

Sabbath Challenge, Sabbath Delight!

David Bird



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Sabbath Challenge, Sabbath Delight!
by Dr. David Bird

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Unless otherwise indicated, Bible quotations are taken from the 1769 Authorized King James Version.

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Important Note. If you feel unsure about the reliability of the Bible because of the theory of evolution or other reasons, please first go right to the end of this book and read the section, *The Holy Bible: Is it Reliable?*

Introduction



It's a still, quiet morning as you wake up. Birds are singing. All seems normal as another busy day begins. The usual musical crescendo choruses from the radio as seven-o'clock news time arrives. A familiar newsreader's voice begins. But the news is not good. The bottom has dropped out of the world economy and hyperinflation is occurring on a global scale. Calling at a store on the way home from work that day you get a shock when the evening newspaper costs nearly twice as much as normal. The headline on the paper reads, "WORLDWIDE ECONOMIC EMERGENCY."

Prices of goods and services continue to rise alarmingly and a few days later a special news broadcast explains that the nation is converting to cashless transactions, using electronic fund transfers, to manage the crisis. Everyone must buy and sell using plastic cards.

The next morning there is a further shock. The worst earthquake on record has occurred at Tokyo, Japan. Huge Tsunamis have raked the surrounding coasts. The USA has pledged massive aid, but that afternoon everyone is stunned to hear that a similar disaster has hit California—the big one. Three days later a hurricane devastates much of Western Europe. To make things worse the economic crisis has sparked a number of serious wars and there is a threat of nuclear weapons being used. Your mind is in a whirl. You feel desperate and despairing, *what is going on?*

Then it happens. You see it on the TV screen. In earthquake torn Los Angeles a supernatural event occurs. From the sky comes

a huge sparkling object resembling a classical UFO. It hovers above the rescue HQ that has been organizing disaster relief operations. A beautiful being appears, glowing with an unearthly glory more splendid than anything the onlookers have ever beheld. In a melodious voice this being addresses the astonished crowds: "I have come again. I have come to help you and give you hope and relief. I have come to give you lasting peace and prosperity. Tomorrow I will help at Tokyo and also in Europe. On this day next week I will appear at Jerusalem to announce that my kingdom has come." After the glorious being departs a shout goes up that the telephone systems are working again. Soon it is realized that water supplies are operating normally and that food parcels have been found all over the city. During the week it is reported that similar things happened at Tokyo and in Europe.

Then the spectacular event happens at Jerusalem. It is seen on millions of TV screens. The glory that surrounds him is beyond anything mortal eyes have yet seen. The cry of exultation rings out upon the air: "Christ has come! He has returned!" Everywhere people are prostrating themselves in adoration before him. He raises his hands and proclaims a blessing upon them. With melodious voice and compassionate tones he shares some of the same merciful, heavenly truths that Christ gave while on Earth. He heals the sick and then, claiming all authority in Heaven and Earth, he claims to have authorized the change in the day of worship from the Sabbath to Sunday. He commands all to reverence the day that he has sanctified. He pronounces a curse upon all those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day. He declares that the disasters have been due, in a large degree, to the desecration of Sunday and that they will continue until the observance of this day is strictly guarded and enforced. Those who are keeping the seventh-day Sabbath are dishonoring his name, he says, and must be convinced of their error.

A law is passed. Every person who does not carry an identification card certifying that they have promised, on oath, to reverence Sunday and to treat the seventh day as a common working day is strictly prohibited from all financial transactions. But despite these measures more natural disasters follow. It is therefore deemed essential to enforce anti-Sabbath laws more strictly, so...

Is this story a joke? Or does it have a serious, relevant message for us? Actually it is a hypothetical scenario (apologies to Tokyo and LA) based on two indisputable facts of Bible prophecy, firstly, that in the time just before Christ's return there will be a huge satanic deception and, secondly, that the Sabbath will be a critical issue at this time. The story is not meant to describe details of what will actually happen, but to show how events of huge significance can take us by surprise. And the idea of the Sabbath being a big issue in the final crisis of Earth's history is probably a surprise to many.

Sabbath Challenge, Sabbath Delight! is written with the deep conviction that a tremendous crisis is stealthily approaching in which our eternal destiny will depend upon whether we worship the Owner of the Seventh-day Sabbath or the owner of a counterfeit Sabbath. Our conviction about this "Sabbath-crisis" is founded solidly on scripture. Chapters 13 and 14 of the book of Revelation outline Earth's final showdown between good and evil with the battle centering upon whom the inhabitants of this world will worship as God. In these chapters false worship is described many times, but only once is the word "worship" used in reference to the true God, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Where is this once found? In Revelation 14:7, *a verse that points to the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment*. Revelation 14:7 challenges us to wake up to the great significance of the Sabbath, to comprehend its meaning and to embrace its observance.

A worldwide crisis associated with supernatural events is not the best environment for making informed decisions. So we hope that this book will help readers to carefully examine the Sabbath issue before the crisis develops. In this book we will discuss Revelation chapters 13 and 14. We will also investigate many other Bible passages dealing with the Sabbath, satanic deceptions and "end-time" issues.

This book is also written with an earnest longing for the masses of people who do not experience the rest, identity, security, peace, family health and closeness to Christ that are found in true Sabbath observance. The Sabbath is meant to be a weekly feast of good things. That this book may help many weary souls discover and

enjoy the fantastic benefits of this delightful day is our sincere hope and heartfelt prayer.

In a user-friendly question-and-answer format this book outlines the Sabbath's involvement in the end-time crisis, endeavors to unveil its relation to the marvelous achievements of our Savior and seeks to provide solid answers to questions that are commonly asked when discussing Sabbath and Sunday. We cannot hope to have covered everything, but we believe that, by God's grace, we have provided enough information for every sincere seeker after truth to prayerfully make the right choice in the final crisis. In addition, those who are seeking to delight in the Sabbath will find in this book plenty about the Sabbath's promotion of family happiness and its connections with the vast blessings achieved by Christ.

Throughout the book are scattered descriptions of 37 different wonderful accomplishments of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ made possible by His death and resurrection. Readers will enjoy finding them and noting their association with the Sabbath. When one of these achievements is mentioned a number in square brackets, e.g. [2], will accompany it. This number correlates with the listing of the achievement in *Appendix Six* where all 37 are found and discussed in order.

There are four main ways that this book can be used:

- 1). It can be simply read from the beginning to the end without paying much attention to all the references and endnotes. This will provide a good overview.
- 2). In addition to the above, all the endnotes and Bible references can be examined. This should give an in-depth knowledge of the subject.
- 3). Readers can look through the list of questions and go to the answers that most interest them.
- 4). The *Scripture Index* can be used to find comments on Bible verses related to the Sabbath.

To help make things more understandable, we now mention a few matters of "book-keeping." Bible quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise specified. All emphasis

in Bible passages is supplied. The capitalized word “Sabbath” is used for the seventh-day Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment and the non-capitalized “sabbath” for other uses of the term.¹ Some questions may seem a little strange. This is because several of them are modified from unusual allegations printed on some non-referenced, photocopied sheets given to the author several years ago. Finally, we must admit that though much effort has gone into checking the hundreds of Bible references found in this book, humanly speaking it is quite likely that one or two have been mistyped. For this we humbly ask forgiveness and suggest that if a little extra time is spent the correct text will surely be found.

Please consider the author of this book to be a fellow pilgrim in need of God’s grace just as much as anyone else. Let us help one another as we travel the narrow path to the Heavenly Jerusalem.

May God’s grace and peace be yours forever.

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Chapter One:

Matters Relating to Time



Question 1: Which day is the seventh day of the week?

Answer: The practice of the seven-day week is amazingly widespread amongst the various cultures and nations of our world. Moreover it seems, in some deep way, to be built into the very fabric of our being. Attempts at other systems by modern nations have been tried in the last few centuries, but have proved unsustainable.² Unlike other units of time, such as the year, month and day, there is no astronomical event to delineate the seven-day week. So where does our week come from? The only explanation that correctly and clearly portrays the origin of the week is that found in the first chapters of the Holy Bible.

Genesis portrays God as the Creator of time and its various cycles:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth... And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light *Day*, and the darkness He called *Night*. And the evening and the morning were the first *day* (Genesis 1:1-5).

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for *seasons*, and for *days*, and *years* (Genesis 1:14).

And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and *He rested on the seventh day* from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made (Genesis 2:2-3).

God created the Earth in six days. This is the origin of the week. Why did our Maker create the Earth in six days and rest on, bless and sanctify the seventh day? The only logical answer is that He did it as part of His loving gift to those whom He had created in His own image. It was part of His wonderful gift to Adam, Eve and the whole human race. Just as God created the atmosphere, the sun and moon, the plants and animals to sustain Adam and Eve and make them happy, so He created the week and its seventh-day Sabbath for the same purpose.

With this background we can now specifically address the question of which day is the seventh day of the week. Genesis 2:2, 3 tells us that this was the day on which God rested (Hebrew, *shabath*) and which He blessed and sanctified. In Exodus chapters 16, 20 and 31 we find the seventh day being emphasized as essential for the nation of Israel to recognize as God's holy Sabbath. Then throughout the Old Testament we have the story of the Jewish nation's use and misuse of this day. In Jesus' time the Jews knew which day was the seventh day of the week even if they did not keep it properly. It is important to remember that Jesus Himself confirmed that they were right so far as the day of the week was concerned. It was His custom to worship in the synagogue on the seventh-day Sabbath (Luke 4:16).

We know with certainty which day of the week was the Sabbath, or seventh day of the week, from the account of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus was crucified on the Jewish preparation day (the sixth day of the week), rested in the grave on the Sabbath, and rose from the dead on the first day of the week:

50 And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counselor; and he was a good man, and a just:

51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

52 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

54 And *that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.*

55 And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid.

56 And *they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day* according to the commandment.

1 *Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning,* they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

(Luke 23:50 to 24:3).

In modern terms we would say that Jesus was crucified on Friday, rested in the grave on Saturday and was resurrected on Sunday. However, it is important to remember that our modern days start and finish at different times than Bible days. Our seventh day of the week, called Saturday, starts at midnight Friday and finishes with the following midnight. We have inherited this method from the Romans. But in the Bible a day begins and ends at sunset. Thus in modern terms the Biblical seventh day of the week starts at sunset on Friday and finishes at sunset on Saturday.

It was because Friday sunset (the end of the preparation day and the beginning of the Sabbath) was near that the Jewish leaders

wanted the legs of the crucified men broken to hasten their death (John 19:31). It was likewise because the Sabbath drew near that the disciples hurried to get Christ's body buried in a nearby tomb and the women had insufficient time to do all that they would have liked to with their "spices and ointments" (John 19:42; Luke 23:54-24:1).

Genesis Chapter 1 clearly outlines how God designated days to begin with the dark part and to finish with the light part. Genesis 1:5 says, "And the evening and the morning were the first day." This phrase "evening and morning" is repeated for the other days of the week mentioned in the chapter: "And the evening and the morning were the second day" (vs. 8), "And the evening and the morning were the third day" (vs. 13) and so on. Later on, when the Israelites had come out of Egypt and were receiving directions concerning sacred days, God said, "from even [Hebrew, *ereb*, evening, night, sunset] unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath" (Leviticus 23:32).

The evening came at sundown. For example the Israelites killed the Passover lamb "at even, at the going down of the sun" (Deuteronomy 16:6). Regarding a Hebrew who became ceremonially unclean, Deuteronomy 23:11 says, "it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall wash himself with water: and when the sun is down, he shall come into the camp again." Similarly Leviticus 22:6, 7 explains, "The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water. And when the sun is down, he shall be clean." Furthermore Joshua 8:29 says, "And the king of Ai he [Joshua] hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase [body] down from the tree."

Concerning the seventh-day Sabbath beginning at sunset, Nehemiah 13:19 is very clear: "And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day." During the time of Christ's ministry the Jewish leaders taught (erroneously) that those who had been sick for a long time should not be healed on the Sabbath. Hence the common people of Capernaum,

fearing their leaders, waited until the end of the Sabbath before bringing their sick to Christ. When was the Sabbath considered to have ended? The Bible says: “And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils” “Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him” (Mark 1:32; Luke 4:40).

In conclusion, in modern terms, the Biblical seventh day of the week starts at sunset on Friday and finishes at sunset on Saturday. This is, in fact, the day still recognized by modern Sabbath-keeping Jews who have kept up the weekly cycle from Jesus’ time and before. It is also the day recognized by Biblical, Sabbath-keeping Christians.

Question 2: *Is there any proof that Saturday was the exact day of the week upon which God rested at the end of Creation Week (Genesis 2:3)?*

Answer: First we need to realize that our Saturday, though it is the nearest to the mark of our seven modern days, is not exactly the same unit of time as the Biblical seventh day of the week. Saturday is from midnight Friday to midnight Saturday. The Biblical seventh day of the week is from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday (please see the answer to Question 1 for more details). Thus there is no proof for our Saturday, midnight to midnight, being the *exact* day upon which God originally rested.

However, there is clear evidence that sunset Friday to sunset Saturday is the exact day of the week upon which God rested, as recorded in Genesis 2:3. We know that Genesis 2:2, 3 records the first seventh-day Sabbath on our Earth because of the word used there for “rested” (Hebrew, *shabath*). Also when we read Exodus 20:11 and 31:17 we can see clearly that God kept this first Sabbath for the purpose of instituting a regular reminder of His creative act.

Long after Creation Week, as the Israelite nation came out of Egypt, God reminded His people which day of the week was the seventh-day Sabbath (Exodus 16:1-36; 20:8-11; 31:13-17). In addition to this, through the double miracle of the manna, God reinforced

for forty years the timing and sacredness of the seventh day. What was the “double miracle” with the manna? It was miraculously provided for six days each week and also did not spoil on the Sabbath, though collected the previous day (Exodus chapter 16).

When God, in Christ, took upon Himself human flesh He again made it clear which day was His seventh-day Sabbath. Jesus recognized that the day the Jews were keeping at that time was the correct period of time. More than this, He claimed that the seventh day that they observed belonged to Him saying, “the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5).

That sunset Friday to sunset Saturday is the correct seventh-day Sabbath is made completely clear by studying the account of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection (please see the answer to Question 1 for more details). Most people in Westernized countries are aware, from modern Easter celebrations, that Christ was crucified on Friday and rose from the dead on Sunday. In between these times Jesus, the Creator (John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:8-10), was resting on the Sabbath, just as He had done back in the beginning when He created the Earth. In other words Christ rested on the seventh day of the week after completing His earthly work of redemption [11],³ just as He rested on the same day millennia before after His work of creation.

God Himself, up until the time of Christ, has reminded us which time-period is the one He originally kept as the seventh-day Sabbath. Neither has the day been lost through the centuries since the time that Christ walked the roads of Palestine. Apart from anything else, it is obvious that the Jewish race has faithfully preserved the correct timing.

Please also read the answer to Question 3.

Question 3: *Have calendar alterations confused the weekly cycle so that we can no longer guarantee which day of the week was the original seventh day?*

Answer: It is plain from the Bible which day of the week was the true, original seventh day during New Testament times (please see

the answer to Question 2) and, although calendars have changed from time to time since then, the seven-day cycle has never been lost.

Regarding the use of calendars since the time of Christ, it is helpful to consider the religious calendar and habits of the Jewish people. We can see from the Gospel accounts that the Jewish teachers of Jesus' day were very fastidious about Sabbath observance. Though they kept the day in the wrong spirit and connected with it many burdensome man-made rules, yet they observed the correct Biblical day. Furthermore, we can say with confidence that from Jesus' time up until the present day the Jewish people, as a race, have faithfully kept the same seventh day. Orthodox Jews would be horrified to change or alter their Sabbath day because it is so intimately connected with their identity, religion and culture. Just as they have been very concerned and careful to maintain their distinctiveness as a race, so they have been careful to keep the seventh day as the Sabbath.

The Jewish religious calendar⁴ is, as expected, different from the so-called Gregorian calendar that is commonly used today. Jewish years do not begin in January and end in December. Nor is their year reckoning based on the estimated date of Jesus Christ's birth. The Jewish year of 5763 includes parts of 2002 and 2003 AD. When using the traditional Jewish calendar, years are counted since the creation of the world, which is assumed from their calculations to have taken place in 3761 BC. Jewish months are calculated differently to our modern Western months and have different names. Jewish weekdays are simply given numerical values as the First Day, Second Day, Third Day and so on. The Seventh Day, of course, is also referred to as the Sabbath. In addition their Sixth Day is called "the eve of the Sabbath" or "the day of the preparation." The Jewish religious calendar used today is the one originating in the Fourth Century AD and credited to Hillel II. Based on mathematical and astronomical data Hillel II made changes in the method previously used for calculating months. His alterations did not change, in any way, the seven-day cycle of the week that the Jewish people had for centuries faithfully observed. So, for us today, the Jewish calendar and habits are a sure testimony of which day is the true Biblical seventh day of the week, namely, sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.

The change in our Western calendar that is most widely known about, and probably most often referred to in discussions on the Sabbath question, is that which occurred in 1582 AD. This was the changeover from the Julian to the Gregorian system⁵ motivated by a need to bring the calendar back into phase with the seasons. The Julian calendar, calling for an extra day in February every four years without exception, resulted in a discrepancy with the seasons of almost eight days in every thousand years. Pope Gregory XIII's changes included dropping ten days to bring the calendar back into line, and slightly altering the Julian calendar to avoid the same problem in the future.⁶ Gregory shortened October of AD 1582 by ten days. Thursday, October 4, 1582 (Julian) was followed immediately by Friday, October 15, 1582 (Gregorian). Obviously Gregory's change in the calendar did not interfere at all with the seven-day cycle of the week. Thursday was followed by Friday as usual.

***Question 4:** Has the International Date Line made Sabbath observance meaningless for those living in modern times?*

Answer: The International Date Line (IDL) is an imaginary line running from the North Pole to the South Pole that is, in theory, 180° away from the Greenwich Meridian. We say "in theory" because it is actually not a straight line. It changes course around various land areas to minimize confusion from having countries divided by it. The IDL separates two consecutive calendar days. That is, the date in the eastern hemisphere,⁷ to the left of the line on a map, is always one day ahead of the date in the western hemisphere. The IDL is recognized by the nations of the world as a matter of convenience. It has no force in international law.⁸ If we look at a map of the Pacific Ocean in a standard atlas of the world we should be able to find the IDL marked out approximately in the middle.

Why do we need an IDL? Time around the planet is divided into zones so that, in theory, noon in each country coincides approximately with when the sun is overhead (or at its highest point in the sky). The only other systematic method would be to have the whole world on the same time, which would be much more problematic. Since the globe is divided into time zones, a traveler journeying

eastward would have to advance his or her watch by one hour every time a new zone was entered. Thus, on entering the first time zone they would reset their watch to, for example, Ten AM instead of Nine AM, which is the “real” time back home. Then, at the next time zone they would advance their watch another hour, and be two hours out of synchrony with home time. Without an IDL, they would find, on their arrival back home that they were 24 hours, or one calendar day, ahead of everyone else. It would not really be one day ahead because it is just an artificial phenomenon caused by the resetting of their watch in each time zone. If they traveled in a westerly direction they would be one day behind every one else when they got back to their home country.⁹

The IDL has an interesting history that reflects mankind’s gradual adjustment to living in a world where international travel and communication have become progressively more widespread and rapid. It was in 1884, at an international convention held in Washington, D.C., that the prime meridian of Greenwich was established. This action indirectly affirmed the concept of a date line 180° from Greenwich. Although it was in 1884 that the 180th meridian was internationally affirmed as the date line, the general custom of navigators in the years before this time had been to adjust their time counts at this meridian. Also the out-of-step dating methods of Pitcairn Island, the Philippines, the Society islands and Alaska had been adjusted relative to this meridian prior to the conference of 1884.

Following are details of some of the changes in dating methods that have occurred at different localities as the present IDL has evolved.¹⁰ In each case a local government changed their time reckoning in order to harmonize conditions with the broader global picture and to reduce confusion and inconvenience.

1. In 1790 the mutineers of the *Bounty* settled in the remote island of Pitcairn in the southeastern Pacific. The *Bounty* had entered the Pacific from the west by way of the Cape of Good Hope and the mutineers brought with them to Pitcairn the time reckoning of the lands west of the 180° meridian. It was not until about 1814 that the date reckoning was changed to that of the nations east of the 180° meridian.

2. The Philippines were on the time count of America and the other lands east of the 180° meridian until a decree was issued by the local governor-general that the day following Monday, December 30, 1844 should be Wednesday, January 1, 1845. This moved the Philippines to the calendar reckoning of the lands west of the 180° meridian and brought them into harmony with other local nations such as China and Indonesia. Why were the Philippine Islands on the time count of the lands east of the 180° meridian to begin with? It was because the Spanish colonized the Islands from the American (eastern) side of the Pacific. The American calendar reckoning was brought with the colonizers who did not want to change their day as they went across the Pacific.

3. The Society Islands, of which Tahiti is the best known, lie in the Pacific Ocean at about 150° longitude west of Greenwich. They were evangelized by European missionaries who entered the Pacific Ocean from the west via the Cape of Good Hope in the 1790's. Unfortunately these missionaries failed to make an adjustment in their time reckoning as they crossed the Pacific and thus brought the day count of the lands west of the 180° meridian over into the area east of this line. This mistake led to a confusing state of affairs since the Tahitian natives were originally taught by the missionaries to keep Sunday on what was actually Saturday. The French government, however, moved the Islands to the time count of the lands east of the 180° meridian sometime between 1844 and 1846. The Christians who had been observing Saturday as Sunday were then forced to change their weekly reckoning, and what had previously been Monday was now hallowed as Sunday.

4. In 1867 the United States of America accepted Russia's proposal for them to buy the area of land known as Alaska. When the sale was finalized an adjustment in the calendar was necessary to bring Alaska into harmony with the rest of America. First the Russian's were, at this time, still using the old Julian calendar which by now had accumulated 12 days of error in it. Hence it was necessary to add 12 days to the Russian calendar to bring it into line with the new Gregorian calendar (see the answer to Question 3 for

more information on this change from the Julian to the Gregorian method). This change did not involve an alteration in the day of the week as, for example, Monday, May 15, 1867 according to the Julian calendar would be Monday, May 27, 1867 by the Gregorian method. But the Americans had to also drop a day of the week to bring Alaska into line with the U.S.A. and other nations east of the IDL. This would have meant that what was previously Saturday would now be Friday. The Alaskan change in the day of the week was done in the years shortly after the formal transfer of Alaska to the USA in October 1867.

5. The Samoan Islands, situated between about 168 and 172° longitude west of Greenwich were, like the Society Islands, evangelized by missionaries who brought the time reckoning of the nations west of the 180° meridian into the area east of this demarcation. In 1892 the time was corrected by the Samoan population keeping Monday, July 4, twice in succession.

6. The Cook Islands, lying at longitude 156 to 160° west of Greenwich, also counted their days as if they were west of the 180° meridian until they rectified the error by keeping Christmas day, Monday, December 25, 1899, twice (for two days in a row).

7. In 1995 the island group called Kiribati made an interesting change in its time reckoning. This nation is spread over a huge area of the Pacific Ocean and is divided by the 180° meridian. Its eastern most islands lie as far east as the 150° meridian, which is farther east than Honolulu. In 1995 the Kiribati government unilaterally moved the islands east of the 180° meridian to the day count of those islands west of this line. Probably Kiribati's action has moved a large segment of the IDL east, and many modern maps now show the IDL as bulging around Kiribati's eastern islands. However, we say "probably" because it seems that the international decision and consensus on Kiribati's 1995 time adjustments has not yet been finalized. The idea that the vast stretches of international ocean lying between the tiny islands of eastern Kiribati should be also on the day count of lands west of the 180° meridian

has been considered unsatisfactory by at least one leading map producer. MapQuest.com uses the pre-1995 IDL and makes the following note on its maps: “All islands east of 180° within the Republic of Kiribati observe the same date as the islands west of 180° even though they are positioned on opposite sides of the International Date Line.”¹¹ Thus it seems that Kiribati has changed its local time zone reckoning but may not have altered the IDL. In time this will be clarified. Nevertheless, for the inhabitants of Kiribati the change in day count for the easterly islands is a big issue for Sabbath-keepers. It is equivalent to the IDL being moved as far as they are concerned. We sincerely sympathize with the Sabbath-keepers in the islands that used to be in the eastern day count until 1995 when they were transferred to the day count of the lands west of the IDL. They have been faced with the difficult decision of whether to keep worshipping on the same day as previously, or to change to the new calendar reckoning advised by their government. The day they used to call Saturday has now become Sunday. We also sympathize with Sunday-keepers and Friday-keepers (Moslems) who, of course, face the same sort of conscientious dilemma. We will mention more about Kiribati’s rather unique situation later.

8. The kingdom of Tonga is the only island group that, to our knowledge, has not yet readjusted its time count following the introduction of the incorrect calendar reckoning by early missionaries. Tonga lies at about 175° longitude west of Greenwich and is thus east of the 180° meridian and should really be keeping the calendar reckoning of America and the other nations east of 180°. However it still keeps the time count of the lands west of the 180° meridian. On maps showing the IDL it will be noticed that the line veers eastward just north of the Tongan group. This is because Tonga has chosen to stay on the calendar reckoning of the lands west of the 180° meridian. This is really an artificial situation since the whole Tongan nation lies east of the 180° meridian in the same way as the Samoan and the Cook Island groups do. Due to this artificial situation, in Tonga they keep Sunday for Saturday. In other words those who go

to church on Sunday, Tongan time, are really worshipping on Saturday. Interestingly, Seventh-day Adventists on this Island who worship on the Biblical seventh-day Sabbath go to church on Sunday local time. They keep Sabbath from sundown Saturday to sundown Sunday, Tongan time.¹² These Seventh-day Adventists have chosen to keep the correct day even though locally it looks like they are Sunday-keepers. It is a strange situation to have “Sunday”-keepers and Sabbath-keepers going to church on the same day. It is hoped that one day the authorities will make the change and correct the calendar reckoning of this island group, thus resolving the confusing situation.

As will be obvious from the above, the issue of the IDL brings to mind many questions in relation to the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath. Such questions include:

1. Our original question, is it true that Sabbath observance is irrelevant for modern living because of the IDL?
2. Does God recognize the current IDL?
3. Should Jerusalem or some other place be considered as God’s IDL?
4. How does God view the way that days of the week have been changed by local governments who have made alterations in relation to the IDL?
5. How can the Sabbath be kept when travelling across the IDL?

Let us consider these questions one at a time:

1. Is it true that the IDL makes Sabbath observance meaningless for those living in modern times?

The seventh-day Sabbath will always be relevant and meaningful for mankind because it is intrinsically linked to the great truths of creation and redemption (please see the answer to Question 13) [11].¹³ The IDL results in the need for some extra thought and consideration from modern Sabbath-keepers and creates issues that

people of bygone days were not concerned with. But these matters, which are discussed below, are quite straightforward when considered with commonsense and should not cause any doubts or worries for those who think about them carefully while recognizing the relevant Biblical principles.

2. Does God recognize the current IDL?

God has not given in the Bible any direct instruction regarding the position of an IDL. This can only mean that He has left it up to mankind to arrive at a solution while recognizing the principles that He has laid down in His Word.

First, it should be recognized that God has made the Sabbath to be kept on a round world and that He does not ask us to do things that are impossible. To command us to do something, while knowing it was not completely possible, would amount to being unjust or unfair. The Bible clearly teaches that God is perfectly just¹⁴ and thus we can rest assured that the problem of the IDL does not produce any impossible situations regarding Sabbath observance.

Secondly, we need to realize that the need for an IDL is a *natural* phenomenon resulting from the fact that we live on a rotating globe. It is not just something that is needed because of clocks and time zones. It is a necessity for all people who operate their lives using the division of time that we call a “day,” whether they begin their days at sunset, midnight or some other time. For example, a Sabbath-keeper living in Israel who decides to travel around the world in a westerly direction would begin their Sabbath each week a little later than their brethren and sisters at home. This is because they are travelling in the direction that the sun sets. When they got to half way around the world they would be starting their Sabbath half a day later than those at home. If they did not use an IDL, when they got back to Israel, they would be observing the Sabbath a whole day later than their fellow believers. So we can see that the need for an IDL is a natural one and not just some artificial creation of fallen man. Inasmuch as God has ordained the division of time called a “day” based on His creation of our world as a rotating globe, and inasmuch as an IDL is a natural necessity resulting from this situation, we can safely say

that it is God's will for us to have an IDL. The next obvious question is where would God like us to put the IDL? In seeking an answer to this let us first consider the claim of some that "God's International Date Line" is Jerusalem or the eastern border of Israel.

3. Should Jerusalem or some other place be considered as God's IDL?

Those who read the Bible must admit that God has not decreed anywhere that an IDL should be at Jerusalem or anywhere else. There is no evidence at all that Jews in the Old Testament recognized any change in the day at Jerusalem, or that God commanded them of such. As we read the Old Testament scriptures it appears clear that Jews as far east as Babylon, Persia and even India (Esther 1:1; 8:9), and as far west as Egypt, simply kept the seventh-day Sabbath as the sun went down in the same cycle as they were used to keeping it. They kept the Sabbath in this regular cycle as they migrated to these lands. There was no reason for them to do otherwise, as this was the commonsense thing to do. They were certainly not concerned with the problems associated with travelling right around the globe. Thus those in the east would keep the day earlier than back in Israel and those in the west would keep it later.

In addition, Jesus our Lord, who knows everything and who no doubt was aware of the issues that a round world gives, mentions nothing in relation to an IDL during His ministry as recorded by the New Testament. Moreover, He traveled freely east and west of Jerusalem without any reference to an IDL.

Arguments for an IDL at Jerusalem based on the account of Christ's death and resurrection are nothing more than speculation based on analogy.¹⁵ There is no evidence whatsoever that the New Testament church, which spread rapidly outside the boundaries of Israel both east and west, recognized any date line. It would have been such a big issue that Jesus would not have failed to mention it before His death, and the disciples would not have failed to draw attention to it in their ministry after Pentecost.

Making the IDL at Jerusalem, or somewhere else in Israel, would cause far more problems than the current location. There would

certainly be far less commonsense in positioning it there rather than in the Pacific Ocean. It would cause great confusion for Sabbath-keepers all along the line from Russia in the North to the lands of Africa in the South. Huge numbers of believers near the line, and still in the same countries or even towns, would be worshipping on different days. It would make regional gatherings and large church meetings a nightmare. It would significantly hinder the proclamation of the gospel. All this would be contrary to the great principle of scripture outlined in 1 Corinthians 14:40, "Let all things be done decently and in order." It is an old saying that order is the first law of Heaven. But having the IDL in Israel is a recipe for disorder and chaos. If we read through the account in the Old Testament of the sanctuary service we can see that order, neatness and correct timing were regarded by God as essential. They were part of the sacredness of the service. So, in looking for a position for the IDL we need to take into consideration this important Bible principle of "order" and focus on having it where confusion and disorder will be minimized. Certainly to move the position of the IDL in our times would be a colossal source of confusion and would definitely detract from focussing on the essentials of Christianity. Moreover, if just believers in the seventh-day Sabbath considered the IDL as being at Jerusalem, then all Sabbath-keepers east of Jerusalem and west of the IDL would be, in the eyes of unbelievers, keeping sacred the same day as Sunday-keepers. This would remove the witness of the Sabbath from half the world because it would seem, in the eyes of the people, that Sabbath-keepers honored the same day as Sunday-keepers. Doing this would be going against the counsel of Christ in Matthew 5:13-16 where He exhorts us to let our "light" shine.

Matthew 22:37 says "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all *thy mind*." This is another important Bible principle that applies to the IDL issue. We are to use our minds and consider the situation logically and reasonably. The most sensible approach, and the most Biblical, is to consider the issue as it would develop for Sabbath-keepers migrating further and further east and west from the Mountains of Ararat (after the flood) or from Palestine. Those going east would keep the day earlier and earlier as they traveled in the direction of the sunrise. In contrast, those

moving in a westerly direction would keep the day later and later as they journeyed toward the sunset. When the two groups got to half way around the globe they would meet and note the discrepancy between each other's day reckoning. What should they now do? The commonsense approach would be to admit that they needed a line about halfway around from home where there was a changeover in day. This would allow all those migrating eastward to keep the day in the usual cycle until they got to the halfway line. Likewise, those migrating in the westerly direction would keep the daily cycle that they were familiar with until the agreed line of demarcation was reached. This is basically what we have ended up having with the current IDL, and therefore we can use this line in good conscience.

4. How does God view the way that days of the week have been changed by local governments who have made alterations in relation to the IDL?

God has not told us in the Bible what He thinks of these changes. So, again we must go by the principles of His Word. Having a nation divided by the IDL would be a recipe for discord. So we can apply the principle of "order" (1 Corinthians 14:40) here and say that surely God would not want unnecessary confusion to be created by a nation being "cut in two" by the IDL. Also, having a nation divided by the IDL is not logical. It does not make sense because it creates unnecessary division and disunion. So we can also apply the principle of "commonsense" (Matthew 22:37) to the situation. Thirdly, we can apply the principle of "witness" (Matthew 5:13-16) because having a nation divided by the IDL would confuse the witness of the Sabbath. People would make a joke of the situation saying, "Well, are you going to have your Sabbath today on this half of the nation, or are you going to work today at finishing your project and dash across to the other side of the line for tomorrow's Sabbath?" So it becomes evident that having a nation divided by the IDL is not in harmony with important Bible principles. Thus, if a nation is divided by the 180° meridian then, on principle, it needs to move to the day reckoning of whichever side will make for the most sensible, orderly situation. For similar reasons, if a nation, like

Tonga, is completely on one side of the 180° meridian it should be on the time count of that side.

The changes in the IDL that have occurred over the years in the Philippines, Alaska, the Cook Islands and so forth, can be viewed as the challenging but necessary adjustments that were needed as knowledge increased and the best solution for the affected nations evolved. These alterations have been in harmony with the Bible principles discussed above. Tonga needs to move to the east of the IDL to be in agreement with the above principles. What about Kiribati? This nation is divided by the 180° meridian, so the changes made in 1995 are compatible with the three Bible principles elucidated above. Thus, we believe that Sabbath-keepers in the eastern islands of Kiribati can have a clear conscience in changing to the new calendar reckoning that puts them on the same day count as the western half of the nation.

Let us now consider how we might answer for our faith if challenged about the IDL and its adjustment by various nations. Consider the following question: “You worship on the day you do because of the International Date Line, a line decided on for the convenience of the nations and their prosperity. If the line were different, your day would be different. If the nations moved it west of Australia, where you currently live, you would be keeping what we now call Friday. How then can you say that your day is God’s true day, unbroken since time began?” Well, we can say that any move of the IDL west of Australia ought to be rejected because it makes no sense and God wants us to use commonsense and worship Him with our mind as well as with our spirit. We can then state our belief that the current IDL may be viewed, with good conscience, as a result of providential guidance because it is in the best place to allow “all things [to] be done decently and in order.” Furthermore, we can say that the Bible makes it clear that the seventh day is unbroken in terms of Palestinian time and, if we can be sure about Palestinian time, then we can confidently gauge the rest of the world in relation to it.

5. How can the Sabbath be kept when travelling across the IDL?

We believe there are two sensible alternatives that can be chosen, with a clear conscience, by Sabbath-keepers when journeying across the IDL into, or out of, the sacred hours of the seventh day. Briefly they are as follows:

a). Make the change from one day to the next immediately on crossing the IDL.

b). Alternatively, make the adjustment at the first sunset after crossing the IDL. However, if this option is chosen then the Sabbath-keeper needs to change to the new day before sundown if they happen to end their journey prior to sunset. That is, they would make the change in day when they arrived at their destination. Why would they do this? Because if they did not make the change on arrival then they would be out of synchrony with all the people living in that place. The confusion and unnecessary negative influence upon non-believers would be against the Bible principles of 1 Corinthians 14:40 and Matthew 5:13-16. It would also be against another principle of commonsense; namely that the Sabbath should be observed at the time it comes to the country or location on the globe where you are.

To further clarify these options let us consider a couple of scenarios. A Sabbath-keeper called Michael is travelling in a boat across the Pacific from Los Angeles to Japan. He arrives at the IDL at 10:00 AM Saturday morning having already observed as sacred the hours from Friday sunset up until that time. What should he do? Michael could immediately change his clock to 10:00 AM Sunday and close his Sabbath observance at that time. Or he could continue to observe the Sabbath until sunset, which for him could be, for example, 6:00 PM. Then he would change his watch to 6:00 PM Sunday and close the Sabbath. If, however, Michael's ship docked at an island for passengers to disembark before sunset, and Michael had chosen this second option, he would need to finish his Sabbath on arrival at the island and set his watch to the local time which might be, for example, 3:00 PM Sunday.

Another Sabbath-keeper called Kate is flying from New Zealand eastwards across the Pacific to see her sister in Hawaii who has suddenly been taken seriously ill. She is unable to get an urgent flight out except for one leaving at 5 AM Saturday morning. Kate does all the preparations she can before Sabbath begins and then rests and observes the seventh day from Friday sunset as best she can. In the plane she reads, prays and talks to the person next to her. Kate's plane reaches the IDL at 10:30 AM Saturday morning. She decides to immediately change her time to 10:30 AM Friday morning and close her Sabbath. After landing she aims to start the Sabbath again at sunset when it begins for the local people. An alternative for Kate could have been to continue her Sabbath observance in the plane and terminate it at the time of her Friday afternoon landing in Hawaii. Then she would begin the Sabbath again as it came to the Hawaiian people at sunset.

Having said all the above about Sabbath-keepers coping with travel across the IDL on the seventh day, it should be stressed that it would be better to avoid such situations if possible and to observe the Sabbath in some stationary place. This would enable the Sabbath blessings of peace and joy to be more fully appreciated. For the same reason travelers anywhere should try and avoid unnecessary journeying on the Sabbath and especially seek to avoid finishing their train, boat, car, plane etc. trip on the seventh day. However, in Kate's case the principle of caring for the sick and distressed made it very appropriate for her to go over to her sister as soon as possible even though it complicated Kate's Sabbath observance.

Question 5: *How can people who live near the poles know which day is the Biblical Sabbath when at certain times of the year the sun never sets?*

Answer: Is the Sabbath possible to keep in Polar Regions where the sun is not visible for many days, or does not set for many days? The first thing to say about this is that people living in these regions have no difficulty keeping track of when days begin and end. They observe the position of the sun or of the stars. They use their watches

and clocks. They also have no difficulty knowing when sunsets occur or when the polar winter or summer begins. If the skies are cloudy then they, like people elsewhere, use records and almanacs.

As the polar winter approaches the sun becomes just visible above the horizon at noon before immediately sinking (setting) again. Thus the last sunset before the polar darkness occurs at noon. Following this last appearance, during the time of continual darkness, the sun gets nearest to the horizon at noonday, which is the obvious equivalent of the last sunrise/sunset. Then after the days of polar darkness have finished the first sunrise/sunset again occurs at noon. Thus, since both the last sunset before and the first sunset after winter darkness are at noon the seventh-day Sabbath would naturally be observed from noon Friday to noon Saturday during the days when the sun is not visible.

As the polar summer begins the last sunset occurs at midnight. Likewise, the first sunset after the period of perpetual daylight occurs at midnight. During the period of perpetual daylight the sun traverses a circular path in the sky. Its lowest point in the sky occurs at midnight and this is the logical and obvious equivalent of sunset. So the Sabbath would be observed from midnight Friday to midnight Saturday during the days of continual light.

The rule is simple. The time of the day when the sun last sets is the time to observe as the beginning and as the end of the Sabbath during the period that has no normal sunsets.

Question 6: *Is it true that the Bible describes sabbath observance as occurring on a variety of days and for different lengths of time, as follows:*

Sabbaths on different days:

- a). On the first day, Leviticus 23:39.
- b). On the seventh day, Exodus 20:8.
- c). On the eighth day, Leviticus 23:39.

Sabbaths of different lengths:

- a). One day long, Exodus 16:23-29.
- b). Two days long, Leviticus 23:6-8.
- c). One year long, Leviticus 25:4.
- d). Seventy years long, 2 Chronicles 36:21.
- e). Eternity long, Hebrews 4:9.

And if the above is true, why should we consider the seventh-day Sabbath special? Why cannot we choose the time and length of Sabbath observance?

Answer: To properly address this question we need to:

1. Understand the different ways the term “sabbath” is used in the Bible.
2. Appreciate the difference between annual ceremonial sabbaths and the seventh-day Sabbath.
3. Explain factual inaccuracies relating to the use of Leviticus 23:39 in the first part of the question about “Sabbaths on different days.”
4. Examine the different texts quoted in the second part of the question about “Sabbaths of different lengths.”
5. Reply to the last part of the question, which asks why the seventh-day Sabbath should be considered special.

Let us proceed with these five matters in the above order:

1. The different ways the term “sabbath” is used in the Bible.

In the Bible the term “sabbath” is used in three different ways:

- a). As a reference to the seventh-day Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment (and occasionally, as an extension of this, to the seven-day week ¹⁶).

- b). As a reference to the sabbatical years of rest used in horticulture and as a release from debts.
- c). As a reference to the annual sabbaths of Israel's yearly ceremonial festivals.

The sabbatical years of rest for the land were prescribed for every seventh year (Leviticus 25:4). As mentioned above, they were a horticultural law and were also connected with an economic matter, namely, the release of debts (Deuteronomy 15:1, 2; 31:10). When the Jewish nation rejected their Messiah the Kingdom of God was taken from them and given to the Christian church (Matthew 21:43). Since the church is not a nation involved with land tillage or civil matters these laws concerning the sabbatical year are no longer applicable to her.¹⁷

The annual sabbaths consisted of seven special days in Israel's religious calendar when secular work was suspended in order to participate in religious activities. They were all connected with the five basic festivals of the religious year.¹⁸

Let us briefly examine these five ¹⁹ main festivals of the ancient Jewish religious year:

a). **Passover and Unleavened Bread** (Leviticus 23:5-8). Passover was on the 14th day of the first month and Unleavened Bread was from the 15th to 21st of the first month. The 15th and 21st of the first month were both ceremonial sabbaths but, interestingly, Passover was not actually prescribed as a sabbath rest. The immediate significance of this feast was to commemorate deliverance from Egypt (Exodus chapter 12). At that time the destroying angel passed over the Israelite dwellings and they ate unleavened bread "because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry" (Exodus 12:39). The feast was symbolic of the sacrifice and sanctifying power of Christ: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7) [1, 25]. We are to be sanctified by partaking of Christ, the sinless ("unleavened") bread of life (John 6:35-58)[9]. Yeast or leaven is a symbol of sin (Luke 12:1; 1 Corinthians 5:4-8; Leviticus 2:11; Exodus 34:25).

b). **Pentecost**, Greek for “fifty days” (Leviticus 23:16-21). This feast was also called the Feast of Weeks (Exodus 34:22), or of First Fruits (Exodus 34:22; Numbers 28:26), or of Harvest (Exodus 23:16). It was on the 6th day of the third month, being calculated as the 50th day inclusive or seven weeks from the day of the wave sheaf ceremony which took place on the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (i.e. the 16th day of the first month). The 6th day of the third month was an annual sabbath. The feast was based around dedicating to God the first part (first fruits) of the wheat harvest (Exodus 34:22). Thus God was recognized for His power and goodness in giving the wheat crop (and by extension all food and blessings of life). The ancient Feast of Pentecost symbolized the first fruits of the gospel gathered in (i.e. the souls converted) on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given following Jesus’ ascension to Heaven (Acts 2) [36].

c). **Trumpets** (Leviticus 23:24, 25). This festival was on the 1st day of the seventh month and was a sabbath. It was to be a reminder that the Day of Atonement was near. You shall “have a sabbath, a memorial [reminder] of blowing of trumpets” (Leviticus 23:24, c.f. the NASB rendering of this text). The Feast of Trumpets symbolized the revival in the 1830’s-40’s proclaiming the end of the 2300 days (prophetic years) of Daniel 8:14.²⁰

Also it probably symbolized the seven trumpets of Revelation (chapters 8-11).

d). **Day of Atonement** (Leviticus 23:27, 28). This festival was on the 10th day of the seventh month and was a sabbath. Its immediate significance was the judgement of the people and the annual cleansing of the sanctuary from the sins that had been figuratively transferred to it (Leviticus 16). Symbolically it signified the “pre-advent” judgment that began in 1844.²¹

e). **Tabernacles** (Leviticus 23:34-36). Also called the Feast of Booths (Leviticus 23:42), or of Ingathering (Exodus 23:16). This feast was on the 15th to the 22nd of the seventh month and the first and last days were ceremonial sabbaths. It was a celebration of the

end of the harvest, especially the grain, olive and grape harvests. It was also a commemoration of the time when the Jews dwelt in the wilderness (Leviticus 23:34-43). It symbolized the celebration in Heaven, after Christ's return and the harvest of souls is completed (Revelation 14:14-20; chapters 21, 22) [15]. The "camp of the saints" in Revelation 20:9 alludes to the camp of Israel in the desert.

2. The difference between annual ceremonial sabbaths and the seventh-day Sabbath.

The Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment is completely different from the annual sabbaths of Israel's yearly festivals. Let us examine these differences using the following nine points of comparison:

a). Which day of the week was involved?

The seventh-day Sabbath was, and is, always the same day of the week, namely, the seventh day or sunset Friday to sunset Saturday (please see the answer to Question 1 for more information on how the Bible reckons days of the week). In contrast, the annual ceremonial sabbaths varied from year to year and could be on any day of the week, from the first through to the seventh.

b). Origin in relation to the entrance of sin into our world.

The seventh-day Sabbath was established before sin entered this world (Genesis 2:2, 3) whereas the annual ceremonial sabbaths were given after sin entered (Exodus 12, Leviticus 23, etc.).

c). At Sinai who *spoke* to the people about observing the Sabbath or the annual festivals?

It was God Himself who narrated the Sabbath commandment to the people (Exodus chapter 20).²² In contrast to this only Moses spoke to the people about the annual ceremonial sabbaths (Leviticus 23:2).

d). At Sinai who *wrote* to the people about observing the Sabbath or the annual festivals?

The seventh-day Sabbath commandment was written with God's own finger (Exodus 31:18). But only Moses wrote the details about the annual ceremonial sabbaths (Deuteronomy 31:24).²³

e). What was the commandment written on?

God wrote the seventh-day Sabbath commandment on stone tablets (Exodus 31:18).²⁴ Instructions regarding the ceremonial sabbaths were written in a scroll or book (Deuteronomy 31:24).

f). Where was the record of the commandment stored?

The Sabbath commandment, recorded on the stone tablets, was placed *inside* the sacred Ark of the Testament (Deuteronomy 10:2-5). The instructions about the annual ceremonial sabbaths were kept in a scroll that was placed *by the side of* the Ark (Deuteronomy 31:26).

g). Functions.

The seventh-day Sabbath has at least the following functions:

i). As part of the moral law it helps define sin (Exodus 20:1-17; Romans 7:7; 1 John 3:4).

ii). Commemorating the creation of the world and honoring the Creator (Exodus 20:8-11).

iii). Commemorating redemption and honoring the Redeemer (Deuteronomy 5:12-15).

iv). A sign that God is the one who sanctifies us (Ezekiel 20:12, Exodus 31:13).

v). A test of allegiance (Exodus 16:4-30; Deuteronomy 8:2, 16).

vi). The promotion of healthy relationships with God, family members and others (Genesis 2:2, 3; Leviticus 23:3).

In contrast to the above, the annual ceremonial sabbaths served to:

i). Commemorate events connected with Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

ii). Symbolize various aspects and accomplishments of the Messiah's future ministry (for more details please see Question 6, part 1).

h). Did God mention using it as a test?

The seventh-day Sabbath is described as a test in Exodus 16:4-30 (c.f. Deuteronomy 8:2, 3, 16). No annual ceremonial sabbath was specifically mentioned by God as a test. However, the keeping of the first Passover (Exodus chapter 12) did test the people's faith. But God did not say (as He did of the seventh-day Sabbath) that He was giving it "that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or no."

i). Relation to Christ's death and resurrection.

The seventh-day Sabbath was magnified by our Lord's death and resurrection. Christ came to "magnify the law, and make it honourable" (Isaiah 42:21). God's moral law, His standard of right and wrong, which includes the Sabbath commandment could not be changed in order to save us. So, in amazing love, Christ died for our transgressions of the law. "Sin is the transgression of the law" and "Christ died for our sins" (1 John 3:4; 1 Corinthians 15:3). If it had been possible for us to be saved through the moral law being changed, then Christ need not have agonized and died on the cross paying the penalty of the broken law. To say that the Ten Commandments have been changed or abolished means to deny both Christ's own words (Matthew 5:17-48) and the significance of His death. If God's moral

law has been changed for man's sake then Christ died in vain (c.f. Galatians 2:21) [21].

In contrast to the Sabbath, the symbolic, ceremonial festivals were superseded by new realities when the sacrifice and resurrection of Christ ushered in the Christian era. The Passover/Unleavened Bread festival pointed forward to the deliverance from sin provided by the death, resurrection and priesthood of Christ. So when Christ had died its ceremonies were redundant. Likewise, the other animal sacrifices connected with the annual sabbaths ceased to have any significance once Christ had died as “the lamb of God” [25].²⁵ Furthermore, when the Kingdom of God was transferred to the Christian church after the Jewish nation's rejection of Christ²⁶ the ceremonies based on annual harvests²⁷ also became redundant. This was because the church was not a country involved with horticultural crops.

The annual sabbaths have been superseded by Christian realities. Thus, today we remember the death of Christ and by faith partake of Christ the sinless bread of life.²⁸ Today we pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit [36] so that we can participate in the harvesting of souls.²⁹ Today we are to blow the trumpet, sounding the warning that a judgement began in 1844 and that the Lord is returning soon (please see endnote 20). Today we partake, by faith, in the realities of Heaven and rejoice in the hope of the resurrection and the final home of the saved.³⁰

3. Factual inaccuracies relating to the use of Leviticus 23:39.

In the first part of Question 6 we have the claim that there were “Sabbaths *on different days*” as follows:

- a). On the first day, Leviticus 23:39.
- b). On the seventh day, Exodus 20:8.
- c). On the eighth day, Leviticus 23:39.

The above gives a false impression because there is a confounding of the numbers used to define days of the week (e.g. first, second, seventh) with numbers used to describe the first and last days of annual festivals. Leviticus 23:39 says, “Also in the fifteenth day of

the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.” This is talking about the festival of Ingathering (Tabernacles) and is simply stating that this festival will be eight days long with a sacred rest day at the beginning (the first day) and at the end (the eighth day). The first and eighth days of this feast could fall on different days of the week from year to year. This is similar to how Christmas Day, New Year’s Day and other annual holidays fall on different days of the week (e.g. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and so on) from year to year.

The seventh day of Exodus 20:8 is quite different. It is the seventh day of every week (in modern terms from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday) and not the seventh day of some annual festival. Saturday is consistently the same day every week and does not vary with the annual calendar.

4. Examining the different texts quoted in the second part of the question about “Sabbaths of different lengths.”

Question 6 claims that in the Bible there are sabbaths *of different lengths* as follows:

- a). One day long, Exodus 16:23-29.
- b). Two days long, Leviticus 23:6-8.
- c). One year long, Leviticus 25:4.
- d). Seventy years long, 2 Chronicles 36:21.
- e). Eternity long, Hebrews 4:9.

Let us consider each of these five points and their associated Bible texts in order:

a). “One day long, Exodus 16:23-29.” It is correct to say that Exodus 16:23-29, which is about the seventh-day Sabbath, describes a Sabbath rest of one day long. Sacred rest periods were one day long in the case of the seventh-day Sabbath and the ceremonial sabbaths of the annual festivals. They were one year long in the case of the sabbatical rest for the land. As will be shown, one day long and one

year long are the only two units of time discussed for sabbath rest periods in the Old Testament.

b). “Two days long, Leviticus 23:6-8.” Leviticus 23:6-8 does not talk about a sabbath rest of two days long. It simply describes the seven-day festival of Unleavened Bread which has a ceremonial sabbath on the first day and on the seventh day. It does not even describe two sabbaths of one day long that are together. The only time when you would have had two days that are both sabbath rest days, one after the other, would be when the seventh-day Sabbath occurred the day before or after an annual ceremonial sabbath.

This is what Leviticus 23:6-8 says:

6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

8 But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

c). “One year long, Leviticus 25:4.” It is correct to say that Leviticus 25:4 describes a sabbath rest of one year long. It is giving instruction about the sabbatical rest for the land prescribed for every seventh year.

d). “Seventy years long, 2 Chronicles 36:21.” This verse in 2 Chronicles is really just talking about seventy sabbatical years in a row. It says, “To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her *sabbaths*: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.” It appears that the Israelites had not given their land the sabbath rest every seventh year. So God had kept an account and gave the land the sabbaths it was owed when the people went into captivity.

Thus we only have the “one day” or “one year” unit as being applicable to the length of sabbath rests prescribed by God in the Old Testament.

e). **“Eternity long, Hebrews 4:9.”** Is Hebrews 4:9 talking about a sabbath that is an eternity long? To understand this verse, we really need to read carefully all of chapters 3 and 4 in the book of Hebrews. As will be seen, these chapters are full of interesting, practical information and advice.

Hebrews chapter 3 starts with the invitation to consider Jesus (3:1, 2). This invitation flows on from the detailed description of Christ’s divine and human merits given in chapters 1 and 2.

Jesus is then described as being infinitely superior to Moses (3:3-6).³¹ This would be impressive to the Hebrew audience the author was writing to.

In verse 6 the author moves to personal application and states that we belong to Christ “if” we hold fast to the end. To illustrate his point he proceeds in the rest of the chapter to warn his readers about making the same mistake that the Israelites did in the wilderness when they came out of Egypt.

The Old Testament text the author of Hebrews uses to explain the problem in the wilderness is Psalm 95:7-11, which he quotes (3:7-11). In verses 16-19 of chapter 3 he explains exactly who this passage is referring to and what their problem was. It is a reference to the generation that came out of Egypt and that rebelled at Kadesh, refusing to enter the Promised Land (Numbers chapters 13, 14). What was their problem? Unbelief, or lack of faith (3:18,19).

God said that this generation in the wilderness would never enter His “rest.” In chapter 3 this appears to be referring to entering the land of Canaan. But as we read chapter 4 it becomes clear that this “rest” involves more than just going into the Promised Land.

Hebrews 4:1 says that a promise of entering God’s rest still stands and verse 3 says that we who believe enter that rest. This is obviously referring to having faith in Christ. So the “rest” that the wilderness generation did not find, and that we, who have faith, do find, is the spiritual rest of being in Christ.

In Hebrews 4:3, 4 the writer explains that God's rest has actually been available since the foundation of the world. This is proved by God's act in resting on the seventh day of Creation Week. Why would God's rest on the seventh day of Creation Week reveal that the spiritual rest in Christ has been available from that time? The answer to this would have been quite clear to the author's Hebrew audience of seventh-day Sabbath-keepers. But a modern reader's initial reaction when reading Hebrew 3:3, 4 may well be, "What is the writer doing here? Why is he suddenly switching to talking about the creation of the world and God's rest on the seventh day?" This is because most modern readers are not used to the thought that *the Seventh-day Sabbath is closely associated with, and symbolic of, the spiritual, mental and physical rest found in Christ* [1, 2, 3].³²

True Sabbath-keeping is a celebration of redemption [11], an act of faith, a sign that we are putting our trust in God to sanctify us [9] and a foretaste of Heaven [4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 15, 31, 37]. For a discussion of Sabbath-keeping's relationship to redemption, faith and sanctification please see the answer to Question 13. That Sabbath-keeping is a foretaste of Heaven can be seen from the way it gives relief from the burdens and cares of the working week and allows us to be refreshed by special communion with and worship of God. Also notice Isaiah 58:13, 14 which says:

13 If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and *feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father*: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

What is "the heritage of Jacob thy father?" Nothing less than Christ and His everlasting kingdom. The two promises given to Jacob were to do with the Messiah and the inheritance of Canaan (Genesis 28:13, 14). Jesus made plain what Jacob's inheritance

would be when He said, “And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of *heaven*” (Matthew 8:11. See also Hebrews 11:13-16).

God’s rest on the seventh day of Creation Week was a celebration of His perfect plan for humankind: “God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). It was a time of special fellowship between Him and Adam and Eve for whom He had so lovingly prepared the world. Thus, the seventh-day Sabbath is a day that points us forward to the time in Heaven when, because of Christ’s redemptive work, God’s perfect plan will be fully realized and His face to face communion with men and women restored [5, 6, 10, 11, 15].³³

The fact that the Sabbath is a celebration of redemption, an act of faith, a sign that we are putting our trust in God to sanctify us, and a foretaste of Heaven is revealed powerfully by Jesus Christ’s healing ministry. Many of Christ’s miracles were done on the Sabbath³⁴ and therefore associate this day with faith, restoration and joy.

So, God’s rest has been available since the creation of the world, the Israelites in the wilderness did not obtain it because of unbelief, and still “today” it remains for some to enter (Hebrews 4:6). This is why we can be certain that there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God (4:9). Hebrews 4:9 is a kind of summary statement concluding what has been discussed thus far in Chapters 3 and 4 on the subject of God’s rest. This verse employs a different word for “rest” than has been previously used in these two chapters. It says literally, THEN REMAINS A SABBATISM TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD. Thus, this verse is best translated, “there remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God” (e.g. Revised Standard Version).

Though the Israelites in the wilderness did not obtain God’s rest, it is evident that through the ages individuals have entered it as they have exercised genuine faith in Him—just as now we who have believed do enter that rest (4:3).

The one who has entered God’s rest “has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His” (4:10). When we correctly put our faith in Christ we cease from our own efforts to work our way to

Heaven. We stop trying to earn God's favor and rest in His promises and achievements [7]. But we do have something to do. We are to "labour [hasten, be diligent³⁵] therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." (4:11). Compare this with Jesus' admonition: "Strive [Greek *agonizomai*] to enter in at the strait [narrow] gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" Luke 13:24.³⁶

The concept of ceasing from our own efforts to earn God's favor, and of entering into God's Sabbath rest by faith [7], is beautifully reflected in true Sabbath-keeping. In this experience we cease from our weekly secular toil in order to keep, as an act of faith, the seventh-day Sabbath.

Getting back to our original question, does Hebrews 4:9 talk about a sabbath rest that is an eternity long? Yes, because it refers to the rest that believer's enjoy through being in Christ. This rest of soul will continue throughout eternity if they remain in Christ.

Does Hebrews chapter 4 support the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath? Most definitely. Consider the following:

i). Why would the author of Hebrews use the seventh-day Sabbath to illustrate the spiritual rest found in Christ if it had been, as some allege, done away with?

ii). Hebrews 4:9 is a summary statement for Hebrews 3 and 4. The writer points out the failure of the Israelites in the wilderness to enter God's rest and the fact that God's rest has been available since the creation of the world. He further explains that some still have not entered God's rest. Therefore it is certain that "there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God." If the Sabbath were an outdated vestige of the past with no more relevance, then the author would have lost his audience at this critical point in his argument.

iii). The author of Hebrews introduces and uses the seventh-day Sabbath without apology or introduction. It is simply not an issue because the writer and his audience are obviously seventh-day Sabbath-keepers. If some other day were being used we would surely find a reference to the issue here. We know that the Jewish

custom of circumcision was a big issue in New Testament times and we hear a lot about this controversy in the Bible. But the seventh-day Sabbath was an equally, if not more, important part of Jewish life and therefore we can be certain there would have been much discussion and controversy over any change in it. Is such discussion found in the New Testament? No, there is not the slightest whisper anywhere in the scriptures, including Hebrews chapter 4.

iv). In this chapter the seventh-day Sabbath is magnified by its connection with the spiritual rest found in Christ. It is associated with the most fundamental gospel truth of salvation through faith in Christ, often called justification by faith [7]. Thus, the conclusion is inescapable that, for the author and his writers, the seventh-day Sabbath was, at this very time they were living (AD 60's³⁷), a positive thing, a good thing, a divine institution, and not a burden or an out-dated vestige of the past.

5. Why should the seventh-day Sabbath be considered special.

The last part of Question 6 says, “Why should we consider the seventh-day Sabbath special? Why cannot *we* choose the time and length of Sabbath observance?” Hopefully the above material has made it plain that the Seventh-day Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment is special, important for today and very different from the annual ceremonial sabbaths. The issue of why we should choose the seventh day for our weekly Sabbath, rather than some other day, is dealt with in the answer to Question 13.

Question 7: [Note. This is a very strange question. It was modified from an allegation printed on some non-referenced photocopied sheets given to the author many years ago. Some readers may find it rather confusing. If this is the case please read the answer and then go back to look at the question].

Was not the seventh-day Sabbath of Israel a changing Sabbath, being observed on two different days of the week each year because of an additional Sabbath being observed at Pentecost? If we

suppose, for instance, that the 15th of Abib (when Israel left Egypt) which was on the Sabbath, was Saturday, then the seventh-day Sabbath would fall on Saturday for seven weeks or until 49 days had run their course. The 50th day, which would be Sunday, would be Pentecost. The next seventh-day Sabbath after Pentecost would fall on Sunday, and so it would be until Pentecost of the following year which would change the seventh-day Sabbath again. This time it would fall on Monday until the next Pentecost which would be 50 days after the first 15 days of Abib, as stated, or on the 65th day of that particular new year. Thus, can we not say that there was never any such thing as the Sabbath being on Saturday throughout the year, or perpetually?

Answer: This question is factually inaccurate. Whoever originally came up with the question was confused over the difference between the weekly seventh-day Sabbath and the annual ceremonial sabbaths of the Jewish calendar. It also appears that they did not understand the way the Hebrew word for sabbath (*shabbath*) can sometimes be used to mean simply “week.”

The question states “Was not the seventh-day Sabbath of Israel a changing Sabbath, being observed on two different days of the week each year because of an additional Sabbath being observed at Pentecost?” By this they mean that seventh-day Sabbaths occurred on two different days of the week during the same year. They claim that the reason for the change is that at Pentecost there are in effect two seventh-days in a row. This is false and appears to be based on a wrong interpretation of Leviticus 23:15,16. This passage reads in the KJV:

15 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:
16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.

In the Revised Standard Version ³⁸ (RSV) it reads:

15 And you shall count from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven full *weeks* shall they be,

16 counting fifty days to the morrow after the seventh sabbath; then you shall present a cereal offering of new grain to the LORD.

In the RSV the Hebrew word *shabbath* is correctly translated as “weeks” in the second part of verse 15. Indeed, it would be best to translate *shabbath* as “week” in verse 16 too. This verse would then read, “counting fifty days to the morrow after the seventh week; then you shall present a cereal offering of new grain to the LORD.”

The Feast of Unleavened Bread started on the 15th day of the first month (Abib, also called Nisan). On the second day (16th) of this feast a special grain offering ³⁹ was made. From the 16th, seven weeks (Hebrew *shabbath* in Leviticus 23:15b, 16) were to be counted (49 days inclusive ⁴⁰) which brings us to the 5th day of the third month (Sivan). The day after, or the fiftieth day (6th of Sivan), was Pentecost. This is the way the date of this Feast of Pentecost is calculated. Let us remember that another name for this feast is the Feast of weeks (Hebrew *shabuwa* or *shabua*, Exodus 34:22; Deuteronomy 16:10, 16; 2 Chronicles 8:13). It is never referred to as the feast of Sabbaths (Hebrew *shabbath*). Let us also remember that the word Pentecost is Greek for “fifty days.”

It appears that the person who originally came up with the theory that the above question is based on misunderstood Leviticus 23:15, 16 and interpreted it to mean that seven actual seventh-day Sabbaths were to be calculated from the day the wave sheaf was offered. They have also falsely claimed that the day after the seventh of these Sabbaths was an additional “seventh-day” Sabbath. This is a mistake because if we were to count the seven actual seventh-day Sabbaths (Saturdays ⁴¹) after 16th Abib we would end up with a total of anywhere from 45 to 51 days inclusive depending on whether 16th Abib fell on a Saturday (the seventh day of the week⁴²) or a Friday (sixth day of the week). It is also a mistake because the sabbath of

Pentecost is an annual ceremonial sabbath and quite different from the unchanging weekly seventh-day Sabbath. Please see the answer to Question 6 for a discussion about the great difference between the annual ceremonial sabbaths of Israel and the seventh-day Sabbath of the week.

Chapter Two:

The Seventh-day Sabbath and Israel



Question 8: *Is seventh-day Sabbath observance for Israel only (Exodus 16:29; 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12)? Is it true that the Sabbath laws applied only to Gentiles who had met the necessary requirements and joined the nation of Israel (Exodus 12:49; Numbers 15:16)?*

Answer: The seventh-day Sabbath, which is referred to in the texts sited in the question, is for all people in the whole world. It was not given for the nation of Israel only. In support of this position we will consider four Bible texts as follows:

1. Genesis 2:2, 3.
2. Exodus 20:8-11.
3. Mark 2:27.
4. Matthew 24:15-20.

After considering these texts we will discuss the passages mentioned in Question 8, namely:

5. Exodus 16:29.
6. Exodus 31:13 and Ezekiel 20:12.
7. Exodus 12:49 and Numbers 15:16.

1. Genesis 2:2, 3.

This passage introduces the seventh-day Sabbath as one of the two institutions given as a precious gift to mankind in Eden before the entrance of sin. The other institution was marriage (Genesis 2:21-24; Matthew 19:3-6). Marriage is a foundation for human relationships and relates to the horizontal dimension of social life. The Sabbath is foundational to our relationship with God and relates to the vertical dimension of social life. There is a close connection between marriage, “family” and the Sabbath,⁴³ and true Sabbath-keeping is a powerful force towards healthy marriages and families. God has especially blessed these two vital institutions originating in Eden (Genesis 1:28; 2:3) and Satan has gone to a lot of trouble to undermine and attack them. Unfortunately the devil has been very successful, as a little thought about the current state of marriage and the Sabbath will reveal. We must resist him and do all we can to restore the sanctity and happiness of marriage and the Sabbath.

This is what Genesis 2:2, 3 says:

2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested [Hebrew *shabath*] on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested [*shabath*] from all His work which God created and made.

Why did God have a Sabbath-rest on this seventh day? He obviously wasn't tired. The only logical reason is that He did it as part of His creative gift to mankind. A vital part of God's purpose in creating the world, and so lovingly furnishing it, was in order to present a beautiful gift to Adam, Eve and all their children. On the

seventh day God provided a vital part of this gift, the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a gift of time. It was to stand as a memorial to all coming generations, a weekly reminder of the love, power and wisdom of God in creating the world. It was to remind all future generations that He was the only true God and their source of happiness. It was to provide a regular opportunity for special fellowship with Him. Though man spoiled God's gift by his sin, in Christ its sweetness is returned. Through Christ we can have close, meaningful fellowship with our Maker without fear of rejection. In Christ we can "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 10:19) [16].

Genesis 2:2, 3 tells us that God set the seventh day apart by doing three important things:

a). Resting on the seventh day.

This is something unusual for One who never gets tired (Isaiah 40:28). As discussed above, it was clearly done for a special purpose. God was giving a gift and setting an example. God did not need to rest, but He *chose* to rest. Likewise, we are not forced by God to keep the Sabbath and any Sabbath observance done because "we have to" is not true Sabbath-keeping. We should *choose* to keep the day because we love God and want, of our own free will, to fellowship with Him and His people.

b). Blessing the seventh day.

What does it mean for God to bless something? Numbers 6:23-27 is helpful. It gives us the words that God told the priests to use when blessing the people. From this passage of scripture we can see what it means to receive God's blessing. It reads as follows:

23 Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise [in this way] ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,

24 The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:

25 The LORD make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

26 The LORD lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

27 And they shall put My name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.

So the Sabbath is associated with God's protection, light, grace, presence,⁴⁴ peace and name.

Blessing is also commonly associated with growth and prosperity. For example Leviticus 25:21 says, "Then I will command My blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years" (See also Genesis 1:22, 28).

c). Sanctifying the seventh day.

What does it mean for God to sanctify something? The basic meaning of the Hebrew word is to set apart as sacred, to consecrate, to dedicate.⁴⁵ Thus, to sanctify something means to set it apart as something that belongs to God in a special way. It means to dedicate it to a sacred use. An example of this would be Exodus 28:41: "And thou shalt put them [special clothes] upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, *that they may minister unto Me in the priest's office.*" If something or somebody is going to be brought close to God they must first be sanctified. For example, 1 Chronicles 15:12 says "...sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, *that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel* unto the place that I have prepared for it." Though God's people are admonished to sanctify themselves, it is actually *only* God Himself that can make it effectual: "And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory. And *I will sanctify* the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: *I will sanctify* also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to Me in the priest's office" (Exodus 29:43, 44). The New Testament teaches that Christ's blood, God's word and the truth sanctify believers (Hebrews 13:12; John 17:17-19)[9].

It is interesting and important to know that the seventh-day Sabbath, sanctified by God, is the only ⁴⁶ thing mentioned in the Bible as a sign that God is the One who sanctifies us:

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 (Exodus 31:13).

Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them (Ezekiel 20:12).

Genesis 2:2, 3 describes God resting upon, blessing and setting apart the seventh day of the week as a gift for *all mankind* before the nation of Israel was in existence. It was established for Adam and Eve and all of their descendants.

2. Exodus 20:8-11.

The seventh-day Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments and the Ten Commandments are not for ancient Israel only, but for all of mankind.

How do we know that the Ten Commandments are applicable for everyone and not just for the Jews? In answering this question we will consider the following six areas:

- a). The Ten Commandments as a foundation of morality.
- b). The Ten Commandments as a definer of sin.
- c). The Ten Commandments as a definer of love.
- d). Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew chapters 5 to 7.
- e). The original Ten Commandments in Heaven.
- f). Jesus' use of the Ten Commandments in Matthew 19:16-19.

a). The Ten Commandments as a foundation of morality.

If the Ten Commandments have been abolished then, not only has the Sabbath been done away with, but also all decency, honesty and integrity. Why? Because it would then be okay to worship any God or idol we wanted, use God's name in vain, dishonor our parents, murder, sleep with our neighbor's wife, steal and lie. The Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment is singled out by many as something to forget. Yet they will admit that the other nine are still relevant. If the other nine are relevant, then why do they not accept the fourth? Why do they tell us to forget the only commandment that God has specifically told us to "remember" (Exodus 20:8)? The Ten Commandments are a single entity and to break one is to be guilty of all:

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, *and yet offend in one point*, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery [Seventh Commandment], said also, Do not kill [Sixth Commandment]. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law (James 2:10, 11).

b). The Ten Commandments as a definer of sin.

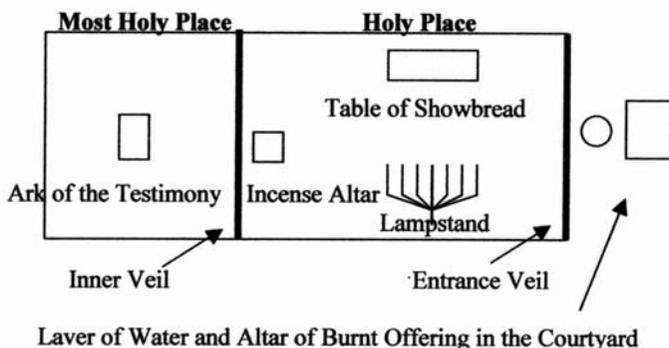
Is sin an issue for all mankind, or for Israel only? If sin is relevant for all humanity then so are the Ten Commandments. Please consider the following about the role of the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament Sanctuary service:

The sanctuary was a tent-like structure set up at the time of Moses when the Jewish nation made their escape (exodus) from Egypt. It is described in the book of Exodus in the Old Testament. The sanctuary was designed by God to explain how people are reconciled to Him. Why did people need reconciling to God? Because they had broken God's holy law, namely, the Ten Commandments. These Ten Commandments were kept in a sacred chest, called the "Ark of the Testimony," in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary.

The sanctuary was based around the truth that a sacrifice (substitute) and a priest (mediator) were needed for reconciliation to take place. Every part of the symbolic furniture and service in some way pointed to the Person or ministry of Jesus Christ. Figure One illustrates the general layout of the sanctuary used at the time of the exodus (see Exodus chapters 36-40). The temple that was eventually built in Jerusalem followed a similar design.

Figure One: The Jewish Sanctuary at the Time of the Exodus

Not to scale. The courtyard boundary is not included.



Basically, the way that the sanctuary worked was as follows: The Israelite who had sinned by breaking the law of God contained in the Ark of the Testimony brought an animal such as a lamb into the courtyard. The lamb was to be sacrificed as his substitute. He confessed his sin over the lamb and then killed it with his knife—a requirement that would help most people realize the ugliness and seriousness of sin. Killing the lamb also taught that sin leads to death. The priest then took the blood of the lamb and put some of it on the altar of burnt offering in the courtyard. The remainder of the blood was poured out at the base of this altar. After removing fat from the animal the rest of it was burnt on the courtyard altar except for a portion that was to be eaten by the priest. If a priest or the whole congregation of Israelites had

sinned the blood was taken and put on the altar of incense in the Holy Place instead. This procedure, and similar ones, continued daily throughout the year.

Once a year the Most Holy Place was entered by the high priest. This was on the solemn Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:1-34; 23:26-32; Hebrews 9:1-7). It was in the Most Holy Place that God appeared to Moses above the Ark and spoke to him from a cloud of glory (Exodus 25:22; 34:29, 30).

By considering the sanctuary service, as described above, we can see how the Ten Commandments have a special role in defining what sin is. Every phase of human behavior is covered by one of these ten all-encompassing precepts. Romans 7:7 says: “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, *I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*” “Thou shalt not covet” is, of course, the Tenth Commandment. James 2:10, 11 has been previously mentioned in relation to the unity of the moral law. It also reveals the use of the Ten Commandments in understanding sin and guilt:

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery [*Seventh Commandment*], said also, Do not kill [*Sixth Commandment*]. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, *thou art become a transgressor of the law* [i.e. a sinner, 1 John 3:4].

The need for, and promise of, a Savior to provide reconciliation because of transgression of the Ten Commandments was the essence of the sanctuary service [25]. It was because there was no other way; it was because the moral law could not be changed, that Christ died on the cross for us paying the penalty of the broken law [21].

Sin is an issue that effects all mankind. The word “sin” is vague and uncertain unless we have something that defines what we are talking about. This is where the Ten Commandments come to our help. When we consider these commandments then we can under-

stand what sin is.⁴⁷ Thus, the Ten Commandments, including the fourth Sabbath commandment, are for all mankind.

c). The Ten Commandments as a definer of love.

Is love an issue for all mankind, or for Israel only? If love is relevant for all humanity then so are the Ten Commandments. The word “love” is also vague and uncertain unless we have something that defines what we are talking about. Here again the Ten Commandments come to our help. Consider what Romans 13:9 says:

For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Paul is here making the point that “love is the fulfilling of the law” (vs. 10). But how could Paul tell us what love is fulfilling if he did not have the Ten Commandments (he quotes five of them)? The Ten Commandments enable us to know what love is. Jesus kept the Ten Commandments perfectly in His life [23] and so, of course, we can know what love is by looking to Him and His sacrifice [18]. Jesus Himself said, “If ye love Me, keep My commandments” and “If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love” (John 14:15; 15:10) [24]. Without Jesus’ life and without the Ten Commandments we cannot clearly appreciate what love is.

Jesus said, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:37-39). What does loving God and our neighbor mean? The first four of the Ten Commandments focus on love to God and the last six emphasize love to others. “By this we know that we love the children of God, when *we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God,*

that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous”(1 John 5:2, 3).

Someone will probably object here saying, “The Ten Commandments are negative. They don’t include the positive side of loving, like doing good and giving to others; they just say, ‘Thou shalt not.’” In answer to this we would say that the Fourth and Fifth Commandments are not given in the “negative” manner. Also Jesus showed, in the Sermon on the Mount, how even the “Thou shalt not” commandments include the positive side. He explained that the commandment “Thou shalt not kill” included going to an offended person and making things right (Matthew 5:21-24).

So the Ten Commandments are relevant for all people because we all need to appreciate and understand what love is.

d). Jesus’ “Sermon on the Mount” in Matthew chapters 5 to 7.

To appreciate the relationship that the Sermon on the Mount has to the Ten Commandments we need to understand how Jesus’ life paralleled the Israelite exodus experience. He went, as it were, over the same ground and, where they failed, He conquered. This parallel experience is recorded in the first several chapters of Matthew as follows:

i). The evil king’s attempt to kill the infant Christ parallels the king of Egypt’s evil plan to kill the baby Israelite boys (Matthew 2:16; Exodus chapter 1).

ii). Christ’s journey out of Egypt parallels Israel’s exodus from Egypt (Matthew 2:19-21; Exodus chapters 13, 14).

iii). Christ’s baptism parallels Israel’s baptism in the Red Sea (Matthew 3:13-16; Exodus chapter 14; 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2)

iv). Christ’s temptation in the wilderness for 40 days parallels Israel’s 40 years of wandering and temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11; Deuteronomy 8:1-16).

v). Christ’s sermon on a mountain (Matthew 5:1) recorded in Matthew 5-7 parallels His delivery of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai described in Exodus chapters 19 and 20. ⁴⁸

Since Jesus' Sermon on the Mount parallels the giving of the Ten Commandments, any necessary changes would naturally be addressed here. In other words, if Jesus wanted to replace or abolish the Ten Commandments this is when it would have been done. Does He do this? Let us listen to His own words from the Sermon on the Mount:

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 5:17-19).

He then goes on to specifically name two of the Ten Commandments and instead of changing or revoking them, He magnifies and deepens them (Matthew 5:21-28). In addition to this Christ indicates His total disapproval of those who promote lawlessness by His words in Matthew 7:21-23:

21 Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven*.

22 Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity [Greek *anomia*, transgression of the law or lawlessness].

Thus the Sermon on the Mount proves that the Ten Commandments are still fully applicable for all mankind.

e). The original Ten Commandments in Heaven.

We are told in Exodus 25:40 that the sanctuary and all its parts were to be made according to a pattern provided by God. In Hebrews 8:1-5 it says that Christ ministers for us in “the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” We know that this true tabernacle is in Heaven and is the one that Moses copied from. How? Because the work of the earthly priests was to “serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, *that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount*” (Hebrews 8:5. See also 9:11, 24).

Does the true tabernacle in Heaven, where Jesus ministers, have the Ten Commandments in it? Hebrews chapter 9 certainly implies that it does since it describes the earthly sanctuary, including the Ark with the Ten Commandments (Hebrews 9:1-4), and then it says that these things were copies of the true heavenly realities (Hebrews 9:24). This is impressive evidence but it would be nice to have more. Well, in the book of Revelation we find that John actually *saw* the Ark of the Testimony in the temple of God in Heaven. Revelation 11:19 says, “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”

Probably someone will object at this point saying, “What John saw was not real, just symbolic.” It is true that what is written in Revelation is to be *generally* taken as symbolic because Revelation 1:1 says that the book was sent and “signified” (Greek *semaino* from *sema*, a mark). But this does not mean that *everything* in Revelation is to be taken as symbolic. For example, the “One like the Son of Man” in Revelation 1:13 is not symbolic of Jesus, but was actually Jesus. Also the throne seen in Revelation 4:2 is not symbolic because we know that there is a real throne in Heaven (Matthew 23:22; Acts 2:30; Hebrews 8:1). Likewise, the heavenly angels in Revelation 5:11, 7:11 and 12:7 are obviously to be understood as real angels.

The rule for Revelation is that things in it are to be taken as symbolic unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. The temple

of God and Ark in Revelation 11:19 should be taken literally because, firstly, we are not told anywhere that the “temple of God... in heaven” or “the ark of His testament” are symbolic of anything. Secondly, we have a literal earthly copy of the heavenly temple and Ark described elsewhere in the Bible (Hebrews 9:1-4; Exodus chapters 25-27). Thirdly, Revelation 11:19 introduces a section in Revelation where the Ten Commandments are very prominent.⁴⁹ It would thus be most appropriate for the Ark containing them to be seen.

So Revelation 11:19 describes a real temple and Ark of the Covenant (Testament) in Heaven. If then, there is a real Ark of the Testament in Heaven, it is obvious that there must be a “Testament” in it, that is, there must be the Ten Commandments in it. If the Ten Commandments are in Heaven today before the altar at which our High Priest Jesus Christ ministers the merits of His blood, then surely those commandments are still relevant to all on the Earth.

f). Jesus use of the Ten Commandments in Matthew 19:16-19.

These verses read as follows:

16 And, behold, one came and said unto Him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

17 And He said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but One, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

18 He saith unto Him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

If the Ten Commandments were not relevant for all mankind then Jesus would not have quoted from them when answering the question “what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?”

3. Mark 2:27.

This is the third Bible passage that we are considering as support for the seventh-day Sabbath's relevance for all mankind. In this verse Jesus plainly says, "the Sabbath was made for man [Greek *anthropos*]." He did not say that the Sabbath was made for Israel only.

4. Matthew 24:15-20.

This passage is part of Jesus' message to His disciples about what would happen in the future. It reads as follows:

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day:

Matthew chapter 24 mingles the description of the coming destruction of Jerusalem (which occurred in AD 70) and the second coming of Christ. These were the two events that the disciples asked about (vs. 2, 3).⁵⁰ Why would Jesus have said, "pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day" if the Sabbath was not still an important day for Christians to observe in AD 70?⁵¹ Jesus plainly indicates here that "the Sabbath day" in AD 70 was going to be the same day as it was when He gave this address to His disciples. This was the seventh day of the week that was recognized by Jesus

as the Sabbath throughout the Gospel accounts. Thus, Jesus' words in Matthew chapter 24 reveal that the Sabbath was not just something for Old Testament Jews.

Let us now consider the Bible texts used in Question 8. The question states "Sabbaths were for Israel only" and then lists Exodus 16:29, Exodus 31:13 and Ezekiel 20:12. What are these verses about?

5. Exodus 16:29

This verse reads as follows, "See, for that the LORD hath given you the Sabbath, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." This instruction is part of the narrative of Exodus 16:11-36 that records how God gave the manna in the wilderness and how He connected with this the lesson about the Sabbath day. The people of Israel needed to be reintroduced to the Sabbath because as slaves in Egypt they had largely lost this truth. The fact that the Sabbath truth had been lost while the Israelites were in Egypt is supported by Exodus 5:4, 5 which says:

4 And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.

5 And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest [Hebrew *shabath*] from their burdens.

This implies that because of their slavery the Israelites had not been keeping the Sabbath rest (*shabath*) and that Moses and Aaron had been responsible for telling them to keep it. Thus Pharaoh accused these leaders as he did.

So Exodus 16:29 does not say that the Sabbath was for the nation of Israel only, just that it was reintroduced to them by God at this time. And it needed reintroducing because it had been neglected while they were in Egypt.

6. Exodus 31:13 and Ezekiel 20:12.

To understand Exodus 31:13 we need to get the context of verses 12-17. These verses say:

12 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

13 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.

14 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.

15 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.

16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

17 It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.

Ezekiel 20:12 is very similar to Exodus 31:13 and 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.

These passages do not say that the Sabbath was only for the children of Israel or that it was not for all mankind. They simply tell us that the Sabbath is a sign between God and the children of Israel forever. And who are the children of Israel today? They are Christians. “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart,

in the spirit, and not in the letter..." "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Romans 2:28, 29; Galatians 3:29). Since "Jew" and "Abraham's seed" are both synonymous with the phrase "children of Israel," it is clearly evident from the above passages that Christians are the spiritual children of Israel (or Jacob, as he was earlier called).⁵² Luke 1:33 says of Christ, "He shall reign over *the house of Jacob* [i.e. Israel] for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Christians are part of this house of Jacob that our Lord will reign over forever. Just as God wants all people to become Christians and be a part of spiritual Israel, so He wants all to enjoy His Sabbath.

There is only one thing in the entire Bible that is described as:

- A "sign between Me [God] and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you" (Exodus 31:13) and,
- "a perpetual covenant" (vs. 16) and,
- "a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever" (vs.17).

And that thing is the Sabbath.⁵³ It is still a sign for the true children of Israel today who are not Jews outwardly but inwardly through faith in Christ. *The Sabbath is therefore relevant, significant and vitally important for all of mankind today.*

Some may think that Exodus 31:12-17 cannot be relevant for today because it says that whoever profanes the Sabbath shall "surely be put to death." But we must remember that the death sentence is a civil matter, while the Sabbath is a moral one. The death sentence is no longer applicable for Sabbath-breaking because the Christian church, which took over from the nation of Israel (Matthew 21:43), is not a civil power. For this reason the civil laws applicable to the nation of Israel are no longer in practice.⁵⁴ In contrast, the moral law is a perpetual and universal requirement.

7. Exodus 12:49 and Numbers 15:16.

Getting back to Question 8, the final sentence says, “Is it true that the Sabbath laws applied only to Gentiles who had met the necessary requirements and joined the nation of Israel?” It then gives the texts of Exodus 12:49 and Numbers 15:16. Exodus 12:49 says, “One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.” Numbers 15:16 says the same thing, but with slightly different words.

These two passages are simply saying that when a foreigner joins the nation he is not to worship God in a manner different from native Israelites. This makes good sense and is not implying that the Sabbath was not for all mankind. Indeed, God’s plan was for the nation of Israel to rule the world so that ideally all would eventually know the one true God, get ready for His Messiah and keep His commandments including the Sabbath (see, for example, 1Kings 8:41-43).

***Question 9:** Why should the church observe the old Jewish Sabbath if it is just a memorial of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt (Deuteronomy 5:15) rather than a commemoration of God’s rest upon completing His work? Isn’t it as meaningless for the church to observe the old Jewish Sabbath in commemoration of the escape from Pharaoh, as it would be for England to observe the 4th of July with Americans who thus commemorate their independence and freedom?*

Answer: The first sentence of this question says, “Why should the church observe the old Jewish Sabbath if it is just a memorial of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt (Deuteronomy 5:15) rather than a commemoration of God’s rest upon completing His work?” The question is correct in saying that the Sabbath is a memorial of deliverance from slavery under Pharaoh. Deuteronomy 5:15 ^{ss} supports this. However, this question is going against the word of God when it implies that the seventh-day Sabbath is not a commemoration of God’s rest upon completing His work. God says:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy... *For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it (Exodus 20:8-11).*

Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: *for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed (Exodus 31:16, 17).*

Next, Question 9 says, “Isn’t it as meaningless for the church to observe the old Jewish Sabbath in commemoration of escape from Pharaoh, as it would be for England to observe the 4th of July with Americans who thus commemorate their independence and freedom?” This question neglects the great truth that the exodus of the Jews from Egypt is symbolic of deliverance from sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus [11]. Indeed, the New Testament refers to our deliverance from sin through the “exodus” of Jesus Christ. His death and resurrection are referred to in Luke 9:31 as an exodus. On the Mount of Transfiguration Moses and Elijah “appeared in glory, and spake of His decease [Greek *exodos*] which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.”

What was God doing when He rescued the Israelites from Egypt? He was redeeming them, or “buying them back.” Thus the Bible says, “But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God *redeemed* thee thence” (Deuteronomy 24:18). What was Jesus doing when He died for us on “Good Friday?” He was redeeming us from the bondage of sin. As the Bible says, “Christ hath *redeemed* us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Galatians 3:13).⁶ And what was Jesus doing on the day after Good Friday? He was resting from His work of redemption in the tomb on the seventh-day Sabbath. Therefore, just as Christ the Creator ⁷ rested on the seventh day of the week after His work of creation, so likewise He rested on the seventh day after His work of redemption.

Interestingly, the Gospel of John appears to compare the last week before Christ's resurrection with the Creation Week of Genesis.⁵⁸ John 12:1 mentions "six days" during which Christ worked prior to His resurrection. This parallels the six days of work done when the Earth was created (Genesis chapter 1). In John 19:30 Jesus is on the cross and about to give up His life when He cries, "It is finished." Similarly, after the six days of creation the record say, "the heavens and the earth were finished" (Genesis 2:1). Then in the Gospel of John it tells us of Jesus resting in the tomb on the seventh-day Sabbath (John 19:31; 19:42-20:1) just as Christ rested in the beginning on the seventh day of Creation Week (Genesis 2:1, 2). Thus, John's account supports the concept of the Sabbath being a memorial of Christian redemption.

Since the rescue of the Jews from Egypt is a type or symbol of the greater deliverance from sin wrought by Christ's life, death and resurrection, the Christian church ought to be eager to embrace the Sabbath as a memorial of these two events. Certainly Christians will want to commemorate their rescue from sin through Christ. But why should not the Christian church also remember God's mighty work in delivering our spiritual forefathers from Egyptian bondage? Are not all God's miracles worth remembering and praising Him for? And has not God, in His word, repeatedly referred to this deliverance as one of His most notable actions? Can we not learn many wonderful lessons of faith, trust and obedience by remembering this deliverance? Does not even the New Testament point us to this event as something not to forget? For example 1 Corinthians 10:1-6 says:

- 1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;
- 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;
- 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;
- 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

6 *Now these things were our examples...*

The Corinthian church was largely a non-Jewish congregation. Hebrews 11:27-29 is also significant:

27 By faith he [Moses] forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.

28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

It is true, as Question 9 asserts, that the English would not want to commemorate the victory of the Americans over them. But this comparison is not a good one. It is comparable to the Egyptians not wanting to commemorate the victory of the Israelites over them. But Christians are not to think of themselves as spiritual Egyptians for the Egyptians of Moses' time were characterized by their cruel persecution of God's people. Christians are spiritual Israelites and therefore it is proper for them to think with gladness over the deliverance God wrought at the time of the exodus, and the seventh-day Sabbath is a God-ordained opportunity for doing this.

Chapter Three:

The Seventh-day Sabbath and the Book of Genesis



***Question 10:** How could Adam and Eve’s first Sabbath have been the same day God rested when they were only created the day before God’s Sabbath? Adam and Eve had worked no more than one day and are not six days of work required before a Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11)?*

Answer: God could not have wanted the Fourth Commandment to mean that “six days of work are required before a Sabbath” because He also commanded the Israelites to keep the annual ceremonial sabbaths. Common work was forbidden on ceremonial sabbaths in the same way as it was for the weekly Sabbath. Thus, unless it fell on the seventh day, when an annual rest day was celebrated people would not be doing six days work before the weekly Sabbath. For example, Pentecost, an annual ceremonial sabbath, could have fallen on a Friday in which case the people would have only worked five days (Sunday to Thursday) before the weekly Sabbath occurred on Saturday.⁵⁹

Let us consider the matter from another angle. Suppose a person is studying the Bible with Sabbath-keeping Christians and on a

Wednesday evening they give their heart to Jesus and decide to keep the Sabbath. Will they count off six days work and keep their first Sabbath on the next Wednesday? No, of course not. But someone will say, “This argument is not valid because even though he was not aware of the Sabbath truth before his conversion and instruction he still will have completed six days of secular labor prior to his first Sabbath.” Well, what if he had just worked twenty days straight before Saturday? What if he had been on holiday or sick and not done any secular labor at all? The Sabbath commandment is not a commandment about laboring, but about rest! “Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD” (Exodus 31:15). The commandment means that work *may* be done on the first six days of the week but not on the seventh, which is to be observed as God’s special rest day.

A person studying the Bible with Sabbath-keeping friends who, on a Wednesday evening, is “born again” (John 3:3) and decides to keep the Sabbath would naturally go with their friends to worship God on the following Saturday. God was Adam and Eve’s Sabbath-keeping Friend. Adam and Eve were “born” on Friday and would have kept their first seventh-day Sabbath with God the next day.

Let us think about it logically too. Why would God have made Adam and Eve on the first day of Creation Week, in order to give them six days work, when He had not yet prepared for them the land, trees, sun etc.? He created them on the sixth day because He wanted to have His wonderful gift all ready for them and because He wanted part of that gift to be a Sabbath every seventh day. That is why He took six days to do the creating and not two, four or eight. God could have created the world, and all that is in it, in a moment. But He took the time He did for a purpose: so He could institute something that would be a perpetual reminder to mankind of what He had done, namely, the seventh-day Sabbath.

Question 11: *How can it be said that Sabbath observance has been required from man’s beginning when, on account of Adam’s almost immediate sin, God Himself stopped observing the Sabbath shortly after the creation of the world in order to begin the work of redemption?*

Answer: This question suggests that in the beginning Sabbath observance was not required of mankind. In support of this the claim is made that God ceased His Sabbath observance soon after Creation Week because of Adam's "almost immediate" sin which necessitated immediate and ongoing redemptive labor. There are major problems with this idea, as follows:

1. It is an assumption that Adam and Eve sinned almost immediately. The record is silent on this point and for all we know they could have been in the Garden of Eden for some years before they sinned. Some may say, "But surely they would have had children if they had been in the Garden of Eden for more than a short time?" Not necessarily, because Enoch is not recorded as having any children until he was 65 years old (Genesis 5:21). Noah was 500 years old before any children are mentioned (Genesis 5:32).

2. This question forgets that God is always working for the benefit of His creation. If He didn't "all flesh would perish together"(Job 34:15). God holds the stars in place and "by the greatness of His might...not one faileth [is missing]" (Isaiah 40:26). God was sustaining and upholding all of His vast creation even on the first Sabbath mentioned in Genesis 2:2, 3. If He didn't then all His creatures would have instantly perished. God's rest on this first Sabbath was not a rest from doing good and ministering to others, but from creating the Earth. God's work of redemption on the Sabbath is not evidence against the Sabbath because it is simply a continuation of God's constant work of beneficence. Indeed, since God's rest on the seventh day of Creation Week was a celebration of His perfect plan for humanity (Genesis 1:31-2:3), and since the work of redemption [10, 11] is what will see that plan fulfilled at last, it is most appropriate for works of redemption to be done on the Sabbath.

We have elsewhere discussed how the seventh-day Sabbath is a memorial of redemption (please see the answers to Questions 9 and 13). The idea of redemption being associated with the Sabbath is demonstrated beautifully by Jesus' healing ministry. Many of Christ's miracles ⁶⁰ were done on the Sabbath. In John chapter 5,

when accused by the Jewish leaders of healing on the Sabbath Jesus said, “My Father is working still, and I am working” (John 5:17). In saying this He was pointing out the fact that He, like His Father, was always involved with the work of helping others. Jesus was keeping the Sabbath properly. But He was going against the evil traditions of the Jews and so got into strife with them. On another occasion Jesus said, “it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days” (Matthew 12:12).

So we cannot use the argument that God’s redemptive work on the seventh day means He was not recognizing or keeping the Sabbath.

Question 12: *How can it be said that Sabbath observance has been required from man’s beginning when it was thousands of years after creation before we hear anything about God commanding people to observe a certain day in commemoration of His work (Exodus 16:23-29; 20:8-11)?*

Answer: This question, like the previous one, suggests that when mankind was first created no Sabbath observance was required. This time the “evidence” is the long period of time between the record of Genesis chapter 2 and the command to keep the Sabbath as recorded in Exodus chapters 16 and 20.

As an answer we wish to present the following:

1. Genesis 2:2, 3 is really all that we need in the Bible to know that the seventh day is to be recognized as a day to rest on and keep holy (sanctify). Please see the comment on these verses in the answer to Question 8.

2. The absence of any specific Sabbath command from Genesis chapter 3 until Exodus chapter 16 may simply mean that no command was needed up until the time of the exodus. The fact that a command was definitely needed after Israel’s prolonged slavery in Egypt has been discussed in the answer to Question 8 (part 5) where we mentioned Exodus 5:4, 5. In this verse Pharaoh accuses Moses and Aaron of making the Israelites rest [Hebrew *shabath*]

from their work, implying that under the yoke of Egyptian bondage the Israelites had forgotten or neglected Sabbath observance.

3. In the book of Genesis there is no specific command to present offerings of animal sacrifices.⁶¹ Nevertheless, when we read the book it is plain that this is what God desired people to do. Likewise, though Genesis records no specific command to keep the Sabbath, it is plain that this is what God wanted. We know this from Genesis 2:2, 3. Also we know that God had given laws and commandments from Genesis 26:5 which says, “Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” Furthermore, we know that sin is “the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4 c.f. Romans 7:7) and that sin was identified and rebuked in the book of Genesis.⁶² Therefore God’s moral law must have been recognized in those early times and, inasmuch as the Sabbath is a part of God’s moral law,⁶³ we would expect its observance to have been required. Finally, it is certain that periods of seven days were recognized in Genesis (Genesis 7:4, 10; 8:10, 12; 50:10 c.f. 29:27, 28) indicating that the seven-day week with its Sabbath day was known about.

Please also see *The Holy Bible: Is It Reliable?* at the end of this book.

Chapter Four:

Faith, Law and Grace



Question 13: *Why cannot we just rest on any day, why does it have to be the seventh day? Since the words “Sabbath” and “seventh” do not come from the same original word, and the Hebrew for “Sabbath” is shabbath, meaning intermission or cessation from work, why cannot we have a Sabbath rest on any day, any time we cease from work? Is it not the act of resting that causes it to be the Sabbath, rather than the day or time we cease from work?*

Answer: We will divide our response to this question into two parts. The first will address the initial query, “Why cannot we just rest on any day?” The second will address the last part of the question, “Is it not the act of resting that causes it to be the Sabbath?”

1. Why cannot we just rest on any day?

It is true that the words “Sabbath” and “seventh” do not come from the same original word. It is also true that the Hebrew for “Sabbath” is *shabbath* and means intermission or cessation from work. However, the question that concerns us is, “*What has God commanded us to do?*” He has not commanded us to have a Sabbath rest from work at random times as we see fit. He has not commanded

us to rest every seventh day in whatever cycle seems best to us. He has specifically commanded us to keep holy and avoid secular work on *the* seventh day of the week:

8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

10 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:

11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

(Exodus 20:8-11).

Why has God asked us to observe the seventh day of the week, rather than to rest, as we think best, on any day of the week? There are several reasons:

a). One very practical reason is that God requires a sacred meeting (“holy convocation”) to be held on the Sabbath: “Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings” (Leviticus 23:3). How can believers effectively gather together if they each choose whichever day of the week is convenient for them? If believers were to individually decide when they want to rest and worship then there would be chaos, with one person deciding on Monday, another Thursday, another Sunday and so on. Many people, in the hustle and bustle of life, would be so careless, in view of no definite time being specified, that they would neglect to keep any day. No regular effective meetings would be held. We doubt that God’s church could operate effectively at all. Maybe it would not even exist as a corporate body. God is against the confusion that would inevitably result from this policy. He says, “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40).

b). God has specifically told us *why* He has chosen the seventh day. He says, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy... *for* in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day” (Exodus 20:8-11). The God of the Bible is the Creator. This truth is the fundamental fact that separates Him from all false gods:

10 But *the LORD is the true God*, He is the living God, and an everlasting king: at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation.

11 Thus shall ye say unto them, *The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.*

12 He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion.

(Jeremiah 10:10-12).

For all the gods of the nations are idols: *but* the LORD made the heavens (Psalm 96:5).

So we are to remember the seventh day and keep it holy in order to worship the one true God the Creator, *our* Creator.

But there is more. God has given a second reason why He wants *the* seventh-day to be the Sabbath. In commenting on the Ten Commandments Moses said, “Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee...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” (Deuteronomy 5:12-15). When God rescued the Israelites from Egypt He was redeeming them, or “buying them back.” When Jesus died for us on “Good Friday” He was redeeming us from the bondage of sin. On the day after Good Friday Jesus rested from His work of redemption in the tomb on the seventh-day Sabbath. Thus, just as Christ the Creator “rested on the seventh day

of the week after His work of creation, so likewise He rested on the seventh day of the week after His work of redemption [11].⁶⁵

Therefore, we are to remember the seventh day and keep it holy in order to worship the one true God, the Creator and Redeemer, *our* Creator and Redeemer. It is very interesting that the miracle of the manna in the wilderness powerfully reinforced to the Israelites the truth that God was both the Creator and the Redeemer. He miraculously provided (created) the manna for six days, then He miraculously preserved it (redeemed it from corruption) on the Sabbath (Exodus chapter 16).

c). Another reason why God has asked us to keep holy and rest on the seventh day of the week, and not just any day of the week that we choose, is because *He highly values faith*. Indeed, “without faith it is impossible to please Him” (Hebrews 11:6). How is faith demonstrated? By believing what God has said and then acting in harmony with this belief. By hearing the word of God and obeying it:

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God [God speaks] of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark [Noah believes and acts] to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out [God speaks] into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out [Abraham believes and obeys], not knowing whither he went.

(Hebrew 11:7, 8).

Faith is demonstrated by believing God and doing what He says, even if it may not seem logical or necessary. This is why the Sabbath commandment is an ideal test of loyalty to God. Each of the other Ten Commandments can be considered worth obeying simply on the basis of logic or self-interest. But the keeping of the seventh rather than the first, third or any other day of the week is based purely on what God has said (c.f. Luke 6:46; Genesis 3:3). So, let us remember

that God is particular about the way we worship Him ⁶⁶ and let us take seriously our response to His Sabbath commandment.

Believing God and doing what He says, even if it may not seem logical or necessary to us, is the foundation of justification by faith.⁶⁷ This is illustrated by the experience of Abraham, as recorded in Romans chapter 4, and of the many great Bible characters of Hebrews chapter 11. Add to this the fact that true Sabbath-keeping is a cessation of all efforts to be saved by our own works, and a resting in God's saving power,⁶⁸ and it can be seen that the seventh-day Sabbath is powerfully connected with the great truth of justification by faith [7].

The Bible is full of examples of faith being demonstrated by people doing as God has commanded. Likewise, an absence of faith is often demonstrated by some divine request being neglected or rejected. Let us consider some examples:

i). In Genesis 2:16-3:19 God speaks to Adam and Eve saying, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." But faith was lacking. Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and, as a result, sin, death and misery entered our world.

ii). In Genesis 12:1-7 God speaks to Abram saying, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." Faith was revealed because "Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him" (c.f. Hebrews 11:8-11). As a result of Abram's faith he received God's promise to inherit the land of Canaan (and the heavenly Canaan) and to be the ancestor of the Messiah.

iii). In Exodus 12:1-28 God commands His people to observe the Passover, telling them to "take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses." Faith was present because "the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron" (c.f. Hebrews 11:28). As a result their firstborn children were not killed when the plague struck Egypt.

iv). Leviticus 10:1-11 records the sad story of Nadab and Abihu who worshipped God in a manner contrary to what He had commanded. Their actions demonstrated that faith was absent. They offered common fire before God, which He had commanded not (10:1). They may also have been drunk (10:9) and entered the Most Holy Place (Leviticus 16:1, 2). Because of their sin “there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.”

v). Numbers 21:4-9 gives the account of the attack from snakes in the wilderness. People who had been bitten were told to look at a model of a serpent on a pole: “Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live” (c.f. John 3:14, 15). Faith was present (at least in some): “Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.”

vi). In 2 Kings 5:1-14 Naaman the Syrian leper is commanded by God, through His prophet, to “Go and wash in Jordan seven times.” Faith was present because “He went down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God.” As a result “His flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.”

vii). In John 9:1-11 Jesus commands a man blind from birth saying, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.” Again faith was present because “He went his way therefore, and washed.” As a result he was healed and testified: “I went and washed, and I received sight.”

viii). Acts 2:14-41 records Peter’s famous sermon where, as God’s spokesman, he commanded the “Men of Judaea, and all... that dwell at Jerusalem” to “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” Faith was demonstrated by those who obeyed: “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.” As a result “the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”

Thus, there are very important reasons why we should choose to observe the seventh day of the week rather than just any day.

2. Now we will consider the second part of Question 13: “Is it not the act of resting that causes it to be the Sabbath, rather than the day or time we cease from work?”

The act of resting does not cause it to be the Sabbath. First, it is vital to follow God’s instruction specifying when He wants the Sabbath rest to take place. Second, the Sabbath is much more than just resting from secular work. We do not keep the Sabbath by just stopping our weekly chores or employment! The Sabbath includes:

- a). Worshipping God as our Creator (please see the preceding discussion in this answer for more detail on points “a” to “d”).
- b). Worshipping God as our Redeemer [11].
- c). Exercising faith in God [7].
- d). Meeting together with fellow believers.
- e). Learning not to please ourselves, but to delight in the things of God, draw near to Him and receive special blessings (Isaiah 58:13, 14).
- f). Acknowledging that God alone can sanctify us (Ezekiel 20:12; Exodus 31:13) [9].
- g). Celebrating God’s original design for humanity and the blessed hope of Eden restored [5, 6, 15, 31].⁶⁹

The seventh-day Sabbath is defined by God. Humans do not define it. God tells us both when and how it is to be kept.

Question 14: *Is Sabbath-keeping legalism? Have Sabbath-keepers “fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:4)?*

Answer: There is a big difference between doing what God has commanded as an act of faith ⁷⁰ and trying to obey God as an attempt to earn His favor. The Sabbath commemorates the saving work of Christ (please see the answer to Question 13). The Sabbath points us to re-creation in Christ. It points us to the everlasting gospel.

We are to keep it as a sign that we are depending upon God to save us, and not upon our works [7].⁷¹ Far from being legalistic, keeping the Sabbath properly will demonstrate our trust that God alone can sanctify us [9].⁷² It is essential to emphasize that to properly worship God through the Sabbath (or by any other means) we need to have experienced Christ's healing, transforming presence in our lives. We need to have been genuinely converted. Then Sabbath-keeping will act as a memorial of Christ's saving work in our lives.

Here is a good place to discuss the importance of renouncing all efforts to be saved by our own works. The idea that salvation, happiness, security, personal significance, identity, worthiness or spiritual greatness is based upon personal achievement is as false as it is deeply ingrained in the human psyche. In Satan's kingdom personal value is based upon performance and achievement, but in God's kingdom it is based on the fact that we are God's children and members of His family. In Satan's kingdom the currency is material possessions, personal accomplishments and worldly position or power, but in God's kingdom the currency is character, love and righteousness. Satan's kingdom is founded on brute force, territorial rights and dictatorship, but God's kingdom is fundamentally a family organization.

In proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom we should tell people that they can, through Christ, experience the reality of being sons and daughters of God [27], members of His family and heirs of Paradise. They can come home to be with their loving heavenly Father (Luke 15:11-32). We can assure them that they *are* significant and of priceless value. We can tell them that their worth and acceptance with God are not based on performance or good works. They are valuable to God because they are His creation and His blood-bought children. God's heart is yearning over them like the father, in Christ's parable, longed after his son who had left home to live a wanton life (Luke 15:11-32). God is for them, not against them. He wants; He earnestly desires them to be in Heaven with Him forever. He is their most genuine Friend, wanting what is truly best for them. In the giving of this good news we are also to proclaim the falsehood of Satan's system. In the book of Revelation Satan's kingdom is called Babylon and in Revelation 14:8 and 18:2 the resounding

cry is given that “Babylon is fallen!” This is both a cry of condemnation against Babylon’s evils and a cry of freedom.⁷³ It signals that the foolishness of Babylon is at an end and that, in Christ, we are set completely free from her slavery. Yes, we can be free from the captivity and slavery of a performance-based self-esteem and so-called security. We can rejoice in the true identity and meaning found in belonging to God’s family.

The subject of “Babylon,” her identity, the systems and organizations built on her principles, and the significance of her fall are too large to cover here in detail and readers are referred elsewhere for this.⁷⁴

Question 15: *Some claim that the New Testament apostles did not require Law and Sabbath-keeping. Is this claim true?*

Answer: First we need to define what we mean by “Law.” This is a very important thing to do, so we will take the time and space to consider it carefully. Then we will be in a position to intelligently answer this question.

The Old Testament has at least four different kinds of laws: the moral, the civil, the ceremonial and what we might call natural law (these four laws are elaborated on later). In addition, the books of Moses and even the entire Old Testament are referred to as “the law.” Hence the term “law” in the Bible has several possible meanings. How can we best understand these different references to “law” in the Bible?

Firstly, we need to realize that there is a foundational law, a fundamental principle, behind all of God’s laws. From this foundational law come applications or expressions which are the various laws, statutes and commandments found in the Bible.

Thus, God’s foundational law => gives us => various specific laws and commands.

What is this foundational law? It is the character of God. The chief attribute of God’s character is His love: “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God... He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” God’s love has two complementary aspects: mercy and justice/righteousness. When God proclaimed His name

(character) to Moses He mentioned both His mercy and His justice: “The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.” Mercy and justice perfectly blend in God’s character.⁷⁵

What does merciful mean? The Greek word translated “mercy” in the Bible means “kindness or good will towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them” (*Online Bible Lexicon*). What does it mean to be just or righteous? The main Greek and Hebrew terms ⁷⁶ translated “just” or “righteous” indicate that it means to do what is right, lawful and fair.

Since God’s foundational law is His loving character, it expresses *both* His righteousness and His mercy. Throughout the Bible God’s character is described as righteous,⁷⁷ just ⁷⁸ and merciful.⁷⁹ Jesus, the divine Son of God, has given us, in His life, a perfect demonstration of God’s foundational law. He is God’s foundational law, God’s character, made flesh and bone. The Bible describes Him as righteous,⁸⁰ just, ⁸¹ merciful and gracious.⁸² Christ’s sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate demonstration of God’s righteousness and mercy [18, 19].⁸³ Concerning the cross it can be said: “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (Psalm 85:10). The cross perfectly demonstrates the unity and balance between God’s righteousness and mercy [20]. This balance is expressed elsewhere in the scriptures: “The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty...” (Numbers 14:18).⁸⁴

As we would expect, the various laws and commandments that come from God’s foundational law are described in the Bible as being righteous and just (Psalm 119:172, Matthew 5:17-20, Romans 7:12). Not only this, but love is described as fundamental to all the laws in the Bible. Romans 13:10 says, “love is the fulfilling of the law” and Galatians 5:14 says, “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”⁸⁵

God’s foundational law is not a set of negative rules. Its positive nature is expressed by Jesus’ life. His life was one of doing good and of being good.⁸⁶ God’s law is also unified. Its unity is expressed in

the words of James 2:10: “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

This foundational law, like God, is eternal and unchanging.⁸⁷ It is defined in terms of a Person. It reveals, it reflects, that Person’s character. It is not a cold, impersonal set of rules, but an opening of the mind and heart of God.

Thus we have,

God’s foundational law, His merciful, righteous character => gives us => various specific merciful, righteous laws.

The above is the key to understanding the different uses of the term “law” in the Bible. As mentioned previously, the Bible contains moral laws, ceremonial laws, civil laws, and natural laws. By reading the Bible we can see clearly which of these laws is still applicable today.

God’s moral law is contained especially in the Ten Commandments. The first four commandments particularly relate to loving God and the last six to loving our neighbor. We cannot love God or our neighbor while knowingly breaking any of these commandments. Obviously the Ten Commandments are fully applicable today. Every phase of human activity falls under one or more of these ten all-encompassing principles. The holiness and importance of God’s Ten Commandments are but dimly understood in today’s world. So precious, sacred and important are these ten precepts that, unlike the rest of the Holy Bible, God spoke them with His own mouth and wrote them with His own finger (Exodus 20:1-17; 24:12; 31:18). They were of central importance to the Jewish sanctuary service and have a special function in defining sin (see the answer to Question 8, part 2, point “b” for more details on this point).

The Old Testament ceremonial laws applied to the time before Christ’s death and resurrection. Using these ceremonies the people were to fix their faith on the coming Christ. After Christ’s sacrifice and resurrection these ceremonies, that had pointed forward to His death and ministry, were no longer applicable [25, 28].⁸⁸ Christ replaced them with ceremonies suited to the new era.⁸⁹ Although

Christ replaced the Old Testament ceremonies we must not despise them or count them as useless. Far from this, the Old Testament sanctuary services reveal the complete plan of salvation through Christ in greater detail than anywhere else in the Bible. We can learn much of great importance from these symbols.

The Old Testament civil laws applied to the time before Christ's death when the nation of Israel was supposed to be under the direct rule of God, whom the people professed to be their true King. The Israelite nation was then a God-ordained, God-directed religious and civil organization.⁹⁰ God had arranged things so that He could communicate His wishes directly to the people through the high priest. Unfortunately, the nation of Israel rejected their Messiah and withdrew from God's kingship (Matthew 21:33-46; John 19:15). So the kingdom of God was transferred from Israel to the Christian church (Matthew 21:43) [14]. The Christian church is a purely religious organization. Although it has discipline and order,⁹¹ it is never to be a union with the state, and is not to use civil laws. This is made clear by specific passages in the New Testament ⁹² and also from the book of Acts which portrays the early church as a religious movement that was separate from the civil authorities of the day.⁹³ The New Testament church was to be subject to the civil rulers in all matters that did not interfere with the higher claims of God.⁹⁴ As an organization this church spread worldwide into many different nations that were controlled by a variety of civil authorities.

The fourth area of law mentioned in the Bible concerns God's natural laws. These are the laws that govern nature. If we throw a ball up it comes back down. If we heat water to boiling point it turns into steam. When we cool water enough it freezes. A duck's egg hatches into a duckling. Opposite magnetic poles attract one another. Dry paper placed in a fire burns. A fish out of water or a tree out of soil dies, etc. Natural laws help us to understand a very important principle relating to all of God's laws, namely, the principle of cause and effect. Or to use the words of the Bible, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). Natural laws assist us in learning that obedience will lead to health and happiness, and that not obeying God's laws will always produce ill effects of one kind or another. The book of Proverbs particularly focuses on

the principle of cause and effect. It often uses natural law to illustrate spiritual truths. Natural laws are used to demonstrate the value of obedience⁹⁵ as well as the tragic consequences of breaking God's laws.⁹⁶ Likewise, many of Christ's parables are based on the principle of teaching spiritual truths using natural law.⁹⁷ Health laws are a form of natural law. The Old Testament describes many laws about health given to the nation of Israel. They include dietary regulations,⁹⁸ rules about basic hygiene⁹⁹ and quarantine regulations.¹⁰⁰ They must, of course, still apply today, in principle, seeing that the human body is physiologically the same now as then. Horticultural¹⁰¹ and agriculture laws¹⁰² were another form of natural law given to ancient Israel and no doubt still apply, in principle, today.

A proper understanding of God's law enables us to correctly understand sin. In 1 John 3:4 we read "sin is the transgression [violation] of the law." In Romans 7:7 it says, "I had not known sin, but by the law."

So sin is defined in relation to the law of God. This is especially true of the moral law or Ten Commandments. In Romans 7:7, after Paul has said "I had not known sin, but by the law," he refers to the Ten Commandments, saying, "for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet [Tenth Commandment]."

But sin in its most basic form is defined in relation to God's foundational law which, as discussed above, is actually His character. Thus our foundational sin is the opposite of God's foundational law or character. It is being unmerciful and unrighteous. It is being *selfish or self-centered*. This foundational sin leads to various consequent sins, namely, unmerciful, unrighteous thoughts, words or deeds (Matthew 15:18, 19). How do we know what is unmerciful and unrighteous? Through God's various laws that express and illustrate His merciful and righteous character. How do we know the true extent of sin's malignity and enormity? By contemplating the supreme manifestation of God's character, the cross of Calvary [22].

Thus we have,

God's foundational law => gives us => merciful, righteous laws and commandments.

Our foundational sin (*our selfishness*) => gives us => *unmerciful, unrighteous thoughts, words or deeds.*

How can we better understand our foundational sin (our selfishness)? It is sobering to consider that “Selfishness is the root of all evil”.¹⁰³ It is the root from which springs every branch of wickedness. The truth of this can be seen by studying how sin came into the universe and then into our world. Lucifer, the heavenly angel, became Satan, the evil one, by cherishing selfish ambition rather than devotion to God (Isaiah 14:12-15).¹⁰⁴ Eve transgressed when she put herself and her judgment above the instructions of God. Her desire for selfish gain overcame any trust that she had in God’s word (Genesis 3:1-6). The indulgence of selfishness leads to its establishment deep within the human heart where it is ready to respond to every new temptation. “It is because selfishness exists in our hearts that temptation has power over us. But when we behold the great love of God, selfishness appears to us in its hideous and repulsive character, and we desire to have it expelled from the soul.”¹⁰⁵ Thus, we can conclude that our foundational sin involves a self-centered life of rebellion against our loving Creator, a self-seeking principle that is offensive to the God of infinite love.

When we understand what God’s foundational law is, and what our foundational sin is, we can better understand what happens when we are forgiven and made right with God. The Bible calls this justification or “being born again” [7]. When this happens our selfishness, which has ruled on the throne of our lives, is replaced by God’s foundational law through the presence of Christ. He comes into our hearts by His Holy Spirit and His merciful, righteous character is written upon our hearts (Hebrews 8:10). Through His presence we are made righteous and merciful. From Him flow merciful and righteous thoughts, words and deeds. Once Christ is in our heart we need to daily co-operate with Him in letting His character flow out from our lives, rather than allowing our selfishness to manifest itself. Day by day we are to grow in maturity, more fully reflecting the character of Christ. Our aim is to become so surrendered to Christ that only His merciful, righteous character is manifest in us. To have

His character thus revealed in our lives fulfils Christ's commands of Matthew 5:43-48 and John 13:34, 35.

Dear reader, if you need Christ in your heart then all you have to do is come to Him just as you are, confess your need of Him and ask Him to abide in you. You can trust Him because He gave His life for you. He promises, "him that cometh to Me I will in no wise [never] cast out." "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (John 6:37; Revelation 3:20).

One of the main functions of God's foundational law, and all the precepts that flow from it, is to convict us of sin and make us realize our need of a Savior, thus sending us to Jesus. Then, when we have been cleansed and renewed by Jesus, He lovingly points us back to God's law ¹⁰⁶ as the pattern for our lives. He says to us "follow Me." We are to follow His example [23, 24]. It is essential to note here that we cannot make ourselves righteous and merciful. Jesus is our righteousness and mercy. In Him we are made righteous: "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). His presence, through the Holy Spirit, gives us genuine love: "the love of God is shed abroad [poured out] in our hearts by the Holy Ghost [Spirit] which is given unto us..." (Romans 5:5). His presence fills us with admiration of God's character and gratitude for what God has done. We feel eager to please Him in all things and, as we choose to follow and obey Him, He provides all that is needed. As we behold His sacrifice for us gratitude wells up and through His presence the heart is truly cleansed from sin. He has delivered us from the wrath of God against sin [13]. He has given us victory over the devil [17]. All praise belongs to Him!

Now we are in a position to properly answer Question 15 which asks, is the teaching that "Law and Sabbath-keeping are not required by the apostles" true?

There are at least three ways of interpreting this question:

1. If it is referring to the use of "Law and Sabbath-keeping" as a means of attempting to earn salvation by works, then the answer

is “yes.” It is certain that the apostles did not require us to keep the Law or Sabbath for the purpose of earning saving merit with God.¹⁰⁷

2. The original author of this question,¹⁰⁸ in using the phrase “Law and Sabbath-keeping,” may have been thinking of just the Old Testament ceremonial law. It is true that the apostles do not require us to keep the Old Testament ceremonial law,¹⁰⁹ but it is a big mistake to include the seventh-day Sabbath as part of this ceremonial law. The seventh-day Sabbath is a part of the moral law and is included in the Ten Commandments which the apostles exhort us to obey (see the next paragraph). Please refer to the answer to Question 6 for more details on the difference between the seventh-day Sabbath and the ceremonial law of the Old Testament.

3. The phrase “Law and Sabbath-keeping” may be interpreted to mean the moral law. If this is the case then the emphatic answer to Question 15 is “No!” The New Testament plainly exhorts us to keep the moral law or Ten Commandments. This moral law is a wonderful expression of God’s character. Throughout the New Testament we are directed to God’s character (His foundational law) as something we are, through Christ, to experience in our lives. The following passages are a small selection of those available that deal with this subject:¹¹⁰

And, behold, one came and said unto Him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And He said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but One, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments (Matthew 19:16, 17).

If ye love Me, keep My commandments (John 14:15).

He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him (John 14:21).

If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love (John 15:10).

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law (Romans 3:31).

Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good (Romans 7:12).

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

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God (1 Corinthians 7:19).

For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty (James 2:11,12).

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people (Hebrews 8:10).

And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him (1 John 2:3, 4).

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:2, 3).

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17).

Please also see the answer to Question 8 (part 2, regarding Exodus 20:8-11 and the Ten Commandments).

Question 16: *Was not Israel obliged to commemorate freedom from bondage by observing a yoke of bondage while, in contrast, Christians are free to commemorate their freedom on any day that they choose?*

Answer: The phrase “yoke of bondage” comes from the following passage in Galatians chapter 5:

- 1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the *yoke of bondage*.
- 2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.
- 3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.
- 4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

What is this yoke of bondage? Clearly, it is referring to the practice of using “the law” as a means of trying to earn salvation. It is the vain attempt to win God’s favor through works of the law. To all who have turned from faith in Christ to practice this form of religion Paul says, “Christ is become of no effect unto you, *whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace*” (vs. 4).

God never required Israel to commemorate their escape from slavery in Egypt with a yoke of bondage. The old covenant at Sinai was simply an agreement God allowed the Jews to enter into so that they could recognize their weakness and be led to rely upon Him by faith. He was trying to lead them to embrace the everlasting or Abrahamic covenant (which later became known as the new covenant). Unfortunately the Jews turned the old covenant (and ceremonial system) into a yoke of bondage by refusing the provisions of the everlasting covenant and clinging to the hope that their own works would somehow bring them into favor with God. For a more detailed discussion of this matter of the covenants please see the answer to Question 20.

The seventh-day Sabbath commemorates God's divine act in freeing the Israelites from slavery (Deuteronomy 5:12-15). More than this, it commemorates Christ's redemptive work in freeing believers from the bondage of sin (please see the answer to Questions 9 and 13) [11]. But it is not a yoke of bondage except to those who, like the Pharisees of old, add it to their list of labors that they are performing in a vain attempt to work their way to Heaven. Far from being a yoke of bondage, genuine Sabbath-keeping celebrates the true rest found through faith in Christ as a personal Savior. And as such it is part of Christ's "easy" and "light" yoke described by Him in Matthew 11:28-30:

28 Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.

29 Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek
and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 *For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.*

Are Christians free to commemorate their freedom on any day that they choose? In the context of Question 16 this is a reference to choosing any day they want for a "Sabbath." For a discussion of this matter please see the answer to Question 13. Of course, it is most appropriate for Christians to give thanks for their freedom and redemption on any day or to celebrate the Lord's supper whenever an appropriate opportunity arises. True Christian freedom is

not being let loose to do as we please. It is being set free from sin's penalty and power. It is being free to do what we know is right.

Question 17: *Would not observing the Sabbath be going “under the law” and obligate Christians to keep the whole law of Moses?*

Answer: This question is basically asking the same thing as Question 16. The expression “under the law” is used in several New Testament passages (Romans 6:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 9:20; Galatians 4:21; 5:18) to refer to a performance-based religion founded on the false notion that God's favor can be obtained through so-called meritorious acts. As such, being “under the law” is the same as wearing the “yoke of bondage” spoken of in Galatians 5:1. In Paul's discussion in Galatians 4:21 to 5:1 he clearly uses the two expressions to mean the same thing. The fact that true Sabbath observance is not part of an effort to be saved by works is outlined in the answers to Questions 14 and 16 and readers are cordially referred there for further comment.

This question also suggests that observing the Sabbath obligates Christians to keep “the whole law of Moses.” The implication here is that the seventh-day Sabbath is a part of the ceremonial law and that if we are going to keep the Sabbath we ought to keep the rest of the ceremonial law too. The fact that the seventh-day Sabbath is a part of the moral rather than the ceremonial law is discussed in the answer to Question 6. Please refer here for further comment.

Question 18: *Since it is not the day that makes an act sinful but the act itself, regardless of the day on which it is committed, why should the seventh day be considered more sacred than any other day?*

Answer: It is true that the day of the week is not what makes an act sinful, but rather the act itself. For example, if something is stolen on the fourth day of the week it is as bad as the crime being committed on the seventh or any other day of the week. This is commonsense.

The seventh day is unique, not because the day makes various transgressions of the moral law sinful, but because God blessed, sanctified and rested on this day of the week (Genesis 2:1-3). It is to be observed as something special by mankind because of this. It is

also to be regarded as special simply because of God's command for us to remember, and keep holy this day of the week (Exodus 20:8-11). If a person knows about the obligation to keep the seventh-day Sabbath, and yet does not observe it, then they are guilty of sin, not because of something mysterious about the day itself, but because they have transgressed the moral law of God.

Readers may find it helpful to also study the answer to Question 46 (part 2).

Question 19: *Was not the Jewish Sabbath a part of the Mosaic Law, which was abolished and done away with?*

Answer: The Old Testament ceremonial law that had pointed forward to the death, resurrection and ministry of Christ was to be no longer observed after He had fulfilled these things [25, 28]. Also, the Old Testament civil laws that had applied to the nation of Israel were to cease when the church, a non-civil organization, took over (see the answer to Question 15 for more details). But the seventh-day Sabbath, a part of the moral law, was not to be abolished by Christ's first coming. The perpetuity of the moral law, or Ten Commandments, is discussed in the answer to Question 8, part 2.

Here we will discuss the main New Testament passages used to try and support the idea that the seventh-day Sabbath was "abolished" in New Testament times. These passages are:

1. Second Corinthians 3:13.
2. Colossians 2:11-17 and Ephesians 2:15.
3. Romans 10:4.

1. Second Corinthians 3:13

This text says, "And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." To correctly understand what is being said here we need to consider the context of verses 3 to 16:

3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

8 How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

9 For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

10 For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

11 For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:

13 And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:

14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.

16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.

The thing “which is abolished” (vs. 13) is the old covenant which was made at Mount Sinai. This whole passage is contrasting the bless-

ings and advantages of the new covenant with the deficiencies of the old. The new covenant is written on the heart while the old covenant was written on tables of stone (vs. 3). The new covenant is written by God's Spirit, while the old covenant just used ink (vs. 3). The new covenant is of the Spirit while the old covenant is just of "the letter" (vs. 6). The new covenant brings life while the old brings death (vs. 6). The new covenant is a "ministration of righteousness" while the old is a "ministration of condemnation" (vs. 9). The glory of the new excels that of the old (vs. 10). The new covenant is something that remains while the old covenant has been "done away" (vs. 11). Those who depend upon the old covenant have a veil over their eyes, but when they turn to the new covenant that veil is taken away (vs. 14-16).

The old covenant made at Sinai was an agreement designed to open the eyes of the Israelites to their inability to obey God apart from faith. Through this covenant, which was only to be transient, God was trying to lead the Jews to embrace the everlasting or Abrahamic covenant (which is also known as the new covenant). Tragically, the Jews as a people refused the everlasting covenant and clung to the vain hope of being made right with God through their own efforts. This was despite the repeated calls of their prophets to have a true heart relationship with God. With the coming of Christ the greatest appeal yet was given for the old covenant to be forsaken (abolished) and for the Jews to dismiss the notion of being saved by works. Sadly, the above passage in the second letter to the Corinthians testifies to the fact that many of the Jews, even in the days of Paul's ministry, had not yet cast aside the old covenant and embraced Christ. The abolition of the old covenant did not do away with either the Ten Commandments or the seventh-day Sabbath, both of which are upheld by the new covenant. But the abolition of the old covenant, as described in this passage, should make us do away with all attempts at being saved by our own works [7].

Please see the answer to Question 14 for a more comprehensive discussion on the bankruptcy of performance-based salvation or happiness. For a more detailed discussion of the covenants and their relation to the seventh-day Sabbath please see the answer to Question 20.

2. Colossians 2:11-17 and Ephesians 2:15

Another passage sometimes used to try and support the claim that the seventh-day Sabbath has been abolished is Colossians 2:11-17:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12 Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.

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.

A sister passage to this one, also used by some to deny the perpetuity of the Sabbath, is Ephesians 2:15: "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace." Let us read this verse in its context:

11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the

covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

15 Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

16 And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

(Ephesians 2:11-16).

So what was abolished or taken away? These passages are affirming that, by His death and resurrection, Christ abolished the Jewish ceremonial laws (and associated human traditions) [28]. The religious leaders had made these ceremonial laws and traditions into a separating wall. They had become an “enmity” that was “against us” and “contrary to us.”

Thus the “handwriting of ordinances” of Colossians 2:14 and the meat, drink, holydays, new moons, and sabbaths in Colossians 2:16 are references to the Jewish ceremonial law and all the burdensome baggage of human traditions connected with it. What is the evidence for this?

1. The Greek words used for “handwriting of ordinances” (*cheirographon ho dogma*) mean literally “handwriting in the decrees” and not “certificate of debt” (e.g. NASB) or “bond” (RSV). The passage is not about our debt of guilt being nailed to the cross, but about the abolition of the abused, outdated and adulterated Old Testament ceremonial laws.¹¹¹

The Greek word *cheirographon* is from *cheir*, hand, and *grapho*, to grave (as in engrave), and is only used this once in the New Testament. The word *dogma* means a decree, ordinance, law (civil, ceremonial, ecclesiastical) and is used five times in the New Testament (Ephesians 2:15, Colossians 2:14, Luke 2:1, Acts 16:4; 17:7). The related word *dogmatizo* is used in Colossians 2:20.

2. As suggested above, the word *dogma* of Colossians 2:14 is closely related to the word *dogmatizo* of 2:20.¹¹² Since the ordinances of Colossians 2:20 are clearly explained in vs. 21-23 to be matters of ceremony, it is consistent and logical to understand the term “ordinances” in 2:14 to refer to the same thing.

3. The Colossians had a problem with ceremonial or ritual ordinances (Colossians 2:16, 20-23). Thus Paul’s instruction to them that Christ’s death had done away with the Jewish ceremonial laws was most appropriate. They certainly did not need to be told that the moral law had been wiped out. The moral law, which includes the seventh-day Sabbath, is upheld throughout chapters 3 and 4 of Colossians.

4. The term “shadow” in Colossians 2:17 definitely refers to the ceremonial law (Hebrews 10:1; 8:5) and is never used as a reference to the Ten Commandments. Therefore the “sabbaths” of Colossians 2:16 must be a reference to the annual ceremonial sabbaths of the Old Testament.

5. In Colossians 2:16 church members are instructed to not let anyone judge them regarding “sabbaths” (the plural is used in the Greek). It does not use the article and say “*the* Sabbath.” In contrast to this, John 9:16 tells us that the Jewish leadership judged Jesus on the basis of “*the* Sabbath” (the article is present in the Greek). Thus the use of the plural form in Colossians 2:16 is further evidence that Paul is here referring to ceremonial sabbaths and not to the seventh-day Sabbath.

6. The reference to circumcision of the heart in Colossians 2:11-13 is also significant. Circumcision is a ceremonial matter¹¹³ and hence Paul’s reference to it here is further evidence that it was the Jewish ceremonial laws that were abolished. Paul points out the irrelevance of physical circumcision later on in Colossians (Colossians 3:11), thus giving another blow against the Colossian’s over-emphasis on external, ceremonial rituals.

7. Which law was abolished by Christ's death and nailed to His cross (Colossians 2:14) [25, 28]? The scriptures clearly testify that it was the ceremonial law that came to an end when Christ made His supreme sacrifice:

And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week *He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease* (Daniel 9:27a).

Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, *the veil of the temple was rent in twain* from the top to the bottom (Matthew 27:50, 51).

Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation* (Hebrews 9:9, 10).

Above when He said, *Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldest not*, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said He, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. *He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second*. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Hebrews 10:8-10).

8. The similarity of Colossians 2:14 with Ephesians 2:15, 16 is also strong evidence that the "handwriting of ordinances" involves the ceremonial law. When it comes to what has been abolished or taken away, they are referring to the same thing. The similarity between Colossians 2:11-3:11 and Ephesians 2:11-22 is revealed by the following:

a). The two letters were written while Paul was in prison (Ephesians 6:20; Colossians 4:3, 18), were sent by the same messenger (Tychicus, Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7) and share several common themes.¹¹⁴

b). The same Greek word, *dogma*, is used in both passages (“ordinances” in Ephesians 2:15 and Colossians 2:14).

c). In both we have a “circumcision” introduction (Ephesians 2:11; Colossians 2:11-13) and then a later “unification” statement (Ephesians 2:15-22; Colossians 3:11).

d). In one the word “abolished” is used and in the other “blotting out” (Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14).

e). In one we have “by the cross” and in the other “nailing it to His cross” (Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 2:14).

f). In one we have “enmity” and in the other “against us” and “contrary to us” (Ephesians 2:15, 16; Colossians 2:14).

In Ephesians the “law of commandments contained in ordinances” is definitely a reference to the Jewish ceremonial laws and traditions. And if this is the case in Ephesians then it must also be so in Colossians. How do we know Ephesians 2:15, 16 is concerned with the Jewish ceremonial laws and traditions? The reasons are as follows:

a) Jewish ceremonial and/or traditional scruples were responsible for the “middle wall of partition” in the temple. This was a low wall that separated the Gentile part from the exclusively Jewish part.¹¹⁵

b) The Jewish ceremonial laws and associated traditions had definitely become an “enmity.” The Gentiles were faced with perverted Mosaic ceremonies and a related burden of wearisome man-made conditions if they wanted to join the Commonwealth of Israel.

c) The circumcision/uncircumcision distinction (Ephesians 2:11), a ceremonial matter, had become an “enmity.” It had become a kind of weapon in the hands of Jewish religionists who exalted in the distinction between “holy” Jews and “unclean” Gentiles.

In summary then, Colossians 2:11-17 and Ephesians 2:15 do not support the claim that the Sabbath has been abolished. They describe how Christ's sacrifice has done away with the perverted Jewish ceremonial laws.

3. Romans 10:4

The last passage we wish to discuss in relation to Question 19 is Romans 10:4 which says, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." This verse should not be used to support the false idea that Christ abolished the Sabbath by putting an end to the moral law. Romans 10:4 is simply saying that Christ is the end of the law as a means of seeking righteousness. Notice the context:

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and *going about to establish their own righteousness*, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For *Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.*

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
(Romans 10:1-10).

The Israelites were “ignorant of God’s righteousness” and tried by works of the law “to establish their own righteousness” (vs. 3). But in Christ we see “the righteousness which is of faith” (vs. 6) and understand that “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness” (vs. 10). Thus “Christ is the end of the law for [a means of seeking after] righteousness to every one that believeth” (vs. 4).

Chapter Five:

The New and Old Covenants



Question 20: *Has not the new covenant done away with Sabbath observance? (Romans 14:5-6; Galatians 4:9-11).*

Answer: This question introduces the subject of the new covenant and its relationship to the seventh-day Sabbath. What is the new covenant? And if there is a new covenant, what is the old one?

The Old and the New Covenants

The Bible speaks of two basic covenants or testaments:

1. The everlasting or eternal covenant (Genesis 17:7, 19; Hebrews 13:20), which later became known as the new covenant (Hebrews 8:8-13; 12:24; Matthew 26:28; 1 Corinthians 11:25).¹¹⁶
2. The old or first covenant (2 Corinthians 3:14; Hebrews 8:7; 9:1).

The everlasting or new covenant is the one that was ratified by Christ's blood. In New Testament times the everlasting covenant became known as the "new" covenant because its ratification had occurred after that of the old covenant at Sinai (Luke 22:20; Exodus 24:7, 8).

The everlasting covenant is essentially the plan of redemption based on the sacrifice of Christ (Hebrews 13:20; Matthew 26:28). It was first given to Adam¹¹⁷ and later repeated to Abraham.¹¹⁸ Thus it is also sometimes called the Abrahamic covenant. The everlasting covenant represents the plan whereby men and women may be restored to the wonderful position that God originally intended for them, but which was lost by transgression [5, 11]. It is based on Christ and is the only means of salvation (Acts 4:12; John 14:6).

In the course of history the everlasting covenant has been administered to people in two different ways. One system was before the cross and the other after the cross. The administration of the everlasting covenant before Christ's sacrifice consisted of promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the Passover Lamb and other types and ordinances delivered to the Jewish people, all pointing forward to Christ.¹¹⁹ These administrations were for that time sufficient, through the aid of God's Spirit, to instruct and build up the true people of God in faith in the promised Messiah by whom they could have full remission of sins and eternal salvation.

When Christ came, died and rose again the administrations and ceremonies that had previously pointed forward to these things were naturally superseded [25] by different administrations that pointed back and commemorated His life and sacrifice. Thus the everlasting covenant was now to be administered by gospel preaching and teaching, baptism and the Lord's supper.¹²⁰ These administrations, though fewer in number and with less outward display, are more appropriate to the realities and privileges made available in Christ and apply to all nations, both Jews and non-Jews.

The old covenant or Sinaitic covenant was an agreement at Mt Sinai that God entered into with the nation of Israel shortly after they had come out of Egypt (Exodus 19:4-8; 24:7, 8). It was designed to lead the people into receiving the everlasting covenant.

The old covenant at Mt Sinai was neither to take the place of the everlasting or Abrahamic covenant, (Galatians 3:16, 17) nor to provide another means of salvation. Its sole purpose was to enable the people to understand and enter into the everlasting covenant. The people of Israel, who had spent hundreds of years in the midst of Egyptian idolatry and error, were greatly ignorant both of God's

great holiness and of their own inability to do what was right without a new heart and divine grace. Therefore God chose to speak His law in great majesty to impress the people with the holiness of His character (Exodus 20:18-20). He also chose to let the people enter into an agreement to keep His law knowing that they would attempt to do this in their own strength saying, “all that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient” (Exodus 24:7 c.f. 19:8). He did this so that they might discover their inability and thus be led to rely upon the provisions of the everlasting covenant.¹²¹ The agreement the people made with God at Sinai, in which they promised to keep God’s law, was the old covenant and could also be called the covenant of works because it was based on the people’s works and not God’s grace. In contrast the everlasting covenant is based on God’s grace and is sometimes referred to as the covenant of grace.

While the people of Israel were left to try and keep the covenant of works that they had made with God, Moses was called up to Mt Sinai to receive the tables of stone and the details of the sanctuary service (Exodus 24:12–31:11). The sanctuary service was designed, in a very simple and beautiful way, to point the people to the coming Savior that they might find in Him forgiveness and power to overcome sin. The services of the sanctuary were designed to introduce the people to the everlasting covenant. Its sacrifices pointed forward to Christ “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Its priests pointed forward to the “great high priest... Jesus the Son of God” (Hebrews 4:14). God obviously knew that the people would not be able to keep the covenant of works and therefore was getting His “gospel” message ready. After Moses had come down from the mountain and punished the people for their rebellion in worshipping the golden calf they would be convinced of their weakness and guilt and be receptive to the gospel message of the sanctuary services.

As can be seen from the above, the old covenant was simply a part of “gospel evangelism” at Mt Sinai. First the people had to realize their need of a Savior. Then the Savior was introduced to them. This is the way gospel evangelism works today. The evangelist first helps the people to appreciate their need and then gives them the good news about God’s provisions through Christ.

Sadly, despite God's repeated appeals through Moses and His prophets, Israel, as a nation, never received the everlasting covenant either at Sinai or at any subsequent time. Before the Babylonian captivity God made the following hopeful promise:

31 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:

32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:

33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people.

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

(Jeremiah 31:31-34).

This promise could have been fulfilled to the Israelites on their return from the Babylonian captivity, but unfortunately, due to their unbelief, this did not happen and its fulfillment had to tarry until the time of Christ's first coming. It was at that time fulfilled in the experience of spiritual Israel, the Christian church, as shown by the words of Hebrews 8:6-13. The new covenant spoken of in Jeremiah chapter 31 and Hebrews chapter 8 is the everlasting covenant which, as has been mentioned before, was ratified by blood after the old covenant at Sinai.

One of the purposes of the book of Hebrews was to help Jewish people turn away from the covenant of works (the old covenant) that had always proved inadequate. Even at the time the book of Hebrews was written (most probably late 60's AD) the Jewish people were clinging to the failed ideas of the old covenant. More

than this, they had turned the old administration of the everlasting covenant, as revealed in the sanctuary and ceremonial system, into a part of the covenant of works. Instead of using these symbols and services to exercise faith in the Redeemer, they performed them in an effort to earn favor with God.¹²² This is why the author of Hebrews (in chapters 8-10) describes the sanctuary services as part of the old or first covenant. The other reason he did this was because, at that time, these services had already been fulfilled by Christ and had therefore been superceded by the new administration. Hence these services were “old”—and that which “waxeth old is ready to vanish away” (Hebrews 8:13).

Question 20 says, “Has not the new covenant done away with the observance of any particular day by Christians?” and then mentions two texts to support the claim, namely, Romans 14:5-6 and Galatians 4:9-11. We will look at these two texts shortly, but first will address the question of the new covenant’s relationship to the seventh-day Sabbath. The promise of the new covenant is, “I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” (Hebrews 8:10-12). How are God’s laws written on a person’s heart or mind? By the Holy Spirit:

“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but *with the Spirit of the living God*; not in tables of stone, but *in fleshy tables of the heart*” (2 Corinthians 3:3).

So instead of the Ten Commandments being written on tables of stone, as at Mount Sinai, the Holy Spirit writes them on the human heart. The Holy Spirit also empowers us to keep them:

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

11 But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but *if ye through the Spirit do mortify [put to death] the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*

(Romans 8:3, 4; 11-13).

If the Ten Commandments are written on the heart by God's Spirit, instead of being written on tables of stone by God's finger, does that do away with the Fourth Commandment? Obviously not. Instead it is the very thing that makes it possible to keep this commandment properly "in the spirit, and not in the letter" (Romans 2:29).

In the new covenant the Holy Spirit pours God's love into our hearts (Romans 5:5). This love is the underlying motive and principle that enables us to keep all of God's commandments, which is why Jesus said "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:37-39). Jesus, knowing that the Holy Spirit would put God's love into the hearts of all true believers, said, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15; 15:10). The apostle John echoing these words said, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3).

A proper understanding of the new covenant reveals that the Ten Commandments are still of vital importance. If the Ten Commandments are still essential then so is the Fourth Commandment

with its specific call to keep holy the seventh day as God's Sabbath. Thus, the idea that the new covenant does not command any particular day to be observed by Christians is false.

We will now consider the two passages that have been cited in support of Question 20, namely Romans 14:5-6 and Galatians 4:9-11.

Romans 14:5-6 needs to be studied in the context of the whole of Romans chapter 14, which says:

1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat [food] now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat [food], for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

20 For meat [food] destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

What is this chapter about? The first thing to notice is that it does not say anything about the Sabbath being abolished. In fact the word Sabbath is not even mentioned. Secondly, a careful study of its words and phrases will reveal that the chapter's emphasis is on a non-judgmental approach to others and on not giving unnecessary offence in the matter of innocent personal preferences concerning

dietary matters. In this context it can be seen that verses 5 and 6 may be referring to personal preferences about fast days. “He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks” (vs. 6). Since the seventh-day Sabbath of the Jews was never used as a regular fast day,¹²³ Romans chapter 14 cannot be referring to it.

Romans chapter 14 indicates that some of the Roman believers had been adversely influenced by non-Biblical Jewish sectarian beliefs that were leading to a spirit of division and condemnation. That these beliefs did not strike directly at justification by faith is evident by the way that Paul dealt with them. Rather than condemning them outright, as he would have done if they were being used as a means of trying to earn salvation, he counseled mutual tolerance, avoidance of making the weak in faith stumble, and for each one to “be fully persuaded in his own mind.”

Non-Biblical Jewish sectarian beliefs certainly did include the matter of fast days (Matthew 6:16; 9:14; Luke 18:12) and, as stated above, this may well be what Romans 14:5, 6 is referring to. However, there is another possible interpretation that needs to be considered. Romans chapter 14 admonishes us not to judge others in matters that relate to food, drink or certain days (vs. 3, 4, 10, 13). Colossians 2:16 says the same thing: “Let no man therefore judge you in meat [food], or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.”

The first thing to mention about these passages is that they are not directly about the Sabbath. They are instructing Christians not to judge others. The Bible teaches that we must not judge our brother (Romans chapter 14; Colossians 2:16; Matthew 7:1, 2). However, the Bible also teaches that there are times when we must judge a brother (1 Corinthians 5:12 - 6:5, c.f. Luke 19:22; John 7:24; Matthew 7:15-20). What makes the difference? If it is a matter of personal preference we must not judge. We are also not to judge in the sense of comparing ourselves with others and measuring ourselves by their behavior.¹²⁴ But if it is a matter of open sin or deadly heresy some judgment must be made. Of course, in all matters we are never to consider ourselves superior to another, and the church has special rules for dealing with members living in open sin or teaching deadly

error. However, the Bible clearly teaches that we are to rebuke open sin¹²⁵ and resist teachers of malignant heresy.¹²⁶ To do this we must inevitably make a judgement about them. From this we can see that Romans chapter 14 and Colossians 2:16 cannot be referring to breaches of the moral law (the Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath commandment) or deadly heresy, matters about which, as we have said, some judgment must be made. Instead, these passages are concerned with ceremonial matters and related personal preferences that are not sinful in themselves if done in good faith and without causing others to stumble.

So rather than fast days Romans chapter 14 may, in a similar way to Colossians 2:16, refer to personal preferences about ceremonial feast days or festivals. It will be noticed that Colossians 2:16 does, unlike Romans chapter 14, mention the word “sabbaths” (the Greek is plural). This verse and others in Colossians chapter 2 are discussed in more detail in the answer to Question 19.

Question 20 implies that the new covenant excludes the observance of any particular day by Christians and then mentions Romans 14:5-6 as allegedly supporting this. We hope from the above that readers will be able to see that Romans chapter 14 is not about our obligation or not to observe a weekly Sabbath, but about personal preferences concerning fast days or ceremonial festivals—matters that do not involve the moral law unless we become judgmental or cause another to stumble.

Let us now take a look at Galatians 4:9-11. This passage says:

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

The problem that the Galatians suffered from was more serious than that discussed in Romans chapter 14. Instead of counseling mutual tolerance and not judging or putting a stumbling block in

front of others, Paul strongly rebukes the Galatians accusing them of following “another gospel: which is not another” (Galatians 1:6, 7). They were involved with a false “gospel” based on trying to be saved by their own works or deeds (Galatians 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10). Thus when Paul accused them of observing “days, and months, and times, and years” he was doing so because they were keeping these days with the motive of earning favor with God. They observed days as part of a false system of trying to be justified by the works of the law. Paul’s rebuke of the Galatians is not for the purpose of doing away with the Sabbath, but to reprove the use of special days as a part of a vain attempt to be saved by works. As mentioned previously (in the answer to Question 14) there is a big difference between doing what God has commanded as an act of faith and trying to do what God has commanded as an attempt to earn His favor. We are to keep the Sabbath as a sign that we are depending on God to save us rather than our own works [7].¹²⁷ Far from being legalistic, keeping the Sabbath properly will demonstrate our trust that God alone can sanctify us [9].¹²⁸ We are to obey God’s Sabbath commandment because of the love He has put in our hearts. Jesus says, “He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me” (John 14:21).

Thus Question 20 is incorrect in using Galatians 4:9-11 to claim that under the new covenant there is no particular day to be observed by Christians.

Question 21: *Are not Christians free from “bondages” of the old covenant like the sentence of death for cooking, making fires or performing other duties on a Sabbath? (Exodus 16:23; 35:2, 3; Numbers 15:32-36)?*

Answer: The difference between the new and old covenants has been covered in the answer to Question 20, so readers are courteously referred there for more details. Also, we have discussed previously ¹²⁹ why capital punishment is no longer applicable for Sabbath-breaking. Nevertheless for completeness, we will look at this matter again here. The basic message is that the Christian church, which took over from the nation of Israel (Matthew 21:43),

is not a civil power. For this reason the civil laws applicable to the nation of Israel are no longer in practice.

The Old Testament civil laws applied to the people of Israel before Christ's first coming when their nation was to be under the direct rulership of God. The Israelite nation was then a God-ordained, God-directed religious and civil organization. But the nation of Israel rejected their Messiah and withdrew from God's rulership (Matthew 21:33-46; John 19:15). So the kingdom of God was transferred from Israel to the Christian church (Matthew 21:43). The Christian church is a purely religious organization. Although it has discipline and order,¹³⁰ it is not to be a union with the state. The church is not to act as a civil power and is to refrain from legislating in civil matters. This is taught by specific passages in the New Testament.¹³¹ It is also revealed by the account of the early church given in the book of Acts. The New Testament church was subject to the civil rulers in all matters that did not interfere with the higher claims of God (Romans 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 14). As an organization it spread worldwide in numerous different nations and under many civil authorities.

Sabbath-breaking is of course a serious matter and the Christian church is obliged to deal with this sin like any other transgression of the moral law. Open sin needs to be dealt with according to Christ's directions for His church given in Matthew 18:15-17. As this passage indicates, if a church member refuses to repent then they are to be separated from the church (note also 1 Corinthians 5:13). "Disfellowship" or excommunication would be for the Christian church the equivalent of the death sentence for ancient Israel. In contrast to ancient Israel however, the Christian church has the opportunity to receive back into the church repentant members who have been previously severed from membership.

Let us now look at the three passages listed at the end of Question 21:

1. Exodus 16:23. This text says,

"And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the

LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and see the that ye will see the; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.”

Exodus 16:23 is a reference to what is known as the preparation day (Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:31, 42). This is the day before the weekly Sabbath. In modern terms the preparation day begins at sunset on Thursday night and finishes at sunset on Friday night.¹³² It was because Friday sunset (the end of the preparation day and the beginning of the Sabbath) was near that the Jewish leaders wanted the legs of Christ and the other crucified men broken to hasten their death (John 19:31). It was likewise because the Sabbath drew near that the disciples hurried to get Christ’s body buried in a nearby tomb and the women ran out of time to administer their spices (John 19:42; Luke 23:54-24:1).

Exodus 16:23 is a command to get ready for the holy Sabbath by doing in advance as much meal preparation as possible. The principle is that the Sabbath is to be a day free from unnecessary worldly secular cares in order to enjoy and experience to the fullest the blessings of this unique day. Meal preparation can detract from tuning in to God, as the experience of the disciple Martha illustrates (Luke 10:40). What this means, in practical terms today, should be reasonably clear, especially if a measure of sanctified commonsense is used. For example, the table can be set for the Friday evening meal before the sun goes down and, if it is warm weather, a salad could be prepared and placed in the fridge to get out for the midday meal on Saturday. Doing this is not one of the “bondages of the old covenant.” It is not trying to earn salvation. It is simply honoring and loving God by getting ready for His special day. We don’t call it bondage when we get ready for the new covenant celebration of the Lord’s supper. We don’t call it bondage when we prepare for a visitor to call at our home. Neither should we call it bondage to get ready for the Sabbath.

2. Exodus 35:2, 3. This passage reads as follows:

2 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.

3 Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day.

The command not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath day is really just another way of saying the same thing as Exodus 16:23. That is, it is instructing us to do what cooking and baking is needed before the Sabbath begins. Cooking and baking, especially in bygone days, was a time-consuming business that usually involved kindling a fire. It is still time-consuming in many lands where modern conveniences are not used. And even with modern appliances it can be a noisy and lengthy process.

Fires were not needed on the Sabbath for the Israelites to keep warm during the day because they were in a hot desert. Also it seems that they did not need a fire at night to keep warm because God graciously provided a pillar of fire (Exodus 13:21, 22; 14:24).

We know from many other passages in the Bible that it is perfectly proper on the Sabbath to relieve human suffering (e.g. Exodus 23:12; Matthew 12:2-13; Luke 13:15, 16). Therefore it is appropriate to kindle a fire on the Sabbath to prevent unhealthy chilling or to warm food on a cold winter's day. The principle behind Exodus 35:2, 3 is honoring God by appropriate Sabbath preparation. The principle of Exodus 23:12 is being merciful and relieving suffering. Both principles need to be obeyed and kept in their proper place. For example if, on a cold frosty Sabbath day, a believer realizes some elderly person is without fuel for their wood burner, it would be appropriate and right to get some wood, take it to the one in need and light them a fire to keep warm. This is in harmony with the Bible, and does not negate the principle behind Exodus 35:2, 3.

3. Numbers 15:32-36.

32 And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day.

33 And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation.

34 And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him.

35 And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.

36 And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.

This passage needs to be studied in the context of the verses that immediately precede it, namely, Numbers 15:30, 31:

30 But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

31 Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken His commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.

The Hebrew words translated as presumptuously are *ruwm yad*. The term *ruwm* in this verse means “to be high, be set on high, to be raised, be uplifted, be exalted, to be lifted, rise.”¹³³ The word *yad* means principally “hand.”¹³⁴ Thus the image is of someone lifting up their hand in defiance against God, or of shaking their fist in rebellion. The Hebrew word translated as “reproach” is *gadaph* and means “to blaspheme.”¹³⁵

The description of what should be done in the case of defiant sin in verses 30 and 31 is followed in the next few verses by an example, namely, a man rebelliously gathering sticks on the Sabbath. This man knew about God’s request not to do unnecessary work on

the Sabbath and yet in defiance and rebellion he went out and did it. Thus the main issue here is the man's rebellious and blasphemous attitude. He wasn't just innocently gathering sticks with some benevolent idea in mind. He was in defiant, blasphemous rebellion against God.

The issue of the death sentence for Sabbath-breaking was discussed at the beginning of this answer to Question 21.

Question 22: *Does Acts chapter 15 prove that the Sabbath was left out of the new covenant?*

Answer: Acts chapter 15 is not discussing what should be included in the new covenant. The word "covenant" is not used in this chapter. It is discussing whether or not the Gentiles "must be circumcised, and keep the law" (vs. 24) in order to be saved. This issue has been called "the Judaizing controversy" and the point under dispute is whether we are saved (at least partly) by our own works. The controversy surfaces again in some of Paul's letters to congregations troubled by the Jewish "circumcision" party, especially in the book of Galatians. In Galatians 2:16 Paul clearly repudiates the idea that our own works have saving merit before God saying, "a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" [7]. Peter said a similar thing in Acts 15:10, 11: "why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that *through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.*"

The fact that the Fourth Commandment is included in the new covenant is made plain by Hebrews 8:8-10 and 2 Corinthians 3:3:

For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah... For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; *I will put My laws into their mind, and*

write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people (Hebrews 8:8-12).

“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; *not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart*” (2 Corinthians 3:3).

In the old covenant the Ten Commandments were written on tables of stone, but in the new the Holy Spirit writes them on the heart. Please also see the answer to Question 20 where the new and old covenants are discussed in more detail.

Chapter Six:

Christ's Teachings and Practices in the Gospels



Question 23: *Did Jesus and His disciples disregard the traditional Jewish idea of the Sabbath and therefore show that there was no longer any obligation to keep it?*

Answer: There is no doubt that Jesus and His disciples annoyed and angered the Jewish leaders by not keeping the Sabbath *according to their traditions*. By doing this Jesus was not annulling the Fourth Commandment but exalting it by setting it free from man-made hindrances. More than this, by connecting the Sabbath with His miracles of healing, He glorified this day and emphasized its association with His redemptive mission [11].

Let us consider some of the specific instances:

Matthew 12:1-14. This gives the account of Jesus' disciples plucking grain on the Sabbath and the episode of the man with the withered hand who was healed in the synagogue on the Sabbath. These two incidents are also recorded in Mark 2:23-3:6 and Luke 6:1-11.

The reason that the disciples plucked the grain and ate it was because they were hungry (Matthew 12:1). But when the Pharisees saw what they were doing they said to Jesus, “Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day” (vs. 2). The Old Testament allowed for the plucking of grapes or grain from someone’s field to satisfy hunger as long as no containers or reaping equipment were employed. However, due to the Pharisees’ man-made traditions, the disciples’ actions were considered a breach of the Sabbath. Looking through their distorted spectacles of tradition the Pharisees paid no attention to the human need and saw only forbidden Sabbath labor. Jesus answered His critics by pointing them to the case of David when he was fleeing from Saul and in need of food (vs. 3, 4, c.f. 1 Samuel 21:4-6). David and his men ate of the sacred priestly bread because that was all that was available and they had a genuine human need. Jesus also reminded the Pharisees of the priests who did more work in the temple on the Sabbath than on any other day (vs. 5). If the priests’ work was acceptable because of its redemptive nature, then so was the disciples’ because they were engaged in their redemptive mission and needed food to sustain them. Further, Jesus and His work were of greater significance than the temple (vs. 6).

Jesus finished His comments to the Pharisees by referring to the instruction of Hosea where God declares, “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice” (Hosea 6:6). The Pharisees needed to have a heart for human suffering and need.

Luke 13:10-17. Here we have the account of Jesus healing a woman who had been a victim of Satan’s cruelty. She had been a suffering cripple for 18 long years. He delivered her in the synagogue on the Sabbath. The leader of the synagogue was angry at Jesus’ actions because he was an ardent follower of human tradition. The Pharisees taught that it was a breach of the Sabbath to heal chronic (long-term) sickness on the Sabbath. Human tradition had made this Jewish leader insensitive to human need and negligent of the Old Testament Sabbath regulations that taught the importance of remembering the poor and needy on the Sabbath.¹³⁶ On another occasion Jesus openly told the scribes and Pharisees that their traditions

made them break God's commandments (Matthew 15:1-9). Jesus' actions in healing the crippled woman were freeing the Sabbath from man-made burdens and connecting it with the deliverance from Satan that He was offering [17]. The healing of Satan's victims by Christ on the Sabbath foreshadowed the complete exposure and discomfiture of Satan accomplished by Christ's death and resurrection [30, 31]. These acts of mercy glorified both Christ and His Father [35]. They aided in the vindication of His cause in the eyes of the universe, a vindication that was perfected by the sacrifice of Christ [29]. The position that this synagogue leader took revealed his heart to be devoid of true religion. All are judged by their attitude to Christ's ministry and sufferings [32] and this ruler plainly indicated which side he was on.

Luke 14:1-6. This is the story of the man healed of dropsy (edema or swelling, often caused by heart disease) at the house of a leading Pharisee. The lessons are basically the same as in the previous case. Jesus again reinforces that acts of mercy and healing are most appropriate and meaningful on the Sabbath day. Once again there is no intimation that Christ is annulling the Sabbath commandment.

John chapter 5. This chapter records the famous Sabbath-day healing of the helpless cripple at the pool of Bethesda and the resulting encounter between Jesus and the Jewish leadership. When we read the Gospel accounts it is apparent that when Jesus took the initiative in healing somebody He usually did it on the Sabbath day. By doing this He emphasized the Sabbath's association with His redemptive mission and challenged witnesses to make a decision between Him and the merciless system of the Jewish clergy. As stated in more detail in the answers to Questions 9 and 24, the seventh-day Sabbath celebrates redemption from bondage and looks forward to the time when Eden's perfection will be restored [1, 2, 3, 4]. Christ's acts of healing are thus very appropriate upon this day. By performing these acts He was giving a powerful testimony to the fact that He was the Messiah through whom the promised redemption and restoration would come. By healing the cripple on the Sabbath Jesus declared His mission

as the Redeemer and Restorer and precipitated a confrontation with the Jewish leaders. In His address to these ruling Jews, Jesus backed up the unspoken testimony of the Sabbath healing, namely, that He was the Redeemer and Restorer (John 5:21-29). He also warned His listeners that they had taken a perilous position in opposing His work. A position that they would be held accountable for at the final judgment (John 5:25-30) [33]. It is noteworthy that in John 5:36 Jesus clearly says that His works testify to His identity: “the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, *bear witness of Me*, that the Father hath sent Me.” Prominent amongst these works are His Sabbath miracles of healing, of which the one at Bethesda was a leading example. Christ’s miracles on the Sabbath and His associated claims were the leading cause of His rejection by the Jewish leadership (John 5:16-18; 7:19-23; 9:16-41; Matthew 12:14). It seems that God especially uses a person’s attitude towards correct Sabbath observance as a test of their relationship to Him. This is seen, not only in the rejection of Jesus because of His manner of Sabbath observance, but also in Old Testament accounts (Exodus chapter 16; Jeremiah 17:21-27; 2 Chronicles 36:19-21; Nehemiah 13:15-18; Isaiah 56:2-13) and in the prophecies of Revelation yet (January 2003) to be fulfilled (please see the answers to Questions 44, 46 and 47).

John 7:19-23. This is a follow up to Chapter 5 of this Gospel. Here Jesus points out that the Jews have no problem with performing the redemptive work of circumcision on the Sabbath and therefore it is inconsistent for them to want to kill Him for His superior redemptive Sabbath work of healing a man completely.

John chapter 9. This chapter is devoted to another of Christ’s Sabbath miracles and the associated repercussions. The same basic message comes through. In harmony with His redemptive mission and the purpose of the Sabbath, Jesus restores a man physically (vs. 7) and spiritually (vs. 35-38). The Jewish leaders stick with their false assertion that healing the chronically ill on the Sabbath is a sin,

reject the testimony of the healed man and deepen their blindness (vs. 16, 28, 34, 40, 41).

Question 24: *How did Christ relate to the seventh-day Sabbath?*

Answer: This answer is divided into two sections as follows:

1. The seventh-day Sabbath and God's original design for mankind.
2. Christ and the Sabbath in the Gospels.

1. The seventh-day Sabbath and God's original design for mankind.

God's original design for mankind was that he should bear the divine image or likeness and be in close communion with Himself (Genesis 1:26, 27; 3:8, 9). During the sixth day God created man in His own image. After the sixth day of labor "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). On the seventh day God celebrated His creative work and His future plans for humanity. He rested on, blessed and sanctified this seventh day, thus setting it apart as a memorial of His creation of the Earth. Sadly, the fall of Adam and Eve into sin resulted in God's original intentions for humanity being postponed. The purpose of the plan of redemption was to restore to men and women the divine image and communion that were lost at the fall and thus see God's original purpose for mankind fulfilled (Colossians 3:5-11; Romans 8:12-29; 1 John 2:28-3:10) [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 27].

It is crucial to understand that the seventh-day Sabbath *celebrates God's original intention and plan for mankind*. This is made clear by Genesis 2:2-3 which records God resting on, blessing and sanctifying the seventh day following His completed act of creation. On the sixth day He had created Adam and Eve in His own image and on the seventh day He gave them a gift of time. This precious gift was an opportunity to experience God's rest, commune with Him, grow more like Him, reflect on what He had created and receive His blessing. Thus, in a special sense, the seventh day was to be a day to

experience and celebrate God's plan to have upon the Earth a people who reflected His image and who were in close communion with Him. For further comments on Genesis 2:2, 3 please see the answer to Question 8, part 1.

That the seventh-day Sabbath celebrates God's original intent for mankind is also shown by several other passages of scripture as follows:

a). In Exodus 31:13 and Ezekiel 20:12 God tells us that the Sabbath is a sign that He is the One who sanctifies us. The Hebrew word for "sanctify" (*qadash*) in these verses means to set apart or consecrate as sacred and is basically equivalent to the Greek word for "sanctify" (*hagiazō*) used in the New Testament.

There are two aspects to sanctification. Firstly, there is the ongoing state of being set apart and dedicated to God. This is our state as long as we are abiding in Christ (as the branch is to the vine, John chapter 15). To be a saint in the Biblical sense means to be "in Christ" and thus set apart by Him as someone belonging wholly to God. Therefore all true Christians are saints on the basis of what Christ has done.¹³⁷ Secondly, sanctification involves a process of being purified and made more like Christ.¹³⁸

It is the sacrifice of Christ that sanctifies believers [9]. Hebrews 13:12 says, "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate" (see also Hebrews 10:29). Thus when God says that the Sabbath is a sign that He sanctifies His people He is associating the seventh-day Sabbath with Christ whose sacrifice and work are responsible for restoring the divine image in believers. And the restoration of this divine image is fulfilling God's original plan for mankind.

b). Deuteronomy 5:12-15 is about the Sabbath commandment. Verse 15 says, "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." The seventh-day Sabbath commemorates the deliverance of ancient Israel from Egyptian bondage so that they could enter and enjoy

the Promised Land. This Old Testament redemption is symbolic of spiritual Israel's deliverance from the bondage of sin (please see the answer to Question 9) in preparation for inhabiting the Earth made new (2 Peter 3:13, 14; Isaiah 66:22-24; Revelation 21:1-8). In the New Earth will be realized the fulfillment of God's original design for mankind.

c). The message of Isaiah 58:13, 14 connects the Sabbath with the promise of partaking in the eternal kingdom of God where the original design for mankind will be fulfilled. This passage says:

13 If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour Him, nor doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and *feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father*: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

As discussed in the answer to Question 6 (part 4, point "e") the heritage of Jacob is Christ and His everlasting kingdom.¹³⁹

In summary, the seventh-day Sabbath celebrates the fulfillment of God's original plan for mankind that is, and will be, accomplished through Jesus Christ. Knowing this enables us to correctly understand how Jesus related Himself to the seventh-day Sabbath in the Gospel accounts.

2. Christ and the Sabbath in the Gospels.

The Gospels reveal how Jesus *affirmed His Messiahship* by identifying His mission with the weekly Sabbath (and also with the Jubilee sabbath). Let us explore this fascinating subject:

a). Jesus declared His mission to be the fulfillment of Isaiah 61:1, 2a. These verses read as follows:

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD...

Jesus Christ began His ministry in Galilee by reading Isaiah 61:1, 2a in the synagogue at Nazareth on the Sabbath (Luke 4:16-21). This is an example of how Jesus' ministry fulfilled Old Testament prophecy [26]. The "acceptable year of the Lord" quoted by Jesus and declared by Him to be now, "this day," fulfilled, is the year of the Jubilee sabbath. The Jubilee was a sabbatical year that occurred every fifty years during which slaves were allowed to go free and land reverted to the ownership of those who held its ancestral rights (Leviticus 25:10; 27:24). In identifying His mission with this year of release Jesus was declaring Himself to be the One who delivers from the bondage of sin and who will restore mankind to the original Edenic state [4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 15, 31, 37]. Unfortunately, as a people, the Jews were only interested in a "Messiah" who would deliver them from the bondage of their Roman governors and restore Israelite sovereignty. They did not understand that the kind of bondage to be most feared was the bondage of sin [1, 12] and the kind of restoration to be most earnestly desired was the restoration to Edenic perfection. Let us not be like these Jews who rejected Christ. Let us accept Him and rejoice in the assurance of a future restoration to Edenic perfection. This restoration is guaranteed because Christ, by His life, death and resurrection, redeemed Adam's failure, became the new successful head of humanity, and bore the curse of sin upon Himself [4, 5]. Let us surrender our lives to Jesus and abide in Him. Then we will not miss out.

b). Not only did Jesus declare His mission to be the fulfillment of Isaiah 61:1, 2a, but He went on to prove His point by His actions.

In other words Jesus affirmed His Messiahship by doing the very things described in Isaiah 61:1, 2a. This passage in Isaiah describes preaching the gospel to the poor, releasing captives and restoring the brokenhearted. Jesus ministry consisted largely of these things. He preached to the poor, set Satan's captives free and healed the downcast and brokenhearted. By doing these things Jesus identified Himself as the Redeemer and Restorer anticipated by the Jubilee sabbath.

c). When Jesus initiated a person's healing He usually did it on the Sabbath (please see the answer to Question 23 for a more detailed discussion of this point). By doing this He identified Himself as the Restorer and Redeemer anticipated by the weekly Sabbath.

d). Jesus affirmed His Messiahship in John chapters 5 and 9 by declaring that His Sabbath works were the redemptive works of the Father (John 5:16-18, 36; 9:1-7, 14).

e). In John 7:21-23 Jesus compares His work of healing on the Sabbath with circumcision. The Jews were happy to circumcise an infant on the Sabbath because it was regarded as a redemptive act mediating the benefits of God's covenant. Why then, Jesus argues, should they be angry with Him when He has made a person completely whole on the Sabbath? Why should they be angry with Him for performing on the Sabbath a more significant and greater redemptive act than that of circumcision?

f). In Matthew 12:1-8 Jesus compares His mission with the Sabbath services of the temple, and effectively claims to be the fulfillment of the temple services by declaring, "in this place is One greater than the temple" (Matthew 12:6). In the Old Testament sanctuary service the daily offerings on the Sabbath were double the usually prescribed amount (Numbers 28:9, 10 c.f. 28:4). This should have taught the priests and people that the Sabbath day was especially appropriate for ministering to the redemptive needs of others. Thus, in Matthew chapter 12 Jesus points out that He and His disciples were engaged in a redemptive work which was wholly

appropriate for the Sabbath, as shown by the example of the temple priests, and that their ministry was, in reality, more important than the priests. Again Jesus is revealing His Messiahship through identification with the redemptive theme of the Sabbath.

g). In Mark 2:27, 28 Jesus identifies Himself as the mediator of the Sabbath blessings. The Sabbath was made as a blessing to man. Therefore Jesus the Son of Man, through whom all man's blessings come, is naturally its Lord.

In declaring that He is Lord of the Sabbath, Christ is saying that He is Lord of the redemption of man. This is quite logical since the Sabbath is the day that celebrates man's redemption.

h). Jesus rested in the tomb on the Sabbath after completing His earthly redemptive mission (see, for example, Luke 23:50 through 24:1). As mentioned previously in the answer to Question 9, there are parallels between Creation Week and the final week (prior to His resurrection) of Christ's earthly ministry. In the beginning Christ, as Creator, rested on the seventh day and celebrated His beneficent purposes for mankind. When mankind fell into sin it seemed that God's plans had been thwarted. But Christ came to Earth and died so that He could restore mankind. After His death Christ again rested on the seventh-day Sabbath. He had died victorious and now it was certain that His original plans for the human race would be fulfilled. On that Sabbath after Christ's death all Heaven must have rejoiced [29], knowing that the enemy had been defeated and that Christ had won the victory (Revelation 12:10-12) [17, 31]. The relationship between the seventh-day Sabbath and the events of Christ's death and resurrection is further evidence that Christ is the true Messiah, the Redeemer of the world.

In summary, Christ related to the seventh-day Sabbath by upholding it as a true divine institution that celebrated the hope of mankind's restoration. He linked it closely with Himself, His redemptive mission and His identity as the true Messiah.

Question 25: Did Christ abolish the seventh-day Sabbath?

Answer: No He didn't. Please consider the following:

1. The "Sermon on the Mount" recorded in Matthew chapter 5 through 7 proves that Christ did not abolish the seventh-day Sabbath. This sermon of Jesus' parallels the giving of the Ten Commandments in Exodus chapters 19 and 20 (please see the answer to Question 8, part 2, point "d"). If Jesus were going to replace or abolish any of the Ten Commandments this is the time it would have been done. But He does not do this. Instead He upholds and magnifies them.

2. How can it be claimed that Jesus abolished the Sabbath when He said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27, 28)? Why would Jesus say that He is Lord of something that He had abolished or was going to abolish? And why would He say that the Sabbath was for mankind, that is something needed by humanity, if it was to be annulled?

3. In Matthew 24:20 Jesus says, "pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Why would Jesus have said this if the Sabbath day were not still an important day for Christians to observe in AD 70? For a more detailed discussion of this text please see the answer to Question 8, part 4.

4. If Jesus had planned to abolish or change the seventh-day Sabbath as part of the new covenant that was ratified by His blood at Calvary, He would need to have done it before His death. However, He did not do this. Jesus introduced all the new administrations of the new covenant before He confirmed it with the shedding of His blood. The Lord's supper, foot washing, the ministry of preaching, the promise of the Holy Spirit [36] and baptism were all instituted before the cross. But there is no mention of any new Sabbath or any abolition of the original Sabbath before Calvary, and we obviously cannot add new conditions to a divine covenant or contract once it has been ratified or "signed".

5. In His teaching and example Jesus exhorted the people to flee from sin and to obey God's commandments (John 5:14; 8:11; Matthew 5:17-48; John 14:15; 15:10, etc.). Why then, would He have abolished the Fourth Commandment? The fact is, of course, He didn't.

Question 26: *Did Christ or any apostle give recognition to the seventh-day Sabbath after the resurrection?*

Answer: The short answer is, yes. In support of this we will examine the following:

1. Jewish heritage and influence in the New Testament church.
2. Hebrews Chapter 4.
3. Matthew 24:15-20.
4. Revelation 14:6, 7.

1. Jewish heritage and influence in the New Testament Church.

To form a correct view of how the apostolic church regarded the seventh-day Sabbath we must understand how Jewish this church was. Remember that Jesus (humanly speaking) and His twelve apostles were Jews.

The early church was considered to be a sect within Judaism, called the "sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5, 14¹⁴⁰). New Testament Christians worshipped in the temple, the synagogue and in private homes and appeared like a party within the Jewish communion. Christian worship arose, not as a new institution, but as a continuation, renovation and enrichment of the Jewish religious system. The temple and synagogue were still used. The same terminology was still employed for many things, for example, "sacrifice," "elder," "offering," and "altar." The same word "sect" is used in Acts to describe the Christian party (Acts 24:5, 14; Acts 28:22) as well as the official Jewish parties of the Sadducees (Acts 5:17) and Pharisees

(Acts 15:5). If we read Romans chapter 11 we will notice that God did not root out the true Israelite olive tree and plant a new olive tree consisting of Gentile believers. Rather, branches were broken off and the Gentiles grafted in. The Gentile Christian church was grafted into the true Jewish Sabbath-keeping faith.

The early Christians worshipped mainly in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Paul looked for and persecuted Christians in synagogues (Acts 9:1, 2; 22:19¹⁴¹). The Sabbath was spent in prayer, public worship and evangelism (Acts 13:14, 15, 42-44; 16:13 [NASB, RSV]; 17:2; 18:4, 26). Converts were taught in the synagogues until forced to leave (Acts 19:6-9 c.f. Acts 18:1-6). Both God-fearing Gentiles and Jews are recorded as worshipping in the synagogue on the Sabbath (Acts 13:42-44; 18:4). This is where Paul preached Christ to them and where he continued to teach the converts. He only left the synagogues when forced to by antagonistic Jews (Acts 19:6-9).

The account in Acts 13:42-44 is significant. This passage reads:

42 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.

43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

44 And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

If Paul and Barnabas observed the first day of the week as the Christian day for meeting why did they wait for the following Sabbath before inviting the Gentiles to come back? Surely they would have just said, “Don’t worry we will be holding a meeting tomorrow on the new Christian worship day. We will preach more to you about these things then.”

Please also read Acts 18:1-11. While tent making Paul used the Sabbath for formal evangelism. In fact, at this time he may have only used this day for such, as no other day of the week is mentioned. The implication is that he did his main evangelism on the seventh-day

Sabbath and his tent making on the other six days of the week. If he kept the first day of the week surely he would have held evangelistic meetings, at least for the Christian converts, on that day. But no mention of such is given here. However, when the others arrived it appears from verses 5 to 11 that Paul reduced his tent making work and started more full time evangelism.

Concerning a certain man named Apollos, Acts 18:26 says “he began to speak boldly in the synagogue [about the things of the Lord].” When Paul’s Christian friends Aquila and Priscilla heard him in the synagogue, “they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” The Christians Priscilla and Aquilla were most likely worshipping regularly at the Ephesian synagogue when they heard Apollos. They then invited him home to instruct him further in the Way.

Thus, the New Testament witnesses to the fact that the early Christians worshipped mainly in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

The dominance of Jewish influence and heritage in the early church is obvious when we consider that this church was full of deeply Jewish members. Acts 6:7 says, “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” The priests were clearly very Jewish in orientation. Notice also Acts 21:20, 21 where the leading brethren in Jerusalem say to Paul, “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.” The converted priests may well have acted as Christian “elders” (Acts 15:4, 22, 23) needed to minister to the thousands of new converts who were “all zealous for the law.” Interestingly, there is no suggestion given here that their conversion conflicted with the observance of the Mosaic Law.¹⁴² The Jerusalem church may have been organizationally patterned after the Jewish model of the Sanhedrin with James presiding over a body of 70 elders.

Jewish heritage had a lasting and strong influence on the early church. This is shown by the account of Peter and Cornelius (Acts

11:1-3). As this incident reveals, some members of the church were so “Jewish” in their orientation that they still clung onto the old false idea of keeping separate from the Gentiles and not eating with them.

Also the council at Jerusalem in AD 49 or 50 (Acts 15:1-3) shows the lasting and strong influence of Jewish ways within the early church. Some believers in the church were so “Jewish” that they still advocated the old and mistaken idea that we are saved, at least partly, by our own works (Acts 15:5, 10, 11). Also the choice of James, the son of Joseph, as the leader of the church at Jerusalem¹⁴³ demonstrates the “Jewishness” of their thinking. Apparently in the choice of a leader the “blood” factor was regarded as more important than any previous relationship with Christ. James justified his judgment at the council by referring to the customary reading and preaching of the Mosaic regulations on the Sabbath in the synagogue (Acts 15:21), thus again manifesting great respect for the Mosaic regulations.

At the Jerusalem Council the exemption from circumcision was granted only “to the brethren who were of the Gentiles” (Acts 15:23) and not to Jewish Christians. Even after the Jerusalem Council there was an influential “party of the circumcision” apparently supported, at least for a time, by James that harassed the Gentile communities evangelized by Paul.¹⁴⁴ The regulations delivered at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:20, 29) were designed partly to just avoid offending the prejudices of Jewish Christians. For example, concerning eating meat offered to idols, Paul later wrote that it was not morally wrong unless it caused offence to a fellow believer who was “weak” in faith (1 Corinthians 8:4-13).

The fact that Jewish heritage had a deep hold on the early church is demonstrated by the continued power of the “party of the circumcision” after the council at Jerusalem.¹⁴⁵ This group, which damaged Gentile churches established by Paul, even succeeded in leading astray James, Peter and Barnabas (Galatians chapter 2). The circumcision party was responsible for the “Judaizing controversy,” that is, the idea within the early church that we are saved by Christ plus our own works.

When Paul visited Jerusalem for the last time (AD 58 ¹⁴⁶) the Jewish converts were “all zealous for the law.” So Jewish heritage obviously still had a strong impact on these believers. At this visit “James and the elders” explained to Paul that there was a rumor (there was no evidence that it was true) that he had been telling *Jews* to forsake the ancestral customs given through Moses. They proposed that he show to the Jewish brethren that he himself “lived in observance of the law” by undergoing a purification rite (Acts 21:24; 24:18) at the temple along with four other church members who had apparently contracted ceremonial defilement. Paul did not object to this suggestion. Interestingly, he had previously assumed a Nazarite vow on his own initiative at Cenchrea (Acts 18:18; Numbers 6:18). He had already planned to “present offerings” (Acts 24:17) at the temple which were perhaps a vow of thanksgiving in association with the alms given by the Gentile brethren to the Jewish Christians. These alms may have been part of a plan to draw the Jewish and Gentile wings of the church closer together.

A further consideration pointing to the strong Jewish heritage of this early church is the fact that Christians still regulating their lives, at least partly, by the Jewish ceremonial calendar (Acts 20:6, 16; 27:9 [a reference to the Day of Atonement]; 1 Corinthians 16:8).

Finally, the strong influence of Jewish heritage on the early church is also shown by the need for the letter to the Hebrews, written most probably in the late 60’s AD. It is noteworthy that the book of Hebrews sought to wean Jewish Christians away from any dependence upon the old administration of the covenant and to get them to focus fully on the heavenly realities of Christ. If the Jewish Christians were still looking to the temple and Jerusalem for spiritual stability they would be greatly shaken when both were destroyed, which was going to happen shortly. The book of Hebrews itself is a witness to how lasting and strong the influence of Jewish heritage was upon the early church.

The question we are examining asks if any recognition was given by Christ or an apostle to the ancient Jewish seventh-day Sabbath after the resurrection. The above material about the Jewishness of the early church clearly reveals that the seventh-day Sabbath was a most important day in the post resurrection era. The seventh day was

recognized as a time to worship God in the synagogue, even when there was the threat of being punished for doing so. It is described in Acts as the preferred day for evangelism, even of God-fearing Gentiles who were encouraged to come back and hear more of the gospel on the next Sabbath (rather than on the first day of the week). The seventh-day Sabbath was obviously taken for granted by this very Jewish church.

Did the church at Jerusalem change the day of worship in New Testament times? No, definitely not. In such an environment of strong attachment to Jewish ways it would have been impossible to change such a major institution as the Sabbath. And if moves had been made to change it, the inevitable controversy would have been a major issue discussed in the New Testament. The New Testament is totally silent as to any such controversy. This is absolute proof that no such change was made by the apostolic church.

2. Hebrews Chapter 4.

The seventh-day Sabbath is given an honored place by the writer to the Hebrews. For further details please see the answer to Question 6 under the section discussing Hebrews 4:9 (part 4, point “e”). Some may say, “But this book was not written by an apostle of Christ.” We do not wish to get into a discussion of the authorship of the book of Hebrews here. What is important is the simple fact that God has included this book as part of the New Testament. It should therefore be given just as full authority as any other part of scripture.

3. Matthew 24:15-20.

In Matthew 24 Jesus assigns the seventh-day Sabbath an honored place in the post-resurrection era:

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

- 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:
17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:
18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.
19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!
20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day:

Christ here witnesses to the fact that the seventh day of the week was still to be “the Sabbath day” at the time of Jerusalem’s destruction (AD 70). There is only one day of the week that was known as “the Sabbath” when Jesus gave this talk as recorded in Matthew chapter 24. That was the seventh day. Jesus admonished His followers to pray that their flight at the time of Jerusalem’s destruction would not occur on the Sabbath day. The period of time Jesus was referring to was AD 66-70. The Christians fled from Jerusalem in AD 66 and the city was destroyed in AD 70. Please also see the answer to Question 8, part 4.

4. Revelation 14:6, 7

We will now consider a further passage in the New Testament that gives recognition to the seventh-day Sabbath after the resurrection. This time the apostle is John, and the book is Revelation.

Revelation 14:6, 7 says:

- 6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,
7 Saying with a loud voice, *Fear God*, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: *and worship*

Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

The words “Fear God, and... worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” are an allusion¹⁴⁷ to the Fourth Commandment. That is, they point us to the Sabbath commandment (Exodus 20:8-11). How do we know this? Firstly, we have here a large number of verbal parallels, that is, words in common. These words are “made,” “heaven,” “earth,” “sea” and “God.” Secondly, Revelation chapters 13 and 14 represent a strong “structural” parallel with the first four of the Ten Commandments. A structural parallel in Revelation is where there is a whole series of related ideas between Revelation and another Bible passage. In chapter 13 the unholy powers described there counterfeit or rebel against the first four of the Ten Commandments:

a). The First Commandment tells us to have no other gods before the LORD our God, but the beast from the sea (we will call it the “sea-beast”) of Revelation 13 is worshipped as a god.

b). The Second Commandment tells us to not make for ourselves any image to worship, but in Revelation 13 an image to the sea-beast is worshipped.

c). The Third Commandment tells us to not take the name of the LORD our God in vain, but the sea-beast of Revelation 13 has names of blasphemy written on it and opens its mouth to blaspheme God.

d). The Fourth Commandment tells us to remember the Sabbath day, and describes this commandment in terms of a seal.¹⁴⁸ The sea-beast has a counterfeit seal, the mark of the beast (which will be studied in more detail later).

This structural parallel is very powerful evidence that Revelation 14:6, 7 is pointing us to the Fourth Commandment.

A third indication that Revelation 14:7 is an allusion to the Fourth Commandment is the strong thematic parallel between Revelation chapters 13 and 14 and the receiving of the Ten Commandments, as

recorded in Exodus chapters 19 and 20. They both have the major theme of *loyalty to God being shown by keeping His commandments*.¹⁴⁹

Thus we have here in the book of Revelation a remarkable recognition of the seventh-day Sabbath that applies to a time long after the resurrection of Christ. In fact this passage tells us that allegiance to God, as demonstrated by Sabbath-keeping, will be a critical issue at the time just prior to the second coming of our Lord (His coming is portrayed in Revelation 14:14-20). The final battle between good and evil just before Christ's return will involve the matter of worship. In Revelation chapters 13 and 14 worshiping the beast or its image is described many times. But in these two chapters, the word "worship" in reference to the true God is referred to only in Revelation 14:7. This indicates that the Fourth Commandment and true Sabbath-keeping are extremely important in our worship of God and will be a special test of loyalty in the final crisis.

To conclude our answer to Question 26, we hope that the above has clearly demonstrated how both Christ and His apostles gave recognition to the seventh-day Sabbath after the resurrection.

Chapter Seven:

The New Testament Church's Teachings and Practices



***Question 27:** Does the New Testament ever record a distinctive gathering of Christians on the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath?*

Answer: We would like to begin by asking another question. Were Jesus and His disciples Christians? Certainly all must admit that Jesus was, and is, the model Christian. Concerning Him the scriptures say, “And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read” (Luke 4:16). This text points out that it was Jesus’ custom to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Jesus, *the* Christian met with worshippers of the true God on the seventh-day Sabbath throughout His life. If you are a follower of Jesus why not follow His example and keep the same day that He did? Surely He won’t be unhappy with you for doing this! The Sabbath gathering mentioned above, that Jesus attended at Nazareth, was definitely a distinctive gathering. It was the auspicious moment when Jesus announced His identity as the long-awaited Messiah in His hometown (Luke 4:17-21). It was also the formal beginning of His Galilean ministry.

Mark 1:16-31 records a distinctive gathering of Jesus and His disciples on the Sabbath. This was a distinctive meeting because it was one of the first, if not *the* first, gathering in a house of worship that Jesus had with His early disciples after He had formally called them to leave their fishing nets and follow Him. It also signaled the beginning of Jesus' ministry in the city of Capernaum, as is evidenced by the miracles that occurred that Sabbath and immediately after (vs. 23-34). Other examples of distinctive Sabbath gatherings involving Jesus and His disciples are found in Luke 6:6-11 and Luke 13:10-17.¹⁵⁰

We realize some will object to the above saying, "These are examples of gatherings before the cross and before Pentecost and before Jesus' followers were even called Christians so they don't count." But it is not such a big thing to be looking for details about the day of worship *after* the cross. Why? Because changes to a covenant have to be made *before* it is ratified, not after. Jesus introduced all the new administrations of the everlasting covenant (the new covenant) before He ratified it with the shedding of His blood at Calvary. The Lord's supper, the ministry of preaching, the promise of the Holy Spirit [36] and baptism were all instituted before the cross. But Sunday observance was not. Jesus made no change in the day of worship before He died, and we cannot add new conditions to a covenant or contract once it has been ratified or signed. "To give a human example, brethren: no one annuls even a man's will, or adds to it, once it has been ratified" Galatians 3:15, RSV. If we have signed a final contract, we don't immediately add some new condition to it. When a right-minded person has a "last will and testament" that is ratified by their death we can't take it and say, "We are going to replace part of this will with something else." Even so, we cannot say that Jesus added something new for Christians to do as part of His covenant of grace after He had ratified that covenant with His death.¹⁵¹ The seventh-day Sabbath was the day that Jesus and His followers kept before the cross and there is no evidence that He instituted any new day of worship during this time. So, rather than being dismissed as insignificant, Christian gatherings before the cross should really have more weight than those after the event.

There are, however, in the New Testament examples of distinctive gatherings of Christians after the cross, Pentecost and the giving of the name Christian. We won't dwell here on the "Jewishness" of the early Christian church, that is, how steeped in Jewish ways it was (please see the answer to Question 26 for a discussion on this matter). But we will mention that the early Christians worshipped in private homes, the temple, and the synagogues and looked like a party within the Jewish fold. Christian worship arose, not as something completely new, but rather as a continuation and adaptation of the Jewish method.

Notice that Christians were looked for, and persecuted, in synagogues:

"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1, 2).

"And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on Thee" (Acts 22:19).

"And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities" (Acts 26:11).

References to Christians attending synagogues are important because the services in these buildings were, of course, held on the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath. Notice how, *before the cross*, Jesus predicted this persecution in synagogues:

"They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2).

“But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues” (Matthew 10:17).

After their conversion Paul’s Christian disciples were taught in the synagogues until they were forced to leave:

“And he [Paul] went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers [some] were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples [i.e. Christians], disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus” (Acts 19:8, 9).

This text indicates that Paul was holding distinctive Christian gatherings in the Ephesian synagogue on the Sabbath for about three months until persecution forced his departure. These meetings at Ephesus were distinctive because they were the beginnings of a revival so great “that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10). They were also held after the cross, Pentecost and the giving of the name “Christian” (Acts 11:26).

A similar experience to the Ephesian one occurred at Corinth. This is what Acts 18:1-7 says:

1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth...

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon

your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

Another distinctive Christian meeting in a synagogue relates to the experience of Priscilla and Aquila with Apollos. Priscilla and Aquila were devout Christians who left Corinth with Paul and came to Ephesus (Acts 18:18, 19). While worshipping in the synagogue at Ephesus (almost certainly during the Sabbath services) Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos boldly teaching the things of the Lord and invited him home for further instruction in "the way of God" (vs. 24-26). This meeting in the synagogue with Apollos was a distinctive Christian event. It led to Apollos' establishment in the faith and his providential ministry in Corinth (Acts 18:27, 28).

In summary, the New Testament does record distinctive Christian gatherings on the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath, both before and after the cross.

Question 28: *Do not the records show that Christians gathered on Sunday, the first day of the week, which was called "the Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10), for worship (John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2)?*

Answer: We have divided our response to this question into the following sections:

1. Revelation 1:10 and "the Lord's day."
2. The "first day of the week" in John 20:1, 19 and other passages about the day of Christ's resurrection.
3. First Corinthians 16:2.
4. Acts 20:7.

1. Revelation 1:10 and "the Lord's day."

Let's consider this verse in context:

9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. (Revelation 1:9-11).

Revelation 1:10 is obviously not a command replacing Sabbath observance with Sunday-keeping. Nor does it say that John was in the spirit on the first day of the week. Nor does it say that the first day of the week is "the Lord's day." It simply says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." How then can we know what the Lord's day is? If we use the Protestant principle of letting the Bible speak for itself then the passages that are most closely related to this one are Isaiah 58:13, Matthew 12:8, Mark 2:28, Luke 6:5 and those that refer to the eschatological "day of the Lord" such as Isaiah 13:6, 9; Joel 1:15 and 2 Peter 3:10.

Isaiah 58:13 says, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable..."

Matthew 12:8 says, "For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." Mark 2:28 and Luke 6:5 say basically the same thing.

These texts suggest that John was in the Spirit on the seventh-day Sabbath. This is quite appropriate since the Sabbath celebrates the hope of Christ's second coming and Eden restored [5, 15]⁵² which is, of course, central to the visions of Revelation. Mark 2:27, 28 supports this idea. These verses read as follows:

And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

Here Jesus identifies Himself as the mediator of the Sabbath blessings. Since the Sabbath was made as a blessing to man, the Son of Man, through whom all man's blessings come, is its Lord. In declaring that He is Lord of the Sabbath Christ is saying that He is Lord of the redemption of man [11]. Why? Because the Sabbath is the day which celebrates man's redemption (please see the answers to Questions 6 [part 4, point "e"] and 24). "The Lord's day" of Revelation 1:10 was the day when John saw in vision man's redemption. It would thus be most appropriate for it to be the seventh-day Sabbath.

The texts about the eschatological "day of the Lord" could possibly mean that when John said that he was "in the spirit on the Lord's day" he meant that he was taken forward in vision to this great day of judgment. That he did see in vision the eschatological day of the Lord is clearly apparent by reading the book of Revelation. However, notice that John's description of where he was in time is closely related to his explanation of where he was "in space" (Patmos Island, vs. 9), and that this description of his location is given in physical rather than spiritual (visionary) terms. This would favor John's reference to the Lord's day as meaning the day of the week rather than visionary time. Also this part of Revelation is still in the prologue section of the book where we would expect a clear reference to literal time and place.

Another point of interest relates to the Gospel of John. If John considered the first day of the week to be "the Lord's day" why did he not use this expression in his Gospel? The Gospel of John uses the phrase "first day of the week" twice (John 20:1, 19) but nowhere mentions "the Lord's day." We do not know for sure when the books of John and Revelation were written (though most place them late in the first century), but we do know that the phrase "the Lord's day" was not considered appropriate for designating the day of Christ's resurrection when John wrote his Gospel.

In summary, if we want to base our faith upon scripture, then we must admit that it favors “the Lord’s day” as being a reference to the seventh-day Sabbath.

As an after note we must say something about the “church fathers.” Perhaps some are thinking, “Do not the writings of the ‘church fathers’ prove that ‘the Lord’s day’ is a reference to Sunday?” Well, no they don’t because the church fathers are not the Bible! Their writings have mistakes in them. The “church fathers” cannot have any weight in comparison to the Holy Scriptures.

2. The “first day of the week” in John 20:1, 19 and other passages about the day of Christ’s resurrection.

John 20:1 and John 20:19 represent two of a total of eight times that the phrase “first day of the week” occurs in the New Testament. Six of these times are simply describing the day that Jesus arose from the dead and first appeared to His disciples. Here are those six times:

In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre (Matthew 28:1).

And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun (Mark 16:2).

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils (Mark 16:9).

Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them (Luke 24:1).

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre (John 20:1).

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you (John 20:19).

It was certainly logical that Jesus should meet His disciples on the day of His resurrection. He loved them and wanted to comfort their grieving hearts and prepare them for their future work at the earliest opportunity. But at this first meeting there is no reference about a new day of worship or about the abolition of the seventh-day Sabbath. Nor would we expect one, as Jesus had three days earlier (inclusive reckoning) ratified the new covenant by His death, and once a covenant is consummated no new conditions can be added without breaking the agreement (Galatians 3:15, please see also the answer to Question 27).

Why were the disciples gathered together on the day when Jesus was resurrected? There is no indication that they were meeting together to celebrate something. They were trying to cope with the great disappointment that they had just suffered. They were depressed and afraid, probably thinking “Will we be the next victims of the Jews’ hatred towards Christ?” (John 20:19). They did not gather to celebrate the Lord’s supper. Nor did Jesus celebrate this meal with His disciples when He appeared to them. His pledge at the Last Supper was not to partake again of the fruit of the vine until His second coming.¹⁵³ John, who probably wrote his Gospel at the end of the first century AD, makes no reference to any meal on the day of Christ’s resurrection. Luke mentions that Christ ate some broiled fish and honeycomb so that He could demonstrate the reality of His resurrected body.

The early church did not celebrate the Lord’s supper on a specific weekly day, nor was it understood as being commemorative of the resurrection. It was to be celebrated “when you come together” (1 Corinthians 11:18, 20, 33, 34), that is, no definite time was set. It

was to commemorate Christ's sacrifice and second coming. Thus, 1 Corinthians 11:26 says that when we partake of the Lord's Supper we "do shew the Lord's death till He come."

Christ did appear to His disciples on several other occasions before His ascension, but these appearances cannot be fitted into any set weekly pattern. His purpose was not to inaugurate a new weekly day but to demonstrate the reality of His resurrected state, open His disciples' minds to the Old Testament prophecies [26] and instruct them concerning the Holy Spirit's coming [36] and the mission of the church.

John 20:26 describes a visit to the disciples "eight days later" than His first one. This would have been on the following Sunday. Again there is no reference to a new day of worship or to the abolition of the seventh-day Sabbath. The reason Christ appeared is made plain. It was because Thomas was there. The whole narrative of this appearance in John 20:26-29 is centered on Thomas. Nothing else of note is recorded except for Jesus' initial greeting. The other disciples had almost certainly been together everyday since the previous Sunday (c.f. Acts 1:14, 2:1). But this may well have been the first time that Thomas decided to join them.

We have now mentioned six of the eight times where the phrase "first day of the week" occurs in the Bible. The other two are 1 Corinthians 16:2 and Acts 20:7. We will consider these two texts one at a time.

3. First Corinthians 16:2.

This verse says, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." In this passage there is no command substituting the first day of the week for the seventh. Nothing here suggests resting or a public assembly. It describes a plan to ensure that a good donation for the needy brethren at Jerusalem (vs. 3) is ready for Paul's arrival so that there is no embarrassment for either Paul or the Corinthians (c.f. 2 Corinthians 9:1-5). The beginning of the week was an appropriate time to set aside their donations. In

fact, the setting aside of material things at the beginning of the week was a Jewish concept, not a Christian one.

In the writings of Moses, Israel was instructed in the principle of giving sacred offerings of material things at the beginning of a week (or another period of time) so as to release the remainder for common use and acknowledge that really the entire amount belonged to God because it was the fruit of His power. In contrast to this, the offering of time was to be given at the end of a week and acted to consecrate the entire week. In support of this please consider the following:

Material Offerings:

a). The wave sheaf of barley at the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a consecration of material things. It occurred on the day after the first ceremonial Sabbath, at the beginning of the feast (Leviticus 23:11).

b). The first fruits of the wheat harvest were given at Pentecost, on the first day following seven weeks (Leviticus 23:15, 16).

c). The first fruit of the year's harvest at the Feast of Tabernacles was given on the first month of the civil year, which was the seventh month of the sacred year (Leviticus 23:34, 39).

d). The "offering" of land and servants in the year of Jubilee was on the first day following seven "weeks" of years (Leviticus 25:8-11, 40).

e). Firstborn offspring of the herd or flock were given to the Lord on the eighth day of their lives, i.e. on the first day after becoming one week old (Exodus 22:30).

f). Offspring of oxen, sheep or goats were acceptable for sacrifice from the eighth day onwards (Leviticus 22:27).

Time Offerings:

a). The weekly Sabbath on the last day of the week was to be kept even during plowing and harvest (Exodus 34:21). Thus in busy times the Sabbath had to be planned for *ahead of time*, and took priority. The time leading up to it was in this sense acknowledged as belonging to God too.

b). The weekly day of preparation was on the sixth day (Exodus 16:22-31; Luke 23:54). Again, the time before the Sabbath is being managed in reference to it.

c). The seventh month of the religious year was in a sense a sabbatical month. It included three annual festivals (Leviticus 23:24-36). It would have been necessary for the Israelites to plan ahead for this month because it included ten days of religious festivals plus travelling time.

d). The sabbatical year was on the last year of a “week” of years (Leviticus 25:1-7) and the year of preparation was the sixth year (Leviticus 25:20-22). Again, an offering of time is being prepared for in advance.

In summary, 1 Corinthians 16:2 is not about Christians gathering on Sunday, the first day of the week, but about a plan to lay aside material offerings for the support of God’s work. This plan was in harmony with Old Testament principles regarding offerings of material things, but was not in line with Old Testament directions concerning offerings of time.

4. Acts 20:7.

Let us now consider Acts 20:7. This text says, “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.”

The context of this verse is Paul’s journey from Greece to Syria and Jerusalem (Acts 20:1-3, 16). In the course of this journey Paul and his travelling companions came to Troas where they stayed a week and held a meeting on the eve of their departure (Acts 20:6, 7). The fact that Acts 20:7 does not support Sunday observance in place of the Sabbath can be seen from the following:

a). Paul had been at Troas seven days and was now ready to depart (Acts 20:6, 7). Therefore it would be most logical for him to hold a farewell meeting and to “break bread.”

b). The mention of the first day of the week is simply part of an ongoing series of references about Paul's journey (Acts 20:3, 6, 7, 15, 16; 21:1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 15) and is worth noting since they are about to leave Troas.

c). The occasion was also worthy of mention solely on account of Eutycus' fatal accident and subsequent miraculous resurrection (Acts 20:8-12).

d). There is obviously no commandment in this passage replacing Sabbath with Sunday.

e). The incident should be seen in the context of the "Jewishness" (see the answer to Question 26) of the early church. A change of day of worship would have caused an uproar as bad as, or worse than, the circumcision issue. But silence prevails and the early Christians are still considered a sect of the Jewish religion (Acts 24:5, c.f. 15:5; 5:17).

f). Concerning the phrase "breaking of bread," we need to remember that this may mean simply "to eat" (Luke 24:30; Matthew 14:19). This would be sensible, as they were planning to travel when the sun came up and Paul, at least, would be walking a long way (Acts 20:13). Thus, it could be considered as simply a reference to breakfast. We know that communion was not exclusively a first day practice and could be celebrated on any day when the believers were gathered together (1 Corinthians 11:18, 20, 33, 34). No mention is made in this passage about grape juice or wine. If Luke had been using Roman time then the breaking of bread occurred on Monday morning, since it was done after midnight (Acts 20:7, 11).

In view of the above we conclude that it is not appropriate to use Acts 20:7 to support the claim that Sunday was observed by the early church.

In summary, the records do not support the claim that Christians gathered on Sunday, the first day of the week, for worship. Neither do they support the claim that Sunday was called "the Lord's day."

Question 29: *It is claimed by some that the seventh-day Sabbath is not important because, of the 60 times the word "Sabbath" is*

found in the New Testament, it is used 50 times before the establishment of the new covenant, and of the remaining 10 times, none support its ongoing observance. Is this true?

Answer: The word “Sabbath” is used 50 times in the Gospels Matthew through John and 10 times in Acts through to Revelation, giving a total of 60 times for the entire New Testament.¹⁵⁴ But the above question neglects the fact that the new covenant was not ratified at the last verse of the four Gospel accounts, *but at the death of Christ* (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:13-26). Thus a significant part of each Gospel records events that occurred after the ratification of the new covenant. These were the events to do with Christ’s burial, resurrection and post-resurrection appearances. When we take into account that the new covenant was established at Christ’s death we can determine that “Sabbath” is used 43 times before Christ’s decease, and 17 times after. Thus “Sabbath” actually occurs in the New Testament 43 times before the ratification of the new covenant and 17 times after, and not 50 times before and 10 times after as claimed in the above question.

As mentioned in the answers to Questions 25 and 27, if Jesus were going to abolish or change the seventh-day Sabbath as part of the new covenant, which was ratified by His blood at Calvary, He would need to have done it before His death. Why? Because we cannot add new conditions to a covenant or contract once it has been ratified or signed. “To give a human example, brethren: no one annuls even a man’s will, or adds to it, once it has been ratified” (Galatians 3:15, RSV). So the whole argument that the seventh-day Sabbath is not important because of “lack of evidence” in passages mentioning it after the new covenant’s ratification is meaningless. The seventh-day Sabbath is one of God’s moral commandments and as such has always been included with the new covenant and its promise that the divine law can be written upon the human heart rather than stone tables (Hebrews 8:7-13; 2 Corinthians 3:3. Please also see the answer to Question 20). Thus, if a change has been made in the day of worship it needs to be witnessed to by passages dealing with the Sabbath before the ratification of the new covenant. The facts of the matter are that, firstly, no change in the day of worship is mentioned

either before or after the cross and, secondly, the authority of the seventh-day Sabbath is proclaimed by New Testament passages both preceding and following the crucifixion account.

New Testament passages mentioning the term “Sabbath” before the cross include many that reveal Christ’s example of seventh-day Sabbath-keeping. In addition, they demonstrate how Christ freed the Sabbath from man-made tradition and exalted it. They show Christ connecting His ministry with the Sabbath as part of the evidence that He was the long-awaited Deliverer and Restorer (please see the answer to Question 24).

What about the New Testament passages that mention the word “Sabbath” after the cross? Here is a list of them:

In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre (Matthew 28:1).

And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath (Mark 15:42).

And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him (Mark 16:1).

And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on (Luke 23:54).

And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment (Luke 23:56).

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away (John 19:31).

Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey (Acts 1:12).

But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down (Acts 13:14).

For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him (Acts 13:27).

And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath (Acts 13:42).

And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God (Acts 13:44).

For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day (Acts 15:21).

And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither (Acts 16:13).

And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures (Acts 17:2).

And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks (Acts 18:4).

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 (Colossians 2:16).

In these 16 verses the word “Sabbath” is mentioned 17 times (twice in John 19:31). These passages reveal that the close companions of Jesus recognized no change in the day of worship on account of His death. These disciples continued to keep the seventh day holy.¹⁵⁵ After Christ’s death the scriptures testify that the seventh day was still the Sabbath “according to the commandment” (Luke 23:56). Acts 13:42 and 13:44 recount how Christian missionaries witnessed on the Sabbath to both Jews and non-Jews. The Gentiles came back the next Sabbath to hear more of the wonderful news and there is no mention of a meeting on the first day of the week, which would have been natural if such a day were recognized. After all, why would Paul and Barnabas have waited until the following Sabbath if, after the initial Sabbath meeting, they could have said to the eager crowds, “Just come back tomorrow because the first day of the week is now the new day for worship”? Acts 16:13, 17:2 and 18:4 recount how Paul and his companions went to places of worship on the seventh-day Sabbath and used the opportunity to share the good news about Jesus. Colossians 2:16 instructs believers to “let no man... judge you” regarding ceremonial sabbaths and is not actually referring to the seventh-day Sabbath (for a discussion of Colossians 2:11-17 and its relation to the seventh-day Sabbath please see the answer to Question 19).

Question 29 neglects to mention the other places in the New Testament that are after the cross and that strongly support the continued authority of the seventh-day Sabbath, even though they don’t mention the word “Sabbath” directly (please see the answer to Question 26).

In summary, neither the death of Christ on the cross, nor His resurrection on Sunday changed or abolished the seventh-day Sabbath. The seventh-day Sabbath was still the Sabbath “according to the commandment” after Christ’s death, Luke 23:56. There are several New Testament passages that support the ongoing authority

and validity of the seventh-day Sabbath after the death of Christ (for a discussion of these please see the answer to Question 26).

Question 30: *Does the Bible command Gentiles or the New Testament church to keep any particular day as the Sabbath, or to respect one day as being more holy than another?*

Answer: This question is really the same as Question 8, which asks, “Is seventh-day Sabbath observance for Israel only?” So we will refer readers to Question 8’s answer rather than repeat the material here. Please also see the answer to Question 9.

Question 31: *Why should we respect the seventh-day Sabbath when observance of days is rebuked by Paul in Galatians chapter 4?*

Answer: Galatians 4:9-11 says:

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

The Galatians had a big problem, but it was not to do with honoring the seventh-day Sabbath. They were trying to be saved by their own works. Paul strongly rebukes the Galatians warning them that they were following “another gospel: which is not another” (Galatians 1:6, 7). This false “gospel” was based on the vain idea that it was possible to gain saving merit through “the works of the law” (Galatians 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10). Therefore, when Paul accused them of observing “days, and months, and times, and years” he did so because they were honoring these days with the motive of earning favor with God. False systems founded on the idea of being saved by works are “weak and beggarly elements” that lead to bondage (Galatians 4:9. Please also see the answer to Question 14).

Paul's loving rebuke to the Galatians, pointing out that they observe days, and months, and times, and years, is not aimed at stopping them from correctly observing the Sabbath. In context, Paul is essentially saying, "See, you are trying to be saved by the works of the law because you are attempting to gain favor with God by observing prescribed days, months, times and years." It is pointing out to the Galatians that their fascination with days, months, times and years is irrefutable evidence that they are following a false gospel based on works. Paul wants the Galatians to look at their system of observing various days and times and realize that it reveals their attempt to gain righteousness by works. As mentioned previously, there is a big difference between doing what God has requested as an act of faith and trying to do what He has commanded as an attempt to earn salvation (please see the answer to Question 14). The seventh-day Sabbath is to be kept as a sign that we are depending upon God to save us rather than upon our own works.¹⁵⁶ Instead of being legalistic, true Sabbath-keeping will reveal our faith. It will testify to our belief that God alone can sanctify us (Exodus 31:13 and Ezekiel 20:12, 20) [9]. Because God has put His love into our hearts we will happily obey His Sabbath commandment and count it a delight (John 14:15, 21-23; 15:10; Romans 5:5; 1 John 4:10 - 5:5; 2:3-6; Isaiah 58:13, 14).

Question 32: *Why should we respect the seventh-day Sabbath when it is not named among the necessary requirements of the gospel in Acts chapter 15?*

Answer: Acts chapter 15 is about a controversy over whether or not the Gentiles "must be circumcised, and keep the law" (vs. 24) in order to be saved. This issue is referred to by some as "the Judaizing controversy" and the point of dispute is whether or not we are saved (at least partly) by our own works. The controversy is addressed again in Paul's letters to churches that were threatened by the Jewish "circumcision" party and especially in his epistle to the Galatians. In the letter to the Galatians Paul vigorously repudiates the idea that our own works earn saving merit before God (e.g. Galatians 2:16). Peter also spoke against the idea of being saved by works in Acts 15:10, 11 when he said, "why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the

neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.”

The ruling of the Christian council in Acts chapter 15 was that the Gentiles should not be burdened by the rite of circumcision which had come to represent entry into the false Jewish system of works. They did however mention some specific areas that needed attention, namely, that the Gentiles “abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication” (Acts 15:29). The first stipulation was probably designed to help avoid unnecessary antagonism with Jewish believers and those who would stumble by seeing other believers partake of foods offered to idols (c.f. Romans 14:13-21; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; 10:23-33). The second two requirements may also have been designed to avoid hurting the feelings of Jewish believers, but would also have aided in the preservation of good health. In the health laws recorded in the Old Testament God forbade His people to eat blood, or the flesh of animals with the blood still in it (Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 3:17; 7:26, 27; 17:11-14; 1 Samuel 14:32-34). Strangling, in contrast to the practice of cutting the throat, would not drain the blood out of the animal before consumption. Seeing the Gentiles obviously had the same kind of bodies and physiology as the Jews, they would also benefit from these scriptural health practices. The last of the four rules emphasized by the Jewish council was a moral one that was especially relevant amongst the Gentiles where lasciviousness had been promoted for ages as a part of religion.

As readers will perceive, the Jerusalem council described in the 15th chapter of Acts was not concerned with the Sabbath issue. In the same way it was not concerned with the manner of baptism, the Lord’s supper, the validity of Christ’s resurrection [34], the doctrine of the second coming [6, 15], the judgement [33], Christ’s intercessory ministry [25], the baptism of the Holy Spirit [36] and all manner of other vital gospel truths. We must not conclude that all these things are excluded from the gospel simply because they are not mentioned in this chapter of Acts. Likewise, the Sabbath is not excluded from the gospel because of its absence from the list of “necessary things” enjoined upon the Gentile believers by the leaders

at Jerusalem following their deliberations over the matter of circumcision and the use of the law as a supposed means of salvation.

Question 33: *Why should we respect the seventh-day Sabbath when real and eternal rest is found in Christ and not in some mere “holy day?”*

Answer: Yes, real and eternal rest is found only in Jesus Christ. But why should this stop anyone from observing the day that celebrates this wonderful rest that is found in Christ alone?

The experience of ending our own efforts to earn God’s favor and of entering by faith into Christ’s rest is beautifully illustrated in true Sabbath-keeping. In this experience we cease from our weekly secular work in order to keep, as an act of faith, the seventh-day Sabbath.

To quote from Hebrews chapter 4, the one who has entered Christ’s rest “has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.” For more detail on this subject please see the section discussing Hebrews 4:9 in the answer to Question 6 (part 4, point “e”).

Chapter Eight:

The First Day of the Week Versus the Seventh



Question 34: *Does not rest and worship on Sunday serve the same purpose as on the Sabbath?*

Answer: No it doesn't because:

1. Faith is shown by doing what God has asked us to do, not by following custom or doing what is convenient for us (please see the answer to Question 13 for a proper discussion of this point).

2. God is particular about the way we worship and serve Him. He has asked us to keep the seventh day holy. On the subject of God being particular, some relevant passages are, Genesis 3:1-8; 4:3-5 (c.f. Hebrews 11:4); Leviticus 23:26-30; Exodus 16:4-30; 1 Samuel 15:1-23; 2 Samuel 6:1-7 (c.f. Numbers 4:15, 19, 20); 1 Kings 13:1-26. Please also see the answer to Question 13.

3. Observance of the first day of the week cannot commemorate and honor the Creator because it was the seventh day that God set aside as a memorial of His creative work. For a more detailed

discussion of this matter please see the answer to Question 8, part 1 and Question 13, part 1, point “b.”

4. Observance of the first day of the week cannot commemorate and honor God as our Redeemer [11] because it was the seventh day that God set aside as a memorial of redemption (please see the answer to Question 9).

5. Observance of the first day of the week cannot honor God as our Sanctifier [9] because it was the seventh day that God set aside as a sign that He is the One who sanctifies us. For a more detailed discussion of this area please see the answer to Question 8, part 1, point “c.”

6. Honoring Sunday is really paying tribute to tradition and the organization that altered the day of worship, especially if one also knows about the claims of the Bible Sabbath. On the subject of following tradition rather than the commandments of God, Jesus said “Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” “But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:3, 9). Please also read the chapter “Issues of Allegiance.”

Question 35: *Does Sunday have pre-eminence over the seventh-day Sabbath because the Lord completed His redemptive work and His victory over death, Hell, and the grave on the first day of the week?*

Answer: Jesus rose again from the dead on a Sunday morning, modern time. There can be no question about this as the Bible’s account of Christ’s death and resurrection is too clear for any other conclusion to be made.¹⁵⁷ For the same reason we can be certain that Jesus died on a Friday afternoon and rested in the grave Friday night through until Sunday morning. However, the Bible makes no reference to the events of the resurrection day resulting in Sunday becoming the new day of worship or of this day having pre-eminence over the seventh-day Sabbath.

The fact that a great event took place on a certain day of the week is not a mandate for this day to be held up as the new weekly Sabbath day. This does not mean that we are not to commemorate Christ's resurrection. The Biblical ordinance especially celebrating our Lord's resurrection is baptism (Romans 6: 3-11; Colossians 2:12). Romans 6:3-11 says:

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?

4 Therefore *we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.

10 For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In baptism by immersion, the candidate holds their breath as they are lowered under the water, which is illustrative of death and burial. Then they breathe again as they rise from the water, symbolizing resurrection to a new life and hope in Christ.

Please also see the answer to Question 37.

Question 36: *Does Sunday have pre-eminence because Christ's post-resurrection appearances were on the first day of the week?*

Answer: This matter is covered in the answer to Question 28 and therefore, rather than repeat material unnecessarily, readers are referred there for comment. Apart from the manifestations of Christ that occurred on the day of His resurrection, only the appearance to help Thomas, as recorded in John 20:26-29 can be said, with certainty, to have occurred on the first day of the week. His encounter with the seven disciples that went fishing (John 21:1-22), His appearance to James (1 Corinthians 15:7), the visit with the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-20) and His manifestation to the crowd of 500 (1 Corinthians 15:6) occurred on unspecified days. His appearance to the disciples on the day of His ascension (Acts 1:4-9), if it occurred on the 40th day after His resurrection (Acts 1:3, inclusive reckoning used), would have been on a Thursday.

Question 37: *Does Sunday have pre-eminence over the Sabbath because the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was on the first day of the week?*

Answer: The outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurred on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1) [36]. The Feast of Pentecost (Greek for “fifty days”)¹⁵⁸ was also called the Feast of Weeks,¹⁵⁹ or of First Fruits,¹⁶⁰ or of Harvest.¹⁶¹ The date of this feast was on the 50th day, inclusive, or seven weeks from the day of the barley wave sheaf ceremony which took place on the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (which was the 16th day of the first month).

According to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Passover was on the sixth day of the week in the year of our Lord’s death and resurrection.¹⁶² If Passover started the night of Jesus’ betrayal at Thursday sunset (sixth day of the week, Jewish time) then the second day of Unleavened Bread was resurrection Sunday and likewise Pentecost was on a Sunday. On both the second day of Unleavened Bread and on Pentecost an offering of first fruits was presented to the Lord. These were the first fruits of the barley and wheat harvests respectively. First fruits were dedicated to the Lord at the beginning of a harvest *in acknowledgement that the whole crop belonged to God*. There is a deep and beautiful symbolism here. Jesus and many “bodies of the saints which slept” (Matthew 27:52) arose as a

fulfillment of the first fruits presented at the wave sheaf ceremony (1 Corinthians 15:20-23). They were the first fruits of the millions to be resurrected at the final harvest (Revelation 14:14-16). Likewise, on the day of Pentecost the people that repented and were baptized represented the first fruits of the great harvest of souls to be gathered in during the Christian age (Acts 2:41). In both cases there was an offering at the beginning of an era in acknowledgement that the whole was sacred to God and a result of His mighty power. In view of this wonderful symbolism it is most appropriate for both the day of Jesus' resurrection and the day of Pentecost to be on the first day of the week. *This is because the beginning of the week was the day when material offerings were made to God in order to confess that the whole belonged to Him* (please see the answer to Question 28, part 3).

In light of the above, we believe that Pentecost was on the first day of the week because this was the most appropriate day to beautifully fit in with the symbolism of the first fruit ceremonies. However, we cannot agree that Sunday has pre-eminence as a day of worship because the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurred on that day. As stated previously in the answer to Question 35, the fact that some great event took place on a certain day of the week is not a mandate for that day to be made into the new weekly Sabbath day. What really counts are the specific, clear and unmodified directions from God concerning which day of the week He wants us to observe as the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Deuteronomy 5:12-15).

As an addendum to this answer we had better mention the old "problem" that concerns the question of whether Passover (14th Nisan) was on the sixth or on the seventh day of the week in the year of our Lord's death. As mentioned previously, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke suggest that Passover was on the sixth day of the week. John, however, implies that it was on the seventh day.¹⁶³ Why the discrepancy? There are a few possibilities that have been put forward. The one that seems most reasonable to us is that there were two factions within Judaism, with one maintaining that the 14th of Nisan was on the sixth day that year, and the other teaching that it was on the seventh day. Jesus and His disciples almost certainly kept the Passover meal at the regular time, namely, sunset Thursday,

while the references in John are likely referring to another party within the Jewish fold who maintained a different calendar reckoning. But this is not something vital to our salvation. All that is needed for a person to be saved is made as plain as day by the scriptures and such details as apparent contradictions for dates of the Passover should not trouble the humble, believing soul. Let us remember that difficulties in the Bible relating to historical details have a habit of becoming clear when further scientific or archeological evidence comes to light.

Question 38: *Should we observe Sunday because this was the day when the first gospel sermon after Christ's ascension was preached and when the first conversions took place?*

Answer: This is really another way of presenting Question 37. The first Gospel sermon and the first conversions took place when they did because that was the day when the Holy Spirit was first poured out upon the church. Therefore this question is not really adding anything to the debate one way or another. Readers are referred to the answer to Question 37 for further comment on the issues involved.

Question 39: *Should we observe Sunday rather than the Sabbath because God honored the first day of the week by giving the Ten Commandments on that day?*

Answer: To our knowledge the day of the week when the Ten Commandments were given upon Mt. Sinai is unknown. The record simply says that the Israelites came to the wilderness of Sinai "in the third month" (Exodus 19:1). Later it says, "And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared [set] up" (Exodus 40:17). It was between these dates that the moral law was given, almost certainly on the third day after their initial arrival (Exodus 19:2-16). But we know of no reference in scripture concerning the actual day of the week when this law was delivered.

Question 40: *Does Sunday have pre-eminence over the Sabbath because God honored the first day of the week by giving the book of Revelation on that day?*

Answer: There is no Biblical evidence that the book of Revelation was given on Sunday. The record simply states, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day” (Revelation 1:10). The identity of “the Lord’s day” is discussed in the answer to Question 28 and readers are referred there for further comment.

Question 41: *Did not the “church fathers” denounce the seventh-day Sabbath and reverence Sunday, holding this day up as being the true Christian Sabbath?*

Answer: Yes, quotations from the “church fathers” can be given that support Sunday rather than the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath. Though the church fathers are a very helpful source of church history (and this book uses them for such), we must not rely upon them *as a source of doctrinal truth*. In the matter of defining truth their testimony is of no weight beside that of the Bible. The reliability of the scriptures as the source of truth, rather than tradition, “history,” “the sayings of the wise” or so-called science is clearly evident to all who have sincerely examined and tested the matter.

Many readers may not be aware of how historical accounts given by church fathers support the seventh-day Sabbath. In fact, the church fathers’ testimony is that the seventh-day Sabbath was widely recognized in the early church. For example, consider the words of the 5th century Byzantine historian Socrates Scholasticus:

For although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this.¹⁶⁴

Also the witness of Hermias Sozoman is significant:

The people of Constantinople, and almost everywhere, assemble together on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week, which custom is never observed at Rome or at Alexandria.¹⁶⁵

Chapter Nine:

Issues of Allegiance



Question 42: *First Timothy 5:8 says that if we do not provide for our own family we are “worse than an infidel.” But if we start observing the seventh-day Sabbath many of us will lose our jobs. How can God want us to keep the Sabbath and yet forfeit our livelihoods?*

Answer: Obedience to God has a cost attached to it. It may cost us our reputation. It may cost us our friends or family. It may cost us our job and our comfortable lifestyle. It may cost us our life. Jesus has plainly warned us of this:

And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved (Matthew 24:21, 22).

Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold,

your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets (Luke 6:22, 23).

And He said to them all, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels (Luke 9:23-26).

And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life (Mark 10:29, 30).

What are we willing to sacrifice for Christ? Let us contemplate what *He* has sacrificed in order to save us from misery and eternal ruin? How much has He suffered for us? Are we willing to trust His promise to look after us and supply our needs if we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness (Matthew 6:24-34; Luke 12:22-34)?

1 Timothy 5:8 does not mean that we are to sacrifice principle and do anything necessary, including dishonest and corrupt dealings, in order to be certain of an income. A drug-dealing criminal or a professional thief could say, "If I start observing God's commandments I will lose my job. How can God want me to keep His commandments and yet forfeit my livelihood?" We would reply by saying, "God cannot bless or save you while, knowing full well the error of your ways, you continue to do wrong. But He will have mercy and compassion upon you if you truly repent and turn to Him (Ezekiel chapter 18)." Let us not use 1 Timothy 5:8 to justify sin. This verse

in Paul's first letter to Timothy means that we are to have compassion and concern for our family and relatives and make sure that we do not neglect their welfare. We must not let them go about begging, in distress and poverty, while we have means to assist them.

Question 43: *Why and how has the day of worship been changed from the seventh-day Sabbath to Sunday?*

Answer: To the candid student of scripture investigating the matter, it becomes increasingly obvious that the seventh day of the week is the true Biblical Sabbath. So the question naturally arises, why is there a discrepancy between what the Bible teaches and what most Christians practice today?

That there is a discrepancy should not be too surprising because, upon reflection, it becomes evident that there are quite a few clear Biblical teachings that are not believed in or practiced by large numbers of professed Christians today. But to return to the matter of the Sabbath, does the Bible have anything to say about the change from Sabbath to Sunday? Yes it does. However, it does not of course provide a complete historical outline of what took place. Other books¹⁶⁶ have been written giving plenty of historical details, so here we will confine ourselves to a discussion of relevant Bible texts along with a few necessary historical comments and quotations.

One passage we would like to examine is Acts 18:1, 2 which says, "After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (*because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:*) and came unto them." To the uninformed, Christians appeared to be just another Jewish sect. Therefore they suffered under the anti-Jewish attitudes and laws of the Roman Empire. Notice how Acts 18:2 describes the converted Christian Jews Priscilla and Aquila as being expelled from Rome along with non-Christian Jews. This Bible passage illustrates how the early Christian church, in the regions controlled by the Roman Empire, experienced external pressure to differentiate itself from the persecuted Jewish faith. This pressure would naturally have been greatest at Rome.

There must also have been a measure of *internal* pressure within the Christian church to clearly separate itself from the Jewish religion. This was because “Christian” Jews were teaching the heresy that Jewish traditional and ceremonial regulations were essential for salvation. These false teachers caused a major disturbance in the early church, which is referred to as the Judaizing controversy.¹⁶⁷

In the year 135 AD the Roman emperor Hadrian very severely suppressed a Jewish revolt. He completely destroyed Jerusalem, founded a new city upon the ruins, and gave it the name Aelia.¹⁶⁸ He forbade any Jews to live in Aelia and therefore the Christian church there became composed solely of Gentiles.¹⁶⁹ Pressure to be seen as separate from the Jews was obviously strong at this time. Indeed, it was during the second century AD that Christian literature characterized by anti-Jewish messages, and aimed at differentiating between the two faiths, developed within the church.¹⁷⁰ Those who sincerely observed and revered the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath were often branded with the false label of “Judaizers.” By AD 365 anti-Jewish attitudes had grown so strong that the council of Laodicea¹⁷¹ (a convention dominated by anti-Sabbatarians) passed a decree that “Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord’s Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ.”¹⁷²

Apart from the pressure to appear distinct from the Jews, there was also a natural attraction to Sunday as a day already revered by pagan Romans. Sunday lent itself to being symbolically connected with Christ the “Sun of righteousness”¹⁷³ and was also, of course, already associated with the day of Christ’s resurrection. Thus Sunday presented an “ideal” alternative to the Sabbath for those who professed the Christian faith yet did not want to be associated with anything Jewish.

History indicates that Sunday was patterned only gradually after the Jewish Sabbath, which is in itself evidence that there was no divine command for a change in the day of worship. Certain church centers favored the move away from the seventh day far more than others did.¹⁷⁴ The fact that the change was gradual supports the idea that Sunday observance originated as a result of ecclesiastical

authority. The most powerful church authority was at Rome, especially after the destruction and reorganization of Jerusalem as a non-Jewish city in AD 135. It is noteworthy that the Roman Catholic Church freely admits that ecclesiastical authority was responsible for the change:

On page 147 of *The Faith of Millions*¹⁷⁵ John O'Brien, a Roman Catholic professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame,¹⁷⁶ says the following:

“Let me address myself in a friendly spirit to my dear Protestant reader: You believe that the Bible alone is a safe guide in religious matters. You also believe that one of the fundamental duties enjoined upon you by your Christian faith is that of Sunday observance. But where does the Bible speak of such an obligation? I have read the Bible from the first verse of Genesis to the last verse of Revelations, and have found no reference to the duty of sanctifying the Sunday. The day mentioned in the Bible is not the Sunday, the first day of the week, but the Saturday, [actually sunset Fri. to sunset Sat., see the answer to Question 1] the last day of the week. It was the Apostolic Church which, acting by virtue of that authority conferred upon her by Christ, changed the observance to the Sunday... In observing the Sunday as you do, is it not apparent that you are really acknowledging the insufficiency of the Bible alone as a rule of faith and religious conduct....”

On page 89 of *The Catechism Simply Explained* by Canon Cafferata¹⁷⁷ it has the following about the Fourth (which they call the third) Commandment:

192. What is the third Commandment?

The third Commandment is, “Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day.”

193. What are we commanded by the third Commandment?

By the third Commandment we are commanded to keep Sunday holy.

“The Jews’ Sabbath Day was Saturday; we Christians keep Sunday holy. The Church, by the power our Lord gave her, changed the observance of Saturday to Sunday.

“A word about Sunday. God said, ‘Remember that thou keep holy the *Sabbath Day*.’ The Sabbath was Saturday, not Sunday; why, then, do we keep Sunday holy instead of Saturday? The Church altered the observance of the Sabbath to the observance of Sunday... Protestants who say that they go by the Bible and Bible only, and that they do not believe anything that is not in the Bible, must be rather puzzled by the keeping of Sunday when God distinctly said, ‘Keep holy the *Sabbath Day*.’ The word Sunday does not come anywhere in the Bible, so, without knowing it, they are obeying the authority of the Catholic Church.”¹⁷⁸

Does the Bible anywhere agree with this assertion of Roman Catholic Church leaders that their organization was responsible for the change in the day of worship? Stunning as it sounds, the Old Testament actually has a prophecy written hundreds of years before the birth of Christ that predicts the coming of a power that would do such a thing as is claimed by the Roman Catholic Church. This is the prophecy of Daniel chapter 7. Daniel 7 gives much information about coming world empires or powers from the time of Daniel down to the second coming of Christ. Of particular interest is Daniel 7:25 which says:

And he [a power symbolized in this chapter by a horn with eyes and a mouth growing out of a fierce monster] shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, *and think to change times and laws*: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

Notice how the power being described in this verse intends to “change times and laws.” To better understand what this means we need to appreciate that Daniel 7:25 is actually written in a poetic

style. There are four parts to it arranged in an A B A' B' pattern. This can be illustrated as follows:

A “And he shall speak great words against the most High,

B and shall wear out the saints of the most High,

A' and think to change times and laws:

B' and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”

The first and third stanzas (A and A') relate to the same subject. Likewise the second and fourth stanzas (B and B') are poetically linked together. Understanding this poetic structure prevents us from missing the vital point that the first stanza, “And he shall speak great words against the most High” is referring to the same matter as the third stanza, “and think to change times and laws.” What this means is that the intended changing of times and laws *relates to the laws of the Most High*. The most significant, specific, written expression of God's laws is the Ten Commandments. All of God's other laws relate, in some way, to these ten all-encompassing precepts. No better conclusion can be made from this information than the fact that the horn with eyes and a mouth¹⁷⁹ of Daniel chapter 7 will somehow attempt to tamper with the Ten Commandments.

The expression “times and laws” is best understood as a case of hendiadys. This is a fancy grammatical term used to designate two words connected by “and” that explain a single idea. What this means is that it is in regard to “laws” that this horn with eyes and a mouth will attempt change “times.”¹⁸⁰ That is, a law of the Most High concerning time will be its object of attack. Since the law of the Most High in Daniel 7:25 is undoubtedly a reference to the Ten Commandments, the horn with eyes and a mouth must be warring against the one precept among the Ten Commandments that deals with time, namely, the Sabbath commandment. Thus, Daniel 7:25 points unmistakably to a power that will somehow “tamper” with the Fourth Commandment.

Let us look at one more grammatical fact of interest. The Aramaic word for “times” in Daniel 7:25 is *zimmīn*, the plural form of *zeman*. When used in the singular this word refers to a point in time. But in the plural it means repeated points of time¹⁸¹ which is a very good way of referring to the weekly cycle of God’s Sabbath day as given in the Fourth Commandment.

So, centuries before the actual event, Daniel was given a prophecy about a power that would attempt to change the Sabbath commandment. But does Daniel chapter 7 identify which specific power or institution would try to do this? Is it the Roman Catholic Church, as its writers have claimed? To properly answer this question we need to step back and get a broader view of the book of Daniel, and of chapter 7 in particular.

The book of Daniel has four parallel prophetic disclosures or messages, each beginning at the time of Daniel and progressing through to the second coming of Christ. Each one builds upon the previous ones. These four prophetic messages are:

(1) Chapter 2. (2) Chapter 7. (3) Chapters 8 and 9. (4) Chapters 10 to 12.

Here we will only be commenting on chapters 2 and 7.

Daniel chapter 2 focuses on a vision about a great statue composed of four main parts. Each of these four parts is made of a certain type of metal and represents a different empire or kingdom. The vision is presenting a sequence of four kingdoms, namely, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. How do we know that these four empires are the correct ones? The first three are mentioned in the book of Daniel itself¹⁸² and it is clear from history¹⁸³ that Rome is the power that took over from Greece.¹⁸⁴ Rome, the iron kingdom, extends in the prophecy to the second coming of Christ which is symbolized by the stone that smashes the idol and then becomes a great mountain.¹⁸⁵ Notice however that although Rome continues until the second coming, its form changes. It becomes mingled with clay.

Let us now discuss Daniel chapter 7. This chapter presents a vision of four beasts that come up from the sea. The four beasts of

the vision represent the same empires portrayed in Daniel chapter 2. Again Rome extends to the end and has a change in its form. It changes from the fourth beast (monster) to the horn with eyes and a mouth (Daniel 7:8). It is important to emphasize the parallels between chapters 7 and 2 of Daniel. Listing the way both chapters describe the same sequence of empires is helpful in doing this:

(1). *Babylon*: head of gold in chapter 2, lion in chapter 7.

(2). *Medo-Persia*: chest of silver in chapter 2, leopard in chapter 7.

(3). *Greece*: waist and thighs of bronze in chapter 2, bear in chapter 7.

(4). *Rome, Phase 1*: legs of iron in chapter 2, monster in chapter 7.

(5). *Rome, Phase 2*: feet of iron and clay in chapter 2, horn with eyes and a mouth in chapter 7.

(6). *Second coming of Christ*: stone that becomes a mountain in chapter 2, described by the angel in chapter 7.

Now comes the question, what power is represented by the horn with eyes and a mouth that comes out of the monster? This is the power portrayed in Daniel 7:25 as attempting to change the Sabbath commandment.

Let us list the identifying marks of the horn with eyes and a mouth as they appear in Daniel chapter 7. In showing how the Bible reveals the identity of the power responsible for the change in the day of worship, we do not wish to judge the sincerity of the people involved in it. It is the system that is being pointed out as evil and against God, not sincere individuals who are unaware of these things.

Here are the identifying characteristics:

- 1). It grows out of the fourth beast (Rome). Daniel 7:7, 8.
- 2). It displaces 3 of the 10 horns of the fourth beast (vs. 8).

What does a horn refer to in Daniel? It refers to a kingdom or nation, or to the leader of a kingdom or nation. This can be ascertained by studying the passages in Daniel (and also in the book of Revelation) where horns are explained¹⁸⁶ and bearing in mind that “king” may be used to mean an actual kingdom.¹⁸⁷

The context of Daniel 7 indicates that the horns in this chapter are representative of nations, kingdoms or powerful organizations rather than individuals. We are told that the horn with eyes and a mouth (vs. 8) comes out of the fourth beast (Imperial or Pagan Rome) and continues until “the saints possessed the kingdom” (the second coming of Christ).¹⁸⁸ This obviously is not talking about just one person. The other ten horns also come out of Imperial Rome and three of them are torn out by the horn with eyes and a mouth. The obvious suggestion here is that the Roman Empire’s demise, in some way, involves ten nations and that three of these nations are removed by a new power. Did any such sequence of events happen?

History documents how the Western Roman Empire, centered at Rome, came under attack from many migrating “barbarian” tribes.¹⁸⁹ By 476 AD¹⁹⁰ it had been quite thoroughly divided up amongst the invading forces. These migrating tribes, which took over various territories of the Western Roman Empire, are represented in the prophecy of Daniel 7 by the ten horns on the head of the monster. They eventually formed the nations of modern Europe. It is not necessary to get anxious and dogmatic over exactly which tribes composed the ten horns. In fact, it is probably best to consider the number ten as a round number which fluctuated up or down from time to time according to political and military activities in Europe. However, there were about ten major tribes. A typical list of the most significant ones would be the Alemanni, the Franks, the Burgundians, the Suevi (Suebi),

the Anglo-Saxons, the Visigoths, the Lombards, the Vandals, the Ostrogoths, and the Heruli.¹⁹¹

The Eastern Roman Empire (which became the Byzantine Empire) continued for many centuries after the fall of the Western Empire. It was centered at Constantinople and became ruled by emperors who sought the support of the church leader at Rome in an effort to regain control of the western lands. Also, in the west Clovis, king of the Franks, became a Roman Catholic and began championing the cause of the church leaders at Rome.¹⁹² Through these political alliances the Roman Catholic Church was instrumental in destroying three of the prominent tribes that were opposed to it. In other words, three of the horns were plucked up. For further details on the history of this matter readers are referred to *Appendix One*.

3). The horn with eyes and a mouth comes up after the ten horns are in place and it eventually becomes greater than any of the ten original divisions (horns) that the Western Roman Empire broke up into (vs. 20).

4). It has a mouth speaking “great” (i.e. pompous, boastful) words. (vs. 8, 20, 25).

5). It makes war with the God’s true people and prevails against them (vs. 21, 25).

6). It intends to “change times and laws” (vs. 25). This characteristic was discussed earlier in this answer to Question 43.

7). It has a persecuting reign of 1260 years. The expression “time and times and the dividing of time” (vs. 25) refers to a special period of 1260 years mentioned seven times in the books of Daniel and Revelation.¹⁹³ How do we get 1260 years from “time and times and the dividing of time?” First, by comparing Revelation 12:14 with Revelation 12:6 we can see that this phrase is equivalent to 1260 days.¹⁹⁴ Secondly, we need to apply

the prophetic day-for-a-year principle (see *Appendix Two*) which gives us the 1260 years.

8). It continues right up until the time comes for the saints to possess the kingdom (vs. 21, 22, 24-27).

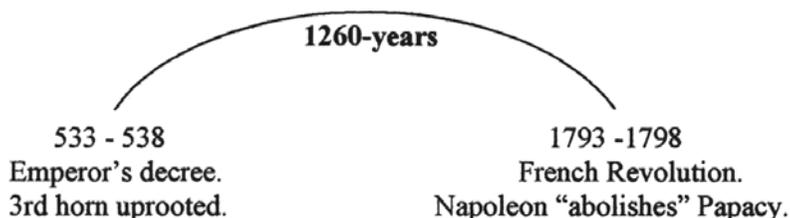
John Wycliffe (c1379),¹⁹⁵ John Knox (1547),¹⁹⁶ William Tyndale (1550),¹⁹⁷ Thomas Cranmer (1582),¹⁹⁸ James 1st, King of England (1600),¹⁹⁹ Sir Isaac Newton (1727),²⁰⁰ Joseph Wolff (1822),²⁰¹ Adam Clarke (1833)²⁰² and many other Bible scholars²⁰³ all correctly²⁰⁴ applied this symbol of the horn with eyes and a mouth to the Papacy or Roman Catholic Church. Concerning points (4) and (5) above and their fulfillment by the Papacy, please see *Appendix Three*.

Regarding point (7) above and the 1260 years, the Papacy began its 1260-year reign in the period 533-538 AD. In 533 a powerful civil power made a landmark decree *in favor* of the Papacy. This consisted of the well-documented decree by the emperor Justinian pronouncing the Roman Bishop to be the “head of all the Holy Churches.”²⁰⁵ In 538 the civil power of Justinian’s empire performed a key military act in support of its decree upholding the Papacy. This was the campaign of Justinian’s general that freed the Bishop at Rome from the control of the Ostrogoths, thus delivering him from many years of control by “barbarian” tribes and enabling him to begin increasing in both civil and religious power.²⁰⁶

The Papacy ended its 1260-year reign in the period 1793 -1798 AD. In 1793 AD a powerful civil power made a landmark decision *against* the Papacy—France cast off the Papacy and made decrees against it during the French Revolution.²⁰⁷ In 1798 AD the civil power of France performed a key military act in support of its decision against the Papacy. This was when Napoleon’s general took captive the Pope, occupied Rome and proclaimed a republic there. The Pope was expelled from the city and died the following year in exile and with no replacement at Rome.²⁰⁸

Please see Figure Two for an illustration of the 1260-year period with the events marking its beginning and end.

Figure Two. The 1260-year Papal Reign of Daniel 7:25



In conclusion, the Bible does support the Roman Catholic Church's claim to be responsible for the change in the day of worship from the Bible Sabbath to Sunday. The change was encouraged by this church's desire to be linked to civil power and by the way the pagan Romans already venerated Sunday. The change was made gradually and was facilitated by a desire to be seen as different from the Jews and possibly also from the Christian judaizing party.

Question 44: *Is there a relationship between the seventh-day Sabbath and the seal of God mentioned in Revelation?*

Answer: The book of Revelation does mention a seal. Here are the relevant texts:

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads (Revelation 7:1-2).

And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree;

but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads (Revelation 9:4).

What is this seal? We should consider it as being symbolic rather than literal because this is the way the book of Revelation should be understood unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.²⁰⁹ The seal on the forehead in Revelation chapter 7 is associated with being singled out for protection from evil. The evil is represented by the four winds.²¹⁰ Revelation 9:4 is also obviously about being set apart for protection by God's seal.

Revelation 7:1-3 is almost certainly an allusion to Ezekiel 9:1-7, which also describes a mark on the forehead indicative of divine protection. But the passage in Ezekiel chapter 9 also tells us why the mark of protection is given. In verse 4 it says, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men *that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.*" This tells us that the protective mark or seal has to do with having a certain type of character. Sighing and crying because of the abominations done by God's chosen people indicates a character that abhors sin and that mourns over God's name being dishonored.

The idea of character being linked to a mark on the forehead comes up again in Revelation 14:1 which says, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads." The Bible teaches that God's name is associated with His character (Exodus 33:17-19, 34:5-7). So if we have God's name upon our foreheads it must mean that His character is reflected in our lives. This is the case with the group described in Revelation 14, whose character is further described in verses 4 and 5. It should be noted that they are redeemed followers of the lamb (vs. 4), so their characters are the result of Christ's atonement. It is interesting too that the forehead is that part of the visible body that is closest to the frontal lobes of the brain where the higher functions of character and personality are centered.

It will be noticed that both the seal of God and the name of God are placed upon the foreheads of the faithful. Are they references to

the same thing? We believe so, since it is the same group, called the “hundred forty and four thousand,” who are portrayed in Revelation 7 as receiving the seal and in Revelation 14 as having the name of God (c.f. Revelation 7:1-4 and 14:1).

As we have mentioned previously in the answers to Questions 8 and 26, the Fourth Commandment is presented in the moral law in terms of a seal. The Sabbath commandment is in the middle of the Ten Commandments, which matches with ancient covenant documents that were also sealed in the middle. A seal needs to contain a name, a title, and a dominion. In the Fourth Commandment the name is “the LORD — Yahweh,” the title is “God the Creator” and the dominion is “the heavens the earth and the sea.” The Sabbath is also described in the Bible as a sign (Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Exodus 31:13) which, in the context of belonging to God, is synonymous with a seal (Romans 4:11). Furthermore, in the context of the Ten Commandments, God told the Israelites to have His words in their hearts and to let them “be as frontlets between” their “eyes” (Deuteronomy 6:8, c.f. 11:18). Thus the Jews were to have the Ten Commandments upon their foreheads which, in context, meant that they were to know them, sincerely want to keep them and, through God’s help, obey them.

God’s commandments are closely related to His character ²¹¹ and those who have God’s name on their foreheads in Revelation chapter 14 are described as “they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (vs. 12).

Putting all this together we can see that those who have the seal of God described in Revelation have, through Jesus, developed Christ-like characters and are obedient to all His commandments, including the Sabbath precept. And inasmuch as the Sabbath is itself described in the Bible as a sign and seal, true Sabbath-keeping must be a notable characteristic of these believers.

That the Sabbath has special significance for those who are sealed and have God’s name on their foreheads is made crystal clear by Revelation 14:6, 7 which says:

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

7 Saying with a loud voice, *Fear God*, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: *and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

As discussed in the answer to Question 26, the words “Fear God, and... worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” are an allusion ²¹² to the Fourth Commandment. This means that these words are directing us to consider the Sabbath commandment (Exodus 20:8-11). Though the evidence for this has been presented before, it is so important that we will mention it again here:

The first indication that Revelation 14:7 is an allusion to the Sabbath command of Exodus 20:8-11 is the large number of words in common (technically called “verbal parallels”). These words are “made,” “heaven,” “earth,” “sea” and “God.”

Secondly, the material in chapters 13 and 14 of Revelation is arranged with a strong structural parallel to the first four of the Ten Commandments. In Revelation a structural parallel is where there is a series of related ideas one after another between Revelation and another Bible passage. Notice how the unholy powers described in chapter 13 counterfeit or rebel against all of the first four of the Ten Commandments: The First Commandment forbids us to have any other gods except the LORD, but the beast from the sea (“sea-beast”) in Revelation 13 is worshipped as another god. The Second Commandment forbids idol or image worship, but in Revelation 13 an image to the sea-beast is worshipped. The Third Commandment warns us against taking the name of the LORD our God in vain, but the sea-beast opens “his mouth in blasphemy against God.” The Fourth Commandment exhorts us to remember the Sabbath day and, as discussed above, describes this commandment in terms of a seal; but the sea-beast enforces a counterfeit seal called “the mark of the beast” (which will be discussed in the answer to Question 46).

A third indication that Revelation 14:7 is a definite allusion to the Fourth Commandment is the strong thematic parallel between Revelation chapters 13 and 14 and the account of the giving of the Ten Commandments as recorded in Exodus chapters 19 and 20. These passages both have a major theme of *loyalty to God being shown by keeping His commandments*. Thus in Exodus it says:

Now therefore, *if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant* [the Ten Commandments ²³], then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine (Exodus 19:5).

And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, *and keep My commandments* (Exodus 20:6 c.f. Exodus 16:26-29).

Please compare this with the theme portrayed in Revelation 13 and 14:

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, *which keep the commandments of God*, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17, which is the last verse of chapter 12 and an introduction to what follows in chapters 13 and 14).

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that *keep the commandments of God*, and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).

Summing this up, we can be sure that Revelation 14:7 is an allusion to the Fourth Commandment, and therefore the seventh-day Sabbath is extremely important in the context of the sealing of God's commandment-keeping people prior to the end-time calamities and crisis portrayed in Revelation. The final battle between good and evil, just prior to Jesus' return, will focus on whom we worship. Although false worship is described many times in Revelation chapters 13 and 14, the word "worship" in reference to the one true God

is mentioned only in Revelation 14:7—the verse that alludes to the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath.

A crisis situation is described in Revelation 13 and 14. We are told that the mark of the beast will be enforced by economic sanctions and a death penalty. We are also warned by God that everyone who receives the mark of the beast will suffer under His justice and “drink of the wine of the wrath of God” unmixed with mercy. All must make their choice. There will be no “sitting on the fence.” We will either worship God and receive the wrath of the beast or worship the beast and receive the wrath of God. Which will we choose? Which *will I choose*? Those who choose God can rely upon the sure promises of His Word: “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” “Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation” (Romans 8:38, 39; Habakkuk 3:17, 18).

Question 45: *If we say that the seventh-day Sabbath should be kept by Christians as a sign of allegiance to God, are we not going against Colossians 2:14-17 which says that it is wrong to judge people in regard to sabbaths?*

Answer: Colossians 2:16 says, “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.” As discussed in some detail in the answer to Question 19, this verse is referring to Jewish ceremonial and traditional regulations and not to the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment. Also, in the answer to Question 20 we mentioned how both Romans chapter 14 and Colossians 2:16 admonish us not to judge others in matters that relate to food, drink or certain days when the moral law is not being transgressed. In answering Question 20 we also discussed how the Bible teaches that we must

not judge others if it involves an innocent personal or ceremonial matter ²¹⁴ or if we are comparing and measuring ourselves with them.²¹⁵ We further mentioned that the Bible also teaches us to rebuke open sin,²¹⁶ to resist teachers of deadly heresy,²¹⁷ and to make a judgement in matters involving open iniquity or destructive heresy.²¹⁸

Thus in emphasizing that the seventh-day Sabbath should be kept by Christians as a sign of allegiance to God, we are not going against Colossians 2:16 because this verse is about avoiding judging others on ceremonial or traditional matters and does not involve the moral law. Also we are not going against Romans chapter 14 or Matthew 7:1, 2 as long as we are not “looking down our noses” ²¹⁹ at non-Sabbath-keepers, or measuring ourselves by them.

Since the seventh-day Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments and of special significance in the end-time struggle between good and evil (please see the answers to Questions 43, 44 and 46), we should be ready to admonish and warn against teachers who denounce it and tell us to forget it. We should also be prepared to lovingly admonish Christians who are sinning by not obeying this commandment. This is a solemn responsibility and cannot be done without special help from Jesus. If it is done in the wrong way, without His love in our hearts, then it will only do further harm. “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1).

Question 46: *Is Sunday-keeping sinful or “the mark of the beast?”*

Answer: This subject is an emotive and controversial one. Therefore, it is all the more essential that we stick strictly to the Protestant principle of “the Bible only” in seeking to define the truth. This we will earnestly seek to do, and if any disagree with our conclusions we will be happy to listen to their opinions giving them due weight in proportion to their faithfulness to scripture.

We will answer Question 46 by dividing it into two parts as follows:

1. What is the mark of the beast?
2. What do we mean by “sinful?”

1. What is the Mark of the Beast?

The mark is something that belongs to “the beast” so, in order to know what the mark of the beast is, we must first know the identity of the beast. Revelation contains descriptions of 5 different “beasts.”²²⁰ Three of these different entities are called “the beast” (Revelation 11:7; 13:2; 17:10-16). However, we can see clearly which beast has the mark when we read Revelation chapter 13 in association with the other texts mentioning the mark. Revelation chapter 13 tells us that the beast that comes up out of the sea (we will call this the “sea-beast”) has an image made to it. This sea-beast is the only beast in Revelation that has such an image. Since “the beast,” his image and the mark are repeatedly associated together (Revelation 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 20:4) it becomes obvious *that the beast with the mark is the one that has the image made to it, namely, the sea-beast of Revelation 13.*

Who or what is this sea-beast of Revelation chapter 13? The identity of this beast should be clearly seen when its characteristics are listed. But before we catalogue these attributes we want to say that, in demonstrating how the Bible reveals the identity of the beast power, we do not want to judge the sincerity of the people involved with it. It is the system that is being pointed out as wrong and against God, not sincere individuals who are unaware of the facts.

Let us now turn to Revelation 13:1-10 where the following identifying characteristics are given:

a). This beast arises out of the sea (Revelation 13:1). Since Revelation 17:15 tells us that water represents “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” we can safely say that the sea-beast

will arise out of a populated area of the Earth rather than some desolate or sparsely inhabited region.

b). The sea-beast has elements of all four of the beasts of Daniel chapter 7 (Revelation 13:1, 2). It has the ten horns of the fourth beast of Daniel 7, the body of the third beast, the feet of the second beast, and a mouth like the first beast. The sea-beast also has seven heads, and if we add up all the heads of the animals described in Daniel chapter 7 they likewise come to a total of seven. In the answer to Question 43 we explained that these four beasts of Daniel 7 represented, in order, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. So this sea-beast in Revelation has characteristics of these four empires.²²¹

c). The dragon gives it “his power, and his seat [throne], and great authority.” (Revelation 13:2). Who or what is the dragon? The identity of the dragon is made easy for us because in Revelation 12:9 it is clearly and unequivocally named as “that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan.” However, notice that Revelation chapter 12 also outlines the powers through which Satan especially works to attack Christ and His people:

i). In Revelation 12:4 the dragon is described as trying to kill the infant Christ as soon as He is born.²²² Through which power was Satan working here? It was Imperial or Pagan Rome acting through King Herod, her appointed leader in Judea (Matthew chapter 2).

ii). In Revelation 12:13-16 we have the dragon’s war against the church (represented by the woman ²²³) during the 1260-year period.²²⁴ Through which power was Satan working during this period? The answer is given in Revelation 13:1-7. The beast that comes out of the sea reigns for the 1260-year period (vs. 5) and during this time makes war with God’s people (vs. 7).

iii). In Revelation 12:17 the dragon is warring against the last part of God’s church just prior to Christ’s return. ²²⁵ Through which power will Satan especially work at this time? The answer is given

in Revelation 13:11-17. It is the beast that comes out of the earth and the associated image to the sea-beast.

Since the dragon (Satan) gives the sea-beast his power and throne and great authority it is obvious that the enemy of God and man is the power and authority behind the sea-beast. However, as noted above, the first power Satan uses in Revelation Chapter 12 to fight against God's cause on Earth is Imperial Rome. The second power used is the sea-beast, which does the persecuting during the 1260 years. ²²⁶ *This means that, as the 1260-year period began, Satan must have given the throne and authority of his Imperial Roman power to the sea-beast. In other words, the sea-beast takes over after Imperial Rome.*

d). The sea-beast receives a fatal wound but rises again, as it were, from the dead (Revelation 13:3, 12). Two things are noteworthy here. First, this power reigns for a time, seemingly dies, then rises again to prominence later. Secondly, it is a counterfeit of Jesus Christ. This can be seen from this counterfeit death and resurrection as well as from the following other characteristics: It has a ministry, like Jesus, of 3 1/2 years (Revelation 13:5). It receives authority from a father figure, the dragon (Revelation 13:2, c.f. John 5:26, 27; 17:2). It is promoted by the land-beast, which performs miracles to authenticate it (Revelation 13:12-14). This contrasts with the Holy Spirit who glorifies Christ and works miracles for Him (John 16:13, 14; Matthew 12:28) [36]. Clearly we have an "unholy trinity" here that is a counterfeit of the true trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The next point (e) discusses two further counterfeits of Christ that this sea-beast has, namely, the claim to forgive sins and the claim to titles of divinity.

e). It blasphemes God. Let us look at what the Bible says about blasphemy. Jesus was falsely accused of committing blasphemy. On one occasion a paralyzed man was brought to Him for healing (Mark 2:1-12). This man not only needed physical healing but also relief from overwhelming guilt. Maybe the guilt had caused his illness. As Jesus compassionately looked upon him, He realized that his

major need was the guilt and therefore addressed this problem first saying, “Son, thy sins be forgiven thee” [7]. The man was relieved, but some of the Jewish leaders who were standing by accused Jesus of committing blasphemy because He was asserting that He had the right to forgive sins. Of course this was a false charge because Jesus, being God, and man’s Savior, has every right to, and wants to forgive people for their sins and restore them to a right relationship with Himself. However, for anyone other than God to claim to be able to forgive sins is blasphemy. Dear reader if you have a problem with sin and guilt please come to God, through Jesus Christ, in prayer asking Him humbly to forgive you and restore you to Himself (Hebrews 7:25; 4:14-16; Matthew 6:9-12; 1 John 1:9). But please do not go to anybody else who claims to provide relief from sin.²²⁷ On another occasion Jesus said, “I and My Father are one” (John 10:30-33). The Jews accused Him of blasphemy saying “Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God.” Once again, it was perfectly correct for Jesus to claim to be God, but the Jews misunderstood Jesus and His mission. For anybody else to claim the titles of God would, of course, be blasphemy.

So, in identifying this sea-beast in Revelation chapter 13, we need to look for a power whose agents use the titles of God for themselves (c.f. 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4) and claim to provide relief from sin. Blasphemy may also include other areas of contempt for God’s truth. In Revelation 13:6 we are told specifically that this power opens its mouth to blaspheme God’s name, His tabernacle (sanctuary or dwelling place), and those who dwell in Heaven.

f). The sea-beast has a period of rule of 42 months (Revelation 13:5). This is a period of 1260 days or 3 1/2 years (in prophetic time a month is 30 days and a year 360 days²²⁸). We need to apply the prophetic day-for-a-year principal here (please see *Appendix Two*). By doing this we can see that this power has a period of rule of 1260 years.

g). It persecutes God’s true people (Revelation 13:7).

h). It is worldwide in its extent (Revelation 13:7).

i). It receives worship (Revelation 13:8). This means it must be, at least partly, a religious power.

j). It has a special mark which is enforced at the end of time (Revelation 13:16, 17).

k). It has a special number (666) which is the number of “his name” and the “number of a man” (Revelation 13:17, 18).²²⁹

As noted previously, the description of the sea-beast in Revelation 13:1, 2 points us directly to Daniel chapter 7.²³⁰ When we compare the identifying characteristics of the sea-beast with those of the horn with eyes and a mouth of Daniel chapter 7 (please see the answer to Question 43) we will realize that they are referring to the same power, the Papacy. Please notice the following similarities between the sea-beast and the horn with eyes and a mouth:

- a). Both follow immediately after Imperial Rome.
- b). Both have a reign of 1260 years.
- c). Both persecute God’s true people.
- d). Both have a mouth speaking great things against God.
- e). Both continue until the time when Christ’s eternal kingdom takes over, at which time they are destroyed by fire (Daniel 7:11, 21, 22, 26, 27; Revelation 19:11-20).
- f). The horn with eyes and a mouth has the “eyes of a man” while the sea-beast has the “number of a man” (Daniel 7:8; Revelation 13:18).
- g). As will be revealed shortly, the sea-beast, like the horn with eyes and a mouth of Daniel 7, undermines the seventh-day Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment.

Now that we know the identity of the beast we are in a much better position to comprehend its mark. So, zeroing in on the mark itself, let us list the things we need to remember in identifying and understanding it:

a). The things in Revelation are to be taken symbolically unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. Revelation 1:1 says, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which... He sent and *signified*... by His angel unto His servant John.” This immediately tells us that we should not be looking for some mark branded or encoded on the literal forehead or hand. We should be asking about the symbolism of this mark and what the rest of the Bible may reveal concerning it.

b). As already mentioned, it is the mark of the sea-beast (Papacy).

c). It will apply to the whole world and effect everyone.²³¹

d). The beast that comes up from the earth (the “land-beast,” called in Revelation “the false prophet”) performs miraculous signs to deceive those who receive it (Revelation 13:14; 19:20).

e). The image to the beast enforces it (Revelation 13:15, 16).

f). The mark is placed on the right hand or on the forehead (Revelation 13:16). This would logically symbolize either unwilling or willing obedience to receiving the mark. Thus, some receive the mark from convenience and get it on the hand; others are an intelligent party to the plan and receive it on the forehead.

g). No one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, or the name of the beast or the number of “his name” (Revelation 13:17).

h). Those who receive this mark receive the wrath of God (Revelation 14:9, 10).

i). It is referred to as “the mark of his [the beast’s] *name*” (Revelation 14:11).

j). It is contrasted with the Father’s name that is written on the foreheads of God’s faithful people (Revelation 13:16-14:1). The Father’s name is equivalent to the seal of God and is associated with a Christ-

like character and a commandment-keeping life-style (Revelation 7:2-4; 14:4, 5, 12, please see the answer to Question 44).

k). Those who receive the mark of the beast are set in contrast to those who keep the commandments of God (Revelation 12:17; 14:1-5, 12, c.f. chapter 13 where God's commandments are repeatedly transgressed and/or counterfeited).

So what exactly is this mark? Since those who receive the mark of the beast are contrasted with those who keep the commandments of God, we should look for something that is a violation or counterfeit of God's commandments. This is supported by Deuteronomy 6:8, which explains that God's commandments should be bound "for a sign upon thine hand" and "as frontlets between thine eyes." If the divine commandments are here described as being upon the hands and foreheads of God's true people, then we can expect a counterfeit commandment, or set of commandments, to be what gets enforced upon the hands and foreheads of the beast's followers. As we have noted before in the answers to Questions 26 and 44, in Revelation 13 the sea-beast is portrayed as counterfeiting or rebelling against the first four of the Ten Commandments. When we read Revelation 13 it is easy to see how the first three of the Ten Commandments are being counterfeited or transgressed. But what about the Fourth Commandment, where is the sea-beast's counterfeit of this precept? We find it in the mark. The fact that the mark of the beast is a counterfeit of the Fourth Commandment is supported by the observation that in Revelation the commandment-keepers *who refuse to worship the beast* are characterized especially by *the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath* (Revelation 12:17; 14:7, 12, please also see the answers to Questions 26 and 44). These commandment-keepers are sealed on the forehead (Revelation 7:3 c.f. 14:1, Ezekiel 9:4) and the Sabbath is described in the Bible as a sign (Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12) or seal.²³² Thus the beast has its mark, a counterfeit of the Sabbath precept, and God has His seal, the seventh-day Sabbath.

But it goes deeper than mere outward compliance with the Fourth Commandment or its counterfeit. As we have mentioned previously, those who are sealed by God have His name written on them. In like manner, those who receive the mark of the beast are receiving

“the mark of his name” (Revelation 14:11). As mentioned in the answer to Question 44, God’s name in the Bible is associated with His character. Those who receive His seal and name are therefore like Him in character. Likewise, we can safely say that those who receive the mark of the beast will have characters like their master. Thus, both the seal of God and the mark of the beast are outward signs of deeper, personal issues, namely, *character and ownership*. Those who belong to God keep His Sabbath and are, on account of Christ, like Him in character. Those who belong to the beast keep its counterfeit of the Sabbath and are like the beast in character.

Let us now consider Sunday. We have established that the mark is the sea-beast’s (Papacy’s) counterfeit of the Fourth Commandment. Is Sunday observance also a counterfeit of the Fourth Commandment, and if so, is it the same thing as the mark? In the answer to Question 43 we noted how the Papacy claims responsibility for the change in the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday and how this claim is supported by the Bible prophecy of Daniel chapter 7. The observance of Sunday has been cited by Roman Catholic authorities as evidence that Protestants are unwittingly obeying the authority of the Papacy. As the Roman Catholic writer Canon Cafferata says, “Protestants who say that they go by the Bible and Bible only, and that they do not believe anything that is not in the Bible, must be rather puzzled by the keeping of Sunday when God distinctly said, ‘Keep holy the *Sabbath Day*.’ The word Sunday does not come anywhere in the Bible, so, without knowing it, they are obeying the authority of the Catholic Church.”²³³ It is a witness to the Papacy’s authority that in the majority of the world’s nations the public recognizes Sunday as “*the*” weekly religious day for rest and worship. In view of the above, we can confidently say that the Papacy’s declaration that people should observe Sunday as a religious holiday is a counterfeit of the Fourth Commandment.

If Sunday observance is a Papal counterfeit of the seventh-day Sabbath, is it also the mark of the beast? It is obvious from what we have discussed so far that Sunday-keeping is closely associated with the mark of the beast. Both the mark of the beast and Sunday observance are a counterfeit of the Sabbath precept and both come from the Papacy. However, it is not quite that simple. Those who

keep Sunday now cannot have the mark yet (January 2003) because the image to the beast that “causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive” the “mark” (Revelation 13:16) has not yet appeared. Also the message of Revelation 14:6-12, enlightening the world regarding the obligation of the Fourth Commandment and warning people against receiving the mark, has not yet been given extensively enough. As we will discuss in more detail shortly, people who conscientiously keep Sunday without knowing that it is a falsehood cannot be held guilty. However, if they are enlightened concerning the issues and yet persist in observing Sunday, while neglecting the seventh-day Sabbath, they will incur guilt. When Sunday-keeping is enforced by the image to the beast, those who have been enlightened regarding the obligations of the true Sabbath, and yet continue to reverence Sunday, will receive the mark the beast.

The fact that when this mark is enforced no one will be able to buy or sell unless they have it (or the name of the beast or the number of “his name,” Revelation 13:17) indicates that some mechanism will be put in place by the authorities to differentiate between those who are Sabbath-keepers and those who have the mark. What this mechanism will be is difficult to say and we must be careful not to speculate (please do not consider the hypothetical suggestion given in the introduction to this book as being definitely what will happen). However, it is clear that those who are faithful in keeping God’s Sabbath will be singled out, and will suffer persecution for their faith. But they need not fear because God will sustain and help them.

We do not have space here to identify the beast from the earth or the image to the sea-beast of Revelation 13. However, because these powers are very much involved with the mark of the beast, their identity and work are discussed in *Appendix Four*.

2. What do we mean by “Sinful?”

Question 46 asks, “Is Sunday-keeping sinful...?”. The clearest definition of sin in the Bible is found in 1 John 3:4: “sin is the transgression of the law.” With this transgression comes guilt,

but only if there has been opportunity to know what is right and wrong.

God's law is based on love (Mark 12:30-31) and since love requires informed choice, sin and guilt only occur when there has been opportunity to know right from wrong. The Bible says:

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin (James 4:17).

Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth (John 9:41).

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father (John 15:22-24).

Guilt is also incurred if a person ought to have realized something was sinful (through previous experience) and yet at the time he committed the wrong it was not perceived. He is then to acknowledge the wrong and confess it as soon as he recognizes it:

Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; *when he knoweth of it*, then he shall be guilty in one of these. And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing (Leviticus 5:4, 5).

We are also held responsible for the amount of light and truth that we have received. The more that we have been given, the greater the responsibility, and the greater the guilt if we neglect it:

And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes...For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more (Luke 12:47, 48).

Furthermore, if we have an opportunity to know the truth, but through sinful neglect or willful refusal receive no light, then we are guilty when we do not live according to the way that we might have done had we heeded the opportunity. The words of Leviticus 5:17 reflect this principle:

And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD; though he wist [knew] it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity.

If a person has had *no* opportunity to know that something is wrong, and yet innocently does it, then he will still suffer harm from his wrong actions even though he has not sinned, for like the law of nature 'as a man sows so shall he reap'. Thus a child, for example, who does not know that illicit drugs are bad for him, and whose parents teach him to use such poisons from an early age, will suffer bodily damage as a result of his habit even though he is innocent. An experience similar to this happened to King Abimelech when he innocently took the wife of Abraham into his court after Sarah deceitfully said that she was Abraham's sister. Infertility came upon all Abimelech's household due to his actions. However, God healed Abimelech's people after Sarah was returned to Abraham unharmed (Genesis 20:1-18). This story also illustrates how God sometimes chooses to intervene to prevent the suffering that would otherwise result from innocent wrongs. The fact that any wrong brings harm, unless God intervenes, helps us to realize God's goodness in making known to us His laws and the importance of teaching them. Truly, obedience is the secret of happiness.

All this knowledge about sin and guilt is depressing unless we mention the good news about Jesus! Through Him we can have both

forgiveness for past transgressions and power to do what is right in the present. In Him we can be truly happy.

Let us now consider the matter of Sunday-keeping. Resting from work on Sunday or attending religious meetings on this day cannot be sinful unless it is associated with knowingly breaking the Sabbath commandment or one of the other commandments (e.g. via idolatry or irreverence). In other words, Sunday-keeping cannot be associated with sin or guilt unless it involves knowingly neglecting a commandment (such as Sabbath observance) or unless we have had an opportunity to be enlightened regarding the true Sabbath and yet have, through neglect or obstinate refusal, chosen to remain in the dark.

Dear reader, if you have studied this book then you are not in the dark anymore regarding the true Sabbath. Therefore we challenge you, with God's help, to be faithful in observing the seventh-day Sabbath. You will never regret it.

Question 47: *Why should we keep the seventh-day Sabbath if we have witnessed genuine miracles that overwhelmingly support Sunday observance?*

Answer: The basic issue here is whether we should put our trust in miracles or in the word of God.

In the Garden of Eden Eve looked upon a miracle: a beautiful snake that was able to talk. She trusted the words of this miraculous creature rather than the words of her Maker. God had said, "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But the serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 2:17; 3:4, 5). Because Eve believed the miracle-working serpent rather than God she ate of the forbidden fruit and thus opened the floodgates of woe upon the human race.

Deuteronomy 13:1-4 says:

1 If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams,
and giveth thee *a sign or a wonder*,

2 *And the sign or the wonder come to pass*, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;

3 Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God *proveth [is testing] you*, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

4 Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear Him, *and keep His commandments*, and obey His voice, and ye shall serve Him, and cleave unto Him.

In Matthew 7:22, 23 Jesus warns:

Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done *many wonderful works*? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye *that work iniquity* [Greek *anomia*, transgression of the law or lawlessness].

When Jesus was tempted by the devil He was miraculously taken up a high mountain and shown “all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.” But Jesus resisted Satan and put His trust in the word of God saying, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10).

We are to “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7) remembering that “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” and that “without faith it is impossible to please Him [God]” (Hebrews 11:1, 6).

When Satan used the serpent in Eden to deceive Eve he laid the foundation of one of his greatest weapons, namely, spiritualism (or spiritism). Satan said to Eve “you will not surely die” (Genesis 3:4) in direct contradiction to God who said that if they ate of this particular tree they would surely die (Genesis 2:17). This first lie of Satan, that despite disobeying God Eve was immortal, forms the basis of modern spiritualism. Spiritualism’s claim is that the dead

can be contacted by the living. Webster's Dictionary defines spiritualism as, "A belief that spirits of the dead communicate with the living...". This false idea is based on the satanic lie that our "souls" or "spirits" are inherently immortal. If, as spiritualism alleges, the soul is immortal and goes into a new and higher existence (c.f. "ye shall be as gods" Genesis 3:5) at death, it is natural to expect to be able to communicate with these departed "souls." "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*" (Isaiah 8:19, 20). If a "dead relative" or "friend" appears to us then, no matter how friendly they may seem, we can be sure that they are not from God. Satan and his devils can impersonate dead people or heavenly angels (1 Samuel 28:7-20; 2 Corinthians 11:14). So if an angel or even someone claiming to be Christ comes and tells us to do something contrary to the Bible then we can be certain that they are an enemy. We should resist them with scripture as Jesus did when He said to the devil, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10, c.f. James 4:7).

To resist the devil's spiritualism it is essential to have a proper understanding of the Bible's teaching about the human soul, death, Hell and the wickedness of necromancy ²³⁴ (trying to contact the dead). **For further details please see *Appendix Five*.**

The books of Revelation and 2 Thessalonians, in describing the times shortly before Christ's second coming, specifically warn of satanic miracles that will deceive:

And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live (Revelation 13:13, 14).

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty (Revelation 16:13, 14).

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved (2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10).

Jesus also personally warned about deceiving miracles before His return:

For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect (Mark 13:22).

Therefore, in answer to Question 47, we should still keep the seventh-day Sabbath even when we have witnessed genuine miracles that overwhelmingly support Sunday observance. Why? Because God's word must be trusted more than miracles, no matter how great they may be.

For further details on Satan's end-time deception please see *Appendix Four*.

Chapter Ten:

The Seventh-day Sabbath in Practice



Question 48: *Does the Fourth Commandment require us to work the first six days in every week in order to keep the Sabbath properly?*

Answer: This issue is covered in the answer to Question 10 so, to avoid unnecessary repetition, readers are referred there.

Question 49: *How should the seventh-day Sabbath be observed?*

Answer: We believe the best way to teach correct Sabbath observance is to simply emphasize four areas:

1. We should make sure that we have a good, strong, saving relationship with Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. Let us pray to Him and read the Gospel accounts about His life, death and resurrection. We should let Him be our Lord and counselor. We need to seek His guidance in everything and trust His promises no matter what.

2. We should guard the edges of the Sabbath. This means being properly ready for the Sabbath's start, and finishing it on a good

note. It is so easy in this busy world to “rush” into the Sabbath or not be sincerely ready for its beginning. Let us remember that the Bible calls the day before the Sabbath “the preparation” day (Matthew 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:31, 42).

3. Let us read, meditate on and do our best to prayerfully follow the main Bible passages about Sabbath observance:

8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

10 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:

11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it (Exodus 20:8-11).

Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings (Leviticus 23:3).

13 If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it (Isaiah 58:13, 14).

11 And He said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.

13 Then saith He to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other (Matthew 12:11-13).

4. We need to also carefully consider what the Bible says about the purposes of the seventh-day Sabbath:

- a). Worshipping God as our Creator.
- b). Worshipping God as our Redeemer.
- c). Exercising faith in God.
- d). Meeting together with fellow believers.
- e). Learning not to please ourselves but to delight in the things of God, draw near to Him and receive special blessings from Him.
- f). Acknowledging that God alone can sanctify us.

For more details about the purposes of the seventh-day Sabbath please see the answer to Question 13.

Allow me now to break in with a personal note and share my Sabbath-keeping experience. Sometimes a testimonial can help others get a better idea of what it is like to observe this special day.

Close to my 16th birthday I was converted from secularism to Christianity. Then, a few weeks into Bible study, I was introduced to the seventh-day Sabbath. It was a surprise to find out that Saturday was the seventh day of the week²³⁵ as I had always considered the week to begin with Monday. But a glance at a dictionary soon convinced me otherwise. After being convicted of the obligation to observe the Sabbath there came the challenge of behavior modification! I had a job delivering newspapers each morning, except Sundays. The Saturday morning paper was the biggest and most important delivery of the week. I asked my boss if I could get someone else to do the Saturday morning delivery while I continued with the rest. This was not acceptable, so I quit the job. Actually it did not seem much of a sacrifice at the time. Maybe this was because I was single and had no dependents. Whatever the case may be, I must testify

that the Lord has been good to me through the years. Jobs have come my way that avoided Sabbath work and money hassles were not a big issue in my student days, despite having parents unable to support me much in this area. Don't get me wrong, I wasn't a perfect Christian specimen! But God does help those who are serious about His commandments. One text that has been a source of strength to me in Sabbath-keeping is "them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed" (1 Samuel 2:30).

Being the only Sabbath-keeper in my family was a challenge. I tried to be with my parents and brothers on family outings and sometimes these were on the Sabbath. Mostly our excursions were into nature, so there was little problem apart from the challenge of keeping my conversation appropriate. But sometimes things were more complicated. My parents were kind and tolerant, but just didn't seem to grasp my absolute unwillingness to do shopping or attend things like amusement parks on the Sabbath. This made watchfulness and prayer all the more essential. On one Sabbath I spent hours walking along a country road while my family and friends played and swam at a "holiday park" (unfortunately it wasn't a "holy day" park). As a youthful son living at home it was a challenge to both honor my parents and also to keep holy the Sabbath day. Though I am sure that I let Him down many times, the Lord was always faithful in helping me. He heard my prayers.

Study, study, STUDY was the cry that constantly rang in my ears while at university. Books, lectures, seminars, deadlines, exams, rushing hither and thither! Every spare moment was precious and it was so easy to feel guilty if I did not have my nose in a book. Amid the mad pace of university life the Sabbath was an oasis of tranquility and rest, a real delight. It was especially a rest for my conscience because I could take a deep breath and say, "Hallelujah, I can take a break from study and not feel guilty! God has *commanded* me to keep this Sabbath and study *must* be put aside!" God's command was like a cry of freedom for me. I was so glad to have that Sabbath command. I was so glad that it was not an optional thing that I had to decide about. If it had been optional then my Sabbath-keeping would have been in ruins during my university years and maybe I would have lost my Christian experience altogether, choked out

by the mountain of other pressing demands. But thanks to God's instruction, rather than being strangled and choked, I delighted in the breath-taking experience of the Sabbath. Yes, the Sabbath was a breathing space during the rat race! Actually the Bible itself describes the Sabbath in terms of "breathing easy." The Hebrew word translated as "refreshed" in Exodus 23:12 and Exodus 31:17 means, "to take breath."²³⁶ So the Sabbath is truly a time to relax and be rejuvenated.

At university I once found out that an important examination was scheduled for the Sabbath and immediately decided not to attend it. God's Ten Commandments can make decision making easy for us if we take them seriously. Just as the Ark in the wilderness went before the Israelites and guided them in all their wanderings, so the Ten Commandments guide believers in the will of God through their pilgrimage on Earth. Actually, I was able to take the exam because I found out that the university had a system for Sabbath-keepers to sit exams on Saturdays after sundown. I had to stay at a pastor's house for the day, before heading into the university to sit the test in the evening. I am personally thankful for Auckland University's respect of religious liberty because I know that there are many places in the world where such respect is not given.

Being employed in the medical field has led to several jobs involving Sabbath duties. I spent fourteen months working at a psychiatric halfway house rehabilitating patients who had spent years in institutions. Over one summer break I did nurse aiding for a few months. Then later on I was involved with hospital and general practice work on the Sabbath. The main principles that I followed were, firstly, to cheerfully do whatever humanitarian work was really necessary while avoiding common stuff like everyday cleaning, routine chores and employment-related medical examinations. Secondly, I donated to charity any money that I earned from my Sabbath duties. This was a blessing as it gave me the joy of choosing where to give my "Sabbath-money." None of the jobs that I held meant working on every Sabbath or for many Sabbaths in a row and I would not have stuck with such employment because it would have meant virtually zero church attendance. Having a starvation diet of organized church fellowship would have been both spiritual suicide and a disre-

gard of the command exhorting us to hold a sacred meeting on the Sabbath (Leviticus 23:3 c.f. Hebrews 10:25). I must mention here that although it must be a breach of Leviticus 23:3 to neglect sacred gatherings week after week when there is opportunity to participate, this verse cannot mean that it is compulsory to attend worship meetings *every* Sabbath, for Jesus Himself did not do that (e.g. when He was in the wilderness for forty days).

Early sunsets during the winter season were a challenge when employed in general practice. Quite a bit of general practitioner (GP) work does not really involve urgent things and I well remember one winter evening when a patient walked into my consulting room at about Friday sunset asking for an insurance medical. I cannot remember what was actually said, but I politely declined, apologized and rebooked him for another time. He did not appear to be offended. It was my fault really because I should not have been working so late and should have instructed the receptionists to watch out for routine medical examinations and schedule them for times other than Friday afternoons. Now I do my best to avoid working late on Friday afternoons, especially in the winter. If it appears that I may be working close to Friday sunset then I try to do everything possible to prepare beforehand so that the beginning of the Sabbath is honored and I am in the right frame of mind.

A fellow Sabbath-keeper once convinced me that it was OK to attend health conferences on the Sabbath. These were continuing professional development meetings for GP's and involved mixing with other doctors and participating in seminars. So when I attended my next conference I stayed at the venue that Sabbath. It was a big mistake. Spiritual food was zero and spiritual company felt similarly low, except for God who in His mercy did not forsake me. I decided never to do it again. Attending such meetings, even if they are about humanitarian or health topics, means participation in a common secular gathering rather than a sacred meeting or "holy convocation" (Leviticus 23:3). Also it forces common thoughts and everyday subjects into our minds. Frequently secular or business conversations are overheard. No, it is not for me. However, I must confess that subsequently I did attend one conference for just the Sabbath afternoon after going to church in the morning. But this

was a mistake too, and now I avoid any Sabbath involvement with medical conferences. This is a sacrifice because it sometimes means missing gatherings that would otherwise be very helpful and it makes meeting “accreditation” goals more difficult. But it is nothing compared to the sacrifices Christ has made for us.

Being now married with two young children makes planning ahead for the Sabbath especially important. Our routine is to discuss during the week what we are going to do for the following Sabbath. We try and do something special on Friday evening. We are members of a local Seventh-day Adventist church where we attend Saturday morning services. There is a special program for the children. In the afternoon we usually have a picnic and nature walk. We feel it is especially important for the children to get outdoors into nature after sitting in church. We often invite friends to join us for our Sabbath afternoon activities. Currently we have a non-Christian friend who usually comes along with us. She is studying the Bible with my wife and hopefully, in the not too distant future, will surrender her life to the Lord. When the weather is rainy we frequently still go for a walk. But if it is really rough, which is not often, we do something else like watch animal videos or read with the children.

True Sabbath-keeping is not drudgery. It is a delight! What more could a human ask for than a special weekly 24-hour appointment with his or her Maker and Redeemer? An appointment that God Himself has graciously asked us to have with Him because we are special to Him, even as Adam and Eve were? It is as if Jesus knocks on the door of our homes each Friday evening. Will we be ready for Him? Will we welcome Him in?

Jesus wants to be welcomed into your home and heart this coming Sabbath. Will you let Him in? He has given a sacred day for you to enjoy family life to the fullest and to experience blessed social contact with others. He has given you a day to experience the joy of helping others. Enjoy it, revel in it, delight in it, it is yours, a wonderful gift from God!

Appendices



Appendix One:

The Plucking Up of the Three Horns by the Papal Power



This appendix relates to Question 43 and its answer.

The horn with eyes and a mouth of Daniel chapter 7 grows out of the monster with ten horns. As it comes up it plucks out 3 of the previous horns. As discussed in the answer to Question 43, the ten horns represent the most prominent of the “barbarian” tribes that invaded the Western Roman Empire and the horn with eyes and a mouth symbolizes the Papacy or Roman Catholic Church. We believe that the evidence points to the Visigoths, Vandals and Ostrogoths as being the three tribes that were uprooted by the papal power.

The Visigoths, a non-Catholic Christian tribe that inhabited what is now southern France, were the first of these tribes to be uprooted. To their immediate north lay the territory of the Franks. Clovis, king of the Franks, married the Catholic Burgundian Princess Clotilda in 493 AD and, not too long after this, professed conversion to the Catholic faith himself.²³⁷ He became a champion of the Roman Catholic cause and a church-state or religio-political union was formed between him and the Catholic leaders. In the words of the historian Gibbon, “On the memorable day when Clovis ascended

from the baptismal font, he alone in the Christian world deserved the name and prerogatives of a catholic king... The eldest, or rather the only son of the church, was acknowledged by the clergy as their lawful sovereign or glorious deliverer; and the arms of Clovis were strenuously supported by the zeal and favour of the catholic faction.”

²³⁸ In 507 Clovis, with the approval and support of the Catholics, designed to attack the Visigoths who were labeled as Arians and heretics. “It grieves me” he declared “to see that the Arians still possess the fairest portion of Gaul. Let us march against them with the aid of God; and, having vanquished the heretics, we will possess and divide their fertile provinces.” ²³⁹ But the Visigoths were a formidable force to try and overcome and “Rome watched with anxious heart the outcome of this decisive battle, for she well knew that her hopes of expansion in this world were vain if her only prince in the West failed.”²⁴⁰ Clovis “secretly corresponded” with the Catholics living in the Visigothic lands and “a formidable conspiracy” developed in his favor.²⁴¹ Since conditions seemed right Clovis began his campaign in 507 and in the following year (508 AD) consolidated his victory with the conquest of the province of Aquitain. The Visigothic tribe had been dealt its deathblow and never regained its former strength and power. It had been uprooted from its base. Following the 508 battle the Visigoths only remained in possession of Septimania, a narrow tract of seacoast, from the Rhone to the Pyrenees. They also went over the Pyrenees to inhabit part of what is now northern Spain.²⁴² The Spanish Visigoths were finally subjugated in the eighth century by a Moslem invasion.²⁴³ Today there remains no nation that is directly descended from this uprooted tribe.

The Vandals of North Africa were the second tribe to be uprooted. But it was not the king of the Franks who did the work this time. The Roman Catholic Church had also formed a political alliance with the eastern (Byzantine) emperor Justinian who in 533 AD decreed that the Roman Bishop was “head of all the Holy Churches.”²⁴⁴ It was also in the year 533 that Justinian sent his army, under the leadership of Belisarius, to conquer the Vandals. The Vandals had embraced a non-Catholic version of Christianity and, like the Visigoths, were branded heretics and called Arians. Therefore the Catholic clergy were much in favor of the war. Justinian, it seems, entertained

doubts about whether the attack on the Vandals should proceed. According to the historian Gibbon, “the design of the war would perhaps have been relinquished, if his [Justinian’s] courage had not been revived by a voice which silenced the doubts of profane reason. ‘I have seen a vision,’ cried an artful or fanatic [Catholic] bishop of the East. ‘It is the will of Heaven, O emperor! that you should not abandon your holy enterprise for the deliverance of the African church. The God of battles will march before your standard, and disperse your enemies, who are the enemies of his Son.’”²⁴⁵ When the capital Carthage was taken “the defeat of the Vandals, and the freedom of Africa, were announced to the city on the eve of St. Cyprian...The Arians, conscious that their reign had expired, resigned the temple to the Catholics, who rescued their saint from profane hands, performed the holy rites, and loudly proclaimed the creed of Athanasius and Justinian.”²⁴⁶ When Justinian received word of the defeat, “he proceeded, without delay, to the full establishment of the Catholic church. Her jurisdiction, wealth, and immunities, perhaps the most essential part of episcopal religion, were restored and amplified with a liberal hand; the Arian worship was suppressed; the Donatist meetings were proscribed; and the synod of Carthage, by the voice of two hundred and seventeen bishops, applauded the just measure of pious retaliation.”²⁴⁷ The Vandal nation subsequently disappeared from history. The second horn had been uprooted.

It seems obvious that, as part of Justinian’s plan to achieve “the full establishment of the Catholic church,” he would entertain the aim of freeing the Bishop of Rome from the domination of the Ostrogoths on the Italian Peninsula. No doubt he also wanted to regain these ancient lands of the Roman emperors which he considered himself to be the rightful heir to.²⁴⁸ Non-Catholic “Barbarian” tribes of Italy had surrounded the Bishop of Rome since the fall of Rome in 476. Hence this clergyman at Rome would have been all too happy to welcome Justinian’s army for his liberation from the “barbarian” yoke. When Justinian’s famous general Belisarius arrived in Italy he was welcomed into the city of Rome and made it his fortress against the surrounding Ostrogothic army. “The first days” after Belisarius entered the city “...were devoted to mutual congratulation and the public joy; and the Catholics prepared to celebrate, without a rival,

the approaching festival of the nativity of Christ.”²⁴⁹ The citizens of Rome “were edified by the apparent respect of Belisarius for the successor of St. Peter.”²⁵⁰ The Ostrogothic army surrounded the city of Rome but were unable to overcome it and with huge losses and a broken spirit they ended the siege in March 538.²⁵¹ “The whole nation of the Ostrogoths had been assembled for the attack, and was almost entirely consumed in the siege of Rome.”²⁵² The year 538 sounded the death bell of the Ostrogothic kingdom and a few years later this nation also disappeared. The third horn of Daniel’s vision had been uprooted.

We need to mention that amongst Bible scholars who discuss the identity of the three uprooted nations there is general agreement about the inclusion of the Vandals and the Ostrogoths, but some difference of opinion about the third power. This is really a minor matter that should not bother the sincere student of prophecy. The evidence of cooperation between the Roman Catholic Church and civil powers in the demise of “Barbarian” tribes is clear. It is also clear that large numbers of tribes were not uprooted, that the Vandals and Ostrogoths were two of the powers that were destroyed, and that there was a third. Whether the third tribe was the Visigoths, as we suggest, or whether it was the Heruli, as others maintain, is simply a matter for students to decide about for themselves on the weight of evidence.

Before stating why we believe the Visigoths were the third power we will mention what happened to the Heruli. The Byzantine emperor Zeno made a treaty with Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, which involved the Goths marching against the Heruli of Italy. “Theodoric addressed the emperor in the following words: ‘Although your servant is maintained in affluence by your liberality, graciously listen to the wishes of my heart! Italy, the inheritance of your predecessors, and Rome itself, the head and mistress of the world, now fluctuate under the violence and oppression of Odoacer [king of the Heruli] the mercenary. Direct me, with my national troops, to march against the tyrant. If I fall, you will be relieved from an expensive and troublesome friend: if, with the divine permission, I succeed, I shall govern in your name, and to your glory, the Roman senate, and the part of the republic delivered from slavery by my victo-

rious arms.’ The proposal of Theodoric was accepted, and perhaps had been suggested, by the Byzantine court. But the forms of the commission, or grant, appear to have been expressed with a prudent ambiguity, which might be explained by the event; and it was left doubtful, whether the conqueror of Italy should reign as the lieutenant, the vassal, or the ally, of the emperor of the East.”²⁵³ The Ostrogoths did attack the Heruli, overcoming them in 489-493 AD.²⁵⁴ However, the Heruli persisted after this date, many serving in the army of Belisarius (until mid-sixth century) and others, according to Procopius, returning to Scandinavia and settling by the Geats.

The reason that we believe the Visigoths rather than the Heruli represent one of the uprooted horns is that they were uprooted in 508 AD and that the involvement of the Catholics in a church-state union is more definite than in the case of the Heruli. Clovis was a baptized Roman Catholic, whereas Theodoric was a non-Catholic and leader of a people considered anti-Catholic in their stance. In fact, as shown above, the defeat of the Ostrogoths was later instrumental in freeing the Roman Bishop from a non-Catholic nation so that the Papacy could be firmly established. The march of the Ostrogoths against the Heruli seems to us more like a matter just between the eastern emperor and Theodoric. Perhaps some are unsure about the Visigoths because they feel that a tribe must be almost or completely eradicated within a short time to be considered “uprooted” (the Visigoths lingered for a few hundred years before their disappearance). We respect this opinion but believe that it is not certain that Daniel’s vision requires complete and sudden eradication in order to qualify for being “uprooted” (the word in Daniel 7:24 is “subdued”). The Visigoths were certainly uprooted from their main abodes and had their foundation destroyed by Clovis. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, the Heruli also lingered for some time after their defeat by the Ostrogoths.

Why is the year 508 significant? Because Daniel chapters 11 and 12 indicate that the period 508 to 538 AD was especially important in the formation of the papal power. Daniel 12 mentions the 1260-year period (vs. 7) and also a 1290-year period (vs. 11). We know that the 1260 years was from 538 to 1798 (please see the answer to Question 43) but what about the 1290 years? We wish to refer

readers elsewhere ²⁵⁵ for comprehensive details on this as it is not the main subject of this book and would take up a lot of space to go into properly. We will simply mention that the evidence points to the 1290 years as ending at the same time as the 1260 years. Thus the 1290-year period extends back from 1798 to the year 508 AD. It was in 508 that the first major demonstration of the Roman Catholic Church uniting with the arm of the state was seen when Clovis, king of the Franks, attacked the Visigoths. It is interesting to note here that it was the French who were instrumental in both the formation (Clovis, king of the Franks, 508) and the near-fatal wounding (Napoleon, French emperor, 1798) of the Papacy.²⁵⁶

Appendix Two:

The Day-for-a-year Principle



The day-for-a-year (or year-day) principle is a well-established method of prophetic interpretation that has been used by both Jews and Christians for centuries.²⁵⁷ It relates to time prophecies in the apocalyptic sections of Daniel and Revelation. As Revelation 1:1 points out,²⁵⁸ material in apocalyptic literature is to be taken as having a symbolic meaning unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. With this in mind the day-for-a-year principle is a commonsense way of approaching these time prophecies that are obviously symbolic and which don't make any sense if taken literally. But it is not just commonsense because the Bible itself points out that this is the method to be used.

In non-apocalyptic scripture the idea of a day standing for a year is relatively common. Examples include Numbers 14:34, Ezekiel 4:6, Genesis 29:27 and Leviticus 25:3, 4.²⁵⁹

Concerning the prophecy of Daniel chapter 7, the “time and times and the dividing of time” of verse 25 cannot mean a literal 3 1/2 years. The kingdom of the horn with eyes and a mouth referred to in this verse is a more significant kingdom in the vision than the empires that reigned before it. The previous kingdoms were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Imperial Rome (please see the answer to Question 43 for more details). All these previous kingdoms lasted

for many decades. Also God judges the horn with eyes and a mouth towards the end of earth's history when He gives the dominion to His Son (Daniel 7:21, 22; 24-27). So it must continue for a long time after the downfall of the previous empire (Imperial Rome).

In Daniel chapter 9 the prophecy about the seventy weeks or 490 days is incomprehensible without the day-for-a-year principle being applied. The angel tells Daniel that a period of "seventy weeks" is determined (literally "cut off") for the Jews "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy" (vs. 24). Also after 69 of these weeks the Messiah will come (vs. 25). How could all this happen in a literal seventy weeks, which is less than one-and-a-half years?

The seventy weeks (490 years) of chapter 9 are cut off from the longer period of chapter 8.²⁶⁰ This indicates that the day-for-a-year principle must also apply in Daniel 8. In Daniel 8:13 it says "How long will the vision be...?" This vision of chapter 8 runs from the ram (Medo-Persia, Daniel 8:20) right through to the activities of the exceedingly great horn (Daniel 8:9, symbolizing both Imperial and Papal Rome²⁶¹). Therefore the 2300 period of Daniel 8:14 must cover Medo-Persia, Greece, Imperial Rome and Papal Rome. Obviously 2300 days would never do here and 2300 years must be accepted as the meaning of the symbolism. Furthermore, while the prophecy of Daniel chapter 8 starts with Medo-Persia, we are told it relates to the "time of the end." Therefore the 2300 period must certainly be a long period of time to take us to the time of the end.²⁶²

If we compare the 2300 "evening-mornings" or "days" of Daniel 8:14 with the years of Daniel 11:6, 8 and 13 we have another example of the day-for-a-year principle being taught. Events portrayed in the largely symbolic vision of Daniel 8 are given in more detail in the mainly literal descriptions of Daniel chapter 11. The vision of Daniel 8, which began in the Persian realm and continued through the Greek period, and beyond, uses symbolic days. But the material in chapter 11 describing the same Greek period as is covered in Daniel 8 uses literal years. Thus we have days in Daniel 8 turning into years in Daniel 11.²⁶³

To re-emphasize a point mentioned earlier, these time periods in apocalyptic prophecy are characterized by symbolic language.²⁶⁴ This should at least point us to considering the day-for-a-year principle as applying. After all, why would one want to use symbolic language unless there was some deeper meaning behind the time period mentioned?

Appendix Three:

The Horn With Eyes and a Mouth Fulfills Prophecies of Daniel Chapter Seven



This appendix relates to the answer to Question 43 where the horn with eyes and a mouth is identified as the Papacy. The following is more evidence that the correct identification has been made. In some ways we would prefer not to include this material. But it is really essential in order to be fair to the sincere Bible student and seeker for truth.

**It has a mouth speaking “great” (boastful) words
(Daniel 7:8, 20, 25).**

It is sad to mention the following examples (many others could be cited):

On Nov. 18, 1302, Bonifacius VIII in the papal bull *Unam Sanctum* said “Furthermore, we declare, we proclaim, we define that it is absolutely necessary for salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff”²⁶⁵

On 18 July, 1870, the First Vatican Council made the following decree concerning the definition of papal infallibility: “...we teach

and define as a divinely revealed dogma that when the Roman pontiff speaks EX CATHEDRA,...he possesses, by the Divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, *that infallibility* which the divine Redeemer willed his church to enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals. Therefore, such definitions of the Roman pontiff are of themselves, and not by the consent of the church, *irreformable*.” (Emphasis supplied).

On January 10, 1890, Pope Leo XIII in the encyclical letter *Sapientiae Christianae (On Christians as Citizens)* said: “the supreme teacher in the Church is the Roman Pontiff. Union of minds, therefore, requires... complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, *as to God Himself*.”²⁶⁶

On December 20, 1935, Pope Pius XI in the encyclical *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii* said: “And thus the ineffable greatness of the [Roman Catholic] human priest stands forth in all its splendour; for *he has power over the very Body of Jesus Christ*, and makes It present upon our alters.”²⁶⁷

In the 1994 book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* by Pope John Paul II it says: “Confronted with the Pope, one must make a choice. The leader of the Catholic Church is defined by the faith as the Vicar of Jesus Christ (and is accepted as such by believers). The Pope is considered the man on earth who represents the Son of God, who ‘takes the place’ of the Second Person of the omnipotent God of the Trinity.” “Catholics...call him ‘Holy Father’ or ‘Your Holiness’.”²⁶⁸

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says: “Indeed the bishops and priests, by virtue of the sacrament of Holy Orders, have power to forgive all sins ‘in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit’.” In the case of somebody on the brink of death it says: “...any priest, even if deprived of faculties for hearing confessions, can absolve from every sin and excommunication.”²⁶⁹

**It makes war with God’s true people and prevails against them
(Daniel 7:21, 25).**

In remembrance of those who were tortured and martyred for their faith the following quotations are given:

All bolding for emphasis is supplied.

1. In 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council (under Innocent III) included the following decree regarding “heretics”: “We excommunicate and anathematize every heresy raising itself up against this holy, orthodox and catholic faith which we have expounded above. We condemn all heretics, whatever names they may go under.... Let those condemned be handed over to the secular authorities present, or to their bailiffs, for due punishment. Clerics are first to be degraded from their orders. The goods of the condemned are to be confiscated,... Let secular authorities, whatever offices they may be discharging, be advised and urged and if necessary be compelled by ecclesiastical censure, if they wish to be reputed and held to be faithful, to take publicly an oath for the defence of the faith to the effect that they will seek, insofar as they can, to expel from the lands subject to their jurisdiction all heretics designated by the church in good faith.... If however a temporal Lord, required and instructed by the church, neglects to cleanse his territory of this heretical filth, he shall be bound with the bond of excommunication by the metropolitan and other bishops of the province. If he refuses to give satisfaction within a year, this shall be reported to the supreme pontiff so that he may declare his vassals absolved from their fealty to him and make the land available for occupation by Catholics so that these may, after they have expelled the heretics, possess it unopposed and preserve it in the purity of the faith...

“We add further that each Archbishop or Bishop, either in person or through his archdeacon or through suitable honest persons, should visit twice or at least once in the year any parish of his in which heretics are said to live. There he should compel three or more men of good repute, or even if it seems expedient the whole neighbourhood, to swear that if anyone knows of heretics there or of any persons who hold secret conventicles or who differ in their life and habits from the way of living of the faithful, then he will take care to point them out to the Bishop. The Bishop himself should summon the accused to his presence, and they should be punished canonically if they are unable to clear themselves of the charge or if after compurgation they relapse into their former errors of faith.”²⁷⁰

2. *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume VII, Article Heresy, Part VIII. CHURCH LEGISLATION ON HERESY (1910, Online edition 1999)* says the following: “The office of teaching belongs to the hierarchy, the *ecclesia docens*, which, under certain conditions, judges without appeal in matters of faith and morals (see COUNCILS). Infallible decisions can also be given by the pope teaching *ex cathedra*. Each pastor in his parish, each bishop in his diocese, is in duty bound to keep the faith of his flock untainted; to the supreme pastor of all the Churches is given the office of feeding the whole Christian flock. The power, then, of expelling heresy is an essential factor in the constitution of the Church. Like other powers and rights, **the power of rejecting heresy adapts itself in practice to circumstances of time and place, and, especially, of social and political conditions.**”

“When Constantine had taken upon himself the office of lay bishop, *episcopus externus*, and put the secular arm at the service of the Church, the laws against heretics became more and more rigorous. **Under the purely ecclesiastical discipline no temporal punishment could be inflicted on the obstinate heretic**, except the damage which might arise to his personal dignity through being deprived of all intercourse with his former brethren. **But under the Christian emperors rigorous measures were enforced against the goods and persons of heretics.** From the time of Constantine to Theodosius and Valentinian III (313-424) various penal laws were enacted by the Christian emperors against heretics as being guilty of crime against the State. ‘In both the Theodosian and Justinian codes **they were styled infamous persons; all intercourse was forbidden to be held with them; they were deprived of all offices of profit and dignity in the civil administration, while all burdensome offices, both of the camp and of the curia, were imposed upon them; they were disqualified from disposing of their own estates by will, or of accepting estates bequeathed to them by others; they were denied the right of giving or receiving donations, of contracting, buying, and selling; pecuniary fines were imposed upon them; they were often proscribed and banished, and in many cases scourged before being sent into exile...** The children of heretical parents were denied their patrimony and inheritance

unless they returned to the Catholic Church. The books of heretics were ordered to be burned.’ (*Vide* “Codex Theodosianus,” lib. XVI, tit. 5, “De Haereticis.”)”

“This legislation remained in force and with even greater severity in the kingdom formed by the victorious barbarian invaders on the ruins of the Roman Empire in the West. The burning of heretics was first decreed in the eleventh century. **The Synod of Verona (1184) imposed on bishops the duty to search out the heretics in their dioceses and to hand them over to the secular power.** Other synods, and the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) under Pope Innocent III, repeated and enforced this decree, especially the Synod of Toulouse (1229), which established inquisitors in every parish (one priest and two laymen). Everyone was bound to denounce heretics, the names of the witnesses were kept secret; **after 1243, when Innocent IV sanctioned the laws of Emperor Frederick II and of Louis IX against heretics, torture was applied in trials;** the guilty persons were delivered up to the civil authorities and actually burnt at the stake. Paul III (1542) established, and Sixtus V organized, the Roman Congregation of the Inquisition, or Holy Office, a regular court of justice for dealing with heresy and heretics.”²⁷¹

3. *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume VII, Article Heresy, Part IX. PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH LEGISLATION* says the following: “The guiding principles in the Church’s treatment of heretics are the following: Distinguishing between formal and material heretics, she applies to the former the canon, ‘Most firmly hold and in no way doubt that every heretic or schismatic is to have part with the Devil and his angels in the flames of eternal fire, unless before the end of his life he be incorporated with, and restored to the Catholic Church.’”²⁷²

Regarding those who were once baptised Catholics and later leave the church for another belief it says (emphasis supplied): “To restrain and bring back her rebellious sons the Church uses both her own spiritual power **and the secular power at her command.**”²⁷³

4. *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume I, Article Apostasy* says: “When the Roman Empire became Christian, apostates were punished by deprivation of all civil rights. They could not give evidence in a court of law, and could neither bequeath nor inherit property. To induce anyone to apostatize was an offence punishable with death [Theodosian Code, XVI, title 7, *De apostatis*; title 8, *De Judæis*; “Corpus juris romani ante-Justinianæi” (Bonn, 1840), 1521 - 1607; Code of Justinian I, title 7, *De apostatis* l. c. 60, 61]. In the Middle Ages, both civil and canon law classed apostates with heretics; so much so that title 9 of the fifth book of the Decretals of Gregory IX, which treats of apostasy, contains only a secondary provision concerning apostasy *a Fide* [iv, Friedberg, *Corpus juris canonici* (Leipzig, 1879-81), II, 790-792]. Boniface VIII however, by a provision which was amended in the sixth book of the Decretals [V, title 2, *De hæreticis*, 13 (Friedberg, II, 1075)], merely classes apostates with heretics in respect of the penalties which they incur. This decretal, which only mentions apostate Jews by name, was applied indifferently to all. The Inquisition could therefore proceed against them. The Spanish Inquisition was directed, at the end of the fifteenth century, chiefly against apostates, the *Maranos*, or new Christians, Jews converted by force rather than by conviction; while in 1609 it dealt severely with the *Moriscos*, or professedly-converted Moors of Spain.”

“Today the temporal penalties formerly inflicted on apostates and heretics cannot be enforced, and have fallen into abeyance.”²⁷⁴

5. *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume XI, Article Persecution* says: “The Church would therefore seem to be strangely inconsistent, for while she claims toleration and liberty for herself she has been and still remains intolerant of all other religions.”²⁷⁵

It says further: “Every corporation lawfully constituted has the right to coerce its subjects within due limits. And though the Church exercises that right for the most part by spiritual sanctions, **she has never relinquished the right to use other means.**”²⁷⁶

It says further: “There can be no doubt, therefore, that the Church claimed the right to use physical coercion against formal apostates.”²⁷⁷

6. This is what Thomas Aquinas (a sainted Catholic author) wrote in his famous *Summa Theologica* (emphasis supplied): “With regard to heretics two points must be observed: one, on their own side; the other, on the side of the Church. On their own side there is the sin, whereby they deserve not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, **but also to be severed from the world by death.** For it is a much graver matter to corrupt the faith which quickens the soul, than to forge money, which supports temporal life. Wherefore if forgers of money and other evil-doers are forthwith condemned to death by the secular authority, **much more reason is there for heretics, as soon as they are convicted of heresy, to be not only excommunicated but even put to death.**

“On the part of the Church, however, there is mercy which looks to the conversion of the wanderer, wherefore she condemns not at once, but ‘after the first and second admonition,’ as the Apostle directs: after that, if he is yet stubborn, the Church no longer hoping for his conversion, looks to the salvation of others, by excommunicating him and separating him from the Church, **and furthermore delivers him to the secular tribunal to be exterminated thereby from the world by death.**”²⁷⁸

7. *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume VIII, Article Inquisition* has this to say:

“In the Bull ‘Ad extirpanda’ (1252) Innocent IV says:

When those adjudged guilty of heresy have been given up to the civil power by the bishop or his representative, or the Inquisition, the podestà or chief magistrate of the city shall take them at once, and shall, within five days at the most, execute the laws made against them.

“Moreover, he directs that this Bull and the corresponding regulations of Frederick II be entered in every city among the municipal

statutes under pain of excommunication, which was also visited on those who failed to execute both the papal and the imperial decrees. **Nor could any doubt remain as to what civil regulations were meant, for the passages which ordered the burning of impenitent heretics were inserted in the papal decretals from the imperial constitutions** ‘Commissis nobis’ and ‘Inconsutibilem tunicam’. The aforesaid Bull ‘Ad extirpanda’ remained thenceforth a fundamental document of the Inquisition, renewed or reinforced by several popes, Alexander IV (1254-61), Clement IV (1265-68), Nicholas IV (1288-02), Boniface VIII (1294-1303), and others. The civil authorities, therefore, were enjoined by the popes, under pain of excommunication to execute the legal sentences that condemned impenitent heretics to the stake.”²⁷⁹

8. Extracts from the Bull of Pope Gregory XI, Against John Wycliffe, 1382:

“By the insinuation of many, if they are indeed worthy of belief, deploring it deeply, it has come to our ears that John de Wycliffe, rector of the church of Lutterworth, in the diocese of Lincoln, Professor of the Sacred Scriptures (would that he were not also Master of Errors), has fallen into such a detestable madness that he does not hesitate to dogmatize and publicly preach, or rather vomit forth from the recesses of his breast, certain propositions and conclusions which are erroneous and false. He has cast himself also into the depravity of preaching heretical dogmas which strive to subvert and weaken the state of the whole church and even secular polity, some of which doctrines, in changed terms, it is true, seem to express the perverse opinions and unlearned learning of Marsilio of Padua of cursed memory, and of John of Jandun, whose book is extant, rejected and cursed by our predecessor, Pope John XXII, of happy memory.”

“...you are on our authority to arrest the said John, or cause him to be arrested and to send him under a trustworthy guard to our venerable brother, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London, or to one of them.”

“Besides, if there should be, which God forbid, in your University, subject to your jurisdiction, opponents stained with these errors, and if they should obstinately persist in them, proceed vigorously and earnestly to a similar arrest and removal of them, and otherwise as shall seem good to you.”²⁸⁰

The above quotations about persecution are from Roman Catholic’s. A further excerpt from a reliable Protestant source, namely *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, is included below. If readers wish to get further information, it can be easily found on the Internet. For example, try using a search engine to source one of the following:

Foxe’s Book of Martyrs, (the whole book is available over the net for free).

History of Romanism, John Downing (A large amount is available over the Internet for free).

The Great Controversy, Ellen White (the whole book is available over the net for free).

9. Regarding the Inquisition, Henry Halley says: “Later on the Inquisition was a main agency in the Papacy’s effort to Crush the Reformation. It is stated that in the 30 years between 1540 and 1570 no fewer than 900,000 Protestants were put death in the Pope’s war for the extermination of the Waldenses”²⁸¹

He goes on to say (emphasis in the original): “The Reformation movement was followed by 100 years of religious war: 1. War on the German Protestants (1546-55); 2. War on the Protestants of the Netherlands (1566-1609); 3. Huguenot Wars in France (1572-98); 4. Philip’s attempt against England (1588); 5. Thirty Years War (1618-48)...every one of these wars was STARTED by Roman Catholic Kings, urged on by Pope and Jesuit, for the purpose of crushing Protestantism....

“The number of Martyrs under Papal Persecutions far outnumbered the Early Christian Martyrs under Imperial Rome: hundreds of thousands among the Albigenses, Waldenses, and Protestants of Germany, Netherlands, Bohemia and other countries. It is common to excuse the Popes in this matter by saying that it was the ‘spirit of the age’. Whose age was it? and who made it so? The Popes. It

was their world. For 1000 years they had been training the world to be in subjection to them. If the Popes had not taken the Bible from the people, the people would have known better, and it would NOT have been the 'spirit of the age'. It was NOT the spirit of Christ, and 'Vicars of Christ' should have known better."²⁸²

Appendix Four:

The Land-beast and the Image to the Beast of Revelation 13



This appendix relates especially to Question 46. Both the land-beast and the “image to the beast” of Revelation chapter 13 are closely associated with the enforcement of the mark of the beast. Both of these entities are described in Revelation 13:11-17:

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth [the land-beast]; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast [the sea-beast] before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

14 And [the land-beast] deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

1. The Land-Beast.

The land-beast is the name we have given to the beast that comes up from the earth as described in Revelation 13:11-14. In the book of Revelation this beast is also referred to as the “false prophet” (c.f. Revelation 19:19, 20 with 13:11-14). Let us look at its identifying characteristics:

a). As noted in the answer to Question 46 under the description of the sea-beast’s characteristics, the land-beast is a counterfeit of the Holy Spirit. It even brings fire down from Heaven like the Holy Spirit did at Pentecost (Revelation 13:13; Acts 2:1-4). This indicates that this power, whatever it is, is associated with a false revival in which counterfeit miracles are performed. These may well be real supernatural miracles. But they are not done by the Holy Spirit, but by the power of the evil one (c.f. 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10; Exodus 7:10-12, 20-22; 8:5-7).

b). It comes up out of the earth (Revelation 13:11). Waters symbolize “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (Revelation 17:15). Therefore, for this beast to come up out of the earth must mean that it arises in a relatively unpopulated area.

c). It is first described as having two horns like a lamb (Revelation 13:11). The word “lamb” is used 27 times in Revelation. It always refers to Christ except for this one exception. Although the land-

beast speaks like a dragon, the symbol of a lamb plainly indicates that this power, at least initially, has some benevolent characteristics. It is founded on some genuinely Christian principles.

The “earth” (out of which this beast comes) is also associated with benevolence in Revelation. In Revelation 12:16 the earth is described as helping the church (the woman) by swallowing up a flood of water. The dragon spewed this water out of its mouth to carry her away.

Notice that the church was in the wilderness when the dragon tried this method of attack (Revelation 12:14). She was in the wilderness during the 1260-year period (Revelation 12:6, 14). When was this 1260-year period? It was the period when the papal power described in chapter 13 had its long reign during which it persecuted God’s true church (Revelation 13:5-7; Daniel 7:25).²⁸³ It caused the true church to hide in mountainous or wilderness areas of the Earth.²⁸⁴ The papal power was established in its rule in 538 AD when the last of the three uprooted horns (nations) was subdued.²⁸⁵ From 538 AD the period of 1260 years takes us to 1798 AD. It was in 1798 that the Papacy received an apparently fatal wound when Napoleon’s general took captive the Pope and sent him into exile where he died. Toward the end of this 1260-year period of persecution there is one sparsely populated land that stands out as being a haven for persecuted Christians; a place where the earth provided protection from the persecuting flood of the dragon—the land that is now the United States of America. It was in 1620 when the ship *Mayflower* took the first “pilgrims” to New England to plant a colony.

d). The USA was the power that was being formed at the very time when the Papacy was about to receive its deadly blow. Revelation 13:10 says “He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.” It was in 1798 that the Papacy went into captivity. In this year the Pope was taken captive to France, no replacement Pope was put in place and a republic was proclaimed. Thus it was in 1798 that the sea-beast “had the wound by a sword” (Revelation 13:14). After the verse describing the Papacy’s captivity and wound (Revelation 13:10) we

have the words “I beheld another beast [the USA] coming up out of the earth” (vs. 11). Please study the following list of dates for the USA as it came up from relative obscurity amongst the sparsely populated lands of the West. Notice their proximity to 1798:

- 1776, Declaration of Independence.
- 1781, Articles of Confederation.
- 1787, The Constitution of the USA.
- 1789, Bill of Rights passed.
- 1791, Bill of Rights ratified.
- 1798, The Virginia Resolution, James Madison.
- 1799, The Kentucky Resolution, Thomas Jefferson.

Protestant USA was founded on Christian principles. It started with some characteristics of the Lamb. But a change is to come. It has already spoken as a dragon at times, for example, in its support of slavery. And Revelation chapter 13 indicates that it will especially speak like a dragon as the second coming of Christ approaches.

It is the religious side of the USA, fallen Protestantism, that comes into prominence in the land-beast’s role as a counterfeit of the Holy Spirit. The civil element is especially involved during the formation of the “image to the beast” in Revelation chapter 13.

2. The Image to the Beast.

From Revelation chapter 13 verses 11 to 17 the following characteristics are evident:

- a). The land-beast (Protestant USA) leads out in its formation (vs. 14).
- b). It is an image to the sea-beast, that is, the Papacy (vs. 14).
- c). It is a plan to cause “the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast [the Papacy], whose deadly wound was healed” (vs. 12) and therefore to worship “the dragon [Satan] which

gave power unto the [first] beast” (Revelation 13:4). This is Satan’s master plan to bring worship to himself as he has wanted to do from the time he first rebelled in Heaven (Isaiah 14:13, 14).

d). The image involves, at least eventually, the whole Earth. It wants “all” to receive the mark, and “no man” is to buy or sell without it, or its equivalent (vs. 16, 17).

e). The land-beast uses miraculous signs to deceive the people of the Earth regarding the formation and worshiping of the image to the beast (vs. 14, c.f. Revelation 19:20).

f). The land-beast gives the image what is needed for it to persecute. That is, Protestant USA empowers it to speak and to persecute (vs. 15).

g). The image speaks (probably symbolic of legislation) and threatens death to all who do not worship it (vs. 15).

h). The image is to be worshiped (vs. 15).

i). It enforces the mark of the beast. This includes prohibiting those who don’t have the mark from buying or selling (vs. 16, 17).

Also Revelation tells us:

j). Those who worship this image have no (spiritual) rest and will receive the wrath of God (Revelation 14:9-11, c.f. Matthew 11:28-30).

k). Although it may seem that everyone gives in to the wishes of this image (Revelation 13:16, 17), not all will (Revelation 20:4).

Revelation 12:17 mentions Satan’s final war against God’s people. In Revelation chapter 13 we have the description of this war. The tactics Satan uses are deception and persecution. His

primary agents are the sea-beast, the land-beast and the image to the sea-beast.

Revelation chapter 13 emphasizes the role of the USA in making an image to the sea-beast (Papacy). The USA also gives power to this image so that it can persecute. We need to remember that the Papacy is a church-state union. This was especially evident in medieval times (during the dark ages of the 1260-year period). *When the USA combines church with state to enforce religious decrees it will have made an image to the beast.* The whole world will then follow America's lead.

Here would be a good place to discuss in more detail Satan's end-time deception. We have noted how the land-beast performs miraculous signs in order to deceive the people of the Earth into worshiping the image to the beast. This land-beast, called *the false prophet*, also deceives them into receiving the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:13, 14; 19:20). More details about this great deception, which occurs shortly before the second coming of Christ, are given in 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12:

8 And then shall that Wicked [Gk. *anomos*, lawless one, one who treads down God's law] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

In this passage we are told that Satan's agent, the lawless one, is coming with all power, signs, and lying wonders (vs. 9). We are also told that the lawless one is destroyed at the coming of Christ (vs. 8). The word "coming" in both these verses is the same Greek word

parousia. In the New Testament this Greek word is used as a special term for the second coming of Christ.²⁸⁶ This strongly indicates that Satan's coming will, in some way, be a counterfeit of Christ's second coming. Here is an extremely subtle, worldwide deception that will lead the unprepared to make the wrong decisions in the end-time crisis.

It is worth noting that the New Testament nowhere speaks of *two* returns of Christ, as in the so-called "secret rapture" theory. The only place where two end-time comings (*parousia*) are referred to is here in 2 Thessalonians. The frightening thing is that the *first coming here is Satan's counterfeit*. Thus, those who believe in the secret rapture or similar theories are setting themselves up to be deceived.²⁸⁷

How do we escape the deception? First, we need to have Christ abiding in our heart. Second, we need to ask God to give us "the love of the truth" (2 Thessalonians 2:10). Third, we need to know our Bible and especially the Bible truths discussed in this book.²⁸⁸ Fourth, we must not base our faith or decisions on miracles or signs (what we see or hear) but upon the word of God. We would ***strongly urge*** all to study carefully Deuteronomy 13:1-4 and Matthew 7:13-29 while keeping in mind the designation given by Revelation to the USA with its fallen Protestantism—*the false prophet*.²⁸⁹

Appendix Five:

What Happens When We Die?



This appendix relates especially to the answer to Question 47. Please note Figure Three (next page). This is a diagrammatic representation about the soul, death, resurrection, eternal life and Hell. A careful study of it, with the accompanying notes and Bible texts, will be richly rewarded.

Figure Three Explanations and Bible references:

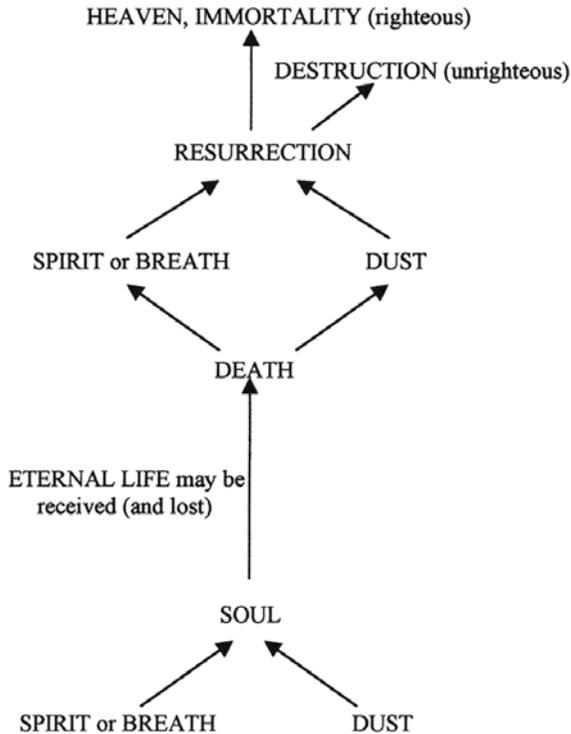
1. The SOUL, DEATH and RESURRECTION.

a). The soul is made of two ingredients, the SPIRIT or BREATH (Hebrew *neshemah* or *ruwach*, Greek *pneuma*) and DUST, i.e. physical matter (Genesis 2:7, c.f. vs. 19 where “creature” is from the same Hebrew word as “soul” in vs. 7).

b). These two ingredients separate at death (Job 34:14, 15; Psalm 146:4, the KJV reading “his thoughts perish” is correct, see *Strong’s* [death is a state of unconsciousness, see point no. 2 below]; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Acts 7:59, 60; James 2:26). The spirit or breath is not a conscious entity, but the spark of life. A rough comparison

would be with electricity, which makes a light bulb “alive.” The soul is not something separate from our body, but the whole person. The term “soul” (Greek *psuche*) is used in the Bible to mean “person” (e.g. Acts 2:41; 7:14; 27:37) or even sea creatures (Revelation 16:3).

Figure Three. Death, Resurrection and Related Subjects



c). The two ingredients come together again (in a certain sense) at the resurrection (Ezekiel 37:5 c.f. Luke 8:52-55). We say “in a certain sense” because it is obvious from 1 Corinthians 15:39-49 that the resurrected bodies of the saints are not composed of the same particles as at death. But their bodies do have solidity because Jesus’ body was palpable with “flesh and bones” when He was raised in glory (Luke 24:39).

2. What Happens at DEATH?

a). At death we are unconscious (Psalm 6:5; 94:17; 115:17; Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6; 9:10; Job 3:11-19; Isaiah 38:17-19).

b). Death is referred to in the Bible as a sleep (Psalm 13:3; Isaiah 57:2; John 11:11-14).

c). We don't go to Heaven at death (Acts 2:25-34; 13:35-37 c.f. 1 Kings 2:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; John 6:40).

d). The wicked do not go to punishment at death (John 5:28, 29; Matthew 25:31-41; Revelation 20:7-9, 13-15 c.f. Matthew 8:29; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4).

e). God preserves the identity and character of those who are dead (Luke 20:37, 38; Romans 4:17).

f). Trying to contact the dead is an occult practice forbidden in scripture (Deuteronomy 18:9-14).

3. The RESURRECTION and the Second Coming.

a). The resurrection occurs at the end of time when those asleep in the graves awake and rewards or punishments are given (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28, 29; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

b). Jesus said that He would meet His disciples at His second coming, not when they died (John 14:1-3).

c). The resurrection of Christ is our assurance that we too can be raised (2 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:14).

d). Those who are resurrected to immortal life receive a type of body superior to our present one (1 Corinthians 15:39-49).

4. IMMORTALITY.

a). Immortality is given to the faithful at the second coming (1 Corinthians 15:50-54; Romans 2:5-8, it is an unending *quantity* of life).

b). Only God is intrinsically immortal (1 Timothy 6:15, 16 c.f. Ezekiel 18:4; Matthew 10:28). The doctrine of intrinsic soul-immortality is unscriptural.

c). Access to the tree of life is needed for humans to live indefinitely (Genesis 3:22-24).

5. ETERNAL LIFE

a). We can have eternal life (a special *quality* of life) now, in Christ (1 John 5:11-13; John 6:53-58).

b). But this gift can be lost if Christ, who is our eternal life, is lost from our lives (Hebrew 3:12-14; 6:4-9; John 15:6; 2 Peter 2:20-22).

6. The DESTRUCTION of the wicked.

a). The wicked suffer destruction by fire (Malachi 4:1-3 c.f. Isaiah 1:31; 33:10-14; 47:14; Ezekiel 28:18, 19; Matthew 13:30; John 15:6).

b). They don't live forever in Hell, they die (Romans 6:23). The term "ever" in Revelation 14:11 and Revelation 20:10 is the Greek word *aion*, an age. It can mean a specific portion of time or an indefinitely long period, depending on the subject. In Revelation 14:11 the "forever" refers to the *smoke* that ascends, not the torment. Also, the beast-worshippers have no rest *while* they worship the beast, i.e.

before the second coming, c.f. Matthew 11:28. In Revelation 20:10 the beast and the false prophet are *symbolic* entities.

c). The wicked will no longer exist (Obadiah 15-18; Isaiah 41:11, 12; Psalm 9:5, 6; 37:9, 10, 20; 2 Peter 2:17).

7. HEAVEN.

Heaven is not a semi-conscious, airy-fairy place, but a place of reality and conscious beauty and joy (John 14:1-3; Hebrews 11:13-16; Revelation 21:1-22:5).

Let us finish this appendix by mentioning three Bible texts that are often misunderstood by Christians when considering the subject of death, namely, Luke 23:43, Philippians 1:23 and Luke 16:19-31.

1. Luke 23:43 reads literally in the Greek “AND SAID TO HIM JESUS VERILY I SAY TO THEE TODAY ME THOU SHALT BE IN PARADISE.” There is no punctuation in the original and the passage would be best translated with the comma placed *after* “today” rather than before it. Luke 23:43 would then read, “And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee to day, Thou shalt be with Me in paradise.” This would then harmonize the verse with Jesus’ words to Mary on the day of His resurrection when He testified that He had not yet gone to Heaven (John 20:17). It would also harmonize with the theme of Christ’s victory through the cross, as it was “today” - the day of apparent defeat - when He promised the repentant thief assurance of forgiveness and a glorious future (c.f. John 17:1-5; 12:28-32).

2. Philippians 1:23 says, “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.” This can simply be understood as meaning that if Paul died the next thing he would know about would be the coming of Christ since he would have been unconscious until then. Or it could possibly be an expression of a desire to be translated as Enoch and Elijah were. Unless

translated, Paul would have, upon death, laid in the grave as King David did (Acts 2:25-34; 13:35-37 c.f. 1 Kings 2:1, 2).

3. Luke 16:19-31 is the parable about the hard-hearted rich man and the beggar Lazarus. It is foolish to base major doctrine on the peripheral details of a parable. The matter of the state of the dead was not the main point of the parable. The parable was given to teach that future destiny is determined by the use men make of the opportunities of this present life. It continues the lesson of the previous parable (Luke 16:1-13) but changes the approach from the positive to the negative. By employing the figurative language He did, Jesus was meeting the people on their own ground by using a commonly believed, but erroneous, tradition. This is similar to Him using the story of a wicked man misappropriating money to teach wise stewardship in the previous parable. If the details are literal, as some insist, how can dead believers all be literally in Abraham's bosom, and can those in Heaven really talk to those in the fires of Hell? Actually the Greek word used for "Hell" in this passage (Luke 16:23) is "*hades*" which means "grave." The Greek word for the fiery Hell that burns up the wicked at the end of time is "*gehenna*" (Matthew 5:22; Luke 12:5).

Appendix Six:

Thirty-seven Accomplishments of Christ's Death and Resurrection



In this appendix we discuss 37 amazing achievements of Christ's death and resurrection. Many books could be written about these glorious victories of our Lord and Savior, and the comments given here are, at the best, only an introduction. To properly understand these accomplishments they must each be studied in the context of Jesus' entire ministry, including His incarnation, sinless life, ascension, ministry in Heaven as our High Priest and His second coming. Every aspect of Christ's ministry is necessary for the final completion of His purposes. All of the achievements in *Appendix Six* have been referred to, in one way or another, earlier in this book where a number in square brackets, e.g. [2], has been used to alert readers to the particular accomplishment that has been mentioned. The number correlates with the listing of the achievement in this *Appendix*. It is surprising and enlightening to realize how many of these wonderful attainments are related in some way to the seventh-day Sabbath.

1. He took upon Himself our sins and died in our place (1 Corinthians 15:3).

He bore our sins in His own body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24). He paid the penalty for our sins; “He was wounded for our transgressions.” (Isaiah 53:5). He did this for everyone, He tasted death for everyone (Hebrews 2:9). On Him was laid the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). *This is the central truth.*

There are two aspects to Christ’s suffering for us to meditate upon, namely (a) The taking upon Himself of our sins, and (b) The punishment He suffered for our sins. Let us consider these two aspects in more detail:

a). He took upon Himself our sins. Christ the Sinless One suffered by being in contact with the cesspit of our slimy, filthy, disgusting, nauseating sins. Oh, they don’t seem that bad to us. But that is because we have become so accustomed to sin that we don’t realize its true abhorrent, malignant, filthy nature. However, for Christ this association with sin was agonizing torture of the worst degree. Amazingly, the Bible actually says that Christ, who knew no sin, was made “to be sin for us” (2 Corinthians 5:21). As we quoted above, “On Him was laid the iniquity of us all.”

b). He paid the penalty for our sins. Not only did Christ suffer from being associated with our sins; He also suffered the penalty of those sins. As we have quoted above, “He was wounded for our transgressions.” (Isaiah 53:5). The penalty for sin is eternal death, eternal separation from God. Therefore Christ suffered the real sense of being eternally separated from His Father. Both Christ and the Father suffered as their eternal union was temporarily broken on account of Christ bearing our sins. This suffering was so great that we cannot ever really fathom it. Christ expressed this sense of separation in His words “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46).

2. He took upon Himself our emotional and mental ailments. He bore “our griefs and carried our sorrows.” Isaiah 53:4 says,

Surely He hath borne our griefs [Hebrew *Choliy*, sickness, from *chalah*, to be or become weak, sick, diseased, grieved, sorry],

and carried our sorrows [Hebrew *mak’ob*, pain, sorrow, from *ka’ab*, to be in pain (physical or mental), be sore, have pain, be sorrowful]:

yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

So when we are feeling depressed, grieved, hurt, emotionally wounded, lonely and sad we can look to Jesus for relief. He is able to lift the weary burden from us and give us strength to cope. Why? Because He has already borne all our sorrows and also *those of the whole world*. Amazing, marvelous Savior! Praise and glory be to Him!

3. He took upon Himself our physical ailments.

He took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses (Matthew 8:17). By His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24). There is a vital connection between the healing of disease and Christ’s sacrifice upon the cross. Those who trust in Jesus will one day be free from the various sicknesses that afflict them, if not in this life, then in the life to come. His sacrifice has guaranteed the physical restoration of believers. When the saints are raised at the last day to glorious immortality (1 Corinthians 15:46-54) they will have no physical defects. However, when the unrighteous, who have rejected the benefits of Christ’s sacrifice are resurrected (John 5:29b) they will, no doubt, bear their physical defects. We should mention here that it is not always God’s will to heal Christians in this present life. This is because His primary purpose is to eternally save people and sometimes illness aids in this aim. Many great men in the Bible

suffered sickness and either were not healed or only healed after a lot of suffering. Often accidents and sickness are the meaningless result of sin in this crazy world. They may happen for no obvious reason and we have to just remember that God suffers with us and offers us His comfort and support.²⁹⁰

4. He took upon Himself the curse of sin and provided deliverance from this curse for both believers and the Earth.

A curse is upon all who have not obeyed God's law (Galatians 3:10; Deuteronomy 27:26). We have all, from Adam down, suffered under this curse. The Earth itself was also cursed as a result of Adam's sin. It would now bear thorns and thistles (Genesis 3:17, 18). It was again cursed when the first murder occurred and Abel's blood was shed upon the ground (Genesis 4:11, 12). Jesus took upon Himself the curse of the broken law that was upon both man and the Earth. Galatians 3:13 says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree [a reference to the crucifixion]." Concerning Jesus' final trial, just before the crucifixion, the Bible says, "And when they had platted a *crown of thorns*, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!" (Matthew 27:29). Notice He was crowned with thorns, a symbol of the curse. But, praise God, because of Jesus' sacrifice there will one day be no more curse:

1 And He shewed [showed] me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3 *And there shall be no more curse:* but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him:

4 And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. (Revelation 22:1-4).

5. He redeemed Adam's failure and became the new, successful head of humanity.

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (1 Corinthians 15:21, 22).

In Romans 5:12 –19 it says:

Wherefore, as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned... For if through the offence of one [Adam] many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many... For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)... For as by one man's [Adam's] disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one [Christ] shall many be made righteous.

The Son of God took upon Himself humanity that He might become a new, second Adam. He redeemed Adam's failure by being successful in resisting Satan's temptations and by taking upon Himself the results of Adam's transgression.

- Genesis introduces the first Adam and the New Testament introduces the second Adam.
- Genesis describes Adam as being made "in the image of God" (Genesis 1:26-28). The New Testament describes Jesus as being in the image of God (2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3).

- Genesis describes Adam's sin and failure, and the resultant breakdown in his relationships with God, fellow humans and the natural environment. The New Testament describes Jesus' sinless life and success. It presents Him as having a perfect relationship with God, people and the natural world. The New Testament presents Jesus as, "Adam as he was intended to be" (the New Testament, of course, presents Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, as being far more than this too).

What were Adam's relationships with God, fellow humans and the natural environment supposed to be like? He should have had perfect, submissive obedience to His Maker who was infinitely greater than he. He failed because he disobeyed God. He was supposed to have perfect love and regard for his human companion, who was one equal to him. He failed because he blamed Eve for his troubles and gave no proper confession of his own guilt (Genesis 3:12). He was supposed to exercise loving dominion over the natural environment, over the animals and the plants. But this relationship broke down too. The ground was cursed, thorns and thistles grew and animals became fierce, unruly or fearful. Jesus redeemed Adam's failure. He maintained a perfect, submissive, obedient relationship with the Father. As the second Adam He voluntarily took a position of subordination to His Father. Thus He said, "And He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him." (John 8:29) and "I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me." (John 5:30). Jesus had a perfect relationship with fellow humans (Mark 10:45; Philippians 2:5-7; John 13:1-35, etc.). Jesus also had a perfect relationship with the environment. The animals and environment were in subjection to Him as they were supposed to be back in the beginning with the first Adam. This dominion is seen in such experiences as Jesus calming the storm at sea (Mark 4:37-39), the fish caught with the coin in its mouth (Matthew 17:27), the two huge catches of fish (Luke 5:5, 6; John 21:8-11) and riding on the foal of a donkey that had never been ridden before (Matthew 21:2-7).

Jesus' experience was modeled on the first Adam. Adam was tested about eating something, and failed. Jesus was severely tested in the wilderness about eating something, and succeeded. Adam sinned and brought into the world thorns, sweat, nakedness and death. Jesus took upon Himself the consequences of Adam's failure, and on the cross suffered thorns, sweat, nakedness and death. Praise and glory be to Him!

6. He provided a resurrection for all people.

1 Corinthians 15:21, 22 says,

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

There are two general resurrections, one for the righteous and one for the unrighteous. John 5:28, 29 says, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." The righteous are raised to eternal life, and the unrighteous to "damnation." By His death and resurrection Christ obtained for Himself the keys of the grave and of death. Revelation 1:18 says, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [the grave in this text] and of death." For more information on what happens when we die and related subjects please see *Appendix Five*.

7. He provided justification for believers (Romans 5:9). Because of His death, resurrection and heavenly ministry Christ is able to justify all who believe in Him. He washes them from their sins (Revelation 1:5). He purges their consciences from "dead works" (Hebrews 9:14, c.f. Romans 4:25).

Let's look at what these passages actually say:

Much more then, being now *justified by His blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through Him (Romans 5:9).

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and *washed us from our sins in His own blood* (Revelation 1:5).

How much more shall *the blood of Christ*, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, *purge your conscience from dead works* ²⁹¹ to serve the living God? (Hebrews 9:14).

Notice that we have written, "He provided justification for believers..." Many of Christ's accomplishments for us are conditional. In the Bible, when God justifies somebody He forgives their transgressions, counts them as not having sinned, makes them righteous, and adopts them into His family. This cannot happen until the person sincerely comes to God in repentance, confession and surrender. Therefore, although God is portrayed in the Bible as being ready to forgive or pardon, His forgiveness is conditional. Likewise, we should constantly be in a forgiving attitude, not harboring bitterness or revenge towards anybody. In addition, since human forgiveness encompasses less than divine forgiveness, we have the wonderful privilege of forgiving people absolutely unconditionally (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 23:34).²⁹²

Does the above mean that we have to repent before we can come to God to seek His forgiveness? Absolutely NOT. We must come to Christ just as we are, with all our faults (Matthew 11:28-30). He then gives us the gift of repentance (Acts 5:31).

The fact that God stands ready to forgive (has a forgiving attitude, as we should have) is described in the following texts:

For Thou, Lord, art good, *and ready to forgive*; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee (Psalms 86:5).

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, *and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon* (Isaiah 55:7).

Concerning our avoidance of bitterness and thoughts of revenge, please notice Ephesians 4:31, 32:

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

8. He crucified the “old man” (sinful passions) in the lives of believers and made them no longer slaves of sin (Romans 6:6, 7; 7:5, 6). Just as Christ was raised from the dead they will walk in newness of life through the power of the Holy Spirit who brings the living Christ into their lives (Romans 6:4; 8:9-11; Galatians 2:20; 5:24; 6:14). In other words He saves believers from the power of sin and enables them to live victorious lives.

Notice the following:

Knowing this, that *our old man [sinful passion] was crucified with Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin (Romans 6:6).

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. *But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [give life to] your mortal bodies* by His Spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:10, 11).

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the

flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me (Galatians 2:20).

The greatest delusion in the Christian world today is the idea that God's moral law cannot be kept by Christians. Those who claim that converted Christians cannot completely obey God's moral law are taking their stand on the side of Satan who has, from the beginning, maintained that God's character is faulty (the moral law is a transcript of God's character). Satan says, "Yea, hath God said...?" (Genesis 3:1), implying that there is something wrong with God. Of course, the unconverted person has no hope of obeying God's law because sin still reigns on the throne of their heart and they are disconnected from the source of power. An unconverted person may agree that God's law is good, as Paul does in Romans 7:7-24, but they are powerless to obey it. Romans 7:7-24 is not about the experience of a converted person, but about the struggles and anguish of a convicted non-Christian. A converted person has been delivered from "the body of this death" (Romans 7:24). The experience of the converted person is described in Romans chapter 8, which says, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: *that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit* (vs. 3, 4). We are sure someone will object here saying, "We cannot hope to fully obey God's moral law because we have to be completely perfect, not even committing sins of omission." But it is not we who are perfect. *It is Christ*. Did not Christ live a perfect life in human flesh? Was He not tempted far more than we will ever be? Christ can live His perfect life in us. He can live a life that is free from sins of omission. If we let Him, His love will take care of every thought, word and deed of our lives. Where is our faith as Christians? We freely admit the omnipotent power of God when it comes to talking about anything other than our sins. We freely confess that He upholds the universe and we stand in awe of His miraculous works in nature. We believe in Christ's incarnation and resurrection. We gratefully acknowledge that angels can stop whole mountains from falling on us, if need be. We gasp as we try and

fathom the idea that God knows everything and that He is present everywhere. But we are unwilling to confess that He can do the very thing that He is most anxious and willing to do, namely, give each Christian a victorious life of obedience, enabling them to fully keep His law. If we have faith to believe that Jesus has forgiven us, so also we should have faith to believe that He will change our characters and give us the sweet fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25). Let us hang onto His promises. This is the key. The Bible is absolutely full of promises that God will keep us from sin. Every command of His is a promise because He will not ask us to do anything without also supplying the power. We should pray in full faith for His victory in our lives and believe that we will experience it. We should ask for our character defects to be remedied and expect that, in God's appointed way and time, they will be. We should pray for Christ to take complete control of our hearts and believe that He will. We must not dwell on our own weakness and emotions but on Christ's power. He is the Savior, not us. Of course we need to cooperate with Him as He works in our lives, as it is written, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12, 13). Just as Christ said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily" (Luke 9:23), so we need to die daily to self and to daily let the resurrected Christ reign in our lives.

Here is a small sample of the many promises of God for full victory. They are a faithful pledge that Christ can live without sin *in our lives*. (Christians of today seem to have "blinkers" on when they read or hear these promises):

For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off...But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, *that thou mayest do it*... I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in His ways, and *to keep His commandments* and His statutes and His judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it (Deuteronomy 30:11-16).

Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed are they that *keep His testimonies*, and that seek Him with the whole heart. *They also do no iniquity*: they walk in His ways (Psalm 119:1-3).

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, *and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them* (Ezekiel 36:26, 27).

With men this is impossible; but with God *all things are possible* (Matthew 19:26).

If thou canst believe, *all things are possible* to him that believeth (Mark 9:23).

Behold, thou art made whole: *sin no more*, lest a worse thing come unto thee (John 5:14).

And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: *go, and sin no more* (John 8:11).

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, *who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able*; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (1 Corinthians 10:13).

I can do *all things* through Christ which strengtheneth me (Philippians 4:13).

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh *hath ceased from sin* (1 Peter 4:1).

And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. *Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him* (1 John 3:5, 6).

Whosoever is born of God *doth not commit sin*; for His seed remaineth in Him: and He cannot sin, because He is born of God (1 John 3:9).

Now unto *Him that is able to keep you from falling*, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen (Jude 1:24, 25).

What we are advocating here is not perfectionism. We are not promoting the idea of trying to be perfect in our own supposed strength. We are not saying that we will be able to boast, “I am now perfect.” We are talking about having faith in God and His promises. Even when Christ is fully reflected in our lives and totally in control of all our thoughts and deeds, we will never boast of being perfect because it is Christ’s perfection, not ours. We will not say, “I have no sin” (1 John 1:8) because this is being boastful and proud. And if we are proud “we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (Christ is not in us). Those who are closest to Christ will have the deepest sense of the frailty and evilness of their own sinful natures. The Christian’s goal is character perfection, but the Christian’s self-view is always one of saying with Paul, “I have not yet attained” (Philippians 3:12). And if the devil does trip us up we are not to be discouraged. God still loves us. Let us remember the words of 1 John 2:1: “these things write I unto you, *that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*”

9. He provided sanctification for believers (Hebrews 10:29; 13:12).

To sanctify (Greek *hagiazō*) means to make holy, to set apart from profane things and dedicate to God, or to purify. Hebrews 13:12 says, “Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people *with His own blood*, suffered without the gate.”

There are two aspects to sanctification, as follows:

a). An ongoing state of being set apart and dedicated to God. This is our state as long as we are abiding in Christ (as the branch is to the vine, John chapter 15). This is what it means to be a saint in the Biblical sense. All true Christians are saints on the basis of what Christ has done. The Greek word for saint, *hagios*, is obviously related to the Greek word for sanctify mentioned above (*hagiazō*).

b). A process of being purified and made more like Christ. This sense is expressed in such verses as the following:

That He might sanctify and cleanse it [the church] with the washing of water by the word (Ephesians 5:26).

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth (*hagnizo*) himself, even as He is pure (1 John 3:3).

Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify (*hagnizo*) your hearts, ye double minded (James 4:8).

10. He provided reconciliation with God (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21).

Sin separated us from God. But Christ has brought believers into fellowship with Him again because of what He has done. Romans 5:10 says, “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God *by the death of His Son*, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”

11. He redeemed us by His most precious blood. (Revelation 5:9; Ephesians 1:7). He purchased or bought us (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 6:20).

Redemption in the Bible is associated with the buying back of someone who had become so poor that they had sold themselves to a stranger (non-Israelite, Leviticus 25:47-49). The person who “purchased” them was to be a close relative, somebody “near of kin.” It is a great comfort to know that Christ our Redeemer is One “near of kin” to us. As Hebrews 2:11 says, “He is not ashamed to call them brethren.” Christ bought us back after we had sold ourselves to the devil. He paid an infinite price for our redemption. Praise, glory and honor be to Him!

Here are some of the passages on this subject:

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; *But with the precious blood of Christ* (Peter 1:18, 19).

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s (1 Corinthians 6:20).

Revelation 5:9 says, referring to Christ, “Thou wast slain, and hast *redeemed us to God by Thy blood* out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”

12. He delivered believers from the fear of death and its associated bondage

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; *that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;*

15 And *deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*
(Hebrews 2:14, 15).

Jesus has “abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light” (2 Timothy 1:10).

13. He provided believers with deliverance from the wrath of God against sin.

Believers can say, with Paul, “Much more then, *being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him*” (Romans 5:9).

We are “to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come” (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

14. He made believers kings and priests to God.

Revelation 5:9, 10 records a hymn sung in Heaven to Jesus, the Lamb that was slain, and reads as follows:

9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for *Thou wast slain*, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

10 *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*

See also 1 Peter 2:9.

15. He gave believers a “living hope” of going to Heaven.

Because Jesus rose from the dead, those who die in Christ will rise again to be with Jesus in Heaven. As it is written:

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy *hath begotten us again unto a lively [living] hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you
(1 Peter 1:3, 4).

See also 2 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:14.

16. He gave believers boldness in approaching God.

Hebrews 10:19 says, “Having therefore, brethren, *boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.*” The idea of coming boldly (confidently) before God may seem strange. How can we, sinful mortals, do this? The key is to remember that it is “by the blood of Jesus.” So we are not coming boldly to God because of some supposed merit of ours, but because of our relationship with Someone else who is very great and who has merit that He has given to us. It is perhaps like being a common person who is invited to see a king or president because of a famous brother whom the king knows personally. See also Ephesians 3:12.

17. He gave believers victory over Satan.

Revelation 12:11 says, “And they overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” The blood of the Lamb is what silences the accusations of Satan. We must plead the merits of Christ’s sacrifice in our battles with evil. As the song goes, “Onward Christian soldiers marching as to war/ *With the cross of Jesus going on before!*”

18. He demonstrated God’s amazing love.

But God commendeth [demonstrates] His love toward us, in that, *while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us* (Romans 5:8).

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man *lay down his life for his friends* (John 15:13). See also John 3:16.

*All the love that has ever flowed through human hearts
Since time began
Is but as the tiniest ripple upon the boundless ocean
When compared with God’s love.*

19. He revealed God’s awesome righteousness.

Romans 3:24-26 says,

Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be *a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His [God’s] righteousness* for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

20. He revealed the beautiful balance between God's mercy and God's justice, between God's grace and God's righteousness (Romans 3:21-26).

The death of Christ enabled God to be both “just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 3:26). God’s righteousness required a penalty for our transgressions of the law, namely, eternal death. God’s mercy provided a substitute: Christ’s death. Thus both attributes of God’s character were satisfied. “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (Psalms 85:10). Jesus, the Divine Son of God, has given us, in His life and death, a perfect demonstration of God’s attributes. He is God manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16). The Bible describes Jesus as righteous (Isaiah 53:11; 1 John 2:1), just (Zechariah 9:9; Acts 3:14, 7:52), merciful and gracious (Romans 16:24; Hebrews 2:17; Jude 1:21). Christ’s sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate demonstration of God’s righteousness, justice and mercy. The cross perfectly demonstrates the unity and balance between God’s righteousness and mercy, His justice and grace. This balance is expressed in other Bible passages: “The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty...” (Numbers 14:18, see also Exodus 34:7; Psalm 89:14; James 1:27; 1 John 3:10).

21. He revealed the immutable, unchangeable nature of God's law.

God’s law could not be altered in order to save us and since the law could not be modified Christ had to die for our transgressions if He wanted to rescue us. “Sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4) and “Christ died for our sins” (1 Corinthians 15:3). If it had been possible for us to be saved through the moral law (which is a transcript of God’s character) being modified, then Christ need not have perished upon Calvary suffering the punishment of the broken law. If we claim that the Ten Commandments have been altered or abolished then we negate both Christ’s own testimony (Matthew 5:17-48) and the significance of His atonement. If God’s moral law

has been adjusted or changed for our sake then Christ died needlessly (c.f. Galatians 2:21). The great sin of the Jewish nation was their rejection of Christ. The great sin of the Christian world today is their rejection of God's moral law, and especially the Fourth Commandment (Exodus 20:8-11 c.f. James 2:10).

22. He revealed the enormity and malignity of sin.

Nothing less than the divine blood of the spotless Son of God could suffice to save us (1 Peter 1:18, 19). Sin is not something to be trifled with. "It was only a little thing that Adam and Eve did when they ate that fruit," someone may say. "It was not!" we reply, "Just look at Christ hanging on the cross and see that it was a terrible thing." Do we crucify the Lord afresh with our "little" sins?

23. He demonstrated that God's law could be kept by humanity even unto death.

Philippians 2:8 says, concerning Christ, "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and *became obedient unto death*, even the death of the cross" (see also Hebrews 5:7-9). Why does Satan tempt people to sin? One main reason is that he wants to show that God's law is faulty and that it cannot be kept. Jesus has refuted this charge completely. He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). He was also tempted far more than we will ever be, and yet did not sin. Which of us has ever been tempted to turn away from bearing the sins and guilt of the world? Which of us has ever been tempted to use divine power to save ourselves? Thus we can see that Christ was tempted far more than we will ever be.

24. He gave us an example to follow with respect to obedience and patient endurance when suffering.

In 1 Peter 2:20-24 and 4:1, 2 it says:

20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

21 For even hereunto were ye called: *because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example*, that ye should follow His steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth:

23 Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously:

24 Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

25. He fulfilled Old Testament ceremonial laws concerning the sanctuary services.

Hebrews 9:13, 14, 23-26.

For thousands of years animals had been sacrificed to symbolize the coming of the Redeemer. Christ's death put an end to this system of animal offerings because He was the reality that these symbols had been pointing to. Even in the Old Testament there is a reference to Christ's death putting an end to the ceremonial sacrifices. Where is this found? In Daniel 9:24-27. These verses are poetical and many modern Bible versions express them in poetry. We need to note specifically that verses 26 and 27 are arranged in an A B A' B' pattern. This means that the first part (A) of verse 26 and the first part (A') of verse 27 refer to the same subject. Likewise the last parts

of these two verses (B and B') are about the same subject. This may be illustrated as follows:

Vs. 26: **A**...

And after threescore and two [62] weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself:

Vs. 26: **B**...

and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

Vs. 27: **A'**...

And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,

Vs. 27: **B'**...

and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

It says in the first part of verse 27, "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation [offering] to cease." This is referring to the work of the Messiah who is described in the first part of verse 26: "And after threescore and two [62] weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself ." Christ, by His death on the cross, brought to an end the system of rituals and offerings that had previously pointed forward to His ministry (See also Matthew 27:51; Ephesians 2:14, 15; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:1-9).

Also by His death Christ earned the right to be our priest and mediator in Heaven as previously typified by the work of the earthly Jewish priests. Hebrews 8:1, 2 plainly states that Jesus ministers as a priest for us in the heavenly sanctuary:

- 1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum:
We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of
the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;
2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle,
which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Hebrews 9:11, 12 says further:

- 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to
come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made
with hands, that is to say, not of this building;
12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, *but by His own
blood* He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained
eternal redemption for us.

Thus, as a result of His death and resurrection, Christ:

- a). Put an end to the earthly sacrifices because He was the true sacrifice offered once for all.
- b) Put an end to the earthly priesthood because He was the true priest who would henceforth minister in Heaven for us.

26. He fulfilled many specific Old Testament messianic prophecies.

This fact verifies the inspiration of the Bible and the identity of the Messiah. Such prophecies include the following:

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it [He] shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel (Genesis 3:15).

For Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption (Psalm 16:10, c.f. Acts 2:25-27).

7 All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,

8 He trusted on the LORD that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him...

14 I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint: My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and My tongue cleaveth to My jaws; and Thou hast brought Me into the dust of death.

16 For dogs have compassed Me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed Me: they pierced My hands and My feet.

17 I may tell all My bones: they look and stare upon Me.

18 They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture.

(Psalm 22:7, 8, 14-18, c.f. Matthew 27:35-43).

20 Reproach hath broken My heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.

21 They gave Me also gall for My meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink.

(Psalm 69:20, 21, c.f. Matthew 27:34).

7 He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of My people was He stricken.

9 And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth.

(Isaiah 53:7-9, c.f. Acts 8:32-35).

12 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.

13 And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

(Zechariah 11:12, 13, c.f. Matthew 27:7-10).

27. He made possible our adoption as God's sons and daughters (Romans 8:8-11; Galatians 4:4-7; Ephesians 1:5-7; John 1:12).

To be adopted into the family of God through the merits of Christ is the highest privilege possible. The Bible says that our heavenly Father cares for even the sparrows. Therefore we can rest assured that He cares for us who are "of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:29-31).

28. He abolished the separating wall that the Jewish ceremonial laws had been made into (by their religious leaders) and verified the equality of all men and women of every race (Ephesians 2:13-16; Colossians 2:14; Galatians 3:26-28).

The passages in Ephesians and Colossians are discussed in detail in the answer to Question 19, so readers are referred there for further comment.

29. He made possible the reconciliation of all things to Himself, both in Heaven and on Earth.

By revealing God's love and justice, and by revealing Satan's wickedness, Jesus has vindicated God's cause before both the heavenly beings and those upon the Earth. As it is written, "And, having made peace *through the blood of His cross*, by Him to reconcile all

things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” (Colossians 1:20).

One day, because of Christ’s sacrifice, all will realize the justice and love of God. Yes, one day “at the name of Jesus every knee... [shall] bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth”...and every tongue shall “confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10, 11).

30. He exposed Satan for who he is—a liar and a murderer (John 8:37-44; 13:2, 27). Satan was the one behind the cruelties of the trial and crucifixion.

31. He made certain the casting out and destruction of Satan, the evil one.

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; *that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil*” (Hebrews 2:14, see also John 12:31, 32).

32. He judged the world.

All are judged by their relationship to Christ and His sacrifice (1 Peter 2:7, 8; Luke 9:23; 1 Corinthians 1:23, 24). How do we relate to Jesus Christ and His crucifixion? Are we attracted or repelled by what He has done?

Let us consider Luke 2:34, 35. These verses record the words of the prophet Simeon given on the day of Jesus’ dedication as an infant in the temple. They read as follows:

And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary His mother, Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea,

a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) *that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.*

Notice these last words, “that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” The true nature and motives of all are revealed clearly when considered in light of the life and death of the Son of God. See also John 12:31.

33. He gave certain assurance of a future, final judgment.

Christ’s resurrection assures us of the future, final judgment and hence provides certainty that all the injustices of this cruel, unfair world will one day be rectified. Acts 17:31 says, “He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof *He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.*”

34. He was declared to be the Son of God with power.

Romans 1:3, 4 reads as follows:

Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And *declared to be the Son of God with power*, according to the spirit of holiness, *by the resurrection from the dead.*

The resurrection of Christ dramatically proved that His claims about His identity were true.

35. He glorified the Father and Himself (John 12:23-28; John 17:1).

God was glorified because His character was revealed as never before.

36. He made possible the wonderful era of the Holy Spirit.

a). In the Old Testament the faithful people of God anticipated a wonderful new era, the era of the Holy Spirit. This era would be ushered in through the work of the Messiah, the Anointed One (anointed with the Holy Spirit): Ezekiel 36:26, 27; 39:29; Joel 2:28-32; Zechariah chapters 12 and 13, especially 12:8-10, which says:

8 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

(Zechariah 12:8-10).

b). We know from reading the Old Testament that the Holy Spirit was active in these times (e.g. Genesis 6:3; 1 Samuel 10:10; Psalm 51:11). But the true era of the Holy Spirit could not come until Christ had done His work on earth and ascended up to Heaven (to claim His right as the true King of Earth) John 7:37-39; Ephesians 4:8-13; Revelation 5:5-12 (notice the reference to the Spirit in Revelation 5:6). John 7:37-39 says:

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; *because that Jesus was not yet glorified.*)

In saying, “*Jesus was not yet glorified*” John meant that He had not died, risen and ascended. This is made clear by John 12:16; 23-31; 13:31-33; 17:1-5

c). John the Baptist had two main messages about Christ, namely, that He was the One who would baptize with the Holy Spirit (John 1:33; Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16) and that He was the One who would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). John’s cry was, “And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost” (John 1:33).

d). Jesus Christ said He was the One who was able to give the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39; 4:10-25). He looked forward to the coming of the Holy Spirit upon His followers (John 16:7-14). Jesus predicted the coming of the Holy Spirit in connection with His ascension (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8). We should rejoice in the privilege of being in the era of the Holy Spirit for Jesus said, “I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you” (John 16:7).

e). We can read about the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit all through the book of Acts. We are now living in the long-awaited era of the Holy Spirit.

37. He became the only one in Heaven and Earth who was worthy to “take the book [scroll], and to open the seals” (Revelation 5:1-14).

What the contents of this book are is not clearly revealed to us. But it is obvious when we read Revelation that the opening of this book is vital for the accomplishment of God’s plans and the final eradication of sin. Also, it is very apparent when we study these verses in Revelation chapter 5, that *Christ’s sacrifice* is the central

reason for His worthiness. He is represented as “a Lamb as it had been slain.” When the “new song” is sung because the Lamb has taken the book, Christ is extolled with the words, “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: *for Thou wast slain.*” Following this, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels take up the melody, singing:

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain
To receive power,
And riches,
And wisdom,
And strength,
And honour,
And glory,
And blessing.
“And every creature which is in heaven,
And on the earth,
And under the earth,
And such as are in the sea,
And all that are in them, heard I saying,
Blessing,
And honour,
And glory,
And power,
Be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne,
And unto the Lamb
For ever
And ever.”

(Revelation 5:12, 13).
Amen!

Endnotes



Introduction Endnotes

¹To avoid confusion this is done even in quotes from the KJV which does not itself use capitalization to differentiate these applications of the word “sabbath” (as the New King James Version does).

Chapter One Endnotes

²A 10 day week was experimented with during the time of the French Revolution. Also the USSR tried twice to alter the week, commanding a five-day week in 1929 and a six-day week in 1932. However, by 1940 the seven-day week had been restored.

³ Christ has redeemed us to God [11] (Revelation 5:9; Ephesians 1:7). He purchased or bought us (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 6:20). Redemption in the Bible is associated with the buying back of someone who had become so destitute that they had sold themselves to a stranger (non-Israelite), Leviticus 25:47-49. The person who did the buying back was to be a close relative, somebody “near of kin.” It is marvelous to realize that Christ our Redeemer is One “near of kin” to us. As it is written, “He is not ashamed to call them brethren” (Hebrews 2:11). Christ bought us back when we had sold ourselves to the devil. He paid an infinite price for our redemption. Praise His Holy Name! This has profound implications for the treatment of modern depression, insecurity, worry and anxiety. Why? Because when we realize that Christ is our “elder brother” who loves us so much that He died a terrible death in our place, then we will rest in the assurance of His promises. When we accept that our heavenly Father, the all-powerful God, loves us so amazingly that He gave His Son for

our redemption, then we will experience true security in knowing that we are a beloved child of God, a member of God's family. He cares for us. No matter what anyone may say otherwise, we have absolute assurance that we are significant and of priceless value.

⁴ Useful Internet sites are:

<<http://webexhibits.org/calendars/index.html>> web page *The Jewish Calendar*, <<http://www.jewfaq.org/toc.htm>> web page *Jewish Calendar*.

⁵ A useful Internet summary was found at <<http://www.greenheart.com/billh/index.html>> web page *Gregorian Calendar*. See also *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Sixth Edition, 2001, Art. *Calendar*, available on the Internet.

⁶ Gregory specified that any year whose number ended with "00" must also be evenly divisible by 400 in order to have a 29-day February.

⁷ Relative to Greenwich.

⁸ Reference: U.S. Naval Observatory, Astronomical Applications Department, Article, *The International Date Line*: <<http://aa.usno.navy.mil/finder/finder.html>>.

⁹ Credit: in preparing this paragraph reference was made to <<http://www.icehawkproductions.com/demo/index1.html>> web page *The International Dateline*.

¹⁰ The information here is easily verifiable from encyclopedias etc. The main source for the data used in this publication was Odom L O, *The Lord's day on a Round World*, 1970, Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee. Odom's book contains quotes from many original sources and is a good reference work on the subject.

¹¹ The latest map of Kiribati from the atlas section of www.info-please.com also uses the pre-1995 IDL.

¹² Personal communication from Pr. John Horvath, President of the Kiribati Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, 29 July 2002.

¹³ As mentioned in the introduction to this book, when one of Christ's 37 achievements, as listed in *Appendix Six*, is referred to a number in square brackets, e.g. [2], will accompany it. This number correlates with the listing of this accomplishment in *Appendix Six* where all 37 are found and discussed.

¹⁴ Psalm 89:14; Isaiah 45:21; Revelation 15:3; Zechariah 9:9; Acts 3:14, 7:52.

¹⁵ The argument using analogy goes something like this: “Do we not as Christian’s believe that a new day arose for all mankind with Christ’s resurrection at Jerusalem on the first day of the week? (Malachi 4:2 and 2 Corinthians 4:6 may be referred to). Why didn’t Christ arise after the Sabbath at Saturday evening? Had He not already completed His Sabbath rest? But no, before He arose there was a period of darkness followed by the light of a new day, like the darkness and light on the first day of creation week (Genesis 1:1-5). And this new dawn for humanity went west from Jerusalem with the dawn of that resurrection morning.” All this reasoning is based on analogy which may sound nice and be quite interesting, but which can have no weight in deciding on Bible doctrine. Why? Because it is speculation. It is not founded on a clear “Thus saith the Lord.”

¹⁶ As an extension of its use in designating the seventh-day Sabbath, the Hebrew word *shabbath* is also sometimes used to refer to the seven-day week. In some cases *shabbath* is translated into the English “sabbath” when really “week” would be the best translation. An example is Leviticus 23:15 in the KJV (c.f. the same verse in the RSV).

¹⁷ However individuals or associations may wish to put these principles into practice. For example, giving the land a year to recoup its strength is a good gardening practice that will no doubt improve crops. The author heard of a man who divided his garden into seven sections and each year gave one section a rest. He apparently had very good results.

¹⁸ Leviticus chapter 23. In addition, it appears from Amos 8:5 that ceremonial sabbaths may have occurred on the monthly new moon festivals. However, it is not completely clear whether Amos 8:5 is referring to a divine precept or to a man-made tradition that was being reluctantly kept. The context of the first part of Amos chapter 8 is the sin of oppressing the poor rather than not resting on prescribed days. The people wanted the Sabbath and new moon to finish so that they could get on with their oppressive dealings.

¹⁹ We are counting Passover and Unleavened Bread as one unified festival. Only the annual feasts of the Mosaic Law are here

discussed. The feasts of Purim (Esther ch. 9) and Dedication (John 10:22) are not included.

²⁰ In the 1830's an international Christian movement proclaimed that Christ's return would occur in the 1840's. They based their teaching on Daniel 8:14. In the U.S.A the most prominent person advocating this was William Miller. The Millerites, as they were called, eventually settled on 1844 as the year when they expected Jesus' return. Though they misunderstood what was to take place in 1844 they were correct regarding the date. The 2300 evening-mornings of Daniel 8:14 is actually a 2300-year time period (see *Appendix Two*). The starting point for this long period is 457 BC when the decree of Daniel 9:24, 25 to restore Jerusalem was issued. The actual event that was to begin in 1844 was the "pre-advent" phase of the judgment necessary before Christ's return and symbolized by the Jewish Day of Atonement. The preaching of Miller and others in the 1830's was a wake up call and made many feel as if they were soon to be judged by God. Many true conversions and much good came out of the movement. Space constraints do not permit further details on this important topic. Readers are referred to <<http://www.askdrbird.com>> or <<http://www.burnoutsolutions.com.au>> or Bird D, *The Forgotten Jesus and The Sanctuary Song*, www.XulonPress.com.

²¹ See previous endnote.

²² Also Moses, on God's behalf, spoke to the people about seventh-day Sabbath observance. Deuteronomy ch. 5; Leviticus 23:2, 3.

²³ Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, Genesis to Deuteronomy, except for the final few verses of Deuteronomy.

²⁴ Also Moses wrote it down in a scroll or book (Deuteronomy 31:24).

²⁵ Animal sacrifices were also prescribed for the seventh-day Sabbath. This was commanded as part of the ceremonial law (Numbers 28:3-10) and not as part of the moral law. Animal sacrifices are not mentioned in the Fourth Commandment. The shedding of the blood of animals as an aspect of worship on the Sabbath has been superceded because Christ has died as the lamb of God and we no longer need animal sacrifices to look forward in faith to the coming Redeemer.

²⁶ Matthew 21:43.

²⁷ During the feasts of Unleavened Bread (barley wave sheaf) and Pentecost (first fruits of wheat). Likewise the aspect of Tabernacles that focussed on the end of the grain, olive and grape harvests has been superceded.

²⁸ Instead of the Passover/Unleavened bread ceremonies.

²⁹ Instead of Pentecost.

³⁰ Instead of the Feast of Tabernacles. Some may wish to have special annual remembrances of these various Christian events and realities based on the dates of the yearly Jewish festivals. We have no controversy with such. Easter usually falls very close to Passover and is already fulfilling this purpose for many. We are not, however, of the opinion that we should make these festival days a test and teach that it is sin to work on them. Why? Because, unlike the seventh-day Sabbath, these annual sabbaths were not named in the moral law (Ten Commandments), and God did not specify them as being a test. Of course, believers should remember the great Christian truths such as the death and resurrection of Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the judgment and the hope of Heaven more than just annually!

³¹ By His resurrection from the dead Christ was “declared to be the Son of God with power” Romans 1:3, 4 [34].

³² Christ took upon Himself our sins and died in our place (1 Corinthians 15:3) [1]. Thus He is able to provide spiritual rest for the guilty. He took upon Himself our emotional and mental ailments (Isaiah 53:4) [2]. Thus He is able to give relief to those tortured by grief, worry, confusion, anxiety, depression etc. Christ also took upon Himself our physical ailments [3]. He took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses (Matthew 8:17). By His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24). Thus He provides rest for the weary body and is able to heal the sick. Those who trust in Jesus will one day be free from the various sicknesses that afflict them, if not in this life, then in the life to come. The weekly Sabbath rest celebrates all these things. For more details on these accomplishments and qualifications of Christ please see *Appendix Six*.

³³ The Sabbath is a special time for the strengthening and restoring of relationships. Every relationship needs *time* for it to prosper. On

the Sabbath our relationship with God and our family is to receive special attention. Taking the family out into nature on the Sabbath, contemplating God's works and talking of His goodness will have a wonderful influence for good. The Sabbath is a special time to strengthen marriage bonds, just as Adam and Eve must have been drawn closer to one another when they had that first Sabbath together with God back in Eden.

³⁴ See for example Matthew 12:10; Mark 1:21-26; Luke 13:10-14; 14:1-5; John 5:9, 9:14.

³⁵ Greek, *spoudazo*, to hasten, make haste, to exert one's self, endeavor, give diligence, *Online Greek Lexicon*.

³⁶ The greatest battle that we have is daily surrender to God. This is where we need to especially strive. The effort is to be in the surrendering of the will to God, not in a vain attempt to do "good works" in our own supposed strength. Jesus says, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." [8] "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for *without Me ye can do nothing*." Luke 9:23; John 15:4, 5.

³⁷ The Book of Hebrews was almost certainly written in the AD 60's. The content itself reveals that it was written well after the ascension of Christ (e.g. 4:15, 16; 8:1-5; 10:19-21) and yet before the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem (13:10).

³⁸ Copyright 1946, 1952, 1973 by National Council of Churches of Christ.

³⁹ A wave sheaf of barley.

⁴⁰ The 16th of Abib was counted as day 1.

⁴¹ To assist in making this explanation simpler to understand we have ignored here the fact that the Biblical seventh day of the week was sunset Friday to sunset Saturday, whereas the modern seventh day of the week is midnight Friday to midnight Saturday, or simply Saturday as we call it. For more detail please see the answer to Question 1.

⁴² Please see the previous endnote.

Chapter Two Endnotes

⁴³ We are all sons and daughters of a human “marriage” (though often the “marriage” falls far short of the ideal). Also we are all supposed to be spiritual sons and daughters of God, and indeed become such when we accept Christ as our Savior. Marriage and Sabbath cement these human and divine family bonds—bonds that provide the foundation for our identity and security—and, if we will let Him, Christ restores the brokenness in them.

⁴⁴ God’s presence is associated with His face and countenance.

⁴⁵ *Online Hebrew Bible Lexicon.*

⁴⁶ Other things are mentioned as signs (Hebrew *owth*) such as circumcision (Genesis 17:11), the Passover (Exodus 13:9), the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 6:8) and the words of scripture (Deuteronomy 11:18), but these are not described as a sign that God is *the One who sanctifies us*.

⁴⁷ Jesus kept the commandments perfectly. So His life is also central in enabling us to know what sin is.

⁴⁸ Yes, it was the pre-incarnate Christ, the Son of God, who gave the Ten Commandments. In Exodus 20:1-3 it says “And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt...” Who was God here? Christ. We can see this clearly by comparing John 8:58 with Exodus 3:12-14. In John 8:58 Jesus says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.” So Christ is the “I AM” who appeared to Moses in Exodus 3:12-14 saying that He would bring the Israelites out of Egypt: “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” Thus Christ is the God of Exodus 20:1 who could say, “I...have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” Also 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 says “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: *and that Rock was Christ.*” (See also Romans 9:33 and 1 Peter 2:6-8).

The pre-incarnate Christ (the Word) was God, the Rock, who was with the Israelites in the wilderness.

The term “Word,” Greek *Logos* (John ch. 1) points us back to the “oracle” of the Old Testament sanctuary. The oracle was a term used to designate the Most Holy Place (1 Kings 6:16). But the actual word “oracle” is from the Hebrew term *dabar* which has the primary meaning of “speech, word, speaking” (*Online Bible Lexicon*). In the Most Holy Place Christ appeared to Moses above the Ark and spoke to him from a cloud of glory (Exodus 25:22; 34:29, 30). Thus by declaring Christ to be the Word and the Light (John 1:4-9; 8:12; 9:5) the New Testament reveals Him to be the oracle of God and the glory of God that lead the Israelites in the wilderness.

⁴⁹ How are the Ten Commandments prominent in the section of Revelation following 11:19? Consider the following:

Revelation 12:17 says, “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which *keep the commandments of God*, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 14:12 says, “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that *keep the commandments of God*, and the faith of Jesus.” Also Revelation chapter 13 describes two evil beast-powers that counterfeit or rebel against *the first four of the Ten Commandments* as follows: (1) The First Commandment tells us to have no other gods before the LORD our God; but the beast that comes from the sea (we will call this the sea-beast) of Revelation 13 is worshipped as a god. (2) The Second Commandment tells us to never make an image to worship; but in Revelation 13 an image to the sea-beast is worshipped. (3) The Third Commandment tells us to not take the name of the LORD our God in vain; but the sea-beast of Revelation 13 is full of names of blasphemy and opens its mouth to blaspheme God. (4) The Fourth Commandment tells us to remember the Sabbath day, and describes this commandment in terms of a seal. Ancient covenants were sealed in the middle and, of course, the Fourth Commandment is in the middle of the Ten Commandments. A seal contains a name, a title, and a dominion. In the Fourth Commandment it is “the LORD, Yahweh,” “God the Creator,” “the heavens the earth and the sea.” The sea-beast has a

counterfeit seal, the mark of the beast (which is discussed in the answer to Question 46).

⁵⁰ Most things in this prophecy have a double application to both events.

⁵¹ Some have proposed that Jesus gave this instruction because His followers would have received more persecution from Jews for transgressing their (erroneous) traditional Jewish Sabbath rules by fleeing on the seventh day. But why would they have been persecuted if they were following the directions of verses 17 and 18? There is no Sabbath work or preparation involved here to call for persecution. The only obvious activity that might have conceivably annoyed fanatical Jews is Christians walking more than the prescribed traditional distance on the Sabbath. But how would the fanatics have known how far they were walking? It is difficult to see this resulting in such massive persecution as to warrant a specific caution from Jesus in advance. Evidently Jesus' concern is with the sacredness of the Sabbath and the problems of conscience that would arise for His people from a call to flee on this day. *Winter was not a good time to flee because it was a season of increased hardship, and the Sabbath was not a good time to flee because it was designed to be a season of happiness and rejoicing.*

⁵² Just as in Exodus 19:6 God said to ancient Israel, "ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation," so the New Testament testifies that Christ, by His sacrifice, has made Christians "kings and priests" unto God [14]. Revelation 5:9, 10; 1 Peter 2:9. What a cure for feelings of worthlessness, insignificance and low self-esteem! The believer in Christ is not only a child of God but also a king and priest to God!

⁵³ The Passover is described as a sign (Exodus 13:9) and as something to be kept forever (Exodus 12:14). But it is not called a sign of sanctification or a perpetual covenant. The Hebrew term translated "for ever" is *owlam* or *olam* and means variously, long duration, antiquity, futurity, for ever, ever, everlasting, evermore, perpetual, old, ancient, world (*Online Hebrew Lexicon*). Thus it can mean a specific portion of time, or an indefinitely long period, depending on the subject. For example, it is used of the child Samuel (1 Samuel 1:22, 28) and of a Hebrew slave (Exodus 21:6) to mean, "as long

as they live.” The sacrificial services of the Passover were part of the ceremonial law and were to be observed every year until Jesus fulfilled them by His death. In contrast to this the seventh-day Sabbath, part of the Ten Commandments or moral law, is perpetually binding and will even be kept in Heaven (Isaiah 66:23). Note: The passage in Isaiah 66:23 says, “from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the LORD.” The reference to the “new moon” is obviously not a reference to the Jewish ceremonial new moon festivals of old. The Hebrew word for “new moon” is *chodesh* and can simply mean “month.” Since the tree of life in Heaven will bear its fruit every month (Revelation 22:2) there may be a monthly worship meeting in Heaven corresponding to this event.

⁵⁴ The Old Testament civil laws applied to the people of Israel before Christ’s first coming when their nation was to be under the direct government of God. The Israelite nation was then a God-ordained, God-directed religious and civil organization (technically called a “Theocracy”). God had arranged things so that He could communicate His wishes directly to the people through the high priest. Unfortunately, the nation of Israel rejected their Messiah and withdrew from God’s kingship (Matthew 21:33-46; John 19:15). So the kingdom of God was transferred from Israel to the Christian church (Matthew 21:43). The Christian church is a purely religious organization. Although it has its form of discipline and order (Matthew 18:15-17), it is not to be a union with the state, and is not to use civil laws. This can be seen, not only from specific passages in the New Testament (Matthew 22:21; 26:52, 53; John 6:15; 18:36; Luke 17:20, 21) but also from the fact that the New Testament Church operated as a religious movement separate from the civil authorities of the day (please read Acts). The church was subject to the civil rulers in all matters that did not interfere with the higher claims of God (Romans 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 14). As an organization it spread worldwide in numerous different nations and under many civil authorities.

⁵⁵ Part of Moses’ commentary on the Ten Commandments.

⁵⁶ The phrase “hangeth on a tree” is a reference to the crucifixion. See also 1 Peter 1:18; Revelation 5:9.

⁵⁷ John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:7-10.

⁵⁸ Paulien J, *The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier, A Practical Guide to Abundant Christian Living in the Book of John*, Pacific Press, Boise Idaho, 1995, p. 196.

Chapter Three Endnotes

⁵⁹ Actually the seventh-day Sabbath is sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. Modern terminology has been used to make the answer easier to understand. Please see the answer to Question 1 for more details on which day is the seventh day of the week.

⁶⁰ See for example Matthew 12:10; Mark 1:21-26; Luke 13:10-14; 14:1-5; John 5:9, 9:14.

⁶¹ The nearest we get is God's command for Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac in Genesis 22. But this was not an animal offering. God did command Jacob in Genesis 35:1 to build an altar. This does imply He wanted animal sacrifices to be offered, but again is not a *specific command* to do so.

⁶² Genesis 4:7; 18:20; 20:9; 31:36; 39:9; 42:22; 50:17.

⁶³ Exodus 20:8-11.

Chapter Four Endnotes

⁶⁴ John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:7-10.

⁶⁵ Please see the answer to Question 9 for Bible references and more details about this theme.

⁶⁶ On the subject of God being particular, some relevant passages are Genesis 3:1-8; 4:3-5 (c.f. Hebrews 11:4); Leviticus 10:1, 2; 23:26-30; Exodus 16:4-30; 1 Samuel 15:1-23; 2 Samuel 6:1-7 (c.f. Numbers 4:15, 19, 20); 1 Kings 13:1-26.

⁶⁷ For more details about justification and what it actually is, please see the answer to Question 15.

⁶⁸ For more details please see the discussion of Hebrews chapter 4 in the answer to Question 6, part 4, point "e."

⁶⁹ Please see the discussion of Hebrews chapter 4 in Question 6, part 4, point "e."

⁷⁰ Please see the answer to Question 13.

⁷¹ C.f. Hebrews 4:9, 10 and the discussion of these verses in the answer to Question 6, part 4, point "e."

⁷² Set us apart as His and purify us. Exodus 31:13 and Ezekiel 20:12, 20.

⁷³ Credit is given to Adrian Eben whose sermon on Babylon alerted the author to the fact that “Babylon is fallen” involves a cry of freedom. His web site is <<http://www.maranathamedia.com.au>>

⁷⁴ Please visit <<http://www.askdrbird.com>> or <<http://www.burnoutsolutions.com.au>>. However we will mention that the identity of Babylon can Biblically be studied in two ways. Firstly, the book of Revelation identifies end-time Babylon as a conglomerate of “the dragon, the beast and the false prophet.” Secondly, the Old Testament description of Babylon refers to her as being rooted in the idea of performance-based identity and “security.” For evidence and discussion please visit one of the above web sites.

⁷⁵ Notice also the blending of God’s mercy and righteousness/justice in Numbers 14:18. We must be careful to understand and present these two attributes of God’s character in a balanced way. They work together in perfect harmony. Today Christians generally talk about and promote the idea of God’s mercy and neglect His righteousness. Thus, the righteousness of His laws is lightly regarded by many. In the past the balance seems to have been in the opposite direction with God’s majesty, power and wrath against sin being emphasized and His mercy and grace kept in the background.

⁷⁶ Righteousness is Hebrew *tsedeq*, Greek *dikaioisune*. In the KJV *tsedeq* is translated as both “righteousness” and “justice.” Righteous is Hebrew *tsaddiyq*, Greek *dikaios*. In the KJV *tsaddiyq* is translated as both “righteous” and “just.” Also *dikaios* is translated as “righteous,” “just,” and “justice.”

⁷⁷ Psalm 11:7, Revelation 16:5.

⁷⁸ Psalm 34:17; Isaiah 45:21; Revelation 15:3.

⁷⁹ Exodus 20:6; 34:6; Deuteronomy 4:31; Psalms 118:1; Luke 6:36; Hebrews 8:12.

⁸⁰ Isaiah 53:11; 1 John 2:1.

⁸¹ Zechariah 9:9; Acts 3:14, 7:52.

⁸² Romans 16:24; Hebrews 2:17; Jude 1:21.

⁸³ Romans 3:21-26; Titus 3:5-7.

⁸⁴ See also Exodus 34:7; Psalm 89:14; James 1:27 and 1 John 3:10.

⁸⁵ See also Matthew 22:37-40.

⁸⁶ This is why we cannot keep the law without having Jesus Christ in our hearts.

⁸⁷ Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8 c.f. Psalm 111:7, 8; 119:160; Matthew 5:18.

⁸⁸ Daniel 9:27; Matthew 27:51; Ephesians 2:14, 15; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:1-9.

⁸⁹ E.g. baptism and the communion service of bread and wine.

⁹⁰ Technically called a “theocracy.”

⁹¹ Matthew 18:15-17.

⁹² Matthew 22:21; 26:52, 53; John 18:36; 6:15; Luke 17:20, 21.

⁹³ Please read through the book of Acts.

⁹⁴ Romans 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 14.

⁹⁵ Proverbs 4:18; 11:28; 16:24; 25:13, 25 c.f. Psalm 126:5; Hosea 10:12.

⁹⁶ Proverbs 4:19; 6:27, 28; 10:26; 15:19; 16:27; 17:14; 22:8; 23:29-35; 24:30-24; 25:16, 20; 26:1, 21; 30:33.

⁹⁷ Matthew 5:15; 7:16; 7:24-27; 9:16, 17; 13:3-8; 13:24-30; Mark 4:26, 27; John 15:4,5.

⁹⁸ E.g. Leviticus ch. 11.

⁹⁹ E.g. Deuteronomy 23:13.

¹⁰⁰ E.g. Leviticus ch. 13.

¹⁰¹ E.g. Leviticus 25:4.

¹⁰² E.g. Exodus 23:12, Deuteronomy 22:10.

¹⁰³ White, Ellen G., *Thoughts from The Mount of Blessing*, Pacific Press, Boise, Idaho, 1896, 1955, p. 118.

¹⁰⁴ See also Ezekiel 28:12-19; Revelation 12:7-9.

¹⁰⁵ White, Ellen G., *Evangelism*, Review and Herald Pub. Assoc., Washington, D.C., 1946, p.633.

¹⁰⁶ As revealed in His life, the Ten Commandments and the rest of the Bible.

¹⁰⁷ Romans 4:6; 9:32; 11:6; Galatians 2:16; 3:2-10; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 4:9, 10.

¹⁰⁸ This question is based on an allegation printed on some non-referenced, photocopied sheets given to the author several years ago.

¹⁰⁹ Matthew 27:51; Ephesians 2:14, 15; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:1-9.

¹¹⁰ Please see also Matthew 5:19; 28:20; 1 John 3:22-24; 2 John 1:6; Revelation 14:12.

¹¹¹ The passage reads literally from the Greek as follows: HAVING BLOTTED OUT THE AGAINST US HANDWRITING IN THE DECREES, WHICH WAS ADVERSE TO US, ALSO IT HE HAS TAKEN OUT OF THE MIDST, HAVING NAILED IT TO THE CROSS (*Online Bible*).

¹¹² In both Colossians 2:14 and 2:20 it is translated as “ordinances” in the KJV.

¹¹³ There is also some evidence that it was a health precept. In addition, it could be argued that it was a civil law as it was closely connected to Israelite citizenship. But it was definitely not a moral law.

¹¹⁴ Christ as head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Colossians 1:18; 2:10, 19). Christ superior to all “principality and power” (Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 2:10). The Church as the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 3:6; 4:4-16; 5:23, 30; Colossians 1:18, 24; 2:19; 3:15). Reconciliation through the cross (Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20) [10]. Also the theme of what Christ has abolished, which we are presently examining.

¹¹⁵ For a description see *Easton’s Revised Bible Dictionary*, Art. *Temple, Herod’s*. He gives a summary of Josephus’ account of the wall and mentions a stone found at the Temple ruins in 1871 bearing the following inscription in Greek capitals: “No stranger is to enter within the partition wall and enclosure around the sanctuary. Whoever is caught will be responsible to himself for his death, which will ensue.” Though this wall is not mentioned specifically in the Bible, it is implied in Acts 21:28, 29. See also Revelation 11:2.

Chapter Five Endnotes

¹¹⁶ Comparing Hebrews 13:20 with Hebrews 12:24 and 9:13-18 reveals that the new covenant is the same as the everlasting covenant.

¹¹⁷ Genesis 3:14, 15; Hebrews 11:4 (Abel was Adam’s second son).

¹¹⁸ Genesis 17:2-7; Galatians 3:16-18.

¹¹⁹ Genesis 15:5, 6; 17:5-8; Galatians 3:6-9, 16, 29; Isaiah ch. 53; Hebrews 9:1-11; 11:4, 24-28.

¹²⁰ Matthew 28:19, 20; John 13:1-17; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Colossians 2:11, 12.

¹²¹ Deuteronomy 30:6, 11-14; Romans 2:28, 29; 10:5-8; 7:21-25.

¹²² Micah 6:6-8; Acts 15:1, 8-11; Galatians 2:11-21; 5:2-4; Colossians 2:16, 17.

¹²³ It was regarded as a day when one should not mourn, but rather rejoice in God's wonderful works. Bacchiocchi S, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, Biblical Perspectives, Berrien Springs, MI, pp. 187, 188.

¹²⁴ Luke 18:10-14; 2 Corinthians 10:12; Matthew 7:1-5.

¹²⁵ Leviticus 19:17; Luke 17:3; Matthew 18:15; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13.

¹²⁶ Matthew 7:15-20; 16:6-12; Philippians 3:2; 2 John 1:10, 11.

¹²⁷ C.f. Hebrews 4:9, 10 and the discussion of these verses in the answer to Question 6, part 4, point "e."

¹²⁸ Set us apart as His, see Exodus 31:13 and Ezekiel 20:12, 20.

¹²⁹ Please see the answer to Question 8, part 6 with the endnote.

¹³⁰ Matthew 18:15-17.

¹³¹ Matthew 22:21; 26:52, 53; John 6:15; 18:36; Luke 17:20, 21.

¹³² The Bible measures days from sunset to sunset, Leviticus 23:32; Genesis 1:5, 8, 13.

¹³³ *Online Bible Lexicon* (*Qal* stem used here).

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

Chapter Six Endnotes

¹³⁶ Exodus 23:12: "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: *that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.*" See also Exodus 23:11; Deuteronomy 5:14, 15.

¹³⁷ The Greek word for saint(s), *hagios*, is obviously related to the Greek word for sanctify (*hagiazō*).

¹³⁸ Ephesians 5:26; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 John 3:3: "And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth (*hagnizo*) himself, even as

He is pure.” James 4:8: “... purify (*hagnizo*) your hearts, ye double minded.”

¹³⁹ Notice also the promises given to Sabbath-keepers in Isaiah 56:2-8. This is another passage that associates the Sabbath with God’s work of restoration, God’s work of bringing those who are far away back into His presence.

¹⁴⁰ The word translated as “heresy” in the KJV is the same Greek word as “sect.”

¹⁴¹ C.f. John 16:1, 2; Acts 26:11; Matthew 10:17.

¹⁴² Though these passages do not mention any problem with the law of Moses for Jews, Acts chapter 15 does. The controversy in Acts 15 was over whether the *Gentiles* (Acts 15:3-5, 19) should observe circumcision *but* also pointed out that the law had been made a yoke of bondage *for the Jews* by being used as an attempted method of earning favor with God (Acts 15:9, 10). *In this sense* of being used as an attempt at salvation based on works, the law of Moses could be a big problem for Jewish converts. But though in the book of Acts the early church made a big point about not using the Mosaic Law as a false method of salvation, it did not condemn this law in itself and prohibit Jews from its use. We are not trying to say here that the ceremonial laws are still relevant for ethnic Jews. The point is that *for Jews* the book of Acts does not mention the law of Moses, including circumcision, as being a problem except for its misuse as an effort to earn salvation. This all adds to the evidence of how Jewish the early church was.

¹⁴³ Acts 15:13-29; Galatians 1:19; 2:9, 12; Acts 12:17; 21:18.

¹⁴⁴ Acts 15:1, 2, 5 c.f. Galatians 2:12; 3:1; 5:11; 6:12; Philippians 3:2, 3.

¹⁴⁵ Galatians 2:11-13; 4:9, 10; 5:1-12; 6:12; Philippians 3:2, 3; Colossians 2:10-23.

¹⁴⁶ Smith W, *Smith’s Bible Dictionary*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, USA, 1967, p. 492.

¹⁴⁷ The book of Revelation often “alludes” to the rest of the Bible, especially the Old Testament. An allusion is a reference to another Bible passage that God wants us to know about in order to help us understand what is being said in Revelation. Although an allusion often uses some of the same words as the passage it is

alluding to, it is different from a quotation where many identical words in the same order are used. Allusions can be determined by looking for common ideas, common words, and common background themes. Some allusions are quite easy to notice and appear to be definite while others are less definite. An example of a definite allusion would be Revelation 13:1-3 with respect to Daniel 7:1-7 (i.e. Revelation 13:1-3 alludes to Daniel 7:1-7). How can we know this? In both cases there are animals (“beasts”) coming out of the sea. Also the beast in Revelation 13 is composed of parts of all four of the beasts mentioned in Daniel chapter 7. In this allusion there are common words and a very strong thematic association (fierce beasts—lion, bear, leopard, ten-horned monster—coming up out of the sea). There are many allusions in Revelation. A Bible with cross-references can be a great help in finding them.

¹⁴⁸ Ancient covenants were sealed in the middle. Obviously the Fourth Commandment is in the middle of the Ten Commandments. A seal needs a name, a title, and a dominion. In the Fourth Commandment it is “the LORD, Yahweh,” “God the Creator,” “the heavens the earth and the sea.”

¹⁴⁹ In Exodus it says, “Now therefore, *if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant* [the Ten Commandments], then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine” Exodus 19:5. That the covenant here refers to the Ten Commandments is shown by Exodus 34:28: “...And He wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.” Exodus 20:6 is also relevant: “And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and *keep My commandments*” (c.f. Exodus 16:28). The same theme of obedience to God’s commandments demonstrating loyalty to Him is found in Revelation chapters 13 and 14: “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which *keep the commandments of God*, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Revelation 12:17, the last verse of chapter 12 and an introduction to chapters 13 and 14). Also Revelation 14:12 says, “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that *keep the commandments of God*, and the faith of Jesus.”

Chapter Seven Endnotes

¹⁵⁰ Inasmuch as these events have been recorded, we can safely assume that at least some disciples were present to witness them. After all, it was the disciples' job to be with Jesus and learn the lessons He taught.

¹⁵¹ If Sunday came in after the cross we can be sure that it wasn't Jesus who "added" it to His covenant.

¹⁵² Please see the answer to Question 6 under the part discussing Hebrew 4:9 (part 4, point "e") and also the answer to Question 24.

¹⁵³ Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; c.f. 1 Corinthians 11:26 where it says that in having the Lord's supper we "do shew the Lord's death *till He come.*"

¹⁵⁴ "Sabbath" occurs in 55 *verses* of the New Testament, but in 5 of these verses the term appears twice, thus giving a total of 60 in all.

¹⁵⁵ Luke 23:56.

¹⁵⁶ C.f. Hebrews 4:9, 10 and the discussion of these verses in the answer to Question 6, part 4, point "e."

Chapter Eight Endnotes

¹⁵⁷ Please read Matthew 27:57- 26:6; Mark 15:37 through 16:6; Luke 23:50 through 24:6; John 19:30 through 20:14.

¹⁵⁸ Leviticus 23:16-21.

¹⁵⁹ Exodus 34:22.

¹⁶⁰ Exodus 34:22; Numbers 28:26.

¹⁶¹ Exodus 23:16.

¹⁶² Matthew 26:17-21. Verse 17 says, "Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover?" Inasmuch as leaven (yeast) was forbidden from the 14th to the 21st of the first month (Nisan), Passover on the 14th was considered as part of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (See Exodus 12:8-18). Strictly speaking however, one would say that the 14th of Nisan was Passover and the *first* day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was the 15th. See also Mark 14:12-17; Luke 22:7-15.

¹⁶³ John 18:28; John 19:14.

¹⁶⁴ *Ecclesiastical History*, book 5, ch. 22, found in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*. By Sabbath he means the Jewish seventh-day

Sabbath. The term “Sabbath” was not applied to Sunday by the early church fathers. They often used the term “Lord’s day” for Sunday. The churches of Rome and Alexandria were the most forward in promoting Sunday and demoting the seventh-day Sabbath.

¹⁶⁵ *Ecclesiastical History*, book 7, ch. 19, found in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*. His *Ecclesiastical History* was written in 439–50 AD.

Chapter Nine Endnotes

¹⁶⁶ See for example Bacchiocchi S, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, Biblical Perspectives, Berrien Springs, MI. This book can be ordered from, and selected chapters read at, the web site <<http://www.biblicalperspectives.com>>.

¹⁶⁷ Relevant texts are Acts chapter 15; the whole book of Galatians; Philippians 3:2-11; Colossians 2:11-23; Titus 1:10. See also the answers to Questions 22, 26, 32 and 14.

¹⁶⁸ In “honor of the emperor Aelius Adrian” (Eusebius Pamphilius, *The Church History of Eusebius*, book 4, ch. 6, found in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*).

¹⁶⁹ Eusebius Pamphilius (c.263–339?), *The Church History of Eusebius*, book 4, ch. 6, found in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*.

¹⁷⁰ Bacchiocchi S, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, Biblical Perspectives, Berrien Springs, MI, pp. 181-184 and ch. VII. This book can be ordered from, and selected chapters read at, the web site <<http://www.biblicalperspectives.com>>.

¹⁷¹ Circa AD 365.

¹⁷² Council of Laodicea, Canon 29, in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*. To stigmatize seventh-day Sabbath-keepers the label “Judaizer” was increasingly applied to them. The label was false because these Sabbath-keepers, unlike the Jewish-oriented heretics spoken against in the New Testament, were not seeking salvation through works or Jewish traditions.

¹⁷³ Bacchiocchi S, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, Biblical Perspectives, Berrien Springs, MI, ch. VIII. This book can be ordered from, and selected chapters read at, the web site <<http://www.biblicalperspectives.com>>.

¹⁷⁴ Particularly Rome and Alexandria. See the quotes from Socrates and Sozoman given in the answer to Question 41.

¹⁷⁵ Huntington, Ind., *Our Sunday Visitor*, 1938.

¹⁷⁶ From the 1940's to 1960's.

¹⁷⁷ London, Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd., 1922, 1948, p 89, emphasis in original.

¹⁷⁸ Emphasis theirs. Please note well the last few words, "they are obeying the authority of the Catholic Church."

¹⁷⁹ Some call it "the little horn" because it started small.

¹⁸⁰ Shea W. H., *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, Rev. Ed., Daniel and Revelation Committee Series Vol. 1, Hagerstown, Maryland, Review and Herald Pub. Assoc., 1992, pp. 130, 131.

¹⁸¹ Shea W. H., *The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier, Daniel 1-7*, Boise, Idaho, Pacific Press, 1996, p. 173.

¹⁸² Babylon: Daniel 1:1; 2:37, 38; 4:30. Medo-Persia: Daniel 5:28-31 (Note "Chaldeans" was another name for "Babylonians," see Daniel 1:1-5); Daniel 8:20. Greece: Daniel 8:21.

¹⁸³ Obviously it was ruling at the time of Christ (e.g. Luke 3:1). See also *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, Art. *Ancient Rome*, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. 1994-2000.

¹⁸⁴ Here it is worth mentioning that Daniel's prophecies about empires that ruled *before* Christ's first coming relate to the geographical region affecting the nation of Israel, i.e. Palestine. That is why other world empires, such as China, are not mentioned in the second chapter of Daniel. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome all ruled over Palestine. In Daniel 7:2 it says that Daniel saw four winds blowing upon "the great sea." This was the sea from which the four beasts emerged. In the Bible the phrase "great sea" means the Mediterranean Sea (Numbers 34:6; Joshua 1:4, etc.). Thus we can expect the empires of this chapter to be those that occupied territory in the Mediterranean Basin.

¹⁸⁵ One method of confirming that this refers to the second coming is by comparing Daniel 2:34, 35, 44 with 1 Corinthians 10:4 and Revelation 19:11-21.

¹⁸⁶ Daniel 7:24; 8:20, 21; Revelation 17:12.

¹⁸⁷ If we compare Daniel 7:17 with Daniel 7:23 we can see that "kings" can mean kingdoms or empires. The Aramaic word used for

“kings” in Daniel 7:24 (*melek*) is the same word as used in Daniel 7:17. Thus, the horns of Daniel 7:24 are representative of kingdoms in the same way that the beasts of 7:17 are. The activities of the horn with eyes and a mouth and the exceedingly great horn, as described in chapters 7 and 8, indicate that they cannot just be individuals. Thus the context of the individual passages and the understanding of other identifying characteristics enable us to clearly identify whether a nation or a leader is referred to. Generally the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, which cover long periods of time, are about kingdoms, nations or empires.

¹⁸⁸ We know from other passages that it is at Christ’s second coming that “the saints of the most high” shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever: Daniel 7:18 c.f. Daniel 2:34, 35, 44; 1 Corinthians 10:4; Daniel 11:40-12:3 (note especially vs. 12:1 and the reference to deliverance and the book); Revelation 19:11-21; 22:3-5.

¹⁸⁹ Gibbon E, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XXVI; *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, Art. *Ancient Rome, Invasions in the early 5th century*, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. 1994-2000.

¹⁹⁰ The generally excepted date for the end of the Western Roman Empire. This was when Odoacer, king of the Heruli, took over in Rome and Italy. See Gibbon E, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XXXVI especially par. 30, *Extinction of the Western Empire*.

¹⁹¹ We found a helpful illustration detailing the invasions of all of these tribes (except the Heruli) in *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, Art. *Ancient Rome, Invasions in the early 5th century*, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. 1994-2000.

¹⁹² Gibbon E, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XXXVIII, par. 6, *Conversion of Clovis*.

¹⁹³ See Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5.

¹⁹⁴ In prophetic time a month is 30 days and a year 360 days. We can confirm this by comparing the seven references to the 1260-year period with each another (Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2, 3; 12:6,14; 13:5). It is also confirmed by the application and fulfillment of the prophetic time prophecies.

¹⁹⁵ Froom L. E., *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Washington DC, Review and Herald, 1950, vol. 2, pp. 53, 55. In this book the horn with eyes and a mouth is usually referred to as the “Little Horn.”

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. vol. 2, p. 453.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. vol. 2, p. 530. Strangled and burnt for his stand against the Papacy.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid. vol. 2, p. 528. Burnt at the stake for his stand against the Papacy.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid. vol. 2, p. 784.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. vol. 2, p. 661. The world-famous physicist.

²⁰¹ Ibid. vol. 3, p. 744. “He was the world’s most noted missionary traveler and linguistic of his generation” (ibid. vol. 3, p. 461).

²⁰² He called it “Popedome.” Ibid. vol. 3, p. 355.

²⁰³ Froom L. E., *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Washington DC, Review and Herald, 1950, documents in its four volumes at least 53 other expositors who came to the same conclusion. Here are the names and approximate dates: Eberhard II (Salzburg) d1246 (d1553 means he died in 1553), Abravanel 1496, Martin Luther 1521 (Luther’s 1521 exposition identified this horn as the Papacy. Later, however, he referred to it as being the Turks. This is probably because of the political situation of the time. Western Christianity was in great danger of being overwhelmed by the Ottoman Turks), George Joye d1553 (Associate of Tyndale), Heinrich Bullinger 1557 (Zwingli’s intimate friend and successor), George Pacard 1604, Joseph Mede 1631, Henry Moore 1664, John Tillinghast 1665, William Lowth 1700, Robert Fleming Jn. 1701, Cotton Mather 1702, William Whiston 1706, William Burnet 1724, Samuel Mather d1785, Hans Wood 1787, Benjamin Gate 1788, James Bicheno 1793, David Simpson 1797, Jean De la Flechere 1800. William Hales 1803, George Faber 1804, Joseph Priestly d1804, Thomas Scott 1805, William Cunninghame 1813, Charles D Maitland 1813, Thomas H Horne 1818, Peter Roberts d1819, John Bayford 1820, Elias Boudinot d1821, Henry Gauntlett 1821, John Romeyn d1825, Edward Irving 1826, Asa McFarland d1827, Alexander Keith 1828, Thomas Keyworth 1828, Alfred Addis 1829, Philip Allwood 1829, John Hooper 1829, William Jones 1830, James Begg 1831, William Miller 1831, John Cox 1832, Matthew Habershon 1834, F. Louis Gausson 1837, Mrs. Charlotte

Elizabeth 1840, Richard C. Shimeall 1842, Thomas Birks 1843, John Cook 1843, Joseph Baylee 1845, Alexander Campbell d1866, Robert Vaughan d1868, Silas Hawley d1888.

²⁰⁴ Examination of the nine identifying characteristics provides no other possible conclusion.

²⁰⁵ *Code of Justinian*, book 1, titles 1, 8 quoted in Froom L. E., *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Washington DC, Review and Herald, 1950, Vol. 1, p. 931 (Scott translation). See also p. 511.

²⁰⁶ Gibbon E, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XLI, par. 28, *The Goths raise the siege of Rome, AD 538*. Please also see *Appendix One*.

²⁰⁷ The French revolution began in 1793. A new calendar was adopted that year which was anti-Catholic in its motive as evidenced by the words of the committee set up to create it: “Take, for example, priests, whose universal and definitive goal is, and always will be, to subjugate mankind and enslave it under their dominion, instituted the practice of commemorating the dead. They did so to inspire disgust in us for earthly and worldly riches so that they could enjoy more of these riches themselves, and make us dependent on them through the myth and imagery of purgatory.” Jacques Guillaume, ed., *Procès-Verbaux du Comité d’instruction publique de l’Assemblée législative*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1891), 440–41, 582–84, 697–99, 701, found at Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution, <[http://: chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/](http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/)>.

²⁰⁸ *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, Arts. *Rome, Decline and fall of the papal empire; Pius VI*, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. 1994-2000. A good account is given in Maxwell C. M., *God Cares* Vol. 2, Boise, Idaho, Pacific Press, 1985, p. 328, 329.

²⁰⁹ Revelation 1:1 says that this prophetic revelation was “sent and signified.” The original Greek word for signified is *Semaino* from *sema*, a mark. This points us to the important principle that in the book of Revelation what is written is to be taken as symbolic or figurative unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. This is the opposite of what happens in the rest of the Bible where what we read is to be taken literally unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

²¹⁰ In Jeremiah 51:1-6 wind is symbolic of war. In Ezekiel 13:10-16 it is symbolic of God’s coming judgment, which was no

doubt a reference to war, famine and pestilence (Ezekiel 5:1-12). In Matthew 7:24-27 wind appears to be symbolic of any sudden calamitous event.

²¹¹ Please see the answer to Question 15 for a discussion of this point.

²¹² The book of Revelation often “alludes” to other parts of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament. In Revelation an allusion is a reference to some other scriptural passage which God wishes us to consider in order to aid our comprehension of what is being taught. An allusion often uses some of the same words as the passage it is alluding to, but it is different from a quotation where many identical words in the same order are used. Allusions can be determined by looking for common ideas, common words, and common background themes. Some allusions are quite easy to notice and appear to be definite while others are not so definite. This allusion in Revelation 14:7 is a definite one because of the amount of evidence supporting it (see text).

²¹³ “...And He wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments” Exodus 34:28.

²¹⁴ That is done in good faith, and without causing others to stumble. Romans ch. 14; Colossians 2:16; Matthew 7:1, 2.

²¹⁵ Luke 18:10-14; 2 Corinthians 10:12; Matthew 7:1-5.

²¹⁶ Leviticus 19:17; Luke 17:3; Matthew 18:15; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13.

²¹⁷ Matthew 7:15-20; 16:6-12; Philippians 3:2; 2 John 1:10, 11.

²¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 5:12 - 6:5, c.f. Luke 19:22; John 7:24; Matthew 7:15-20.

²¹⁹ I.e. being arrogant and proud over the matter.

²²⁰ The dragon of chapter 12, the sea-beast and land-beast of chapter 13, the scarlet beast on which the woman sits in chapter 17, and the beast from the bottomless pit of Revelation 11:7.

²²¹ We know from the Bible that ancient Babylon was characterized by idolatry, oppressing the people of God and attacking the sanctuary of God (e.g. Daniel 1:1, 2; 5:2-4, 23). Medo-Persia was characterized by its leader making dogmatic decrees that threatened God’s people with death (Daniel ch. 6; Esther ch. 3). Greece was characterized by idolatry (Acts 17:16). Rome, of course, perse-

cuted God's people including crucifying Christ and sending John, who wrote Revelation, to the prison-island of Patmos. For extensive documentation on how the sea-beast inherited characteristics of previous empires, especially Babylon, see Hislop A, *The Two Babylons*, A & C Black Ltd., London, 1939. Also, it is helpful to now about Gnosticism, which was strong during the first century, seriously threatening the Christian church. Gnosticism has its roots in Babylonian and Persian beliefs, but was also strongly influenced by Greek Platonism. It was a religion of sacraments and mysteries. It fostered ritualistic worship and liturgy. It taught that matter was essentially evil. One result of this was asceticism. This came from the idea that the body should be denied even natural desires and that holiness resulted from separation, as far as possible, from matter. Celibacy and monastic lifestyles grew out of this idea (Clarke F. E., Dau W. H. T. et al, *NASB Encyclopaedia to the Master Study Bible*, Article "Colossians," Nashville, Tennessee, Holman Bible Publishers, 1981; Fromm L. E., *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Washington DC, Review and Herald, 1950, vol. 1, pp. 222-225).

²²² The beginning of chapter 12 describes a pure woman giving birth to a son that a "great red dragon" wants to kill. But the child is caught up to God and to His throne. This male child is obviously Jesus. He is the One who was caught up to God's throne (Revelation 3:21; Mark 16:19). He is the One who is to rule with a rod of iron (Revelation 12:5, c.f. Revelation 19:13-16; Psalm 2:7-9). As documented shortly in another endnote, the woman here represents God's true church.

²²³ The number "12" is symbolic of the people of God. Ancient Israel had 12 tribes. The Christian church had 12 apostles. See also Jeremiah 6:2, Ephesians 5:25-27 and 2 Corinthians 11:2 where a woman symbolizes the church or people of God.

²²⁴ For an explanation of this time period please see the answer to Question 43.

²²⁵ The remnant of the woman's seed. Compare this verse with Revelation 14:12-20.

²²⁶ Imperial Rome was the power especially used by Satan to fight against God's people until the 1260-year period when the sea-beast took over the persecuting role.

²²⁷ Some have used John 20:23 to claim that individual church dignitaries can absolve people of their sins. However, by comparing this verse with Acts 2:1-4; Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Corinthians 5:12-6:3; 2 Corinthians 2:5-10 (see also Psalm 25:18, 86:5; Daniel 9:19; Matthew 6:12; Luke 5:24, 11:4; Acts 5:31, 26:18; 1 John 1:9) we can see that Christ is conferring authority for church discipline on the corporate organization. If a church member becomes involved in sin then the instruction of Matthew 18:15-17 is to be applied. If they refuse to repent then the church has the authority to remove them from membership, thus ratifying what is already acknowledged in Heaven. Likewise, if they repent the church can forgive them, even as they have first been forgiven by God. Regarding Matthew 18:18, the word “bound” is the Greek word *deo* and is in the perfect tense. The perfect tense describes an action that is viewed as having been completed in the past. Thus what the church binds has already been bound in Heaven. Young’s literal translation reflects this: “Verily I say to you, Whatever things ye may bind upon the earth shall be having been bound in the heavens...”

²²⁸ In prophetic time a month is 30 days and a year 360 days. We can confirm this by comparing the seven references to the 1260-year period with each another (Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). It is also confirmed by the application and fulfillment of the prophetic time prophecies.

²²⁹ Time and space constraints prevent us from properly covering the interpretation of this number here. However, we will mention a few things. The number 666 can be considered as having both a symbolic and a literal interpretation. Symbolically, the number 666 is associated in the Bible with rebellion against revealed truth. This can be seen by studying the idol of Daniel chapter 3 (c.f. the image of chapter 2) and the amount of revenue received by King Solomon just before his open apostasy (1 Kings 10:14). Since 666 is described as the number of “his name,” and a person’s name is associated in the Bible with their character, it is likely to be symbolic of a rebellious character. In the more literal sense it refers to the specific title “of a man” that has the numeric value of 666. *Appendix Three* documents how the leader of the Papacy claims to be “the vicar of the Son of God” (see the quote from the book *Crossing the Threshold of*

Hope). The numeric value of the letters in the Latin version of this title (VICARIUS FILII DEI) do add up to 666 (use Roman numerals to calculate it, remembering that both “V” and “U” equal 5).

²³⁰ The sea-beast is made up of parts of all four beasts of Daniel 7 and, like them, comes up out of the ocean.

²³¹ Revelation 13:16, 17: “And he causeth *all*, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that *no man* might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” “And *all that dwell upon the earth* shall worship him [the sea-beast], whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Revelation 13:8. Also God’s message in Revelation 14:6-12, warning against the beast and its mark, is described as going to “every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.”

²³² The Sabbath commandment is written or expressed in terms of a seal—giving God’s name, title and dominion. For more details please see the answer to Question 44. Please also see Romans 4:11 where the words “sign” and “seal” are used synonymously.

²³³ Canon Cafferata, *The Catechism Simply Explained*, London, Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd., 1922, 1948, p 89, emphasis in original.

²³⁴ One who uses a necromancer is called an abomination in Deuteronomy 18:11, 12.

Chapter Ten Endnotes

²³⁵ Actually the Biblical seventh day of the week is sunset Friday to sunset Saturday, whereas the modern seventh day of the week is midnight Friday to midnight Saturday, or simply Saturday as we call it. For more details on which day of the week is the seventh day please see the answer to Question 1.

²³⁶ Amazingly, Exodus 31:17 is about God being refreshed, and that’s a deep thing to meditate on!

Appendix One Endnotes

²³⁷ *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Sixth Edition. 2001, Art. Clovis I. Gibbon E., *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XXXVIII, par. 6, *Conversion of Clovis*.

²³⁸ Gibbon E., *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XXXVIII, par. 6, *Conversion of Clovis*.

²³⁹ Gibbon E., *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XXXVIII, par. 11, *The Gothic war, AD 507*. See also pars. 12 and 13.

²⁴⁰ Wilkinson B. G., *Truth Triumphant, The Church in the Wilderness*, Mountain View Ca. Pacific Press, 1944, pp. 147, 148.

²⁴¹ Gibbon E., *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XXXVIII, par. 11, *The Gothic war, AD 507*.

²⁴² Gibbon E., *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XXXVIII, pars. 13, 29.

²⁴³ Shea W. H., *The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier, Daniel 1-7*, Boise, Idaho, Pacific Press, 1996, p. 168.

²⁴⁴ Code of Justinian, book 1, titles 1, 8 quoted in Froom L. E., *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Washington DC, Review and Herald, 1950, Vol. 1, p. 931 (Scott translation). See also p. 511.

²⁴⁵ Gibbon E., *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XLI, par. 3, *Debates on the African war*.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, par. 9, *Reduction of Carthage, A..D. 533, Sept 15*.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, par. 11, *Conquest of Africa by Belisarius, AD 534*.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, par. 20, *Reign and weakness of Theodatus, the Gothic king of Italy, AD 534, October - AD 536, August*.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, par. 23, *Siege of Rome by the Goths, AD 537, March*.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, par. 28, *The Goths raise the siege of Rome, AD 538, March*.

Encyclopedia Britannica Online, Art. *Witigis* [he was the Ostrogothic leader in 538], *Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. 1994-2000*, Froom L. E., *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Washington DC, Review and Herald, 1950, vol. 1, p. 514, 515.

²⁵² Gibbon E., *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XLI, par. 28, *The Goths raise the siege of Rome, AD 538, March*.

²⁵³ Gibbon E., *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XXXIX, par. 5, *He undertakes the conquest of Italy. AD 489*.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pars. 7, 8. *The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. 2001, Art. Odoacer*.

²⁵⁵ Shea W. H., *The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier, Daniel 7-12*, Boise, Idaho, Pacific Press, 1996, especially ch. 12.

²⁵⁶ Shea W. H., *The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier, Daniel 7-12*, Boise, Idaho, Pacific Press, 1996, p. 221.

Appendix Two Endnotes

²⁵⁷ Froom L. E., *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Washington DC, Review and Herald, 1950, vol. 1, pp. 176, 203.

²⁵⁸ Revelation 1:1 says that this prophetic revelation was “sent and signified .” The original Greek word for signified is *Semaino* from *sema*, a mark. This points us to the important principle that in the book of Revelation what is written is to be taken as symbolic or figurative unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. This is the opposite of what happens in the rest of the Bible where what we read is to be taken literally unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

²⁵⁹ In Leviticus 25:3, 4 the week is used to symbolize a seven-year cycle with the seventh-day Sabbath representing the seventh year of rest.

²⁶⁰ In Daniel 9:24 the word “determined” comes from the Hebrew word *chathak* and means, “to cut off” (Strong J, *A concise Dictionary of the words in The Hebrew Bible with their renderings in the Authorised English Version*). So verse 24 literally says “Seventy weeks are cut-off for your people....” What are these seventy weeks cut off from? Notice that the same angel Gabriel, who was commissioned to make Daniel understand in the chapter 8 vision (Daniel 8:16), comes in chapter 9 to finish his task (Daniel 9:21). In Daniel 9:23 Gabriel says “understand the vision.” The part of the chapter 8 vision that Daniel did not understand was the 2300 evening-mornings (Daniel 8:26, 27; c.f. Daniel 8:14). Gabriel takes up the explanation where he left off in the previous chapter, on the subject of time. The seventy weeks are obviously cut off from the beginning of the longer 2300-day period. Therefore the two time periods have the same starting point.

²⁶¹ The exceedingly (the KJV uses the older word, “exceeding”) great horn of Daniel 8 symbolizes Rome, both Imperial and Papal. Most of the description in the vision is about the activities of the Papal phase. For further details readers are referred to:

<<http://www.askdrbird.com>> or

<<http://www.burnoutsolutions.com.au>> or

Maxwell C. M., *God Cares* vols. 1 & 2, Boise, Idaho, Pacific Press.

²⁶² By studying Daniel 11:35 and 12:7-10 along with Daniel 7:25 we can see that the “time of the end,” when Daniel’s prophecies would be unsealed, started at the end of the 1260 years of persecution i.e. 1798.

²⁶³ For further details on this and on the day-for-a-year principle in general please see Shea W. H., *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, Rev. Ed., Daniel and Revelation Committee Series vol. 1, Hagerstown, Maryland, Review and Herald Pub. Assoc., 1992, p. 67-110.

²⁶⁴ E.g. “a time and times and the dividing of time” (Daniel 7:25), “two thousand and three hundred days” (Daniel 8:14), “seventy weeks” (Daniel 9:24).

Appendix Three Endnotes

²⁶⁵ This is how it reads in our Roman Catholic translation par. 5. See also: Mirbt and Aland, 1: 458-60 (no.746) quoted in Heinz J, *The Modern Papacy: Claims and Authority in Symposium on Revelation*, Book II, Hagerstown Maryland, Review and Herald, 1992, p. 341; From L. E., *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Washington DC, Review and Herald, 1950, vol.1, p. 679.

²⁶⁶ Emphasis supplied. In our Roman Catholic translation this statement is found in par. 22.

²⁶⁷ Emphasis supplied. par. 16.

²⁶⁸ New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1994.

²⁶⁹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ch. 2, Art. 4, VIII (1461 and 1463).

²⁷⁰ This is how it reads in our Roman Catholic translation. The English translation should be easily available from official Catholic web sites on the Internet. This council is considered “the most important” of the Middle Ages.

²⁷¹ J. WILHELM, Transcribed by Mary Ann Grelinger, *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume VII*, Article *Heresy*, Part VIII. *CHURCH LEGISLATION ON HERESY*. Copyright © 1910 by Robert Appleton Company. Online Edition Copyright © 1999 by Kevin Knight. *Nihil*

Obstat, June 1, 1910. Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor. *Imprimatur.*
+John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.

²⁷² J. WILHELM, Transcribed by Mary Ann Grelinger, *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume VII*, Article *Heresy*, Part IX. *PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH LEGISLATION*. Copyright © 1910 by Robert Appleton Company. Online Edition Copyright © 1999 by Kevin Knight. *Nihil Obstat, June 1, 1910.* Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor. *Imprimatur.*
+John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ A. VAN HOVE, Transcribed by Vernon Bremberg. *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume I*, Article *Apostasy* Copyright © 1907 by Robert Appleton Company. Online Edition Copyright © 1999 by Kevin Knight. *Nihil Obstat, March 1, 1907.* Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor. *Imprimatur.* +John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.

²⁷⁵ JAMES BRIDGE. Transcribed by Douglas J. Potter. *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume XI*, Article *Persecution*. Copyright © 1911 by Robert Appleton Company. Online Edition Copyright © 1999 by Kevin Knight. *Nihil Obstat, February 1, 1911.* Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor. *Imprimatur.* +John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *Summa Theologica*, St. Thomas Aquinas, II-II, Question xi, article 3.

²⁷⁹ JOSEPH BLÖTZER, Transcribed by Matt Dean. *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume VIII*, Article *Inquisition*. Copyright © 1910 by Robert Appleton Company. Online Edition Copyright © 1999 by Kevin Knight. *Nihil Obstat, October 1, 1910.* Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor. *Imprimatur.* +John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.

²⁸⁰ From: Oliver J. Thatcher, ed., *The Library of Original Sources* (Milwaukee: University Research Extension Co., 1907), *Vol. V: The Early Medieval World*, pp. 378-382 as reproduced in the *Internet Medieval Source Book*, © Paul Halsall March 1998, Scanned by Jerome S. Arkenberg, Cal. State Fullerton.

²⁸¹ Halley H. H., *Halley's Bible Handbook* The Bible Handbook Series, Michigan, USA, Zondervan Publishing House, 24th Edition, 1965, p. 777.

²⁸² Ibid. p 792, 793, emphasis in original.

Appendix Four Endnotes

²⁸³ Please see the answer to Question 43. Please also see *Appendix Three* and Halley H H, *Halley's Bible Handbook* The Bible Handbook Series, Michigan, USA, Zondervan Publishing House, 2v Edition, 1965, Chapter on "*Church History*" pp. 767-793; Foxe J, *Foxe's Christian Martyrs of the World*, Uhrichsville, Ohio, Barbour 1989; White E G *Cosmic Conflict*, Washington, Review & Herald, 1989, chs. 4-15.

²⁸⁴ This can be seen clearly, for example, in the history of the Waldensian Church. A good book on this subject is, Wilkinson B G, *Truth Triumphant, The Church in the Wilderness*, Mountain View Ca. Pacific Press, 1944. Available from Leaves-of-Autumn Books Inc., PO Box 440, Payson, Arizona 85541.

²⁸⁵ See the answer to Question 43 and *Appendix One* for more details.

²⁸⁶ E.g. Matthew 24:27, 37; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 2 Peter 1:16.

²⁸⁷ Matthew 24:40, 41 and Luke 17:34-36 are about Christ's bodily, visible and audible return. See Matthew 24:27-30; Luke 17:24. The suddenness of the event, and the fact that one person's experience cannot save another, is being emphasized (c.f. Ezekiel 14:14, 20). 1 Thessalonians 4:14 is about the assurance of the resurrection (c.f. 2 Corinthians 4:14) not saints coming from Heaven with Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 4:16 emphasizes the loudness and public nature of the second advent (see also Revelation 1:7; 6:14-17).

²⁸⁸ Please also see <<http://www.askdrbird.com>> or <<http://www.burnoutsolutions.com.au>> or Maxwell C. M., *God Cares* Vols. 1 & 2, Boise, Idaho, Pacific Press.

²⁸⁹ Please see also Isaiah 8:19, 20; Matthew 4:4; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1.

Appendix Six Endnotes

²⁹⁰ For those wishing more information and help regarding the mystery of suffering we recommend *Where Is God When You Hurt?*, Coffen, R. W., Review and Herald, 1995.

²⁹¹ What “dead works” are can be understood when we compare this passage with Romans 6:19-21.

²⁹² Divine forgiveness encompasses much more than human forgiveness. To pardon, God has to make provision for the removal of sin from the offender. He also has to change the sinner’s heart, otherwise they will continue in sin, be unfit to take to heaven and eventually face eternal death. Furthermore, God’s forgiveness is time-conditional: it must be received before He makes a final end of sin and sinners. In contrast to God, humans cannot pay the debt for another’s sin; they cannot change another’s heart; they cannot put an end to sin. This difference in parameters means that God’s forgiveness has boundaries or conditions to it in order to safeguard the rest of the universe. This does not mean that God forgives less than humans do; indeed, His forgiveness is infinitely greater than ours. Also, we must never forget that God’s *love* is unconditional.

In addition to forgiveness, God also exercises *forbearance*. On account of Christ’s death and ministry, God is able to extend loving forbearance or tolerance for a certain time to all sinners (Romans 2:4; 3:25). This is why Adam did not perish eternally as soon as he transgressed. However, because sin cannot be allowed to continue forever, we must come to Christ before God’s forbearance is exhausted. In response to the pleadings of God’s Spirit we must make confession and seek atoning forgiveness before it’s too late.

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The Holy Bible: Is it Reliable?



The Bible is reliable and can be trusted, but sadly many have doubts. So we will briefly consider this issue in the hope that many will have their faith strengthened. This book contains vital messages that are challenging and even provocative and *only those who are convinced of the Bible's authority will receive and benefit from them.*

A common reason for doubt is the theory of evolution. Many do not realize that evolution and science are different things. Science is based on experiments and observation and, since history is not available for these, science cannot prove historical beginnings. Both evolution and creation are beliefs based on “evidence”. The science that investigates the laws of nature and that uses these laws to achieve such things as space travel is very different from evolutionary theories about the past. Many scientists who discovered natural laws (e.g. Isaac Newton) studied the world using the Biblical viewpoint of creation. In fact, scientists need the Bible to correctly interpret the world. This is because we all have an inherent defect preventing us from seeing things clearly without divine aid (Jeremiah 17:9). Thus we should view our surroundings through the window provided by scripture. When we try and interpret the Bible using science or human theories we will always run into problems.

There are many reasons to reject evolution. Mutations are almost always negative and, at best, neutral. They don't provide a mechanism for adding more advanced information. Natural selec-

tion causes a decrease in genetic material. Organisms need multiple complex molecules and structures to be present simultaneously in order to function properly (e.g. consider the eye) and anything less is a hindrance. But how can complex interrelations evolve simultaneously? Evolution provides no basis for moral law other than consensus. For example, if the majority decides that a certain group is hindering advancement, then, according to evolutionary theory, there is no logical reason to oppose killing them (e.g. consider the “holocaust” under Hitler’s reign). If you don’t like it, so what? That’s just your opinion against the majority.

Sometimes people doubt the Bible simply because of unexplained questions. So, in the hope of helping such, let us offer brief answers to some of the commoner issues (for more information we suggest *The Answers Book*, Batton D Ed., www.AnswersinGenesis.com). One common question is, “If the Bible is true then who was Cain’s wife?” The answer is really quite simple: Adam and Eve had daughters as well as sons (Genesis 5:4) and, since genetic imperfections were close to zero back then, there was no problem with Cain marrying his sister. Abraham married his half-sister (Genesis 20:12) and God blessed this union. It was only later in human history that laws prohibiting the marriage of close relatives were necessary.

“Where did dinosaurs come from?” is another important question. Dinosaurs were created along with the other animals and all except those on the ark perished in Noah’s flood. Since fossils are formed by rapid burial under waterborne sediment fossilized dinosaur bones are evidence of Noah’s flood. Without rapid burial dead organisms are quickly consumed by scavengers. Dinosaurs lived for awhile after the flood before becoming extinct. The Bible describes dinosaur-like animals in the days of the patriarch Job (Job 40:15-24; 41:1-34). Also the “dragons” of bygone days sound like what we now call dinosaurs (the word “dinosaur” was invented in 1841).

The subject of fossils brings up the question, “If Noah’s flood is true, why are there so few human fossils?” In the flood, creatures living on the seabed would have been buried earliest and deepest by sediment whereas the antediluvian people, climbing the highest mountains and using rafts, would have been among the last to perish. Instead of being fossilized their bodies would have rotted away.

The question of how the animals fitted on the ark seems to have bothered many. The number of known species of mammals, birds and reptiles (fish, amphibians and most insects did not need to be on the ark) alive today varies depending on who is consulted. A reasonable figure would be 40, 000 with an average size somewhat smaller than a sheep. But what we call a species today was almost certainly not applicable in Noah's time. We believe that the "kinds" (Genesis 6:20) of animals back then were more genetically rich and less specialized than today's species, corresponding more to modern genera. This means that for every dozen species today there may have been only one "kind" in Noah's day. For example, a single "canine-kind" may have since adapted into the dog, wolf, hyena and so on. Adaptation is different from evolution. Evolution claims that chemicals developed into humans. But adaptation is the process whereby genetically rich organisms decline into more specialized, less adaptable forms. A detailed study of the capacity issue has been done by Woodmorappe (*Noah's Ark: A Feasibility Study*, Inst. for Creation Research, 1997). He counted about 8,000 genera that needed to be on board, including extinct genera. This suggests that something like 17,000 to 18, 000 individual animals had to be on the ark ("clean" animals were taken in sevens). Whitcomb and Morris in *The Genesis Flood* (Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. 1961) have shown that the ark's capacity was equivalent to about 522 standard railroad stock cars, each of which can hold 240 sheep. This means 125,280 sheep could have fitted on the ark. Thus there was plenty of room.

Noah's flood explains why there has been an ice age (with advances and retreats). The huge flood-associated volcanic activity, generating magma to warm the sea and dust clouds to cool the land, would have provided the increased marine evaporation and freezing of ground precipitation needed to form the continental ice sheets.

The subject of radioactive dating and the Earth's age often comes up. Radioactive dating has huge assumptions such as no leaching of isotopes, no daughter isotope being in the material initially and the rate of decay being constant. There are many indications that the Earth is quite young. For example, if salt and mud have been washing into the oceans for billions of years why is there not much

more salt in the seawater and mud on the seabed? Also the Earth's magnetic field has been decreasing and, at its present rate, the Earth could not be more than 10, 000 years old.

Many have tried to interpret the book of Genesis using evolution. They claim that the Earth could not have been created in six literal days since evolution says it took billions of years. The so-called "gap theory" is an example of this kind of thinking. This theory places an indefinite gap of time, usually millions of years, between the first two verses of Genesis chapter 1. Generally it is claimed that the fossils were formed during this period. This idea is a pure conjecture and, like similar falsehoods, does away with the whole Bible since it denies the sin problem by placing millions of years of death and suffering before Adam who, according to the Bible, brought death into the world when he sinned. If there is no sin then there is no Savior because sin is what Jesus came to save us from (Matthew 1:21).

In trying to interpret Genesis using man's theories various "Biblical" arguments have been presented trying to show that the days of Genesis Chapter 1 are not literal, ordinary days. One argument claims that these days were not ordinary 24-hour days because there was no sun until the fourth day of Creation Week. But we do not need the sun to have a 24-hour period with evening and morning. What we need is an appropriate light source and a rotating Earth. A light source was provided on day one and may have been God Himself (c.f. Revelation 22:5). The idea of having the sun to initiate and sustain life is critical for the theory of evolution, as indeed it is similarly important in many pagan sun-god religions. But Genesis chapter 1 sweeps all this away declaring that God is the One who initiates and sustains.

Some assert that the word "day" in Genesis 1 cannot mean an ordinary day because of the way Genesis 2:4 uses the word differently when it says "In the *day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." The Hebrew word for "day", like our English word, can have several different meanings. In Genesis 7:12 it means the light part of the day as opposed to the dark part. In other places, such as the six days of Genesis 1, it clearly refers to a 24-hour period consisting of light and dark. Elsewhere the term is used to mean a certain time in a more general sense, for example, "the day of the

LORD”. Genesis 2:4 uses “day” in this general sense. No qualifying number or phrase is used. The verse simply means “at the time that the Lord God made the Earth and the heavens”.

Others affirm that the days of Genesis 1 can be interpreted as long eons since the phrase “evening and morning” is not used in association with the seventh day in Genesis 2:1-3. But we know for a certainty that the seventh day is a 24-hour period by reading the Fourth Commandment. In Genesis 2:1-3 the term “day” is qualified by the number seven. It is thus clearly linked to the preceding six days of creation and demonstrated to be, like them, a 24-hour period.

The allegorical school likes to refer to 2 Peter 3:8 saying, “The days of Genesis chapter 1 are not ordinary days since the Bible tells us that ‘one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.’” However, we know from the Fourth Commandment that this idea is false because God would never have given a precept, based on the Creation Week, directing us to work for six thousand years and then to rest for another thousand! 2 Peter 3:8 has no connection with the context of Genesis 1. If someone uses the first part of this verse to teach that one day equals a thousand years then they must also use the second part to teach the very opposite, that a thousand years equals one day!

Some are worried because they think that Genesis chapter 2 contradicts chapter 1 by teaching that Adam was created before the land animals. In Genesis 2:19 it describes God creating the animals and then bringing them to Adam to see what he would call them. But the focus in chapter 2 is not the order of creation. That has already been explained in chapter 1. The issue is Adam’s need for a companion. It was “not good” for Adam to be alone, and in unfolding His remedy, God first brought some previously created animals to Adam. By doing this Adam was made more sensible of his need and therefore was in a position to better appreciate and cherish the woman eventually provided.

Another stumbling block is Adam’s naming of the animals. How could he have named them all in one literal day? The naming occurred on the sixth day of creation before Eve was made (Genesis 2:18-23 c.f. 1:26-31). Genesis 2:19 says that God created the animals and “brought unto Adam”. It does not say that He “brought *them all*

to Adam” (the KJV translators supplied the word “them”). Thus we believe that Adam just named every creature *specifically* brought to him at that time. The context of the narrative is Adam’s need for a companion. That is why no insects were brought to him: Genesis 2:19-20 omits the “creeping things” that had been made on the sixth day (Genesis 1:24-26). Naming insects would not have helped Adam sense his need for a companion. A representative number of larger animals and birds were used instead.

Some doubt the Bible simply because they do not believe in absolute truth. Such often claim that the different religions all present valid ways to God. But these different religions are often totally contradictory. For example, some say that we must just develop the good that is inside us, yet others believe that there is absolutely no inherent good within us. Some believe that God is a mystic element in the trees, animals and everywhere else, while others claim that this is nonsense because God is a personal being. So if we say that these contradictory religions all have a true way to God then we are saying that every one of them is right. In other words, there is no right and wrong. If there is no right and wrong then there is no truth or error. But we need to remember that if there is no truth or error then there is no stable natural law either. It is a truth that apples separating from trees fall downward. It is an error to claim that apples detaching from trees float up. Gravity is a reliable truth. So are the laws of electricity, light, pressure, temperature and so on. Without these laws life would not exist. Just as life is dependent on natural laws that are truth, so life is dependent on moral and spiritual laws that are truth

The Bible can be trusted to teach spiritual truth. The Bible has many prophecies that have been dramatically fulfilled. Its 66 books have a wonderful harmony, though communicated through dozens of men over some 1600 years. It has uplifted whole nations and initiated untold thousands of transformations from guilt and misery to victory and happiness. It has withstood centuries of attack. The Bible stands out amongst “sacred books” because it provides an accurate picture of the real world. It explains geology: why there is so much sedimentary rock that has been laid down rapidly and folded while still wet. It explains biology: why we have male and female creatures

producing after their kind. It explains human population statistics, why the population growth curve traces back to a few individuals about 4500 years ago. It explains psychology, why death is such a difficult thing to cope with and why we find it easy to do what is wrong. Most importantly, the Bible reveals a full and complete Savior, the answer to the deepest human need. We commend it to you as a safe and trustworthy guide.

