

THE SABBATH

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a rest, therefore, to the
people of God.”*



H. M. Riggle

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The Sabbath

Sabbath means *rest*. The law said, “Six days may work be done, but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest” (Exod. 31:15). “Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death” (Exod. 35:2). God gave to Israel a day of rest to their bodies, a day when all manual labor was to cease. This was every seventh day. Since the seventh day was a rest day, it was called a sabbath. So in the gospel: whatever is the Christian’s rest, the same is our sabbath. This is the one sole idea it conveys—rest.

There Was No Pre-Mosaic Sabbath Day

By this we mean that there was no day kept as a sabbath day of rest prior to the exodus. The first mention of the sabbath as a rest day enjoined upon man that we have in the Bible was 2,500 years after the creation. Open your Bible at Exodus 16, and you will see that a new commandment was given to Israel, something that they were not acquainted with before. Moses said on Friday, “To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath” (v. 23). “To-morrow is a solemn rest, a holy sabbath unto the Lord” (A. S. V.). On Saturday he said, “To day is a sabbath unto the LORD” (v. 25). The thirtieth verse gives

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the conclusion of the whole matter: “So the people rested on the seventh day.”

This is the first mention of a day being enjoined upon any people as a rest day, and the first account of them keeping a day. The only sense that can be derived from the above language is, that because the Lord here gave them a sabbath day, the people began resting on the seventh day. It is clear that the keeping of the sabbath was a new thing to the Jews. God here gave them a new year and a new beginning of months. (See Exod. 12:2.) And he gave them a new sabbath, or one for the first time. The account of their first keeping the sabbath shows plainly that they were not accustomed to it before. Many other scriptures clearly teach this fact.

“Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. . . . Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them” (Ezek. 20:10-12). The following facts are here clearly stated: 1. God gave Israel the sabbath when he brought them out of Egypt. 2. He gave it to them in the wilderness. 3. He gave it for a sign between himself and that nation. “I gave them my sabbaths” implies the act of committing it to them, showing that they did not have it before. This shows that the keeping of the sabbath was a new thing to them and only for them.

“Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: and madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandest them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant” (Neh. 9:13, 14).

When did God make known the sabbath to Israel? The Bible answers, “Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven. . . . And *madest known unto them thy holy*

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sabbath.” This testimony is conclusive. Though the sabbath had been introduced a short time previously, as seen in Exodus 16, it is but natural that Nehemiah should point to Sinai, as this was the time when God spake the sabbath commandment in their ears, and delivered it to them in written law. Since God made known the sabbath to Israel in the wilderness, it was a new institution.

“And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day” (Deut. 5:15).

This clearly shows that the sabbath was a Jewish institution. It was not given till after their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The above text could not apply to the patriarchs, nor to New Testament Christians, for neither were delivered from Egyptian bondage. One more text we will here bring forward:

“The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day” (Deut. 5:2, 3).

Here it is stated that God made a covenant with Israel, and the words of that covenant are found from verses 6 to 21, which are the ten commandments. “And he added no more. And he wrote them on two tables of stone” (v. 22). So it is forever settled that the covenant enjoining the observance of the seventh day as a sabbath was the one given in Horeb. That covenant, enjoining the observance of the seventh day sabbath (Deut. 5:2-15), Moses declares, God made with us—Israel—who were “all alive this day” (v. 2, 3). This is conclusive in the matter. But was not the sabbath covenant given to the fathers and patriarchs from Adam to Moses? Moses answers, “The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day”—Israel in the wilderness.

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I will here briefly add the testimony of others who are good authority. Justin Martyr, who wrote only 44 years after the death of John, says: "Enoch and all the rest, who neither observed sabbaths, nor any other rites, seeing that Moses enjoined such observances." He further declares that since there was no need "of the observance of the sabbaths before Moses, no more need is there of them now." "The sabbath began with Moses."—*Justin Martyr to Trypho*, a Jew. He further says, "Moreover, all those righteous men already mentioned (Adam, Abel, Enoch, Lot and Melchisedec) though they kept no sabbaths, were pleasing to God."—*Dialogue with Trypho*, Chap. 19.

"They (the pre-Mosaic saints) did not observe the sabbath, neither do we."—*Eusebius*. Tertullian also declared that the pre-Mosaic saints never kept the sabbath. See his argument against the Jews, section 4. Irenaeus says, "Abraham believed God without circumcision and the sabbath."—*Adv. Hoeres, lib. 4, c. 30*.

From this it is seen that the early church understood that the sabbath originated with Moses. This same position was also held by such learned eminent men as Paley, Hesse, and Bramhall. John Milton and John Bunyan also held this position. Bunyan was well versed in Scripture, and says: "Now as to the imposing of the seventh-day sabbath upon men from Adam to Moses, of that we find nothing in holy writ, either from precept or example."—*Complete Works*, page 299. Smith and Barnum's Dictionary of the Bible says, "In Exod. 16:23-29, we find the first incontrovertible institution of the day, as one given to, and to be kept by, the children of Israel." "There is no express mention of it, previous to the time of Moses."—*John's Biblical Archaeology*. Both in Chamber's and the People's Cyclopedias it is positively stated that the sabbath institution

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originated in the wilderness, and “there is no trace of its celebration in the patriarchal times.”

There is no statement that any of the patriarchs kept the sabbath or knew anything about it. Though the record from Adam to Moses covers a period of 2,500 years, not a word is said of them keeping the sabbath day.

The book of Genesis was not written at the time of creation, but 2,500 years after, and not until the law had been given on Sinai, in which the seventh-day sabbath had been enjoined upon the children of Israel. Moses, in writing the history of creation, says that “God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it *he had rested* from all his work” (Gen. 2:3). You see at a glance that the sanctifying of the day took place at a later date than God’s rest. He rested back at creation but on Sinai, in the wilderness, 2,500 years later, he sanctified the day, because in it “he had rested.”

The Jewish Sabbath

The day enjoined upon Israel as a rest day can properly be termed *the Jewish sabbath*. Sabbatarians strongly protest against calling the seventh day by this term. If the term be a proper one, it proves that they are keeping a Jewish day. This accounts for their objections to it. They say the words “Jewish sabbath” are not Bible. True, but that does not prove that the term is an improper one. They talk and write a great deal about “two laws,” “moral law,” “ceremonial law,” “Jewish festivals,” “annual sabbaths,” “sabbaths of the Hebrews,” etc., and yet these expressions cannot be found in the Bible. But I affirm that the term “Jewish sabbath” is perfectly proper, and that the seventh day is the Jewish sabbath. I quote from Canright:

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1. “‘Sabbath’ is purely a Hebrew word never found till the time of Moses. (Exod. 16:23.)”

2. “The word ‘sabbath’ is never used in the Bible except in connection with some Jewish holy time.”

3. “There is no record that the sabbath was ever kept till the Jews kept it. Exodus 16.”

4. “The sabbath was given to the Jews. ‘I gave *them* my sabbaths’ (Ezek. 20:12). If God gave it to the Jews, was it not their sabbath? I gave Fred the knife, is it not Fred’s knife?”

5. “Notice how plain the record is that God gave the sabbath to the Jews, but to no others. ‘The Lord hath given *you* the sabbath’ (Exod. 16:29). ‘Speak thou unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep’ (Exod. 31:13). “Who was to keep the sabbath? The children of Israel, the Jews. ‘It is a sign between me and the children of Israel,’ the Jews. (v. 17.)

6. “God himself calls the sabbath ‘her sabbaths’ (Hos. 2:11). I will also cause all her [Israel’s, the Jews’] mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths.’ Is it not the Jewish sabbath then?”

7. “The sabbath was never given to any other nation.”

8. “The sabbath was confined to the generation of the Jews. (Exod. 31:16.) “

9. “It was exclusively Jewish. (Exod. 31:17.)”

10. “The sabbath is classed right in with the other Jewish holy days and sacrifices. See Lev. 23:1-44; Num. 28:2, 9; 1 Chron. 23:29-31; 2 Chron. 2:4; 8:13.”

11. “It was abolished with them. Col. 2:14-17.”

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12. “The Jews comprise nearly all those who keep the seventh day; hence, ‘Jewish sabbath’ is a natural and intelligent designation for that day.”

13. “Christians almost unanimously keep the first day in distinction from the Jews, who comprise nearly all those who keep the seventh day. Hence the ‘Jewish sabbath’ is intelligent and proper again.”

14. “But Sabbatarians say that the seventh day is called ‘the sabbath of the Lord thy God’ (Exod. 20:10), therefore it is not proper to call it the Jewish sabbath. Answer—Every holy season, place, person, or article was called the Lord’s, as ‘the Lord’s passover’ (Exod. 12:11). Yet we read, ‘The passover, a feast of the Jews’ (John 6:4). So it is ‘the sabbath of the Lord’ in one place and ‘her [Israel’s or the Jew’s] sabbath’ in another. (Hos. 2:11.) Hence it is correct and Scriptural to call the seventh day ‘the Jewish sabbath.’ ”

Adventists keep the sabbath which the Jews keep, hence they keep the Jewish sabbath. The seventh-day sabbath was enjoined upon the Jewish nation alone, and the few Gentile proselytes who came within their gates. See Deut. 5:12-15 and Psa. 147:19, 20. It was a *sign* between God and the children of Israel.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth 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 may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to

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observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever” (Exod. 31:12-17).

In Deut. 5:15 it is further stated that because God delivered Israel out of Egypt, “*therefore* the Lord thy God commanded *thee* to keep the sabbath day.”

“Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them” (Ezek. 20:10, 12).

The above scriptures positively teach that the sabbath was given to Israel, and was a sign between God and that nation alone. Adventists argue in favor of their day from what is said in Exod. 31:17: that Israel was to keep the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant, and the same would be a sign between the Lord and them *forever*. We will meet them on their own ground. When opposing eternal punishment these people argue that “forever” only means a limited duration, for a time only. If they will admit as much here, it will overthrow their position on the sabbath. The Levitical law, circumcision, incense, passover, priesthood, etc., were all enjoined upon Israel in the same language as the sabbath, to be observed in their generations forever. (See Exod. 12:14; 30:8; 29:42; 30:10; Lev. 23:14; 6:18; 24:3; 23:21; 23:41, etc.) Yet all these have ceased, and met their fulfilment in Christ, the same as the seventh-day sabbath.

The Sabbath Covenant and Its Abrogation

The word “covenant” is from *berith* in the Hebrew, and *diatheke* in the Greek. It is translated “testament” thirteen times in the New Testament. It is thus defined by Greenfield: “*Diatheke*, any

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disposition, arrangement, institution, or dispensation: hence a testament, will. Heb. 9:15.” Covenant and testament are used interchangeably when referring to the law and the gospel, the old and new testaments. Christ is the “mediator of the new testament” (Heb. 9:15); namely, “the mediator of a better covenant” (Heb. 8:6).

The Bible speaks of the “first and second”; the “old and new” covenants. (Heb. 8:7, 13.) Hence “two covenants” (Gal. 4:24). The first or old covenant was from “mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage” (Gal. 4:24). What was the covenant from mount Sinai? Here is the answer: “And Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables *the words of the covenant, the ten commandments*” (Exod. 34:4, 28).

“The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us. . . . The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, . . . saying, . . . [1] Thou shalt have no other gods before me. [2] Thou shalt not make thee any graven image: . . . thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them. . . . [3] Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. . . . [4] *Keep the sabbath day. . . . The seventh day is the sabbath.* . . . [5] Honor thy father and thy mother. . . . [6] Thou shalt not kill. . . . [7] Neither shalt thou commit adultery. [8] Neither shalt thou steal. [9] Neither shalt thou bear false witness. . . . [10] Neither shalt thou covet. . . . These words spake the Lord unto all your assembly in the mount: *and he added no more* And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto you” (Deut. 5:2-22).

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“And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone” (Deut. 4:13). “When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you” (Deut. 9:9). “The Lord gave me two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant” (Deut. 9:11). “The ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt” (1 Kings 8:21). “There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone” (1 Kings 8:9)—“the tables of the covenant” (Heb. 9:4).

Comment could not make these texts prove more clearly that the ten commandments were the covenant from Sinai. Eight clear texts declare that that “covenant” was “the ten commandments.”

Uriah Smith, probably the ablest man of the Advent faith, says in his book on “Two Covenants,” page 5: “If the ten commandments constitute the old covenant, then they are forever gone.” The above eight texts plainly declare that they constituted that covenant, hence, in the language of Smith, “They are forever gone.” Saturday-keepers confine the term *covenant* to a single definition of an agreement between two or more parties.

This is not the sense, however, in which it is generally used. The “new covenant” is the “New Testament.” Is the New Testament simply a contract or agreement? Hardly. So with the Old Testament, or first covenant. But the ten commandments did enter into and became part of an agreement between God and the children of Israel. They were the chief thing, or base of the entire covenant, hence, by way of eminence, put for the whole and called “the covenant.” Beginning with Exod. 19:1, it is said that “in the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai.” In verse 3 we see

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that Moses was mediator. God sent him to say to Israel that if they would obey his voice and keep his covenant, they should be a holy nation, etc., unto himself (v. 3-6). When Moses came and told this to the Jews, they answered, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." Here was an agreement.

Next they prepared to hear the voice of God. (See v. 9-25.) God had already come down upon Sinai in majesty, "Thunders and lightnings," etc. (v. 16-19). Moses came down to charge the people to keep outside the bounds lest they perish (v. 21). Chapter 20 begins with God speaking the ten commandments aloud to all the camp of Israel. Then followed various precepts through Moses, to the end of chapter 23. Chapter 24:1-3 records the fact that Moses rehearsed to the people "*all* the words of the Lord." "And all the people answered with one voice, and said, *All the words* which the Lord hath said will we do." Then "Moses wrote *all the words of the Lord*" in a book (v. 4). In verse 7 we read that Moses read "the book of the covenant" to them, and again they said, "All that the Lord hath said we will do." "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words" (v. 8).

That closed the covenant. This was the old covenant, the first covenant, as is plainly stated in Heb. 9:15-20. The writer quotes directly from Exod. 24:8. This forever settles the matter. That covenant embraced all included in the record from Exod. 19:1 to Exod. 24:8, which is the covenant in detail written out. In the very heart of this covenant is the decalog written out in full. (Exod. 20:1-17). It is the base of the whole arrangement. It was so prominent a part of the covenant that it alone is put for the whole covenant. The stones on which it was written are called "the tables of the covenant" (Heb. 9:4). The book in which it was written was called "the book

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of the covenant” (Exod. 24:7). The ark in which it was deposited was called “the ark of the covenant” (Deut. 31:26).

In the very center of that covenant was the seventh-day sabbath commandment. (Exod. 20:8-11.) So it follows conclusively that every time that the Bible declares that the first or old covenant from Sinai is abolished, the sabbath goes with it. It cannot be otherwise. Truth declares in positive terms the abrogation of the sabbath covenant. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, 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” (Jer. 31:31, 32).

Here a new covenant is promised. The writer to the Hebrews quotes this prophecy and shows its fulfilment in the gospel. (See Heb. 8:6-13.) This new covenant is ‘*not according to* the covenant God made with Israel when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt.’ The covenant God then made is found in Exod. 19:1 to 24:8, and contains the seventh-day sabbath commandment. (Exod. 20:8-11.) Adventists try to evade this strong testimony, but they cannot. In the ark was “the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt” (1 Kings 8:21). And “*there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone*” (1 Kings 8:9). And “upon the tables” were “the words of the covenant, the ten commandments” (Exod. 34:28). This nails the matter fast. The new covenant was not to be according to this one, hence different. But what did Christ do in order to establish the second or new covenant? “Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. *He taketh away the first*, that he may establish the second” (Heb. 10:9, 10). Two covenants could not stand at the same time; hence, Christ took away the first, or old one, in order to

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establish the second, or new one. Since the seventh-day sabbath lay in the heart of the old one, when Christ removed that covenant, the seventh-day sabbath went with it. Unless the seventh day is commanded and enjoined upon the church in the New Covenant or Testament, it is forever gone. The fourth commandment of that first covenant cannot be found in the New Testament; hence, it is no part of the new covenant.

The two covenants are thus contrasted in Heb. 8:6-13. The decalog and what clustered around it is termed “the first covenant,” “old covenant,” “faulty covenant,” which “decayeth,” “waxeth old,” and is “ready to vanish away”; while the New Testament is termed the “second covenant,” “new covenant,” “better covenant,” “not according to” the first covenant, “written in our minds and hearts.”

Again, they are contrasted in Heb. 12:18-27 as follows: First. “Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words,” etc.; namely, when God came down on mount Sinai and delivered the law. “That which was commanded,” “that which was spoken on earth,” that which is “shaken” and “removed.” Second. “Ye are come unto mount Zion, . . . the heavenly Jerusalem, . . . to the general assembly and church of the first-born” (the law which came out of Zion, the New Testament), “new covenant” “which speaketh better things,” which was spoken “from heaven” (see Heb. 1:1, 2), which “can not be shaken” and “remains.”

Paul again contrasts these two covenants in his second letter to the Corinthian brethren. (Ch. 3:2-18.) The first he terms “the old testament,” “the ministration of death,” the “letter” which “killeth,” “the ministration of condemnation,” which “was glorious,” that which “was written and engraven in tables of stone,” which is “done

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away” and “abolished.” The second he terms “the new testament,” “the spirit” which “giveth life” (for comments see Rom. 8:2; John 6:63), “the ministration of the spirit,” the “ministration of righteousness,” the “glory that excelleth,” that which is written “in the fleshy tables of the heart,” that which “remaineth.” The old covenant was “done away,” while the new is an “everlasting covenant” (Heb. 13:20, 21).

In Gal. 4:24, 25 the covenant from Sinai is termed a bondwoman, because it gendered to bondage. “Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” (Gal. 4:30, 31).

We deem these scriptures sufficient to convince any reasonable man. Since the fourth commandment is not found anywhere in the New Testament, it is no part of the “new covenant”; and, thank God, we are new covenant Christians and enjoy the rest that remains for the people of God.

The Jewish Sabbath Abolished

Since the first covenant enjoining the seventh day is abolished, what do we find in the new covenant? What is enjoined in the New Testament? Answer: Not one command from the first chapter of Matthew to the last of Revelation to keep the seventh day. The fourth commandment of the decalog cannot be found in the New Testament. It is not possible to cite one text where the seventh day is commanded in the “truth which came by Jesus Christ.”

One Sabbatarian in our presence, referred to Matt. 24:20, where Jesus said, “Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day,” and said this was the command.

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This text does not add a feather's weight of evidence in favor of Saturday keeping. 1. It is no command to keep the sabbath. 2. The sacredness of the day was not the thing in question. It was the safety of God's people in their flight from the doomed city, as the context clearly shows. (See verses 15-21.) 3. It would be no violation of the sabbath to flee out of the city on that day in case of necessity. Then the sacredness of the day was not what Jesus had in view. This being true, there is no argument in the text for Saturday keeping.

4. On the sabbath day the gates of the city were shut, as well as all the villages through which they must pass. (See Dr. Adam Clarke and others of good authority on this text.) This was the Jews' custom. Hence it would be dangerous, and almost, if not altogether, impossible to flee on that day. Any candid person can readily see that this is all there is in the text.

I repeat: The duty to keep the seventh day is not once mentioned in the New Testament. "There is not one single commandment from either Christ or the apostles to keep that day. It is not once said that it is wrong to work on the seventh day, or that God will bless any one for observing it. There is no promise for keeping it, no threat for not keeping it." Time and again, long lists of sins are given, but the breaking of the sabbath is not mentioned even once in the New Testament.

Since no command to keep the seventh day can be found in the New Testament, and the fourth command of the stone-table law is left clear out, then it is no part of the new covenant; and since we are New Testament Christians we are under no obligation to keep that day. Adventists say, "Jesus kept the seventh day, therefore we must." Answer: Jesus was born and lived under the law till his death, when it was abolished. (Gal. 4:4; Col. 2:14.) He no doubt kept every item of it. He was circumcised. Does that make circumcision

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binding on us? He kept the passover. Does that bind it on us? He sent a man to offer a gift according to the law. (Matt. 8:4). Does that make offering gifts according to Moses' law binding on us now? He commanded his disciples to observe all the scribes taught. (Matt. 23:2, 3.) Is it binding on us to do that? Adventists and all others admit these things no longer binding, though Jesus practiced them. Just so with the Jewish sabbath, and all Moses' law, which ended at the cross. Jesus kept it while living as a Jew under the Jewish law.

“But,” it is objected that “the term *sabbath* is found fifty-nine times in the New Testament, and always applies to the seventh day.” Answer: “The temple is mentioned in the New Testament one hundred and fifteen times; circumcision fifty-five times; sacrifices thirty-eight times; and the passover twenty-eight times.” The same argument proves all these in the gospel. Preposterous! In the book of Acts every mention of the sabbath is in connection with Jewish worship. The Jews still kept their day, and all the law, hence, when the apostles preached to the Jews they were compelled to do so on the Jews' day. Thus we read of Paul going in and preaching to the Jews “every sabbath.” Had he gone any other day, he would have found no congregation. For a number of years about all the preaching was among the Jews; hence, was frequently done on their sabbath. And if it could even be proved that some Jewish Christians kept the seventh day, this would have no weight in its favor, for James told Paul that there were ‘thousands of Jews which believed; and they were all zealous of the law’ (Acts 21:20). They kept all of it, circumcision and all, for a time. Paul circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3.) He kept Pentecost (Acts 18:21; 20:16); shaved his head (Acts 18:18); made offerings (Acts 21:20-26), etc., and lived much like the Jews. He says, “that I might win the Jews.”

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But will Sabbatarians contend that these things are now binding on Gentile Christians? Hardly. So with the Jewish sabbath. In not one single meeting of Gentile Christians did they meet on the seventh day. Every exclusive meeting of the church after the resurrection of Christ was on the first day of the week. (Matt. 28:8-11; John 20:19-22; Luke 24:31-36; John 20:26; Acts 2:1; Acts 20:6, 7; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2.) Another fact worthy of note: If Hebrews be counted as of Pauline authorship Paul wrote fourteen epistles and in all these fourteen, he never even names the sabbath but one time, and that was only to show its abolition (Col. 2:16). How do Paul's writings compare with the books, tracts, and letters written by Saturday-keepers? They make the keeping of days the most prominent thing. But Paul says, "Ye observe days. . . . I am afraid of you." How different!

Paul positively declares that the sabbath is abolished. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. . . . Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Col. 2:14, 16, 17).

Here the sabbath is classed in with all the Jewish ordinances which *were nailed to the cross and blotted out*. It is placed among the "shadows" of the law. This forever settles the matter. By the terms "holy days" and "new moon" Paul included all other feasts and rests, monthly and yearly, called sabbaths, leaving nothing but the weekly sabbath, the seventh day, to be meant by the "sabbath days" which were "blotted out," and "nailed to the cross." I will cite a few texts on the expression "sabbath days." "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days?" (Matt. 12:10.) "Taught them on the sabbath

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days” (Luke 4:31). “On the sabbath days, the priests in the temple profane the sabbath” (Matt. 12:5). “Three sabbath days reasoned with them” (Acts 17:2).

In all these texts “sabbath days” refers to the weekly seventh-day sabbath; and Paul says that these “sabbath days” are blotted out, being a “shadow of things to come.” The apostle points to the cross as the correct date when this took place. The words “sabbath” and “sabbath days” occur sixty times in the New Testament. Of these, Adventists admit fifty-nine apply to the seventh day. But in this one instance (Col. 2:16), they say it applies elsewhere. Is it not strange that fifty-nine times it means the sabbath, and the sixtieth time it means something else—the same word in the Greek and English? Paul classifies the holy days and gives the same identical list in Colossians 2 as is given over and over again in Moses’ law, where the seventh day is clearly meant. See Numbers 28th and 29th chapters; 1 Chron. 23:30, 31; 2 Chron. 2:4; 8:13; 31:3; Neh. 10:33; Ezek. 45:17; Isa. 1:13, 14. In all these texts is set forth the law for the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly offerings, those on each day, on the weekly sabbaths, on the new moons, and the yearly feast days.

So there is no way under heaven to evade the positive testimony of Col. 2:14-17, where it is declared that the sabbath was only a “shadow of things to come.” Since the substance has come, the shadow has disappeared, viz., was “nailed to the cross,” and “blotted out.” Amen.

The Sabbath Rest of the Gospel

“Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were

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finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. 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. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Heb. 4:1, 3-5, 7-11).

Sabbath means rest. In the above language the apostle clearly points out the sabbath rest of the gospel. It is not the observance of any particular day, not a temporal blessing, or simply rest from manual labor; but is a spiritual attainment, a blessed experience of the soul, which is entered by faith. “For we which have believed do enter into rest.” This blessed soul rest is not deferred to some future age, but the children of faith now *do enter* into rest. Of this rest the apostle shows that the seventh day was a type. “God did rest on the seventh day from all his works.” Twenty-five hundred years after he had rested he blessed and sanctified that day, because in it *he had* rested. (Gen. 2:3; Neh. 9:13, 14.) He gave the sabbath to Israel as a law for them to keep and observe. That law was but a shadow of good things to come. (Heb. 10:1.) Not that one part of time is better than another, but in order to have a shadow or type of the perfect soul rest of the redeemed, God set apart every seventh day to be kept holy by the Israelites, and that sabbath was “a shadow of things to come” (Col. 2:16, 17). While the seventh day was instituted a memorial of God’s rest at creation, and a sign between God and Israel, commemorating their deliverance from Egypt, yet it pointed forward as a type and shadow to the eternal rest of the redeemed

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soul in Jesus Christ. Just like the passover, which was a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and always pointed back to that event (see Exod. 12:11-17) yet it was a shadow of Christ—"Christ our passover," "sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). So it might be said of all the annual feasts. They were a type of Christ and his redemption work in some way, and yet were memorials of past events.

The seventh-day sabbath belongeth to, and was obligatory upon the people of God in the dispensation day of types and shadows. Those Old Testament worthies grasped the shadow, but the substance was a mystery then hid in God. Under that law they never reached the rest of complete salvation. Hence God "again limited a certain day," "another day," in which day all shadows and types would reach the substance in Jesus Christ. That certain limited day, Paul says, is "today"; viz., the gospel day, the day of salvation. (2 Cor. 6:2.) In this day, when the shadowy sabbath—the seventh day—has forever passed away, "there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9). First, the seventh day (v. 4) which was "a shadow of things to come," under the law dispensation; next, "another day," the gospel day, where we reach the substance in a rest that remains to the people of God. "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God."—*A. Layman*. "There is then a sabbath rest left for the people of God."—*Thomas*. Other translations render this similarly. We which have believed do enter into rest. By faith we now enter the sabbath rest, of which the seventh day was but a type or shadow. This sabbath rest is not one day in seven. "For he that is entered into his rest [the sabbath rest of the gospel], he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his" (v. 10). When God finished creation's work in six days, he began resting the seventh. But did he then cease? No; he rested the eighth, ninth, tenth days, and so on, and has been resting ever

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since. So as God's rest from creation's work has continued from that day to this, so we have ceased from our sinful works, and are resting every day, yea, all the days of our life; and the same blessed rest will continue to all eternity. This is the sabbath of the gospel dispensation.

It was thus prophesied. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious" (Isa. 11:10). "Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jer. 6:16).

These texts are clear predictions of Christ, the root of Jesse, and the result of his redeeming grace. He was to give rest to the soul, and his rest should be glorious. This rest is found in the "good way," and Jesus says, "I am the way." So the sabbath rest of the gospel is found in Jesus Christ. Jesus is Shiloh—the rest-giver. Hear his gracious words: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your soul" (Matt. 11:28, 29).

Oh, the sweet sabbath of the gospel—not a rest to our body only one day in seven, but a rest to our soul every day—a rest that gives quietness and assurance forever.

I will here make some comparisons and contrasts between the old and new sabbaths—between the shadow and substance.

1. The former was the observance of every seventh day. The latter is not the observance of any particular day. Proof: "One man [the Jew] esteemeth one day above another: another [the Gentile Christian] esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully

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persuaded in his own mind” (Rom. 14:5, 6). “Ye observe days. . . . I am afraid of you” (Gal. 4:10, 11).

2. The former was a rest to the body. The latter is a rest of the soul. (Matt. 11:28, 29; Heb. 4:1-11.)

3. In the former they kept but one day in seven holy. In the latter, we keep every day holy. (Luke 1:74, 75.)

4. Abstinence from all manual labor constituted a holy day under the former. In the latter, abstinence from manual labor does not make any day holy to us; but abstinence from all sinful works, and a holy life and experience, make all days holy days. (Heb. 4:10; Luke 1:74, 75.)

5. In the former, by the performance of any manual labor they broke the sabbath, and death was the penalty. In the latter, by indulging in the least bit of sin we lose our sabbath soul rest, and spiritual death is the result.

6. The former is a shadow or type of the latter. (Col. 2:14-16; Heb. 4:1, 3-11)

Dear Adventist friend, you are clinging to a shadow, while we enjoy the substance. Your sabbath died and was buried at the cross.

The Lord's Day

John, on the isle of Patmos, in A. D. 96, testified, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day” (Rev. 1:10). We have already clearly seen that the Jewish sabbath ended at the cross; that the sabbath of the gospel is a spiritual rest attained to in Jesus Christ; an experience found in redeeming grace. This glorious sabbath rest was effected and purchased through the death and resurrection of the Lord. Is it not fitting, then, that in this dispensation Christians should have

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something as a memorial to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus our Lord? something to point back to those events, which were the mightiest that ever occurred in heaven or earth? the two events that are the center and hub of all redemption blessings? We answer, Yes. And the Lord of the new dispensation has not left us without two monuments erected; the one to commemorate his death, and the other his resurrection. These are “the Lord’s Supper” and “the Lord’s day.” The former is observed in remembrance of his death. (See 1 Cor. 11:25, 26.) The latter is kept in honor of his resurrection.

Not once in the Bible is the seventh day ever called the Lord’s day. “The sabbath” was the term always used for that day. In his writings John himself always calls the seventh day “sabbath” (John 5:9, 10, 16, 18; 7:22, 23; 9:14, 16; 19:31). But in Rev. 1:10 he certainly speaks of a day that belongs exclusively to the Christian dispensation. The Jewish sabbath was abolished at the cross, and John wrote sixty years later. Notice the expressions in the New Testament, “the Lord’s death,” “the Lord’s body,” “the Lord’s table,” “the Lord’s supper,” and “the Lord’s day.” All apply exclusively to the current dispensation.

This was the day that Christ arose from the dead. When we come this side of the sacred writings all the church fathers apply the term “Lord’s day” to the first day of the week. A careful reading of the Scriptures proves that the first day of the week was the day of assembly and worship among the early church. Read the following texts: Luke 24:36; John 20:19; 20:26; Acts 2:1; Acts 20:6, 7. The church never regarded this day strictly as a Sabbath, nor is it once in Scripture given that term. It is always called “the first day of the week,” “eighth day,” and “Lord’s day.” The Christians celebrated it by assembling together in holy convocation and spiritual worship

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and devotion. It was a day of spiritual work and rejoicing. Tertullian says, at the close of the second century: “We celebrate Sunday as a joyful day.”

Christians have thus celebrated the day Jesus rose from the dead, as a joyful day of worship and devotion, from the resurrection to the present time. Also, since the laws of our land have set apart this day as a Sabbath day of rest from manual labor, we, as a God-fearing people, observe the same, being subject to laws, as God has ordained. (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-15, 17.)

