not in any way refer to keeping the elements of the Mosaic law, such as the seventh day Sabbath.

III. THEIR APPROACH EVALUATED

As has been pointed out, the Adventist writers are guilty of both a misuse of Scripture and a distortion of historical truth. This has been done to defend their own view. Their sincerity is not questioned, but the deceiving and misleading nature of their writings must be pointed out. The

⁴⁹Maxwell, op. cit., p. 99.

writer of this paper has many friends who are Seventh-Day Adventist. He has prayed with and shared much with many of them. So he shares with Dr. Rowell this apology:

For various reasons the present writer would rather not even refer to this deception, but for the sake of honest, well-meaning church-going people, who are being deceived, it seems necessary to give the facts to the public, who can then judge whether the above charge is true or false.⁵⁰

This third division of Chapter Six is covered in three sections, which are entitled: Not to be Judged; Not Another Gospel; and Not Another Way.

Not to be judged. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is Christ's" (Col. 2:16,17). This passage speaks of judging concerning a sabbath day. The implication is that such judging is wrong. Yet as one reads the literature of the Seventh-Day Adventists, it can be seen that they are very emphatic in judging Christians in general on the basis of whether they observe the seventh day Sabbath or not. Their basis for making such judgment hits at the very roots of historic Christianity, and the conflict becomes very evident. The issues are so basic and so confusing to many well-meaning people that they cannot be sidestepped, especially in light of the extensive literature program of the Seventh-Day

⁵⁰Rowell, op. cit., p. 4.

Adventists. Their view is summed up in the following quotation:

The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other, choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.⁵¹

Not another gospel. In Paul's letter to the Galatian Christians is found this passage:

But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema (Gal. 1:8, 9).

Paul here is dealing with an error in the Galatian church. It was the error of returning to the bondage of certain elements of the Jewish law, such as the "observing of days" and practicing of circumcision (Gal. 4: 8-11 and 5:1-6). He says that those who have taught the practice of these things to the Galatians have taught "another gospel." Then concerning anyone teaching this "other gospel" he says: "let him be anathema" or, as it is in the Authorized Version: "let him be accursed." If this applied to such teach-

⁵¹White, The Great Controversy, op. cit., p. 683.

ing in the time of the Apostle Paul, is it not just as applicable today? If so, it is properly within the scope of this paper to point out the danger of the "other gospel" of modern teaching which demands an observing of the seventh day Sabbath according to the Old Testament law. The evidence of the Scriptures and of history is overwhelming in opposition to the validity of such teaching. Here is the personal testimony of a former leader of Seventh-Day Adventism concerning this:

But after keeping it for twenty-eight years; after having persuaded more than a thousand others to keep it; after having read my Bible through verse by verse, more than twenty times; after having scrutinized, to the very best of my ability, every text, line and word in the Bible having the remotest bearing upon the Sabbath question; after having looked up all these, both in the original and in many translations; after having searched in lexicons, concordances, commentaries and dictionaries; after having read armfuls of books on both sides of the question; after having read every line in all the early church fathers upon this point; and having written several works in favor of the Seventh-Day, which were satisfactory to my brethren; after having debated the question for more than a dozen times; after seeing the fruits of keeping it, and weighing all the evidence in the fear of God, I am fully settled in my own mind and conscience that the evidence is against the keeping of the Seventh-Day.⁵²

Not another way. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). This does not say "by me and the keeping of the law," but "by me." No one should doubt that many sincere Seventh-Day Adventists do love and desire to

⁵²D. M. Canright, Seventh-Day Adventism Renounced (Chicago: [n.n.] , 1889), p. 185.

honor Christ. But their teaching strongly claims that the keeping of certain elements of the Mosaic law must be added to one's faith in Christ for them to be saved. The seventh day Sabbath is the main element of the Jewish law which is deemed necessary. The Adventist literature presents both Scriptures and history in a manner which gives the implication that they also teach the Adventist view. To present the Scriptures and history this way the Adventists have distorted and misquoted the teaching of Scripture and the record of history. An example of this is the drastic way in which the Adventists have misquoted and otherwise misused the writings of the early church fathers. The driving motive behind the approach of the Adventists lies in what they believe to be the purpose of the Mosaic law. This belief has grown out of a definite error in theology, which has led to many related errors. Thus the reader must be aware of the true purpose of the law, as taught in the Scriptures, that of exposing sin and thus condemning the individual as a sinner. This is summed up in the following Scriptural passage:

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:19,20).

IV. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Seventh-Day Adventists are the major seventh-day group which promotes the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath. They judge all of

the rest of the Christian world on the basis of whether they observe the seventh day or not. This is not heeding the admonition against judging concerning "a sabbath day" as found in the Scriptures (Col. 2:16,17). It has caused a conflict with historic Christianity which has confused many sincere people. The Adventists insist that no one can be saved except they keep the law of Moses, especially the seventh-day Sabbath. Yet they do not keep the whole law themselves, so they come under the curse of the law (Gal. 3:10. See also Gal. 5:3 and James 2:10). They claim that Jesus came to magnify or exalt the law, but there is nothing like this taught in the New Testament.

The basic root of the Adventist position is an error concerning the purpose of the Mosaic law. They fail to heed the Scriptural teaching that the law was not given to save, and was given to a specific people for a specific age. It was added because of transgression and terminated at the time of Christ (Gal. 3:19). The Adventist writings reveal a confusion over how the law is fulfilled and who would fulfill it. Christ fulfilled the law personally and through His atoning death and resurrection enables the law to be fulfilled in us, not by us. It is fulfilled in us through love of God and love of our fellow man (Matt. 22:36-40; Rom. 8:3,4; 13:8-10).

The Adventists misuse the Scriptures to make them appear to teach that when the New Testament refers to keeping of commandments, it means the elements of the Mosaic law, such as the seventh day Sabbath. They emphasize the Fourth Commandment above all the other Ten Command-

ments, claiming that the evidence of the true church is the keeping of the Mosaic law, especially the Fourth Commandment. Yet there is actually a de-emphasis of the Fourth Commandment in the New Testament. They claim that since Jesus kept the seventh day Sabbath, it must also be observed by all men everywhere today. This fails to recognize that Jesus was born a Jew, thus was under the law until His death, when He ended the authority of the law (Gal. 4:4; Col. 2:14).

The Adventist writings avoid the issue of the Sabbath not being either mentioned or enjoined upon the Gentiles in the conference in Jerusalem, as recorded in Acts, Chapter Fifteen. Yet this council was called for the very purpose of considering law-keeping and informing the new Gentile converts what was deemed necessary for them. These same writings explain away the first-day worship events of the early church, such as recorded in Acts 20:7 and I Cor. 16:1,2, even claiming that they must have been on the Sabbath instead!! The Adventists grossly misquote and misuse the writings of the early church fathers to support their false claim that the seventh day, rather than the first day of the week was the universal day of worship in the early church.

The early Adventists, the Millerites, deduced from Dan. 8:14 that Christ would return on October Twenty-second, 1844. When He did not come, Mrs. Ellen G. White came up with a vision which provided a new scheme for the Adventists. This was that He did come, but only to a heavenly

tabernacle where He revealed the Fourth Commandment in heaven as the seal of all the commandments. She based this vision on Rev. 11:19 and claimed that it was fulfilled in 1844. She also claimed that if all of the Adventists had accepted her doctrine of the heavenly tabernacle in 1844, Christ would have already come. But since they did not all accept this doctrine, Christ is yet to come. When He returns, He will reveal the tables of the Ten Commandments in the sky and the Fourth Commandment will be the standard of judgment. Those that observe the Fourth Commandment will receive the mark of God, while those who do not observe it will receive the mark of the beast (Rev. 14:9,10).

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The first division of this chapter is a summary of the findings of this paper. The other two divisions are devoted to conclusions based upon the findings.

I. SUMMARY

This first division of Chapter Seven is covered under five headings which indicate the five main chapters of this paper. They are as follows: An Old Testament Study of the Day of Worship; A New Testament Study of the Day of Worship; A Biblical Study of Law and Grace; A Historical Study of the Day of Worship; and An Analysis of Seventh-Day Group Teachings.

An Old Testament study of the day of worship. The Sabbath as an institution for a Day of Worship was introduced in the law as given under Moses at Mt. Sinai. It is recorded in Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15, as the Fourth of the Ten Commandments. Israel was instructed to observe the seventh day as her Sabbath in honor and commemoration of Jehovah God as Creator and Deliverer.

The term Sabbath is applied to events of varying time lengths which fall on different days of the week, as summarized here:

1. The Seventh Day Weekly Sabbath - Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15: This Sabbath is 24 hours long, or one day.
2. The Sabbath of the Day of Atonement - Lev. 16: 29-34; 23:26-32: This fell on the 10th day of the 7th month, regardless of the day of the week. It was a 24-hour, or one day event.
3. The Sabbath of Pentecost - Lev. 23:15-21: This always fell on the first day of the week, the "morrow after the Sabbath." With the regular seventh day Sabbath, the two Sabbaths totaled into a 48-hour period, or two days.
4. The Sabbath of the Seventh Year - Lev. 25:3,4: This was a Sabbath of the land, and was one year in duration.
5. The Sabbath of the Jubilee - Lev. 25:8-12: Including the regular seventh year Sabbath, or sabbatical year, along with this fiftieth year, or Jubilee year, this Sabbath was two years in duration.
6. The Sabbath of the Exile - Lev. 26:33-35; Jer. 25: 11; II Chron. 36:21: This is a Sabbath of the land, and took place while the Israelites were in exile in Babylon. It was 70 years in duration.

The Sabbath was given as a sign and covenant between God and the children of Israel. There is nothing in the Scriptures to indicate that it was ever given to or meant for anyone else than the Israelites. In contrast to this, another "sign" would be for all people, and was to be a "light to the Gentiles" as well as to Israel. This sign was identified as Christ the Messiah. The various Sabbaths foreshadowed in type the person of Christ and His death and resurrection. Because Israel broke and profaned her covenant with God, represented by the Sabbath, a New Covenant was prophesied, which would be a "law written in hearts" rather than on tables of stone.

A New Testament study of the day of worship. The New Covenant had been prophesied. Jesus brought in this New Covenant, and was called

the Mediator of the new and better Covenant (Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). This was a covenant of grace and truth (John 1:17). Jesus taught that He didn't come to destroy, but to fulfill the law (Matt. 5:17,18). He quoted or referred to the other of the Ten Commandments, but made no reference to the Fourth Commandment. He did give teaching concerning the principles which underlie the Sabbath, as summarized here:

1. That He, the Son of man, is Lord of the Sabbath - Matt. 12:8.
2. The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath - Mark 2:27.
3. It is proper to do good on the Sabbath, even if it involves labor - Luke 6:9,10.

The New Testament teaches that the believer is not under law, but under grace (Rom. 6:14). The Apostle Paul warns against returning to the bondage of the law and observing of days and seasons and years as under the law (Gal. 4:9-11; 5:2-4). He also taught that the believer is not to be judged according to the elements of the law, including the Sabbath, which he includes as one of the things which were "a shadow of things to come" (Col. 2:16,17). As a shadow or type, the seventh day Sabbath foreshadowed the eternal rest of God in Christ for the believer (Heb. 4:4-11).

The early church observed the Lord's Day, or the first day of the week, as the universal Day of Worship. This was to commemorate the resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week. It was also in keeping with the emphasis of the first day by Christ in His resurrection appearances, and the example of the Apostles in using the first day for

worship (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1,2; Rev. 1:10). The seventh day Sabbath represented the old creation of the world (Ex. 20:11) while the Lord's Day represents the new creation in Christ made possible by His resurrection from the dead (II Cor. 5:17; Eph. 20:10; 4:24).

A Biblical study of law and grace. The Mosaic law had a definite beginning and termination, in points of time (Gal. 3:19). It was added because of transgression and continued in force until "the seed" or Christ should come (Gal. 3:16). More specifically, the law was in force until the death of Christ, when it was ended as a demanding force upon the believer (Rom. 10:4; Col. 2:14). It still has its ministry of condemnation and death for the unbeliever (I Cor. 15:56; Gal. 3:10; I Tim. 1:9,10).

The New Testament teaches that the principle of love for God and love for one's fellow man undergirds all of the law (Matt. 22:34-40) and that love is the fulfilling of the law. It is fulfilled in us, not by us (Rom. 8:3, 4). This is the love of God shed abroad in the believer's heart by the Holy Spirit, which fulfills the law, not his own works or goodness or obedience (Rom. 5:5).

Of all the Ten Commandments, the Fourth Commandment is the only one not carried over into the New Testament either by quotation or by any positive admonition concerning its duties. This New Testament de-emphasis is significant, and is in sharp contrast to the emphasis given to the Fourth Commandment by modern Sabbatarians. This contrast is greatly

enlarged by the New Testament admonitions against the observing of days and seasons and years, as prescribed by the law (Gal. 4:9-11; 5:2-4).

Christianity is unique among the religions of the world. This is because it is a gospel of grace rather than a system of works, as all of the others are. The Christian is not regulated by laws and regulations, but is motivated by love for Christ and the working of the Holy Spirit in his life. Legal demands concerning any day of worship are simply not found in the New Testament. The worship of God under grace is a privilege rather than a duty to satisfy the law. Thus the Christian observes the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, not because of any written command to do so, but out of love for, and an inward desire to honor, the risen Saviour.

A Historical study of the day of worship. The Sabbath as an institution, with the accompanying offerings and regulations, is a Mosaic institution. However, the term Sabbath was known and used before the time of Moses. The Sabbaths were both profaned and ignored by the Israelites, along with other elements of the law. So God permitted the Babylonian captivity as a judgment upon rebellious Israel. Upon the return from this captivity, the Sabbaths were renewed and kept by Israel. But under the influence of the Essenes, Scribes and Pharisees, the legalistic bondage and enforcement of the Sabbath became burdensome. This was the condition of Sabbath observance at the time of Christ.

In the early centuries of the Christian church the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, became the universal Day of Worship. This is the

testimony of both the historians and all of the church fathers of that period. The conversion of Constantine brought legal recognition to observance of the Lord's Day. His decrees also added enforcement of the Lord's Day as a day of rest. The early Councils of the church affirmed the observance of the Lord's Day, as it had been practiced for over 200 years already.

A Sabbatarian influence developed from the sixth century onward, which promoted a legal enforcement of the Lord's Day. The observance of the Jewish seventh day Sabbath among the Christians had disappeared, and did not appear again until after the Reformation. During the Reformation Martin Luther and later John Calvin opposed the Sabbatarian influence and taught the Biblical doctrine of grace and a break with the Old Testament law for the Christian. After the Reformation, the observance of the seventh day Sabbath according to the law was revived by the Seventh Day Baptists in 1671 and the Seventh Day Adventists in 1845.

An analysis of seventh-day group teachings. The Seventh-Day Adventists are the major seventh-day group. They fervently promote the observance of the seventh day Sabbath, according to the law. In fact they claim that a person cannot be saved apart from a keeping of the Sabbath, and they judge the rest of the Christian world on the basis of whether they observe the seventh day or not. Since they do not keep the entire law themselves, they fall under the condemnation or curse of the law, according to the Scriptures (Gal. 3:10. See also: Gal. 5:3 and James 2:10).

The Adventist position has roots in a theological error concerning the scope and purpose of the Mosaic law. Their writings misuse the Scriptures to make them appear to teach that when the New Testament refers to the keeping of commandments, it refers to elements of the Mosaic law, such as the seventh day Sabbath. They emphasize the Fourth Commandment above the other Ten Commandments, claiming that the mark of the true church is the observance of the seventh day. Their writings grossly misquote and misuse the writings of the early church fathers to support their false claim that the seventh day, rather than the first day of the week, was the universal day of worship in the early church.

The forerunners of Seventh-Day Adventism, the Millerites, deduced from Daniel 8:14 that Christ would return on October Twenty-second, 1844. When He did not come as they had figured, Mrs. Ellen G. White, wife of Elder White, came up with a solution of their problem. She claimed to have a vision of the tabernacle opened in heaven and Christ revealed cleansing the tabernacle. So while He had not come to earth, He appeared in heaven, and revealed the Fourth Commandment as the seal of all the other commandments. She based her vision of the tabernacle on Rev. 11:19 and claimed that it was fulfilled in 1844. She also claimed that if all of the Adventists had accepted her heavenly tabernacle doctrine at that time, Christ would have already come. But since they did not all accept her doctrine, Christ could not come yet, and thus will return in the

future. Then when He returns, the Adventists claim, He will reveal the tables of the Ten Commandments in the sky, and the Fourth Commandment will be the standard of judgment. Those that have kept the Fourth Commandment will receive the mark of God and be saved while others who do not observe the seventh day will receive the mark of the beast (Rev. 14:9,10). Thus only those that observe the seventh day Sabbath will be saved, according to the Adventist teaching.

II. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The general conclusions resulting from this study are covered under the following headings: The Importance of the Lord's Day; The Need for Mutual Respect; and The Need for Positive Testimony.

The importance of the Lord's Day. God led the Apostles and the early church into the observance of the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, as their Day of Worship. Therefore it is important that the modern Christian continue to observe the Lord's Day. It is important as a time for worship and the honoring of God and His Son whom He raised up from the dead to complete His earthly ministry. It is a time which especially commemorates the resurrection of Christ. Also, it is a time of spiritual preparation for the week ahead. While the seventh day Sabbath was a benediction for an old week, the Lord's Day is an invocation for the new week!! But God should be honored every day of the believer's life, not just on a particular day. Worship

should be a daily devotion as well as a special time of gathering together with other believers on the Lord's Day.

The need for mutual respect. Certainly none of the Apostles were as outspoken against lapses into the observance of the law as was the Apostle Paul. Yet it was he who said:

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, unto the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks (Rom. 14:5,6).

These words should temper any rash criticism and judgment concerning others and their Day of Worship. They admonish unto the building of a mutual respect for those who sincerely worship the Lord Jesus Christ, regardless of the Day of Worship. This is the spirit of love, which is the fulfilling of the law. So while one can hardly agree with the position and errors of the Seventh-day Adventists, he can love them and have respect for them as persons. Then he can pray that the Adventists will also show the same love and mutual respect for those who do not share their observance of the seventh day Sabbath of the law.

The need for positive testimony. Instead of a negative debate on the day of worship, the Christian should express a positive testimony as to what the Day of Worship really means to him. He should always remember that he is worshipping a person and not a day or a law. He is honoring the

Person of the risen Son of God. Thus these words should ring true for him:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God. And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him (Col. 3:16,17).

The Lord's Day should be a day of spiritual activity and joy, never one of idleness or mourning. But the activities that are common to the other days should not clutter or dominate the Lord's Day. It is a day of rest, but should never be an enforced day of rest. It is a day free from the common activities of other days, but this should never be structured by laws or rules.

The Christian never needs to apologize for his day of worship, the Lord's Day. It is the first day of the week in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ on that day. This is Sunday, the Day of the Sun (Lat. Dies Solis). Christ was referred to as the "Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4: 2) and the "Light of the World" (John 8:12). Every Christian should so live and so worship that his life will honor and radiate the Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the World, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord's Day, as the first day of the week, gives rise in itself for the opportunity of a positive witness concerning the resurrection and the risen Person of Christ. No, the Christian never needs to apologize for his day of worship, but to let it stand as a positive testimony of Him who rose on that same day long ago.

III. SPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions in this division are of a more specific nature.

They are found in the following three areas: Concerning the Law; Concerning the Sabbath; and Concerning the Lord's Day.

Concerning the law. The law as given by God through Moses at Sinai was for a specific purpose, a specific people and a specific period:

The purpose of the law was to expose or give knowledge of sin. It was given to guide and also to prove or test man. Man, because of his sinful nature, failed this test of the law by his failure to keep it. Thus the law condemns man and places him under the judicial sentence of death. The ministry of the law is one of death. To claim that the law has any power of justification or merit for salvation is to deny the Scriptural teaching to the contrary.

The people to whom the law was addressed were the children of Israel. There is no indication in the Scriptures that the law was ever addressed to or meant for anyone else than Israel. To claim that the law is binding on the Gentiles is a violation of the teaching of the Scriptures.

The period of the law was the time of the Old Covenant, from the giving of the law at Sinai to the time of Christ. The law was added by God because of the sin or transgression of man. It was in force until the death and resurrection of Christ. To claim that the law is binding on a believer

today is a contradiction of Scriptural teaching. The New Testament teaches the principles which underlie the law and are applicable to all men of any age.

Concerning the Sabbath. The Sabbath was an integral part of the Mosaic law. As part of this law, it was for a specific purpose, a specific people and a specific period:

The purpose of the Sabbath was to provide a regular time for rest and worship. It was given to help Israel to know and honor God as Creator and Deliverer. It was given as a sign and covenant between God and the children of Israel.

The people to whom the Sabbath was given were the children of Israel. It was never given to the Gentiles and any claim that they are obligated to observe it is a contradiction of Scriptural teaching.

The period of the Sabbath is past for the believer. It was a shadow or type of eternal rest in Christ, and ended with His death and resurrection. There is no New Testament commandment to observe the Sabbath, while there is New Testament admonition against the observing of days and years according to the law.

Concerning the Lord's Day. The Lord's Day is a Scriptural term (Rev. 1:10) which was understood by the early church to mean the first day of the week, the resurrection day of Christ.

The purpose of the Lord's Day is to commemorate the resurrection

of Christ and honor Him as the risen Saviour. It provides a time for regular assembling together of Christians for worship.

The precedent for use of the first day of the week for Christian worship is found in the examples of Christ in His resurrection and subsequent appearances on the first day. It is also found in the use of the first day of the week as the universal day of worship by the apostles and the early church.

The practice of the Lord's Day should not be structured or regulated by laws or rules. It should never be regarded as a legal duty, but as a privilege and opportunity for honoring Christ and assembling in fellowship with other believers.

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