

SUNDAY OR SABBATH

Which should
Christians Observe?

A Bible answer to Seventh Day Adventists, proving that the Sabbath was first made known at Mount Sinai as a part of the Mosaic Law, was never commanded or observed before that, is never commanded even once in the New Testament; that the Sabbath is ceremonial law, not moral, was given as a special sign to Israel; that the New Testament plainly warns Christians against keeping the Sabbath. Shows Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, pictures man's works; Sunday, the Lord's day, pictures salvation by grace.

Read 2-18-52

by Evangelist

JOHN R. RICE, D.D.

Ordinances of
Ceremonial Law

MEAT

DRINK

HOLY DAY

NEW MOON

SABBATH

DAYS

"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 holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

"Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ"

(Colossians 2:14, 16, 17)

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did Israel worship on
Saturday or hourly rest.

SUNDAY OR SABBATH—

Which Should Christians Observe?

A Bible Answer to Honest Seventh Day Adventists

Many honest people are greatly confused about the Sabbath question. The trouble here, as in the case of other doctrines, is because many follow human leadership and tradition instead of the Word of God. Seventh Day Adventists say that the Sabbath is the seventh day and that all Christian people ought to keep the seventh day as a day of rest and worship. Some even go so far as to say that salvation depends upon the Old Testament Sabbath and that "the mark of the beast" mentioned in Revelation is keeping Sunday instead of Saturday as a day of rest and worship! Another group of men answer back that since the resurrection of Christ, the Sabbath is changed from the seventh day to the first day and that now all Christians ought to observe Sunday as a day of rest and worship. These call Sunday "the Christian Sabbath," call Sunday School "the Sabbath School," and believe that all the commands in the Old Testament about the Sabbath, or Saturday, the seventh day of the week, ought to be applied to Sunday, the first day of the week.

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Answers.

BOTH ARE MISTAKEN as you will soon see from the Scripture. We may be sure that the Bible has a very clear teaching on this subject and that when we are willing to search the Word of God and take God at His word we can know without doubt God's will for us concerning this and other necessary matters of Bible doctrine and Christian life. The Bible does not say that Christians should observe the Sabbath today. The Bible says nothing about "the mark of the beast" being the observation of Sunday. On the other hand, the Bible certainly does not call Sunday "the Christian Sabbath" nor any other kind of Sabbath.

The Old Testament Sabbath Is the Seventh Day

Exodus 20:10 plainly says, "But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God." Concerning this there can be no differences of opinion.

In some languages the word for Sabbath means seventh. The Sabbath of rest followed six days of labor and was counted the last day of the week. Saturday is the Old Testament Sabbath.

The Sabbath Is an Old Testament and Not a New Testament Command

The average Bible student has strangely missed this fact: the Sabbath is a part of Mosaic Law and was never given to anybody but Jews under the law. Many preachers who would not think of urging Gentile congregations to observe the command about circumcision or to refrain from pork and catfish, yet sincerely preach to them, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."

Such preachers mean, "Remember Sunday to keep it holy" and call Sunday the Sabbath. However, there is no more command for Christians to keep the Sabbath than there is for Christians to avoid pork or catfish or to be circumcised. Read very carefully the scriptural proof which I will now give you and get the matter settled in your heart.

First, in the entire New Testament there is not a single command to observe the Sabbath! Every other one of the Ten Commandments is repeated in the New Testament (some many times), with the exception of the Sabbath. Of all the sins mentioned in the New Testament, Sabbath-breaking is never once mentioned as a sin! Jesus did not command His disciples to keep the Sabbath. He was repeatedly called into question on this matter of the Sabbath and never once asked the public to observe the Sabbath. In fact, we are told in John 5:18 that the Jews, rigorous Sabbath-keepers that they were, sought to kill Jesus—

"Because he not only HAD BROKEN THE SABBATH, but said also that God was His Father making himself equal with God."

Jesus hated Jesus because He Himself did not keep the Jewish Sabbath. In rebuking them for their criticism when the disciples gathered grain to eat on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:1-8), Jesus referred them to the Scripture, "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6), and said that if they had understood that Scripture, they would not have condemned the guiltless. Jesus clearly meant that the Sabbath was a part of the ceremonial law, like the sacrifices, which was fulfilled in Jesus.

Jesus did not teach anybody to keep the Sabbath. This fact cannot be denied! The apostles did not teach the New Testament churches to observe the Sabbath. The council at Jerusalem, sending word to the Gentile converts as to what they should do, did not even mention the Sabbath (Acts 15:19-24). The books of Hebrews and James, written to dispersed Israel, do not even refer to the Sabbath as a day to be kept; and Paul in all his epistles

to the churches never once intimated that Christians are to observe the Sabbath! The Sabbath is Old Testament, not New Testament. Make sure of this before you go any further.

The Sabbath Is Mosaic Law, Given to Israel Under the Law

As remarkable as is the absence of the Sabbath command in the New Testament, is its absence before Mount Sinai in the Old Testament. Genesis 2:1-3 teaches that when God had finished creation he rested on the seventh day and blessed that day and sanctified it. But no command is given to man concerning that day either in the Garden of Eden or afterward until Mount Sinai. There is no record that God ever spoke to Adam or Enoch or Noah or Abraham about the Sabbath, nor that any of them ever observed it or ever heard of it! Remember that this passage here in Genesis 2:1-3 was not written until Moses wrote these first five books of the Bible under divine inspiration in the wilderness, after Mount Sinai. The first time the word *Sabbath* is used in the Bible is in Exodus 16:23, and men never heard of it until that time.

This is all the more remarkable when you remember that the people already had the week as a period of time (Gen. 29:27; Gen. 8:10-12). When you read about the incident in Exodus 16:23-36, it is quite clear that it was a strange new teaching to the people of Israel and that they had never observed it before.

Now we turn to Nehemiah 9:13-14 which says:

"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."

After recounting the oppression in Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea, the Scriptures tell us that God came down upon Mount Sinai and "made known" to the people His holy Sabbath. The Sabbath, then, was a part of the Mosaic Law. It was not a previous command incorporated in the Mosaic Law, like marriage, the tithe, or even circumcision. No, the Sabbath was given to Israel as a part of the ceremonial law. It was "made known" on Mount Sinai! No man on earth ever heard of it before then.

This same teaching, that the Sabbath was first given or made known at Mount Sinai, is taught again in Ezekiel 20:10-12.

"Wherefore 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 shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. 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."

Notice carefully that the Lord Himself says concerning Israel at Mount Sinai: "I gave them my sabbaths to be a sign between me and them." No man ever heard of the Sabbath before it was given to Israel as recorded in Exodus 16:23-36.

The Sabbath Given as a Special Sign to Israel

That matter was quite clear to Israel. On Mount Sinai the Lord revealed to Moses that this command was given to Israel as a special covenant between God and that nation. In Exodus 31:12, 13, 16, 17 the Lord says:

"And the Lord spoke 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 . . . 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 FOREVER: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed."

Ezekiel 20:12 repeats that explanation of the meaning of the Sabbath. It was a sign between God and Israel.

It becomes clear then by the plain and repeated teaching of God's Word, that the Sabbath is a command to Israel under Mosaic Law as a special sign or covenant between them and God and was never commanded to Gentiles in any dispensation.

When we speak of the Sabbath, then we speak of the seventh day, Saturday, as the Old Testament command of ceremonial law to Jews.

New Testament Christians Plainly Warned Against Keeping the Sabbath

Now when we turn again to the New Testament, we find that instead of being commanded to keep the Sabbath, the keeping of the Sabbath is discouraged. In Colossians 2:14 we are told that Christ blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances, since that was against us, "and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." Then we are plainly commanded in the verses 16 and 17:

"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."

Let no man judge you concerning the Sabbath days! That was a shadow which was all right until the coming of Christ, but now He is come and the shadow is fulfilled! Therefore no Seventh Day Adventist nor Jew has the right to pass judgment on any Christian concerning the Sabbath

day. The command about the Sabbath day was nailed to the cross with the commands about certain meats and with the other ceremonial laws. God does not want Christians to observe the Jewish Sabbath and plainly says so.

In Galatians 4:8-11, Paul evidently refers to the same thing. The Galatian Christians had been led away into Judaism. Paul in this letter is urging them to break the old tie of Judaism, the "weak and beggarly elements" or "bondage" of Old Testament ceremonial law. In Galatians 4:10-11 he says:

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain."

The "DAYS" mentioned here were Sabbaths, part of the Old Testament ceremonial law for Jews. Paul did not want New Testament Christians to be in bondage to the Old Testament Sabbath or other days, months, times and years of the ceremonial law.

Sunday Then Is Not "The Christian Sabbath"

You can easily see then that preachers are wrong who say that Sunday is the Christian Sabbath, or who say that the Sabbath has now been changed to the first day of the week. The word *Sabbath*, speaking of one particular day of each week, the regular Sabbath, as used in the Bible, always means Saturday, the seventh day of the week. There is not anywhere in the Bible any record where the Sabbath was changed from Saturday to Sunday. Preachers who use such an argument in explaining why they do not keep Saturday will find themselves greatly embarrassed when they cannot prove it by the Scriptures, and their congregation will be many times troubled by the Seventh Day Adventist teaching of the Mosaic Law.

Catholics Did Not Start First Day Worship

Seventh Day Adventists claim that Catholics changed the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week. The funny part is that some Catholic writers admit that they did! Adventist teachers ought to know however that Catholics simply mean that they claim Peter as the first pope and say that the Sabbath was changed in New Testament times by the apostles and therefore by the Catholic Church. It is true that the Catholic Church has backed some civil laws enforcing Sunday as a day of rest. Catholic popes and rulers tried to enforce by civil laws the observance of Sunday as if it were the Old Testament Sabbath, making it legalistic or ceremonial. That is an entirely different matter from starting the use of the first day as a day of worship. Acts 20:7 clearly shows that that began in New Testament times. That verse reads as follows:

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."

It is clear that New Testament disciples met on the first day of the week, and it is inferred that this group may have met regularly on this day to take the Lord's Supper.

First Corinthians 16:2 also indicates that the first day of the week had special meaning to New Testament Christians and that Sunday, as a religious day, was not an invention of Roman Catholics and the "mark of the beast," as Adventists claim.

Remember, however, that this first day of the week is never called a "Sabbath" in the Bible, and we should not call it a Sabbath.

The First Day, the New Testament Day of Worship

The New Testament gives many records when Jesus, and later Paul, met with Jews in their synagogue on the Sabbath or seventh day and preached to them. That is just as when a preacher of today has services at such times and places as he can get a crowd. A preacher should go where the people gather and preach to them. But when it comes to the meeting of New Testament disciples for worship, we never find an account of churches using the Sabbath for that day. On the other hand, Acts 20:7 clearly states that the disciples met on the first day of the week and the context indicates that this was a regular service at a regular time to take the Lord's Supper. First Corinthians 16:2 plainly shows that "the first day of the week" had a religious significance to New Testament Christians. They were commanded to set aside on that day their gifts for the Lord's work.

It is probable that "the Lord's day" of Revelation 1:10 means the first day of the week on which the disciples were accustomed to gathering for worship. John was worshipping the Lord on this day, that is, he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Certainly the Bible nowhere teaches that "the Lord's day" is the Sabbath or seventh day. The Bible does not even hint that any other day besides the first should be used as a day of worship. The Lord's Day must be our Sunday. New Testament Christians did not have a day commanded for rest, but they used the first day of the week, not the Sabbath, as a day of worship.

Jewish Sabbath Not a Day of Worship

The Sabbath, Saturday, in the Old Testament, was for physical rest alone, not a day of worship. When you read again the Old Testament commands about the Sabbath, you will notice that it was never given as a day of worship.

"But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."
—Exodus 20:10.

The word "Sabbath" in the Hebrew language (in which the command was given), means "cessation" or "rest."

Worship went on in the tabernacle and in the temple seven days a week just the same except for certain national religious holidays when the program was somewhat varied.

We find that during the period between the Old and New Testaments the custom of meeting in the synagogue on the Sabbath arose, but not by divine command. There is no Bible command for the synagogue nor for any of the synagogue worship. The Sabbath of the Mosaic Law was purely a day of rest, not a day of worship nor church-going.

We may be sure that the principle of one day's rest in seven for man and beast is a good one, and on such grounds Christians have many times advocated civil laws to provide a day of rest one day a week. Usually the day selected has been Sunday, when Christian people would want to use the day for worship. **HOWEVER, NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANS HAVE NO COMMAND FROM GOD TO ABSTAIN FROM LABOR ON ANY CERTAIN DAY, NOR EVEN TO MEET FOR WORSHIP ON A GIVEN DAY OF THE WEEK.** That is for a Christian a matter of grace and should be voluntary.

Should Christians Then Observe Sunday?

Since Christians are not bound by the Old Testament command to observe the Sabbath, is it right for Christians to observe Sunday? The answer is that we should not observe Sunday as a legalistic Sabbath, part of the ceremonial law; but that we do well to observe the Lord's day voluntarily for our own good as a day of worship. The Scripture plainly says: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Hebrews 10:25). We are commanded to meet for worship. Since New Testament disciples in Acts 20:7 met on Sunday; and John, a lonely exile on the Island of Patmos, worshipped on the "Lord's Day" (evidently the same); and since I Corinthians 16:2 mentions Sunday as a day of religious duty, certainly we ought to give ourselves to worship on that day.

Some people object and say that if you worship on Sunday, you keep a day dedicated to the sun since Sunday was named for the sun. Well, Saturday is named for Saturn! All the days are God's days, and all should be **w**ed for Him no matter how they were named. The days of the week do

not have now the same names as they had in Bible times, but we do have the same days whether we call one Sunday or the first day of the week, or another Saturday or the seventh day of the week. New Testament Christians met on the first day of the week before it was called Sunday. Jews kept Saturday as a day of rest before it was called Saturday. But what has that to do with us? We settle this by God's Word, not by history.

Christians certainly ought to make it possible for as many others as possible to worship on Sunday with them. For employers of labor to close their business on Sunday makes it possible for workmen to attend services as God commanded, and besides provides time for needful rest. We cannot put that on a basis of Jewish law and ought not to. We ought to put it on a basis of grace as Christians who seek to honor the Lord and treat our fellowman as we would be treated.

Let us not use our liberty in this matter for an occasion to the flesh (Gal. 5:13). Christians should not let their liberty concerning the Lord's day be taken as license to do wrong. Surely Christians ought to use this day in a way which would please the Lord Jesus for whom it was named "the Lord's day." Some Christians have a legalistic idea of Sunday, calling it the Sabbath. We should not cause them to stumble and be an offense unto them by our liberty. Many things we should do for their conscience's sake and for the sake of unsaved people who might not understand our liberty. For Paul, under divine inspiration concerning meats offered to idols which were an offense to some, wrote:

"Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other; for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."—I Cor. 10:29-33.

Yes, Christians should use Sunday for their own good and the glory of Christ as a day of worship and service to God, seeking to offend none but to save all and bless all.

The Spiritual Meaning of the First Day of the Week

Six in the Bible is man's number, and seven is the divine or complete number. Six days of labor followed by the Sabbath of rest pictures man living a perfect life under the law and earning the rest, perfection and salvation pictured by the seventh day. Of course man failed under the law, and no one was ever able to keep it (Acts 15:10, Rom. 3:20, Gal. 3:11). But the New Testament Christian, worshipping God on the first day of the week,

means that he already has salvation as a free gift before he did any work, and now being saved, the Christian works the rest of his life to glorify the Saviour he loves. Read Hebrews 4:9, 10.

From Mark 16:2, 9 it seems clear that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. In the twentieth chapter of John we find that when Mary and others came to the sepulchre on the first day of the week, very early while it was yet dark, Jesus appeared to her and said, "I am not yet ascended to my Father." It appears that the Saviour some time in that night which was a part of the first day of the week, had come out of the grave. Here is a great blessing for us. Jesus rising from the dead for our justification, (Rom. 4:25) means that now we are counted righteous without any labor and without the deeds of the law and "have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Concerning this, Hebrews 4:10 says:

"For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

Blessed is the Christian who does not depend on his own works but rests in the finished work of Christ on the cross!

From Hebrews 4:9-11 it seems that two rests or "Sabbaths" are mentioned. (The word *rest* in Hebrews 4:9 is the same word as *Sabbath* in the Greek.) That is the teaching with which all Jews were familiar.

One of the greatest feasts which God gave to the Jews, or Israel, shows this idea of the rests of a Christian, one at salvation and the other after the resurrection. The feast of unleavened bread following the passover supper, as given in Exodus 12:15, 16, lasted seven days. This week represented the complete cycle of a Christian life after conversion, which conversion is pictured by the passover lamb at the beginning of the feast. See I Corinthians 5:6-8. The unleavened bread represents, surely, our feeding on Christ, our fellowship and communion with Him. That fellowship, or peace, begins immediately at conversion as Israel ate the unleavened bread with the passover lamb. The peace and joy of a Christian life should begin immediately when one trusts Christ for salvation. The first day of that feast of unleavened bread was a day of rest when no work was to be done. That pictures a Christian resting from his own works when he has partaken of Christ.

At the close of the week was another day of rest. At the close of life's journey, Christians will enter into perfect rest, for "there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God"! (Heb. 4:9). You can see why Israel, under the law, should keep the Sabbath just as they kept the passover supper and the feast of unleavened bread. All of them pointed toward Christ. A Christian need keep neither the passover supper nor the feast of unleavened bread nor the Sabbath since we have Christ Himself, the fulfillment of all the shadows and types and ceremonial law.

On the other hand, the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday) is clearly a picture of a rest earned after work. Under the law, if one were perfect all his life, fulfilling all the commands, he would deserve Heaven. Since no one was ever perfect but Jesus, nor did any one besides Him keep the law, man could not be saved by the law. You can see then how the Jewish Sabbath, picturing a salvation by good works, is out of place in a dispensation of grace. We are saved by grace, freely, justified without the deeds of the law, so we worship on the first day of the week, representing peace and rest obtained without labor. The Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, is ceremonial law, and does not fit a grace dispensation. Our Lord's Day, the first day of the week, does fit every Christian.

Great Differences Between the Sabbath and the Lord's Day

1. The Sabbath was for Israelites only, under Mosaic Law. The Lord's Day is for New Testament Christians, under grace.
2. The Sabbath was law, enforced with the death penalty, by the command of God (Num. 15:32-36). The Lord's Day, or first day of the week, is grace, without command or penalty, observed voluntarily by Christians if at all. *EXOD. 31:14*
3. The Sabbath was a day of physical rest (Exo. 20:10). The Lord's Day is a day of worship (Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10).
4. The Sabbath typified salvation by works; the Lord's Day typifies salvation by grace.

Christians Are Not Under the Law

Our Seventh Day Adventist brethren, like the Galatian Christians, have tried to lead us into the yoke of bondage of the Mosaic Law. Many of them teach, and most of them believe, that salvation depends upon keeping the Mosaic Law. They not only preach the Old Testament Sabbath, but they often teach the Old Testament laws against eating certain kinds of meats. They teach the tithe as a part of the way to be saved or to stay saved. For that matter they might as well teach the rest of Jewish ceremonial laws if one must keep the law to be saved. As a matter of fact, the ceremonial laws as given to Israel were plainly fulfilled and not for us according to Colossians 2:14-17 and I Timothy 4:3-5. God plainly tells us that the law about not eating certain meats is not binding on Christians.

"For EVERY CREATURE of God is good, and NOTHING TO BE REFUSED, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."—I Tim. 4:4, 5.

About circumcision, New Testament Christians are plainly told:

"Is any called in uncircumcision? Let him NOT BE CIRCUMCISED."
—I Cor. 7:18.

So about the Sabbath, the command about it was nailed to the cross and blotted out with the other ceremonial laws, as the Lord specifically says, in Colossians 2:16, 17:

"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."

If a Christian were under the law about the Sabbath, then he should be stoned for picking up sticks on Saturday as God commanded in Numbers 15:32-36. He could not even have a fire in the house on Saturday as God commanded Israel in Exodus 35:3. Thank God, that heavy burden of ceremonial law is not for us!

The *moral* laws concerning lying, stealing, adultery, murder, etc., are repeated many times in the New Testament. These sins are inherently wrong, were wrong since before the Mosaic Law, as when Cain killed Abel. Christians ought to keep the moral law, to do right and not wrong. But it is not true that men are saved by keeping the law. They never were and never will be. People are saved by simply trusting in Christ, and have everlasting life on that basis alone, and not by keeping either the ceremonial or moral law.

Read again these Scriptures, and have settled in your heart forever that you are not under law but under grace!

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. 2:8-9.

Titus 3:5 also plainly teaches that men are not saved or kept saved by acts of righteousness.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Then let us

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."—Gal. 5:1.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."—Gal. 3:13.

"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. 2:16, 17.

Further Proof the Sabbath Was Ceremonial Law, for Jews Only, Never Commanded for New Testament Christians.

1. *That is what the Scriptures expressly say.*

Read again Colossians 2:13-17.

"13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 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; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

That Scripture is talking about the Jewish ceremonial law which was fulfilled and done away with when Jesus died. Gentiles were in "uncircumcision," says the Scripture; the "handwriting of ordinances" of the Jews was against the Gentiles and contrary to them. But this "handwriting of ordinances" which was against uncircumcised people, Christ took "out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Certainly that refers to the ceremonial law. Was the moral law done away with when Jesus died? Are men now free from obligation about the commands "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not commit adultery," "Thou shalt not steal"? You know that we are not free from obligation to do right about such matters. The moral law was not erased, not rescinded when Jesus died. It was not nailed to the cross, crucified, killed. That was the ceremonial law which lost its force when Jesus died because it was already fulfilled.

So verse 16 above plainly says Christians are not to be judged concerning these ceremonial laws. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days."

Leviticus, chapter 11, named as part of the ceremonial law a number of animals that Jews were not to eat, such as pork, fish that did not have both fins and scales, etc. And in that connection Jews were plainly told that if the lizard, snail, mole or other such animals which were ceremonially unclean, should fall into an earthen vessel, then the water of that vessel would be likewise unclean, and the vessel must be broken. Leviticus 11:34 says, "Of all meat which may be eaten, that on which such water cometh shall be unclean: and all drink that may be drunk in every such vessel shall be unclean." But that ceremonial law concerning eating and drinking was

nailed to the cross of Christ, and Colossians 2:16 plainly says we are not to be judged concerning those dietary rules of meat and drink. Likewise, Christians are not to be judged "in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days." These ordinances were nailed to the cross. They are taken out of the way! No Christian must allow himself to be judged by these ceremonial laws which were fulfilled completely when Jesus died.

Then verse 17 says plainly that all these ordinances "are a shadow of things to come." That is what ceremonial laws are—a shadow or symbol or picture or object lesson. But when Jesus died, the body itself has come, of which the others were a shadow. Now we have Christ, and He has fulfilled those ceremonial laws, they are all nailed to the cross, and Christians must not be judged by the ceremonial Sabbath of the Jews. So the Scripture plainly commands.

2. *The second proof that the Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, is a part of the ceremonial law and never commanded to New Testament Christians is the fact that the Scriptures plainly say the Sabbath was a special sign between God and the children of Israel.*

In Exodus 31:12,13 is this plain statement,

"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."

In verse 13 God says, "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." The word *sanctify* means *set apart*. So Israel is set apart from other nations. A sign of this separation of the Jews from the Gentiles is the Sabbath.

In verses 16 and 17 the Lord said, *"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath . . . It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever."*

In Ezekiel 20:12 the Lord says,

"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."

Thus again we are plainly told that the Sabbath is a special sign between God and Israel, a sign that they are God's chosen people, set apart from other races.

Now all the ceremonial law was just that; a special command for Israel and not for other nations. Circumcision was likewise a sign between God

and Israel. So were the Jewish dietary laws. So were the Jewish sacrifices. So was the Levitical priesthood. Ceremonial laws were laws for Jews only.

How different from the moral law! "Thou shalt not kill"—that is for the whole world. "Thou shalt not commit adultery"—that is for the whole world, too. "Thou shalt not steal"—that too is for all mankind. No nation, no race of people in the world could ever say, "We are the people God commanded not to lie and steal and kill. It is a special sign between our nation and God." Nobody could say that the moral law was given to any particular class of people. It is universal in its scope, and applies to all alike. But of the ceremonial laws the Jews could well say, "We observe circumcision—it is a sign between us and God that we are His separate people. We observe the sacrifices, the feasts, the Jewish dietary laws. They are signs between us and God, given us as a chosen people." And in exactly the same way the Israelites could say, "We are commanded to observe the Sabbath. It is a sign between us and God, a sign that God has set us apart as a separate people to keep ceremonial laws as a shadow or symbol of things to come."

Thus the Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, was clearly part of the ceremonial law.

3. *The observance of the Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, is obviously only a ceremonial law since it is not a moral law written in the heart of mankind.*

The moral law is universal and God has written it in the hearts of both Jews and Gentiles. Romans 2:14-16 says,

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another: in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

You see that Gentiles, even if they never heard the law, never heard the Scripture, never heard a gospel sermon, yet have consciences which bear witness in them. A negro in Africa who never heard the gospel knows that it is wrong to kill, to lie, to steal, to commit adultery with another man's wife. He has an innate sense of right and wrong. That is one reason that heathen people everywhere know that they are sinners. God has written the moral law in their hearts, and though they do not well heed this law, it will bear witness against them in the day of judgment, the Scripture says.

Now a heathen negro in Africa, or an American Indian, or any savage who never heard the gospel, would know it is wrong to murder, wrong to steal; but would such a heathen savage know by something written in the

universal heart of mankind that his boy babies must be circumcised? Would his conscience, which never heard the Scripture nor even heard such a matter mentioned as from God, tell him that it was right to eat beef or mutton but wrong to eat pork? Certainly not. Ceremonial laws were for Jews only and are not written in the hearts of people as is the case with the moral law. And in exactly the same way it is obvious that the Sabbath is ceremonial law. There is nothing in the conscience of people to tell them they must observe one day in seven as a Sabbath, and that this day of rest must be Saturday. No, no heathen ever feels impressed that he must keep the Jewish Sabbath or that he has sinned in not doing so, unless some man has taught him that. Conscience certainly does not teach him that.

Therefore the Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, is not the moral law written in the heart of mankind. It is ceremonial law, meant for Jews under ceremonial law, and for no one else.

4. *The Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, was suitable for Jews in Palestine, but is not suitable for other lands of specially cold winters.*

In Exodus 35:3 is this plain command to the children of Israel,

"Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day."

A literal translation would be, "Ye shall burn no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day." The word here translated *kindle* is the Hebrew word *baar* and the simple meaning is to burn. For people to observe the Sabbath, they are simply to have no fire in their houses on the Sabbath day.

Now that was no hardship upon the Jews in the land of Palestine. It would be a tremendous hardship in the northern part of the United States, in Canada, and in other areas where the temperature goes down to zero and below. The truth is that Seventh Day Adventists and others who insist that we ought to keep the Jewish Sabbath fail in this matter every week. Numbers 15:32-36 tells how a man who picked up sticks on the Sabbath day was stoned at the command of God for breaking that ceremonial law. But if we are commanded to keep that same Sabbath, then Seventh Day Adventists who shovel coal in the furnace are just as guilty. In fact, any one who kindles a fire of any kind on Saturday breaks this ceremonial law. It is foolish to say there is any moral difference in lighting a fire in a stove and lighting a camp fire, or that there is any difference in God's sight between lighting a gas range by turning a knob and lighting a fire other ways when the Bible plainly commands those who are keeping the Sabbath command, "Ye shall kindle (or cause to burn) no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day."

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Obviously that is ceremonial law and was intended for Jews in Palestine before the Saviour died. It was never commanded to anybody but Jews, nor in any country but in Palestine.

5. The fifth proof that Sabbath keeping was ceremonial law, and not for Christians, is that the Sabbath day does not come at the same time on a rotating world.

Days are determined by the rotation of the earth. Every time a certain spot on the earth's surface rotates into the light of the sun, it is another day. And whether we begin at midnight or at sunrise, the day begins at a different time on every spot on the earth's circumference. For example, when it is midnight in New York City it is only 11:00 p.m. in Chicago, 10:00 p.m. in Denver, and 9:00 p.m. in Los Angeles. And on the other side of the earth it is twelve hours later or earlier.

Every time a person goes around the earth to the west, the days are longer, but he loses an entire day, that is, he has one day less than the people had who stayed at home. Every time a man goes around the world to the east, the days are shorter and he passes the sun one more time, and has one more day than the people that stayed at home, two days more than the man who went around the world to the west! The man who stayed at home rotated by the sun the regular number of times. The one who went around westward with the sun missed one time passing the sun, and the man who went around eastward against the sun, passed it one extra time. If all three men were trying to keep every seventh day as a Sabbath, then the man who stayed at home might observe Saturday, the man who went westward would observe Sunday, and the man who went eastward would observe Friday! So you can see that people could not possibly keep the same Sabbath, always observing the seventh day, around the whole world.

For convenience an international date line has been fixed on the map of the Pacific Ocean. On a vessel going west, suppose it is Friday night and just at midnight they come to the international date line. It is time to begin observing the Sabbath. Or if you prefer, have the time at sundown Friday, as the Jews began their Sabbath at sundown. But as the ship comes to the international date line and crosses it, going west, the time changes suddenly from Friday to Sunday! Saturday is eliminated altogether. How then would you keep it for a Sabbath?

Suppose the same ship comes back the next week, approaching the international date line just at the close of Friday, ready to begin the Jewish Sabbath. As they cross the international date line coming east, the time suddenly changes from Friday night to Thursday night. It is the beginning of Friday again instead of the beginning of Saturday! So, people crossing

the international date line eastward have two days alike, by our weekly calendar. Going westward they lose one day entirely. Now shall our Seventh Day Adventist friends fail to observe a Sabbath going west? Coming east shall they observe two Sabbaths, two days in succession? If so, then they are not keeping the seventh day for the Jewish ceremonial command was, "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God" (Ex. 20: 9, 10). If they follow the date line they miss a Sabbath. If not, their seventh day is always different thereafter.

Obviously God never intended this Jewish Sabbath day of rest to be strictly kept by all the world. *He did not command it to all the world!* He commanded it to Jews in Palestine. Now can you imagine any circumstance of travel making it necessary, even for one time, to worship idols, commit adultery or murder? Certainly not! Moral laws are universal, unchanged by climate, position on the earth or nationality of the people involved. So the Sabbath command is *ceremonial law*, for Jews only, in the limited area of Palestine, under Judaism.

Palestine is less than one hundred miles across. There is not over four minutes difference in sun time on the eastern and western edges of Palestine. The rotation of the earth could make no essential difference in the observance of that ceremonial law among the Jews. But it makes the strict observance of it impossible around the whole world. And brother, God knew exactly what He was doing.

The Jewish Sabbath, Saturday, was ceremonial law, not moral law. It was given as a special sign between God and Israel, was never commanded before Mount Sinai when the Mosaic law was given, was never commanded in the New Testament, and in Colossians 2:14-17 we are plainly commanded not to be judged concerning this law which was a part of the ordinances nailed to the cross of Christ.

Honest Questions for Sincere Seventh Day Adventists to Answer

1. *DID YOU KNOW* that *Seventh Day Adventists do not get all of their teachings from the Bible?* They get some of them from other human writings which they believe are as inspired and infallible and binding as the Scriptures themselves. Mrs. E. G. White was called the "Messenger of the Lord." Seventh Day Adventist leaders regard her writings as "inspired." The entire denominational leaderships recognize Mrs. White's writings as containing the authentic tenets of its "message" or creed. They have never been officially repudiated, and are the authorized teachings of Seventh Day Ad-

ventism. Her writings are regarded as prophecy, and many of the doctrines of Seventh Day Adventists are founded upon her writings and not at all upon Scripture. Where in the Bible is any teaching that keeping Sunday is "the mark of the beast"? Where is there a verse of Scripture that indicates that tithing is essential to salvation, that Seventh Day Adventists alone are the one hundred forty-four thousand Israelites mentioned in Revelation, chapter 7? Where in the Bible does any one get the idea that it is Satan who will in the end bear all the sins of mankind, and that Satan, not Christ, is symbolized by the "scape goat" of Leviticus 16?

Seventh Day Adventism, then, has no right to a place among denominations that accept the Bible alone as the infallible Word of God. It is a heresy, a false cult, with a false basis of authority. No wonder Seventh Day Adventists do not teach the eternal punishment of the wicked in Hell; no wonder they teach that it is a sin to eat meat; no wonder they teach that Christians should keep the ceremonial Sabbath, Saturday, as commanded to the Jews! Like the Mormons, Christian Scientists and Mohammedans, all of whom claim to have other divine revelation from God besides the Bible, they are a false cult. That does not mean there are no Christians among Seventh Day Adventists. It means that their doctrinal basis is not founded upon the Bible alone, and so the principal Bible doctrines are perverted by the intrusion of man-made doctrines, including the teachings of Mrs. E. G. White.

2. *DID YOU KNOW* that the most horrible plagues of God are solemnly promised against any who add to the revelation given in the Bible?

Revelation 22:18, 19 solemnly tells us that the book of Revelation closes the canon of divine Scripture, closes the written revelation of God to men. That Scripture says, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

The terrible curse is that "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." No one has a right to add anything as an authoritative part of the written revelation from God. The canon of Scripture closed when John the apostle laid down his pen on the Island of Patmos! And neither has any one a right to take from the canon of Scripture. God Himself finished it through His apostle John. Seventh Day Adventists, in depending on the writings of Mrs. White, and Mormons in depending on the book of Mormon, and

Christian Scientists in depending upon the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, all have violated this stern command of God. They have thus perverted the gospel and brought upon them terrible curses and plagues.

(If any one doubts that the writings of Mrs. White are counted infallible revelations from God and the basis of doctrine of the Seventh Day Adventist denomination, then ask to see some of her books such as "The Great Controversy," "The Desire of Ages," "The Early Writings of Mrs. White," or "The Spirit of Prophecy." These books are by Mrs. White, the "prophetess" of the Seventh Day Adventist denomination. Or write the General Conference of the Seventh Day Adventist church and ask for an official statement.)

3. *DID YOU KNOW* that Seventh Day Adventist leaders are conscious of the terrible disrepute of their denomination, and hide their identity, wherever possible, until they gain adherents?

Why does the nation-wide weekly radio program, "The Voice of Prophecy," which is strictly a Seventh Day Adventist denominational program, seeking deliberately to teach their own peculiar doctrines—why is this program never announced as the Adventist program? Why do they never mention the writings of Mrs. White and other books that they call "inspired volumes" and upon which they base many of their doctrines? Why do Seventh Day Adventist missionaries, when they go to a new town, never announce that they are Seventh Day Adventist missionaries? Why do they have "Prophecy Tabernacles" or "Interdenominational Revivals" and never tell their real doctrine and their real affiliation until they gain some adherents and subtly undermine the faith and pervert the doctrine of believers to get them to leave other churches? Why do they proselyte continually without admitting their identity until they have poisoned the minds of their hearers?

Why is Seventh Day Adventist literature (distributed by tens of thousands of copies) never marked as Seventh Day Adventist literature? Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, Lutherans—all these, when they publish propaganda intended to defend their views or to make converts to their doctrinal position, gladly give their names and avow their doctrines and their purpose. Why do not Seventh Day Adventists do the same?

The answer is that if the public at once knew that these people claim other authorities, other revelation from God besides our Bible; that the denomination grew out of the Millerites who in 1844 and 1846 gathered on mountain tops in white robes looking for the rapture which never came; that they still set dates, claiming that Christ did not enter into the holiest of all in Heaven until 1844; if the public knew that these Seventh Day

Adventists claim that only Seventh Day Adventists are the chosen of God, His sole representatives on earth; that they accuse those who observe Sunday as having taken "the mark of the beast"; if they knew that these Seventh Day Adventists who were among those prophesied to come in the latter times, "giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils . . . commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (I Tim. 4:1-3)—if the public knew this, of course they would not listen to Seventh Day Adventists.

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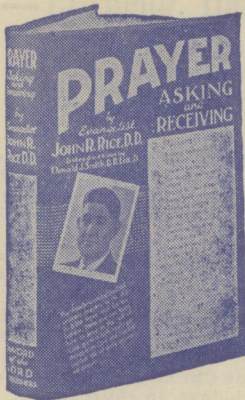
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