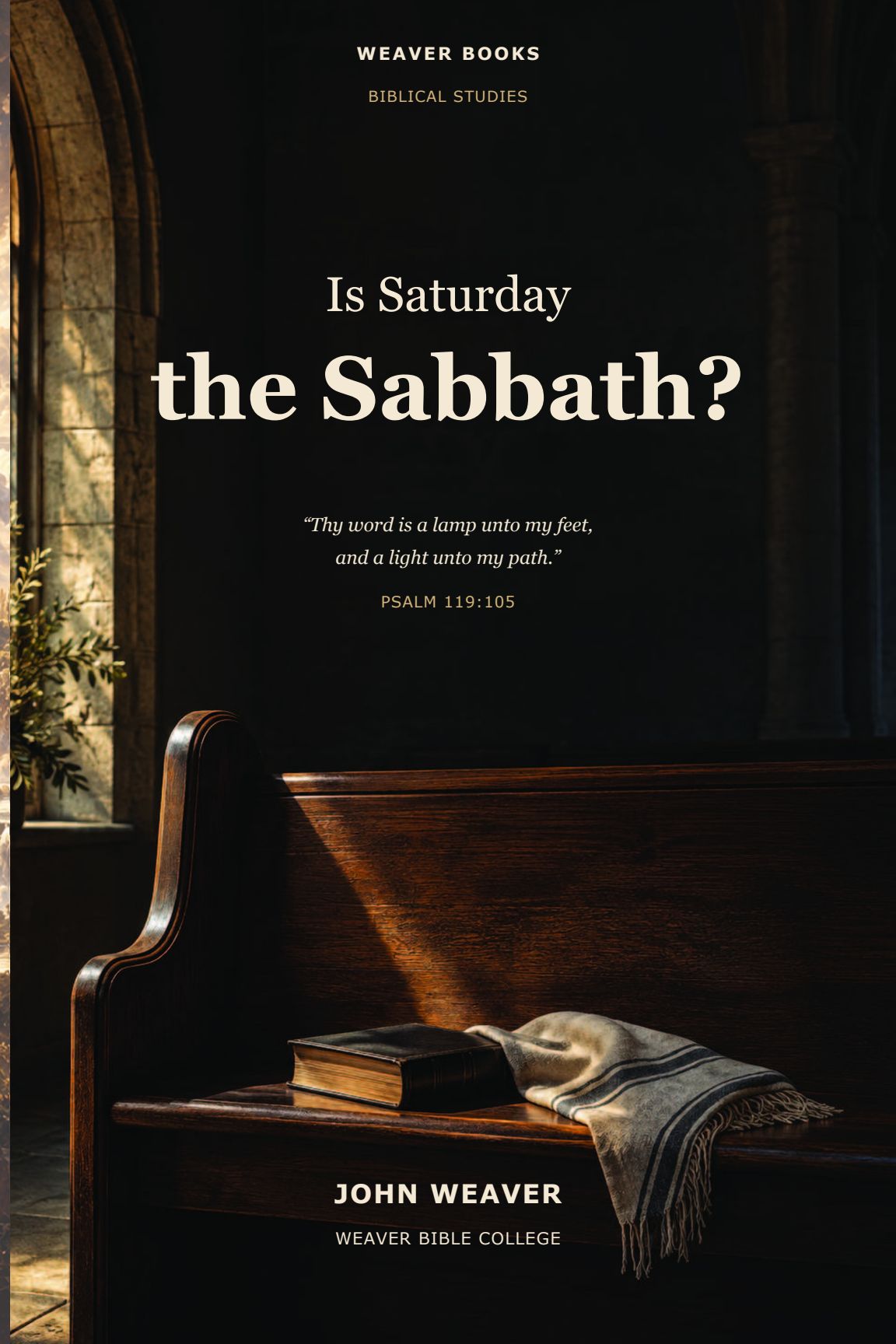
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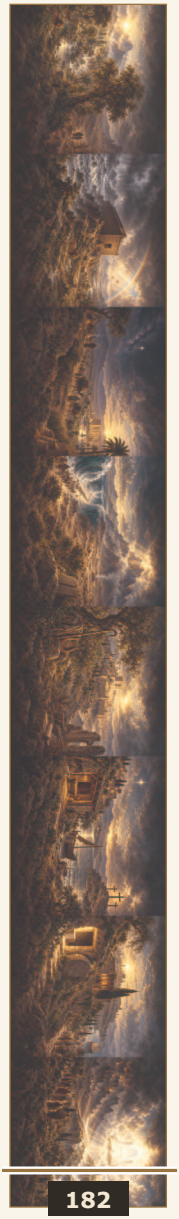
"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

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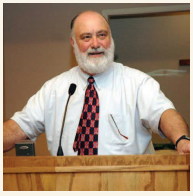
The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.

MARK 2:27, EXCERPT

What is the relationship between the biblical Sabbath and the believer's rest in Christ? John Weaver examines Old Testament shadows, the authority of Christ, and the danger of binding consciences with mistaken interpretations. These messages explore the meaning of rest and the scriptural grounds for understanding the church's practice.

“The fourth commandment, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is the only commandment that is not repeated in the New Testament.”

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

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CHAPTER 1

Is Saturday The Sabbath

Part One

SCRIPTURE READING - Deuteronomy 16:1-9 (KJV)

Introduction and Reading of Deuteronomy 16:1-9

God says, "Observe the month Abib, and keep the Passover unto the Lord thy God. For in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night. Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the Passover unto the Lord thy God of the flock and the herd, in the place which the Lord shall choose to place his name there. Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction. For thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste, that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest out of the land of Egypt, all the days of thy life. And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee on all thy coasts seven days, neither shall there anything of the flesh which thou sacrificest the first day at even remain all night until the morning. Thou mayest not sacrifice the Passover within any of

> thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee, but at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in.
>
> There thou shalt sacrifice the Passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. And thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose. And thou shalt turn in the morning and go into thy tents. Six days shalt thou eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the Lord thy God. Thou shalt do no work therein. Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee. Begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn."

The Question: Is Saturday the Sabbath?

> The title of this message, which will be in three parts, is “Is Saturday the Sabbath?” If so, why do we worship on Sunday? Years ago, I preached a message titled “The Principle of Rest,” in which I dealt with the Sabbath issue. However, there is still a lot of confusion and many questions concerning the Sabbath. I want to share what the Bible really says and show the difficulty that many people are facing. Usually, when people talk about the Sabbath, most everybody is talking about what is known as the weekly Sabbath.

The Principle of Rest and Multiple Sabbaths

But at the same time, they neglect all the other Sabbaths. Many think that Saturday is the Sabbath, and thus they turned around and worship on Saturday. Here is the principle: If one Sabbath is kept, then, in order to be consistent, all the other Sabbaths must be kept as well. Remember that there are weekly Sabbaths, new moon Sabbaths, the seven annual feasts were Sabbaths, there was a sabbatical year, and there was also the year of jubilee. All of these were considered Sabbaths.

I do not know any Sabbatarian that keeps the Sabbath the way it is outlined in the Bible. Neither do I know any Sabbatarian that keeps all of the Sabbaths that are mentioned in the Bible. So we are going to be talking about keeping a Sabbath. Here is a question: Are you interested in keeping the Creation Sabbath, the Hebrew

Sabbath, the Canaan Sabbath, or the Christian Sabbath? Because all four of them are mentioned in the Bible. The reason I titled my previous message “The Principle of Rest” is simply because of the word Sabbath.

The word Sabbath actually means rest. Rest was mandated not only in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament as well. Interestingly, there is nothing in the Bible that determines the length of a Sabbath. A Sabbath may be the length of one day (Exodus chapter 20, verses 8 through 11; Deuteronomy chapter 5, verses 12 through 15). It could also be a rest of two days (Leviticus chapter 23, verses 15 through 21), one year long (Leviticus chapter 25, verses 4 and 8), two years long, or seventy years long, according to 2 Chronicles chapter 36 and verse 21.

The Creation Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11)

Let me show you, first of all, at least the first three rests. In Exodus chapter 20, beginning with verse 8, we read about the creation rest: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” and note that it says, “remember.” “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is in thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

What day of creation was the Sabbath? You may say, “Well, it was the seventh day.” But what day did God begin creating? The answer is absolutely no. We have no idea, basically, what the creation Sabbath was, except that it was the seventh day. God had completed all of his works in six days, and the seventh day he finished it. This is the creation Sabbath.

If you look in Exodus chapter 31, you will see the Hebrew Sabbath. This is where God delivered the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths you shall keep. For it is a sign between me and you throughout your

generations that you may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you."

The Hebrew Sabbath (Exodus 31, Ezekiel 20)

Notice what is said: "Verily my sabbaths," plural, "you shall keep." Not just a weekly sabbath; all of the sabbaths you shall keep.

In Ezekiel chapter 20, God again is talking about these Sabbaths: "Wherefore, I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them my statutes and showed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths," notice it is plural, "to be a sign between me and them that they might know that I am the Lord that does sanctify them. But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness, they walked not in my statutes, they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them, and my sabbaths," plural, "they greatly polluted. Then I said I will pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them. But I wrought for my namesake that it should not be polluted among the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out. Yet also I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands, because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, and polluted my sabbaths," plural, "for

Their heart went after idols. So now we are talking about the Hebrew Sabbath. According to the Word of God, absolutely no work could be done on these Sabbaths or in these Sabbaths. Exodus 31:15 says, "Six days may work be done, but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord." Then it says, "Whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbaths throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant."

No work was to be done. Exodus 35:2-3 states it very plainly: "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." It continues, "You shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations on the Sabbath day." In other words,

everything was nailed down. No work was to be done; you could not even kindle a fire.

In the book of Numbers, a man was found picking up sticks on the Sabbath day. God determined that he was to be put to death because he was gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. Numbers 15:32-36 says, "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation. And they put him in a ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. 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. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died as the Lord commanded Moses."

You are going to ask, "Why in the world was this man put to death just simply because he gathered sticks on the Sabbath day?" Well, there is an answer for that, and you will probably get it at least by the third message. But it is important that you note that it was rest that God absolutely demanded.

No work could be done on the new-moon Sabbaths. What was the new-moon Sabbath? It was a monthly Sabbath. Every month had a new moon. Thus, Israel had not only weekly Sabbaths, but also monthly Sabbaths. The new moon marked the beginning of the month, and the offering commanded for that time was to be made at the beginning of the months.

New Moon Sabbaths and Israel's Contempt

Numbers 28:11 says, "And in the beginning of your months," referring to the new moon, "in the beginning of your months you shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord, two young bullocks and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot, and three-tenth deals of flour for a meal offering, mingled with oil for one bullock and two-tenth deals of flour for a meal offering, mingled with oil for a ram." This offering was required at the beginning of the months. The passage gives the particular animals and meal offerings that were to be presented at that time.

First Chronicles 23:31 says, "And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the Lord in the sabbaths," which is plural, "in the new moons," also plural, "and on set feasts," again plural, "by number, according to the order commanded in them, continually before the Lord." The offerings for the Sabbaths, the new moons, and the set feasts were commanded according to an appointed order and were to continue before the Lord.

God had ordained all of these Sabbaths, and each one of them had certain ordinances and statutes that had to be followed to the end, to agree. The problem was that the people of Israel did not want to rest. They wanted to do whatever they wanted to do and rebel against God. There is a reason why the word Sabbath means rest, which will be explained by the time we get to the third message.

Amos 8:5 shows the contempt that the Israelites had, not only for their weekly Sabbaths, but also for their new-moon Sabbaths: "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn, and the sabbath that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit." They wanted to get the Sabbath out of the way. They wanted to get the new moon out of the way so they could return to their business. They wanted to make money and defraud others, making the ephah small, making the shekel great, and arranging everything for their own benefit. They were despising the Sabbath.

The Canaan Sabbath

In the Old Testament, the Sabbath was not primarily a day of worship. It was primarily a day of rest. Worship was family-centered and revolved around everyday life. The central demand of the Sabbath was rest. Weekly worship did not really begin until the intertestamental period, the approximately 400 years between the Old Testament and the New Testament. It continued in the New Testament, especially in relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Canaan Sabbath (Hebrews 4)

We have looked at the Creation Sabbath and the Hebrew Sabbath. Now consider the Canaan Sabbath in Hebrews chapter 4. The Creation Sabbath celebrated creation. The Hebrew Sabbath

celebrated Israel's deliverance from Egypt. The Canaan Sabbath celebrated the conquest of Canaan land—not only entrance into it, but the conquest.

Hebrews 4:4 says, "For he spake in a certain place on the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest in the seventh day from his works." That is a reference to the creation rest. Then it says, "And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest." Now we are discussing the Canaan rest. "Seeing therefore it remains that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief." They fell in the wilderness, all but Caleb and Joshua. God therefore limited a certain day, saying in David, "Today, after so long a time, as it is said, Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

Verse 8 says, "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day?" Here the word Jesus is the word Joshua: "For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day?" Jesus in the Greek is Iēsous, meaning "Jehovah saves" or "Jehovah is salvation." Joshua in the Hebrew is Yehoshua, and it means "Jehovah is salvation."

So far, we have seen the Creation Sabbath, the Hebrew Sabbath, and the Canaan Sabbath. We will hold off on the Christian Sabbath, which will become especially plain in the third message. The Hebrew Sabbath always began in the evening and continued until the next evening. Our days begin in the morning, but not according to the Hebrews; the Israelites' day began in the evening. What day, then, was the Sabbath?

Before I answer that question, do you realize that there could be numerous Sabbaths in a week? You had your weekly Sabbath, but you also had a new moon Sabbath. The weekly Sabbath and the new moon Sabbath might fall in one week. What about the feast days? God mentioned those as Sabbaths as well. So it is possible to have at least one each week, but possibly two, and, if it fell just right, as many as three in one particular week.

The sabbatical year, which was once every seven years, did not cause the weekly Sabbaths to cease. Neither did it cause the New Moon Sabbaths to cease, nor those seven annual feasts, which were

considered Sabbaths as well. Every seventh year was a sabbatical year in the Hebrew. Now, if one is going to keep a weekly Sabbath, why does he not keep all the other Sabbaths? Why is emphasis placed upon a weekly Sabbath while all the others are absolutely ignored?

I want you to look in your Bibles to Leviticus, chapter 26. The sabbatical year had certain things that had to be done. One of them was that the land had to rest; nothing was to be planted during the sabbatical year. There were other requirements, including forgiving debts. But notice Leviticus 26:34: “Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lie desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lie desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.”

Verse 36 says, “And upon them that are left alive of you, I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.” God says that if you do not observe His Sabbaths, especially this sabbatical year, and do not fulfill this requirement, you are going into captivity; and while you are in captivity, your land will rest.

One reason that the children of Israel went into captivity was that they neglected the sabbatical year and refused to allow the land to rest. In 2 Chronicles chapter 36, beginning with verse 20, the Bible says, “And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and to his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia. To fulfill 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 fulfill threescore and ten years,” seventy years. So while the children of Judah and Jerusalem were in captivity in Babylon for seventy years, the land was enjoying her Sabbaths.

The Hebrew Calendar and Fixed Sabbaths

Now, was the weekly Sabbath on Saturday? The word Saturday was not even in existence when the Sabbaths began. In fact, we get our weekdays and even months basically from the Roman calendar. In

321 AD, Constantine, Emperor Constantine, had been converted to Christianity, and he then designated Sunday as the first day of our week. Our weekdays are named after planets and everything else. Saturday was actually Saturn's day, and Monday was moon day; that is how they are named. Back when the Sabbaths began, there were no Saturdays or Sundays or anything like that.

The Hebrews usually named the days of the week Day 1, Day 2, Day 3, Day 4, Day 5, Day 6, and Sabbath, or Sabbath. There were no weekdays as we know them. When someone says, "Saturday is the Sabbath," when does Saturday even become the Sabbath? Follow this, because it is going to take you through a lot of Scriptures.

Turn in your Bibles to Exodus, chapter 12. You have to understand when the Hebrew calendar began, what its first month was, what its first day was, and why. We know that the first month in the Hebrew calendar was the month Abib. How do we know that? Because it is stated over and over in the Bible.

Exodus 12, verses 1 and 2, says, "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year to you." We have to find out what month that was. Whatever month this is, it is going to be equal to our January, the first month of our year. God says this month is going to be the first month for you.

In Exodus 13, verse 4, God says, "This day came you out in the month Abib." There it is spelled out: Abib. That was the month in which the children of Israel were delivered out of the land of Egypt.

Now look in Exodus 23, verse 15: "Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread. Thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, at the time appointed of the month Abib. For in it thou camest forth from Egypt, and none shall appear before me empty." Again, God has said it is the month Abib.

Exodus 34, verse 18, says, "The Feast of Unleavened Bread shalt thou keep. Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee in the time of the month Abib. For in the month Abib camest thou from Egypt."

One last passage is Deuteronomy 16, which we read at the beginning of this message. Verse 1 says, "Observe the month Abib,

and keep the Passover to the Lord thy God, for in the month of Abib, the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night." Now we know the first month of the Hebrew calendar was Abib. It was equal to our January. How did their month begin? We know it would have to be Abib 1, but what determined how that month began? It was the date that God set.

If there is a first month, there must be a first day of the month. The context in Exodus chapter 12 concerns the Passover lamb: "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You shall take it out from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month."

Exodus 12:6 says, "And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening." Thus, the Passover was Abib 14. The lamb was kept until the fourteenth day, and the whole congregation killed it in the evening. The fourteenth day is therefore identified with the Passover, not with the feast that followed it.

Leviticus 23:5 says, "In the fourteenth day of the first month," that is, Abib, "at even is the Lord's Passover." Verse 6 continues, "And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread unto the Lord. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread."

The fourteenth and fifteenth days are very important. The Bible distinguishes them plainly: the fourteenth day is the Passover, while the fifteenth day is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Numbers 9:3 says, "In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, you shall keep it in its appointed season, according to all the rites of it, according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall you keep it." Numbers 28:16-17 confirms the distinction: "And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast."

"Seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten." Abib 14 was the Passover. Remember, the Hebrew days began in the evening. Thus, the evening of Abib 14 began Abib 15. I just read to you where he said Abib 15 was the celebration of Unleavened Bread. So that means this: Abib 15 had to be a Sabbath every year. Because the Passover

was on the 14th, the 15th had to be a Sabbath. Therefore, Abib 1, Abib 8, and Abib 15 were always Sabbath days. Always.

Now hang on with me. Abib 14 was the Passover, but it was not a Sabbath. Why? Because work had to be done on the Passover. You had to get the animal, kill the animal, clean the animal, and cook the animal. In the original Passover of Egypt, you had to pack up everything, and God said you had to eat it with your loins girded and with your shoes on your feet. It was done in haste. Since the Passover involved work, it was not a Sabbath day, because God says no work is to be done on the Sabbath day.

Now I am going to give you a quote, and I want you to listen carefully. If you can find this book, please get it for me. It is a little booklet. I do not care if it is fifteen or twenty dollars; I would pay it. I do not have the book, but I do have several quotes from it. The book was written by Curtis Clare Ewing, and it is on Israel's calendar.

SCRIPTURE READING - Leviticus 23:1-8 (KJV)

Curtis Clare Ewing wrote in his study on the Hebrew calendar:

"The Hebrews retained an Egyptian calendar of 12 months of 30 days. But instead of adding 5 supplemental days at the end of the year, they added 3 at the end of the 6th month and 2 at the end of the 12th month. The 15th day of Abib, the first month, had to be a Sabbath every year, which meant that the 1st and 8th of Abib were fixed Sabbaths, as were the 7 Sabbaths following Abib 15."

Abib 15, the date is set. It has to be a Sabbath. That means the first and the eighth had to be a Sabbath, and there were seven more Sabbaths following Abib 15. In Leviticus, chapter 23, you will see the following Sabbaths and how everything swung from Abib 15:

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work therein. It is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your

dwellings. Now look, these are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which you shall proclaim in their seasons.

Counting Sabbaths to Pentecost (Leviticus 23)

"In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover." That's not a Sabbath because you had to work there. "And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread unto the Lord. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread." So your 15th had to be a Sabbath. "In the first day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no servile work therein." It's a Sabbath. "But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord seven days. In the seventh day is a holy convocation. You shall do no servile work therein." So it goes from Sabbath to Sabbath.

Leviticus 23 says: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When you be come into the land which I give you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. And you shall offer that day, when you wave the sheaf, an he-lamb without blemish, of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord. And the meal offering thereof shall be two-tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, and an offering made by fire unto the Lord for a sweet savour. And the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of a hin. And you shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that you have brought an offering unto your God. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. And you shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from that day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven sabbaths shall be complete. Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall you number fifty days, and you shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord.”

All these seven Sabbaths worked off of Abib 15. What is seven times seven? Forty-nine. What was the fiftieth day? Pentecost. You can find that in Acts chapter 2, when the day of Pentecost was fully come, because all of these were based upon Sabbath days.

I want to go back and finish quoting what Ewing said. He wrote, “But this is not all. According to Exodus 12:3, 5, 6, and 24, and Leviticus 23:15, the 10th, the 14th, and the 16th of Abib could never be Sabbaths because they were work days of specific commands, real work, like cleaning house, butchering cattle, and reaping firstfruits.” Thus, while certain days were set to be Sabbath days, certain days could never be a Sabbath day because work was commanded.

God is not the author of confusion. You will find that in 1 Corinthians chapter 14. God is not going to command that you do no work one day and then turn around and command that you do work that day. Everything is set.

Annual Feasts as Sabbaths and Male Attendance

The seven annual feasts were Sabbaths as well. There were spring feasts and also fall feasts. The seven annual feasts considered Sabbaths were Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, and Pentecost, which were spring feasts; and Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles, which were fall feasts. All of these fell at specific times of the year, and each time they fell, it was a Sabbath.

In Exodus 34, all the males in Israel had to attend these feasts, and they could not appear before the Lord empty. Women were not necessarily required to attend all of them, and children were not necessarily required to attend all of them. Most of the time they did, but all the males were required to attend. Beginning with verse 18, we read:

"The feast of unleavened bread thou shalt keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread as I commanded thee in the time of the month Abib. For the month Abib camest thou out of Egypt. All that openeth the matrix is mine. And every firstling among thy cattle, whether of ox or sheep, that is male. But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb, and if thou redeem it not thou shalt break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem, and none shall appear before me empty. Six days shalt thou work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest. In earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest, and thou shalt observe the Feast of Weeks of the first fruits of wheat harvest and the feast of ingathering in the year's end."

Conclusion: Saturday Was Not a Perpetual Sabbath

God said three times that these feasts were to be held, and none of those males were to appear before Him empty.

Was Saturday the Sabbath? The word Saturday did not exist back then. But in our understanding, with our comprehension of time, was Saturday a Sabbath? You had seven days in a week. Yes and no is the answer. No, Saturday was not the weekly Sabbath. And yes, Saturday was a weekly Sabbath once every seven years. How in the world can that possibly be? The children of Israel went through the Passover on Abib 14. Abib 15 was a Sabbath.

It was the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Everything swung from that date. Since the date was fixed, the day changed. If Abib 15 had to be a Sabbath, it had to be, because they had to number seven Sabbaths after that. That meant Abib 1 and Abib 8 would be Sabbaths.

If the date is set, the day changes. My birthday is September the 3rd. One year it was on Wednesday; the next year it was on Thursday, then Friday, then Saturday, and then Sunday. It keeps going around until it comes back on Wednesday again. So whatever day Abib 15 was on, it had to be a Sabbath. That meant every day of the week, whatever those days were called back then, had to be a Sabbath at one time or the other. The date was set, and the day changed every seven years.

Look in your Bibles to Leviticus chapter 23, verse 24. This is another incident, and this is why it has to be said. In Leviticus 23, verse 23, we read: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall you have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing trumpets, an holy convocation. You shall do no servile work therein, but you shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.”

Notice what he said: speaking to the children of Israel, in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, they shall have a Sabbath. The very first day of the seventh month had to be a Sabbath as well, because it was trumpets. Once again, since the date is set, the day would change. So, when somebody comes along and tells you, “Well, Saturday’s the Sabbath,” no, Saturday’s not the Sabbath.

Saturday would have been a Sabbath if that had been the name of the seventh day many, many years back. It would have been a Sabbath once every seven years, but so would every other day during the week.

Now, let me make some applications and tie this together for you. I want you to think about this: God ordained the Sabbaths for a reason, and He emphasized rest for a reason, which we will get into. If you observed the Sabbaths the way God commanded you to in the Old Testament, it meant that you were in submission to Him, that you recognized His sovereign authority and power, and that you were obedient. If you did not keep the Sabbaths the way God ordained, it meant that you were in rebellion against Him and sinful against Him. Of course, this is why He judged Israel over and over, because they violated His Sabbaths over and over.

And He said, "You know, it was a sign between Me and you. I brought you out of the land of Egypt. You were supposed to obey Me. I'm your sovereign. I'm your God. I'm your judge. You were supposed to obey Me. You didn't. Therefore, I'm going to judge you." So, if you were in submission, you obeyed; if you were in rebellion, you disobeyed. And here is the interesting thing. I do not know if you picked up on it.

Those who did not keep God's Sabbaths always fell into idolatry. So, once again, you have to understand that in the Old Testament they had to be in submission, and if they were not in submission, they were in rebellion. It is that simple.

The Sabbaths in the Old Testament and even in the New Testament actually taught rest, redemption, and freedom under God. In other words, we find our rest in Him, our redemption in Him, and our freedom in Him. While the Sabbaths did indeed teach rest, redemption, and freedom in God, they also taught, at the same time, rest, redemption, and freedom from the tyranny of man and man's usurped authority.

Here is the third thing: anyone who makes Saturday a perpetual Sabbath is being inconsistent with the Word of God, because Saturday was not a Sabbath. If you claim Saturday as a Sabbath and observe it as they observed it in the Bible, you have a long stretch

ahead of you, because you cannot kindle the fire. You cannot do anything except simply rest. That was it.

There was a good illustration of this when God led the children of Israel through the wilderness. What did He do? He lit them with a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day. What does the Bible say? When the cloud stayed, they stayed; when the cloud moved, they moved.

In other words, that's what the Sabbath was all about. In other words, it was saying we're in submission to God's sovereign authority and God's sovereign power. We move at His command. We rest at His command. We're resting in Him. But the children of Israel, of course, rebelled against God, and God judged them.

Here is the thing that you need to understand today. We will look more in the New Testament next week. I will show you how the Pharisees and the scribes perverted even the teaching of the Sabbath, the principle of the Sabbath. They perverted it. Instead of it being a blessing, they made it a burden. Instead of it being freedom, they made it slavery. The Christian Sabbath fulfills everything in the Old Testament, because Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of everything.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we thank You for Your glory, Your grace, and Your mercy. We thank You, Lord, for all of Your multitudinous blessings to us—for life and health, sleep and rest. Lord, we are thankful for Joshua and Felicia and their new baby, and for the whole family, and ask Your continued hand of blessing to be upon them. We ask, Father, that You would give us grace that we may serve Thee acceptably with reverence and godly fear. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

Is Saturday the Sabbath

Part Two

Introduction and Review of Old Testament Sabbaths

In Luke chapter 13, we read verses 10 through 17:

"And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years and was bowed together and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him and said unto her, 'Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.' And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day, and said unto the people, 'There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.' The Lord then answered him and said, 'Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?' And when he had said

these things, all of his adversaries were ashamed, and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him."

The word Sabbath means rest. There were many Sabbaths in the Old Testament, and they were carried over into the New Testament. I pointed out that there were at least four different Sabbaths. There was the creation Sabbath, which commemorated creation. There was a Hebrew Sabbath, which commemorated the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. There was a Canaan Sabbath, which celebrated the conquest of Canaan. And lastly, there is the Christian Sabbath, which I will deal with next week in detail. We are commanded by God to remember the creation Sabbath, for it is the pattern of all the other Sabbaths, and everything that God has ordained and decreed shall certainly come to pass in that eternal decree as well.

The Hebrew Sabbath was a celebration of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. If you look in Deuteronomy chapter 5 and verse 15, the Word of God says, "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and 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." So the Sabbath day, the Hebrew Sabbath, was done in commemoration of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt.

Here are some questions for you to consider. Were you delivered out of Egypt from the house of bondage? The answer obviously is no. What in the world, then, does the deliverance from Egypt, or Israel, represent? What would it represent to us? What is the symbolism of that? How does it apply to us? Then think, secondly, about the Canaan Sabbath, since the Canaan Sabbath was a celebration of the conquest of Canaan. Did you participate in the conquest of Canaan? Obviously, again, the answer is no. You must then ask the question: What is the symbolism in it, and how does it apply to us? Hopefully all of these truths are going to be brought together in lesson number three.

It is also important, by way of review, to remember that there were weekly Sabbaths, but not only weekly Sabbaths; there were monthly, or new moon, Sabbaths as well. The seven annual feasts were designated as Sabbaths. There was a sabbatical year, and then, of course, there was the year of Jubilee, which also was considered as

a Sabbath. I do not know of any Sabbatarian, or any individual, who observes and keeps all of the Sabbaths in the way that God ordained for them to be kept.

Incidentally, may I point out that all of the Israelitish men were required to attend the feast? They had to attend, and they could not appear before God empty. They brought their gifts, their offerings, and their sacrifices at that particular time. Exodus chapter 34 and verse 24 says, “For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders. Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in a year.”

Three times they had to go for these feasts. Deuteronomy 16:16-17 says, "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose"—that would be Jerusalem—"in the Feast of Unleavened Bread, in the Feast of Weeks, and in the Feast of Tabernacles, and they shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee." The questions would be: Do you attend all the feasts? Do you attend at least the three most important ones? Do you bring your offerings to God at these particular feasts?

Of course, the answer is obviously no. The emphasis upon the Sabbath was rest. In the Old Testament, usually the general principle was that all work was prohibited. However, many forms of work that were forbidden were clearly marked out in the lineage of Scripture. On the other hand, there appeared some exceptions, especially revealed in the New Testament. The general principle was no work, period.

The General Principle of No Work and Its Exceptions

For instance, Exodus 20:8-11, Exodus 34:21, Leviticus 23:3, and Jeremiah 17:22 address this principle. The gates of the city had to be shut on the Sabbath, Nehemiah 13:19. Every man was to abide in his place, Exodus 16:29. Asses could not be laden, Nehemiah 13:19, nor burdens borne, Jeremiah 17:21-22. No fires could be kindled, Exodus 35:3; no sheaves could be brought in, Nehemiah 10:31; nor anything sold, Nehemiah 13:15; and no wine could be trodden in the presses, Nehemiah 13:15.

The general principle in the Old Testament was that no work should be done. However, there were some exceptions, and these exceptions are made exceedingly clear in the New Testament because they are part and parcel of observing the Sabbath. By the time of our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament, the Pharisees had totally misinterpreted and misapplied the law of God, especially in relationship to the Sabbath. Thus they sought always to condemn the Lord Jesus Christ for doing what he did on the Sabbath. Not that our Lord violated the Sabbath. What he violated was their interpretation of the Sabbath and their misapplication of the Sabbath.

I would encourage you to read Matthew chapter 5 this afternoon. Matthew chapter 5 shows you how the Pharisees and the scribes misapplied the law of God. Over and over in that chapter, our Lord said, "You have heard it said by them of old time." Then He would tell you what they said, and He would say, "But I say unto you." In other words, this is what they said, but they were wrong. Now I am correcting it; here is what is true, here is reality. Over and over in Matthew chapter 5, He does that: they said this in old time, but I say unto you.

When we look at our text today, you are going to see that the scribes and Pharisees attacked our Lord Jesus Christ not only with regularity, but openly and vehemently. They always accused Him of violating the Sabbath. So let me say this one more time to make it clear: our Lord did not violate the Sabbath day. He violated their interpretations of the Sabbath and their misapplications of the Sabbath.

Now let me show you how the Pharisees were. Look in your Bibles at John chapter 7, verse 49. Here is what the Bible says, and this is the attitude of these Pharisees: "But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed." They are not necessarily talking about God's law; they may think they are. But these are the Pharisees, so they are talking about their interpretation and application of God's law. What they really meant was this: those who do not know as we know, those who do not see as we see, and those who do not understand as we understand are cursed.

I hate to say this, but I know some preachers and some professing Christians just like the Pharisees. If you do not agree with them, you are cursed. If you do not see what they see, you are cursed. If you do not believe the way they believe, you are cursed. It is not just with eschatology; it is with many different subjects. They have set themselves up, as the Pharisees did, as the standard for belief and the standard for understanding.

Although general work was prohibited on the Sabbath day, there were exceptions according to our Lord Jesus Christ. Before considering those texts, however, there is one passage that must be understood not only in relationship to this message, but also to the one coming next week. In Mark chapter 2, verse 27, Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” We will return to this passage several times, as well as to Luke chapter 13.

The Sabbath Was Made for Man

The Pharisees had clouded the true meaning of the Sabbath. They had misinterpreted and misapplied it, and all their legalistic forms were demanded of everyone. For instance, one of their rules was that a person could not even eat an egg laid on the Sabbath day. I do not know how anyone could determine whether an egg had been laid on the Sabbath unless he happened to watch the chickens on that particular day, but that was one of their rules.

Moreover, there were things called—and I am pronouncing this—muktzah, which literally means forbidden. Although certain things were forbidden, they continually tried to find ways around those prohibitions. Here is a direct quote: “Many objects have been designated by our sages as muktzah. We are forbidden from moving them in some cases, even for activities permitted on the Sabbath. Muktzah may not be moved directly with one's hand or even indirectly with an object such as sweeping it with a broom. However, muktzah may be moved in a way that is very awkward, in an unusual manner, with other parts of the body.” In other words, it could be moved with one's teeth, elbow, or by blowing upon it.

But if something is forbidden to be moved, I do not care whether you use your teeth, your elbow, or your wind; it is still being moved.

That is what they did. In other words, it amounted to rules for thee, but not for me.

Even today, many things are carried to the extreme by the Orthodox. Exodus 35 says that a fire is not to be lit on the Sabbath day. They now apply that to turning on a light switch because it strikes a little fire and brings electricity into the room.

Although they will not do it themselves, it is all right for someone else to do it for them. If condemnation or censure is to be applied to anyone who created a light on the Sabbath, then someone else may be condemned and censured, but not them. They get around that by having someone else flip the light switch for them.

I am simply pointing out that so many rules and regulations have been made, not just by the Jews, but also by many preachers today who have no understanding of the law of God. Notice again in Mark 2:27: “And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.”

First, man was created on the sixth day of creation, and the Sabbath did not occur until the seventh day. Thus, logically speaking, the Sabbath was created for man, since he was created before the Sabbath. Secondly, we could rightly say that the Sabbath was created for man—that is, for man’s good, safety, benefit, and blessing.

Our bodies need rest, and our souls need worship. Even that which God ordained was not created to add to the sufferings and burdens of man. It was created to be a blessing and a benefit for them.

Albert Barnes said, "The Sabbath was made for man, for his rest from toil, his rest from the cares and anxieties of the world, to give an opportunity to call off his attention from earthly concerns and to direct it to the affairs of eternity. It was a kind provision for man that he might refresh his body by relaxing his labors, that he might have undisturbed time to seek the consolations of religion, to cheer him in the anxieties and sorrows of a troubled world, and that he might render to God that homage which is most justly due to him as the Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, and Redeemer of the world.

"And it is easily capable of proof that no institution has been more signally blessed to man's welfare than the Christian Sabbath. To that we owe more than to anything else the peace and order of a civilized community. Where there is no Sabbath, there is ignorance, vice, disorder, and crime. On that holy day, the poor and the ignorant as well as the learned, have undisturbed time to learn the requirements of religion, the nature of morals, the law of God, and the way of salvation.

"On that day man may offer his praises to the Great Giver of all good, and in the sanctuary seek the blessing of Him whose favor is life. Where that day is observed in any manner as it should be, order prevails, morals are promoted, the poor are elevated in their condition, vice flies away, and the community puts on the appearance of neatness, industry, morality, and religion. The Sabbath was therefore preeminently intended for man's welfare, and the best interests of mankind demand that it should be sacredly regarded as an appointment of merciful heaven intended for our best good, and were improved aright, infallibly resulting in our temporal and eternal peace."

“Man was made first, and then the Sabbath was appointed for his welfare. The Sabbath was not first made or contemplated, and then the man made with reference to that. Since, therefore, the Sabbath was intended for man’s real good, the law respecting it must not be interpreted so as to oppose his real welfare. It must be explained in consistency with a proper attention to the duties of mercy to the poor and the sick and to those in peril. It must, however, be in accordance with man’s real good on the whole and with the law of God. The law of God contemplates man’s real good on the whole, and here it is, and we have no right under the plea that the Sabbath was made for man to do anything contrary to what the law of God admits. It would not be for our real good, but for our real and eternal injury to devote the Sabbath to vice, to labor, and amusement.”

This amplifies that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Today, so many reverse that order and try to say that man was made for the Sabbath, and that man must keep rules and regulations that are obnoxious and humanistic, usually imposed

upon us by preachers, cult leaders, and people who do not really understand what they are saying.

Look back at Mark 2:27: “And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” Then verse 28: “Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath.”

Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath

The Greek word for Lord is Kyrios, and it literally means boss, owner, sovereign, master. Therefore, the Son of Man is boss, owner, sovereign, and master also of the Sabbath.

A.B. Simpson, in The Fourfold Gospel, wrote: “So that the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath. The expression ‘Son of Man’ is used 88 times in the New Testament and always means Messiah and not man in general. The Sabbath was made for man’s convenience and blessings and so Jesus, who was the complete and perfect manhood, was Lord of it.

But men who were incomplete and imperfect in their manhood cannot trust their fallible judgment to tamper with it. Though the day was made for man, this fact would not entitle man to use it contrary to the laws under which it was granted. As the Lord of the day, Jesus had a right to interpret it, to apply it, and to substitute the Lord's Day for it.

In asserting His lordship over it, Jesus takes the question outside the range of argument and brings it within the range of authority. When He said, "The Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath," He declared that He has all authority and all power in heaven and earth. He may do as He pleases on the Sabbath and with the Sabbath as well.

John Gill said: "And since Christ is greater than the temple and has all the perfections of the divine nature in him, is equal to the Father in power and glory, and even as mediator, has all power in heaven and earth given to him, so as he is Lord of all things, he is also Lord of the Sabbath and has the power of dispensing with it and even abolishing it. And since the Lord of the Sabbath had a power of dispensing with it, and made use of it in the cases of David and his men, and of the priests in the temple formerly, the Pharisees ought

not to think it strange that the Son of Man, who is equally Lord of the Sabbath, dispensed with it in His disciples now."

When the Bible says that Jesus Christ is Lord even of the Sabbath, it means that He has the absolute right to change it, to modify it, to dispense with it, and to abolish it.

SCRIPTURE READING - Matthew 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28 (KJV)

He may do with it as he pleases because he is God.

Works of Necessity: The Disciples Plucking Grain

> "Now, at that time, Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn, and his disciples were hungry and began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, 'Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day.' But he said to them, 'Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and they that were with him, how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, that in this place is one greater than the temple. But if you had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.'"
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> This passage is also found in Luke chapter 6, verses 1 through 5. "And it came to pass that he went through the cornfields on the Sabbath day, and his disciples began as they went to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said to him, 'Behold, why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful?' And he said unto them, 'Have you never read what David did when he had need and was hungry, he and they that were with him, how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the showbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?' And he said unto them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.'"

Therefore the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. In Luke chapter 6, verses 1 through 5, we find the same matter: a work of necessity, because the disciples were hungry and had nothing to eat. As they walked through the grain fields, or cornfields, they plucked the grain, rubbed it in their hands, and ate it raw.

Whose grain field were they in? The disciples did not have grain fields, and our Lord did not have a grain field. They were in someone's grain field, walking through it, plucking the grain, and eating it raw. You say, "They were stealing." No, they were not stealing. The Pharisees did not accuse them of theft. If it had been possible to accuse them of theft, they certainly would have done so. But let us see why it was not theft.

Deuteronomy 23:25 gives us a principle of the law: "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing corn." God says it is right to eat out of your neighbor's garden, but you cannot harvest. If you are hungry, you can eat.

Matthew Poole said, "To take for our needs so much of our neighbor's goods as we may reasonably think that if he were present and knew our circumstances, he would give us, is not theft. The Pharisees, therefore, do not accuse them of theft, but of violation of the Sabbath."

Plucking ears of corn, or snatching handfuls of grain, would be considered work. Yet our Lord allowed His disciples to do so in order to sustain them, satisfy their hunger, and teach them and the Pharisees the true meaning of the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore, it is lawful to prepare food to sustain life on the Sabbath day.

Adam Clarke said, "We may well wonder at the extreme poverty of Christ and his disciples. He was himself present with them and yet permitted them to lack bread."

"A man therefore is not forsaken by God because he is in want. It is more honorable to suffer the want of all temporal things and be in fellowship with Christ and his followers than to have all things in abundance and be in connection with the world."

Here is what God is saying: We may eat of our neighbor's crops or garden, but we cannot put in a sickle. We cannot harvest them. We cannot steal them.

Years ago, I had a number of horses, and a neighbor who had several farms wanted to borrow my horse and ride through his bean fields to check for disease or insects. I agreed, provided I could ride with him. We saddled two horses and started through the grain fields. My horse was always wanting to eat. She kept putting her head down, snatching up a bean vine, and chewing on it. I tried to hold her neck tight so she would not do that. Thomas saw me holding her back and said, "Preacher, let her eat."

He said, "They're working for us. This is simply letting them have pay for their labor. Let her eat."

His horse was not doing it, but mine was. So I said, "Fine." That is exactly the principle here. She was not running around stomping and tearing up his beans; she was just eating one every now and then. This is what God is saying: It is lawful to satisfy your hunger to the extent that you know that, if your neighbor were present, he would certainly give it to you. But you cannot take any more than that.

Now, it is for our benefit that our stomachs are filled with food. When you stop and think about this, I do not know whether they were eating wheat, rye, barley, or corn. It says grain; it says ears. You have to be pretty hungry to eat something raw like that. The disciples were indeed hungry, that is for sure.

I have always observed that many people are picky eaters. They will not eat certain things. I have friends who will not eat broccoli or cauliflower, hardly any vegetables; they are meat-and-potato folks, and that is all there is to it. My point has always been that they simply have not been hungry enough. If you get hungry enough, you will eat just about anything. People have told me, "I would never be like John the Baptist. I could not eat locusts and wild honey." You can eat the wild honey very easily, but the locusts are a horse of a different color. He said, "I would never eat a locust." You would if you were hungry enough.

Proverbs 27:7 says, "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." If you get hungry enough, the most bitter thing is sweet to you because it is filling and taking care of you. If you get hungry enough, you will be thankful for anything.

Our Lord reminds the Pharisees what David did. David and his men were fleeing from Saul, so they went to Abiathar. David asked whether they had anything to eat. They had only the showbread, which was reserved solely for the priests. David took some for himself and for his young men, who had kept themselves from women for three days. Here they ate food reserved solely for priests. Our Lord is showing that this was a work of necessity. They had to eat; they had to be filled. They were hungry.

Even saving the life of animals would be a work of necessity. Animals must eat as well. Remember Luke chapter 13, where our Lord said to this wicked man, "The Lord then answered and said, 'Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall and lead him away to watering?'" Of course. You feed your animals on the Sabbath day. I fed my animals this morning, and I feed my animals every day.

A work of necessity is easily connected with the sixth commandment: "Thou shalt not kill." The commandment has a negative and a positive. "Thou shalt not kill" means that life cannot be taken except on God's terms. But the positive is this: thou shalt preserve life. Eating is therefore a preservation of life. Works of necessity are not confined simply to cooking and eating; other works are necessary even on the Sabbath.

In Matthew chapter 12, verses 5 through 7, our Lord says, "Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple."

Works of Emergency and Mercy: Healing on the Sabbath

Jesus said, “But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not condemn the guiltless.” The

priests, therefore, had to function even on the Sabbath day, and they were not condemned for doing what they did.

In John chapter 7, verse 22, our Lord said, “I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave you circumcision; not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers; and ye on the Sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?” Then He says, “Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”

So it is necessary to work on the Sabbath day. I do not care whether we are talking about the Hebrew Sabbath, the Canaan Sabbath, or the Christian Sabbath; it is necessary to work on the Sabbath day. I work more on Sunday than I do any other day during the week. My Sundays are twelve-hour days. I work throughout the week because you have to study, prepare, do research, pray, and do many things just to prepare a message. There is much work during the week, but on Sunday I am teaching twice and driving all day. I am simply pointing out that there are works of necessity even on the Sabbath.

Now notice again, in Matthew chapter 12, verses 9 through 14: “And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue. And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, ‘Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?’ that they might accuse him.” They asked this question not because they were interested in learning or wanted the truth, but because they wanted a reason to accuse Him. “And he said unto them, ‘What man shall there be among you that shall have one sheep?”

Our Lord said, “And if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.” Then saith he to the man, “Stretch forth thine hand.” And he stretched it forth, and it was restored whole, like as the other. I want you to note something: Our Lord said it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day.

This is not necessarily a work of necessity. This could be considered a work of emergency. If my animal is in the ditch and cannot get out, I have to get him out. Why? Because if I do not, he may die. Thus, that would again be a violation of the sixth commandment. Life can only be taken on God's terms. Here again, God is saying that it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day.

Now, I want you to see how desperate these people were to condemn our Lord. Look in verse 14. "Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him." Here was teaching that it is lawful to save life. It is lawful to do well. Yet they became so irritated and aggravated that they went out and held a council that they might put Him to death. This is the Pharisees. You have this same truth revealed in Mark chapter 3, verses 1 through 5, as well.

Here is the point: The Pharisees will always place their rules, regulations, customs, and traditions above the Word of God and above the people. They do not really care about people. Look in Luke chapter 13, when our Lord healed the woman who had been bent over for eighteen years. What did the ruler of the synagogue say? "There are six days to work. Let them come and be healed, but not on the Sabbath." Our Lord said, "You hypocrite." He was not concerned about the woman who had been bent over for eighteen years; he was concerned about their traditions and customs.

When people are more concerned about their personal rules, regulations, customs, and traditions than about people, then you have a Pharisee. There are plenty of Pharisees around today, that is for sure. Our Lord was constantly healing on the Sabbath, eating on the Sabbath, living on the Sabbath, and doing works of emergency and works of necessity on the Sabbath as well.

Our Lord healed this woman. In Luke 14, our Lord heals a man of the dropsy on the Sabbath day. Luke 14:1 says, "And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath day, that they watched him. And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?'"

They had been asking him that question so that they might accuse him. He asked them that question, and, as verse 4 says, "they held their peace." They would not answer him; they could not answer him. "And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; and answered them, saying, 'Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?' And they could not answer him again to these things."

Our Lord is saying that it is right to do well on the Sabbath day. He healed on the Sabbath regularly in the New Testament. He not only healed on the seventh day, but aggravated the scribes and Pharisees by doing so—so much so that they wanted to kill him.

In John 5, Jesus saw a man by the pool of Bethesda and healed him. Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." Immediately the man was made whole, took up his bed, and walked; and the same day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, "It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." He answered them, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, 'Take up thy bed, and walk.'" Then they asked him, "What man is that which said unto thee, 'Take up thy bed, and walk'?"

"And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, 'Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.' The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole. Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day."

The Pharisees' Unreasonable Opposition

Just healing someone on the Sabbath day, according to these Jews, merited the death penalty. They took counsel against him.

John chapter 9 is one of my favorite chapters. This is so refreshing. "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, 'Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that

the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And he said unto him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam,' (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, 'Is not this he that sat and begged?' Some said, 'This is he.' Others said, 'He is like him.' But he said, 'I am he.' Therefore said they unto him, 'How were thine eyes opened?' And he answered and said, 'A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.' Then said they unto him, 'Where is he?'

He said, “I know not.” They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. It was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. He answered, “He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.” Therefore said some of the Pharisees, “This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day.” Now look at that. What they meant was, He is not keeping our interpretation of the Sabbath; He is not keeping what we think the Sabbath means. Others said, “How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?”

There was a division among them. They asked the blind man again, “What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.” But the Jews did not believe that he had been blind and received his sight until they called his parents. They asked, “Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.”

SCRIPTURE READING - John 9:18-38 (KJV)

Now these words spake his parents because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, “He is of age; ask him.”

Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, “Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.” He answered and said, “Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” Then said they to him again, “What did he to thee? How opened he thine eyes?”

He answered them, “I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? Will ye also be his disciples?” Then they reviled him, and said, “Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses’ disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.” The man answered and said unto them, “Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.” They answered and said unto him, “Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?” And they cast him out.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” He answered and said, “Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?” And Jesus said unto him, “Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.” And he said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshipped him.

Here is a man that was born blind, who ended up preaching to these Pharisees. Did they listen? No. Did they hear? No. Did they receive it? No. What did they say? “Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?” And they cast him out. But they wanted to know how Jesus healed him. He said, “I’ve told you already. If I tell you again, will you be his disciples?”

Wherever you turn in Scripture, you find this absolute truth: You cannot reason with a Pharisee. Pharisees are unreasonable and illogical; they will not receive anything you say. Their minds are already made up that they have the truth, and they will not listen to anyone who says anything contrary to what they already believe. Their position is, "We have arrived. We are the ultimate. We have it all. Everyone should listen to us. Everyone should bow to us. No one need teach us."

Application and Conclusion

Our Lord went about on the Sabbath doing works of necessity, works of emergency, and works of mercy, and the Pharisees consistently condemned Him for it. By next Sunday, Lord willing, I will show you why we worship on Sundays. Sunday is the Christian Sabbath, if you want to call it that; it is the Lord's Day.

But whatever day you call your Sabbath, you must answer this question: Would you be willing to give up your rest to help and rescue someone, perhaps in a car wreck? Would you give up your rest to help feed the poor? Would you give up your rest to take food to a grieving family that has lost a loved one? Would you give up your day of rest to visit someone in a nursing home who has been neglected by her family or his family and hardly ever has a visitor or friend? Would you be willing to drive a sickly neighbor, friend, or relative to the hospital and sit there for hours on your day off, your day of rest, or your Sunday?

Would you be willing to do that? Would you be willing to be the good Samaritan, or would you be like the priest and the Levite, who simply passed by and ignored the situation? The essence of the Sabbath is rest; that is true. But works of emergency, necessity, and mercy must be done. So how, then, does all this work together?

What do all these Sabbaths in the Bible symbolize and represent? Jesus Christ is Lord of the Sabbath. He is the Creator and ordainer of the Sabbath. Therefore, He has absolute power, right, and authority to change it, dismiss it, alter it, and do with it whatever He pleases, for He is God in the flesh.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask for Your grace and mercy. Teach us, we pray. Father, build us up in the most holy faith and give us, Lord, Your blessing. We pray for these who are sick, asking healing in their lives. We pray for safety, protection, and preservation for each one as we travel. May the Lord's hand be upon us, and may He be honored and glorified in our lives. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 3

Is Saturday The Sabbath?

Part Three

SCRIPTURE READING - Hebrews 4:1-11 (KJV)

"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached as well as of them, for the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, I have sworn in my wrath that they shall enter into my rest, although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place on the seventh day on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest, seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief. Again he limited a certain day, saying in David, the day after so long a time, as it is said, today you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not have afterwards have spoken of another day? There remaineth therefore rest to the people of

> God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest, lest any man fail after the same example of unbelief."

Introduction and Review of Previous Messages

> This is the third message on "Is Saturday the Sabbath? Or if so, why do we worship on Sunday?" Let me review especially the last two messages. There are many Sabbaths in the Bible, and not just the weekly Sabbath. Most folks focus on a weekly Sabbath and totally ignore all of the other Sabbaths given to us in the Scripture. Yes, there were weekly Sabbaths, but there were new moon Sabbaths. The seven annual feasts were considered Sabbaths. There was also the sabbatical year. There is also the year of Jubilee, which was considered a Sabbath. I have made the statement that I do not know any Sabbatarian who keeps a Sabbath day as God has outlined it and ordained it in the Bible.

If one keeps a weekly Sabbath, why does that individual not keep all the other Sabbaths as well? If you keep one, God certainly requires you to keep all of them, because the Scripture says, “he that doeth part shall certainly fulfill all.” If you violate one aspect, you have violated all of it as well. Which Sabbath do you desire to keep: the creation Sabbath, the Hebrew Sabbath, the Canaan Sabbath, or what you and I would call the Christian Sabbath?

All are mentioned in the Bible. Saturday, quote-unquote, is not the Sabbath. It would have been once every seven years, but Abib 15 had to be a Sabbath every year. Abib was the first month of the Hebrew calendar, meaning that Abib 1, Abib 8, and Abib 15 had to be Sabbaths every year, and the next seven Sabbaths worked from those.

If the date is fixed, the date changes, just like your birthday. The Sabbath, quote-unquote, changed every year. That would be the weekly Sabbath as well. The emphasis of the Sabbath in the Old Testament was rest. It was not worship, because worship was basically family-centered and dealt with everyday life. The word Sabbath itself means rest. As I pointed out, absolutely no work could

be done on the Sabbath. The general principle was: no work was to be done, period.

You will find that in Exodus chapter 20, verses 8 through 11; Exodus 34, verse 21; Leviticus 23, verse 3; and Jeremiah 17, verse 22. The gates of the city had to be shut—Nehemiah 13, verse 19. Every man was to abide in his place on the Sabbath day—Exodus 16, verse 29. Asses could not be laden—Nehemiah 13, 19. No burdens could be borne—Jeremiah 17, 21 and 22. No fires could be kindled—Exodus 35, verse 3. No sheaves could be brought in—Nehemiah 10, verse 31—and no wine could be trodden in the presses—Nehemiah chapter 13 and verse 15.

The key New Testament passage was Mark chapter 2, verses 27 and 28: the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. In other words, the Sabbath was ordained by God to be a blessing, not a burden. It was the Pharisees and the scribes who turned everything into a burden.

The Sabbath Made for Man, and Christ as Lord of the Sabbath

In fact, our Lord said that they laid burdens upon men that they themselves would not bear. They would not even lift a finger to bear them. But God ordained the Sabbath to be a blessing and not a burden. And then, in verse 28, the Bible says, “For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath as well.” So that means that He is the sovereign, the owner, the boss, and the master. He may do as He pleases on the Sabbath; He may dismiss it or He may change it however He pleases.

So it is taking the argument away from emotions and away from legalism and putting it squarely on the shoulders of authority. Jesus Christ has all authority in heaven and earth, and so He may do as He pleases.

The Fourth Commandment Not Repeated in the New Testament

Now, I want you to consider another fact that you may not have thought about, and that is simply this: the fourth commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” is the only

commandment that is not repeated in the New Testament. All the other commandments are repeated many times. Now, the word Sabbath and Sabbaths occurs over and over in the New Testament because the original disciples were Israelites, and originally they would certainly meet on the Sabbath day. But all Ten Commandments, with the exception of the Fourth Commandment, are repeated in the New Testament, but the Fourth Commandment is missing. So have you noticed, as you read through the Bible, especially in the New Testament, that the day of worship was changed to Sunday, which you and I would call the first day of the week?

So you are going to have to ask yourself this question: Why then did the disciples cease meeting on the Sabbath and begin meeting on the first day of the week, which we are going to call the Christian Sabbath? The Sabbaths in the Old Testament were not done away with; listen carefully, they were fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am going to show you that Jesus Christ is the author of the new creation, the author of true deliverance, and the author of absolute victory over our enemies, because He is our Joshua, the One who gives us life and rest, eternal rest.

Colossians 2:16-17: Sabbaths as Shadows of Christ

Now, in light of this, look in your Bibles to Colossians chapter 2, verse 16. The Apostle Paul writes, “Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of a holy day or the new moon or the Sabbath days.”

I'm going to give you two quotes. The first one is from John Calvin; the second one is from Albert Barnes. Listen to what Calvin says. He's talking about verse 16: "To judge means here to hold one guilty of a crime, or to impose a scruple of conscience, so that we are no longer free. He says, therefore, that it is not in the power of men to make us subject to the observance of rights which Christ has by his death abolished, and exempts us from their yoke, that we may not allow ourselves to be fettered by the laws which they have imposed. He tacitly, however, places Christ in contrast with all mankind lest anyone should extol himself so daringly as to attempt

to take away what he has given him." But note of you what he said: "to judge means to hold one guilty of a crime."

Now here's Albert Barnes: "The word judge here is used in the sense of pronouncing a sentence. That is, there's been a judge. There's been a condemnation. The meaning is, since you have thus been delivered by Christ from the evils which surround you, since you have been freed from the observances of the ceremonial law, let no one sit in judgment on you or claim the right to decide for you in those matters. You are not responsible to man for your conduct, but to Christ, and no man has the right to impose that on you as a burden from which he has made you free."

Go back and look in verse 16 again. We understand the first part when he says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink." Now, what's this? "Or in respect to a holy day." A holy day was that which related to the festivals, the feast. They were called holy days as well as Sabbaths. In fact, we get our English word "holiday" from this word "holy day" as well. The Greek word is actually heorte or heorte, and it means literally a feast or a festival. The holy days, then, were the seven annual feasts known as festival days, but Sabbaths as well. Look in verse 16 again: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or drink or in respect of a holy day or the new moon." Of course, the new moon was a Sabbath as well. The Greek word happens to be Noumenia or Noumenia, and it refers to the new moon, which was also a festival and, or what you and I would call, a monthly Sabbath.

The Greek word for Sabbath here, “the Sabbath days,” is Sabbaton, which literally refers to the Sabbath days. Look at verse 16 again: “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or the new moon, or the Sabbath days.”

In the Old Testament, you were judged if you violated the holy days or the Sabbath days. In Numbers chapter 15, there was a young man who was simply picking up sticks on the Sabbath. God said he was to be executed, and he was executed. All work was absolutely forbidden. There was a reason for that, and rest was strictly enforced. Why was rest strictly demanded, and work strictly prohibited and forbidden on the Sabbath days?

If the Sabbath days are still in existence today as they were in the Old Testament, why can we not judge someone or condemn someone if they violate the Sabbaths in the way they were violated in the Old Testament? There has to be a difference between that which transpired in the old covenant and that which is transpiring in the new covenant. The emphasis in the new covenant is not necessarily on rest; it is more on worship.

What did the Old Testament Sabbaths teach? What did they symbolize? All types, emblems, and shadows look forward to the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Passover, Deliverer, Propitiation, and true Lamb of God. He is our Tabernacle, our Temple, and our Altar. Everything points to Jesus Christ.

Did the Sabbaths point to the person and work of Jesus Christ? Were they fulfilled in Him, as were all the other types, emblems, and symbols? Now go back to Colossians chapter 2 and look at verse 16 and then verse 17. Here is the answer: verse 16.

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." Notice that he is saying the new moons, the Sabbath days, and the festival days were a shadow of things to come, but the body is that of Christ. In other words, Jesus Christ is the reality. We are specifically told in verse 17 that the Sabbath days, the new moons, and the festival days were a shadow of things to come.

The word shadow is the Greek word skia, and it is translated many times in our Bibles as shadow. What is a shadow? A shadow is a shade caused by the interception of light. It is an image cast by an object and representing the form of that object. When I parked my vehicle out front today, I parked in the shade, or the shadow, of an oak tree. Which was real—the tree or the shadow? Obviously, the tree is real. What made the shadow? Light from the sun was shining on the tree, and on the other side the shadow, or shade, of the tree was pronounced. The shadow is not the reality; the tree is the reality. So the Bible is telling us that Jesus Christ is the true reality.

Old Testament Types Fulfilled in Christ

Thus, all of these Holy Days, the New Moons, and the Sabbaths shadowed and pictured the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything in the Old Testament, especially in relationship to the priesthood, the ceremonial laws, the tabernacle, and the temple, was just a mere shadow.

Hebrews chapter 8, verse 3 says, “For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices. Wherefore it is a necessity that this man, that would be Jesus, have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law.” It continues, “…who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things. As Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle, for seest thou that thou make all things according to the pattern shown to thee in the mount.”

Now, first of all, look at the word example. The Bible says, “who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.” The Greek word for example is Hupodeigma. All that word means is simply this: a sign suggestive of anything, delineating anything, a representation, a figure, or a copy. So he says in verse five that everything there in the Old Testament was basically a shadow, a representation, or a figure. Everything there was a shadow, a representation, a figure, or a copy of something else. Thus, the services of the priests in the tabernacle and the temple were merely an example, a representation, a type, and figure of the great high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is our great high priest, and all of the Old Testament types point to Him. The Bible says they “serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.” The word shadow is the same, skia. God gave Moses a pattern for the tabernacle and for the temple. Notice what he said: “…as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle, for seest thou that thou make all things according to the pattern shown to thee in the mount.” God gave to Moses a pattern for the tabernacle and for the temple.

Now, I’m not a seamstress, but some of you ladies are. You buy a pattern. Once you buy the pattern, do you wear it? Of course not.

You lay the pattern on your cloth, cut out the cloth, and sew everything together. The pattern is not the reality; the dress is the reality. The pattern is a shadow or an example of what you are going to sew. God is saying that everything in the Old Testament, especially in relation to the tabernacle and the temple, was an example and a shadow.

Hebrews chapter 10 and verse 1 says, “For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offer year by year, continually make the comers thereunto perfect.” Note that the law had a shadow of good things to come. All the ceremonial law was nothing but a shadow; it was not the image, the reality. It was a picture, a type, an emblem, or a symbol of the good things that were to come to pass in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The light was showing and shining on the Lord Jesus Christ. Who is our tabernacle? Who is our temple? Everything in the Old Testament was a shadow. I have had people say, “I wish I had lived in Old Testament times. You could smell those sacrifices, see the high priest, and touch the temple. That was reality.” No, that was not reality. All that was shadow, type, and figures. The reality is what we have now in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Why is it that today we no longer have a tabernacle or a temple? The answer is that the tabernacle and temple were nothing more than shadows, emblems, and symbols of reality. We no longer have the shadow because now we have the reality in Jesus Christ.

Revelation chapter 21 and verse 22 says concerning eternity, “And I saw no temple therein for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb thereof are the temple in it.” Jesus Christ is our temple.

Why do you not bring a sacrifice? You might bring an offering, but I have never seen anybody come in the New Testament and bring an ox or a lamb to slaughter. Why do you not bring sacrifices like that? The answer is very plain. First Corinthians 5:7 says, "For even Jesus Christ, our Passover is sacrificed for us." Jesus Christ is the true Passover lamb. All those lambs slain throughout the Old Testament period were nothing more than shadows and types pointing to the Lord Jesus Christ. You remember what John the Baptist said when

he saw Jesus Christ: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

That brings me to another question. Why is it that we do not have an altar in our Baptist churches or in any New Testament church? We do not have a physical altar. I know many preachers will say, "If you want to be saved, come down here to the altar." No, there is no physical altar in a Baptist church or any church. Of course not.

On the other hand, we do have an altar, but the altar is the Lord Jesus Christ. Hebrews 13:10 says, "We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." If you want to go back to the types, emblems, and symbols, you have no right to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our temple. Jesus Christ is our sacrifice. He is our Passover. Jesus Christ is our altar.

Someone says in the average church, "Come forward if you want to be saved." May I ask you, why would you want to go forward to be saved? Is not our Lord capable of saving you where you are seated? Is He not capable of saving you in the back of the church, inside the church? Why do you have to come forward? You say, "Well, you need to confess Christ." You can confess Christ at your baptism.

Since Jesus Christ is our altar, grace can be mediated to people wherever they are, whenever he gives them repentance and whenever he gives them faith. You do not have to be in a church building in order to be saved. You can be saved in your home, out on the road, or anywhere, because Jesus Christ is our altar. If there is a physical altar in the church, then that is the only place you can be saved. You remember, God required all sacrifices to be given at the altar that he ordained in Jerusalem. You could not sacrifice anywhere else. So if you are going to serve the types, the emblems, and the shadows, you have no right to Jesus Christ, because Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of all those types and shadows.

Why do we not have a physical priesthood? Why do we not have the physical high priest like they had in the Old Testament? Hebrews 4:14 gives the answer: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Jesus Christ is our great high priest. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of everything in the Old Testament.

The First Day of the Week as the Christian Sabbath

In light of these questions, why, then, do we meet and worship on Sunday, which is designated as Lord's Day and is also designated as the Christian Sabbath? Why in the world would we call Sunday the Christian Sabbath? There is an answer for that. The New Testament shows something that occurs with a great deal of regularity. Matthew 28:1 says, "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 sepulcher." We understand that the Sabbath day was ending back then. Of course, I think there is more to that phrase than just that, but the first part of this verse is easily understood.

The Sabbath was ending. It began to dawn on the first day of the week. The Greek word for first is mia, which means one and only one. The surprise in this verse comes from the day of the week, which happens to be the Greek word Sabbaton, Sabbath. So literally, what you see in Matthew 28:1 is, "in the end of the Sabbath, or Sabbaths, the Old Testament Sabbaths as well, as it began to dawn toward the number one day, the first day of the new Sabbath, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to the sepulcher."

This does not happen just one time. This is why I recommend that everyone have a good Bible study program like Online Bible, where you can check the Greek and Hebrew words for yourself. There are plenty of interesting Greek words. I took Greek for three years, and I have my favorite Greek words. One of them is pentakischilioi, the Greek word for 5,000. I like the word gune as well. That is the word wife, so I call Alice my gune every now and then. The word Sabbaton occurs over and over. Look at it in Mark 16:1.

"And when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome, had brought sweet spices that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun."

The word Sabbath here is diaginomai: "When the Sabbath was passed." It means when it has thoroughly elapsed, when it was past, when it was through, when it was over. "And when the Sabbath was

passed"—it is gone, over, and done with. Watch: "very early in the morning in the first day of the week."

In Matthew 28, I told you that the word translated “first” is mian. Here, it is proton, which means that which is first in a succession of things—there is something else to follow, but this is first in succession. Notice verse 2: “And very early in the morning the proton Sabbaton, the first Sabbath of the week.” Sunday is being called a Sabbath.

Now skip down to verse 9: “Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, that is the first Sabbath, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene out of whom he had cast seven devils.” Notice how, over and over, this first day of the week is called the first Sabbaton, referring to Sunday as the Sabbath.

Turn to Luke chapter 24, and notice verse 1: “Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came into the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.” Here it is again. The exact same word is used: “on the first Sabbath, very early in the morning.” We are talking about Sunday morning, or the first day. It is now called the Sabbath, the first day of the week. We would identify it as Sunday, and there is a reason for this.

Now turn to John chapter 20 and look at verse 1: “The first day of the week, that is the first Sabbath, cometh Mary Magdalene early when it was yet dark unto the sepulcher and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcher.” Again, it is called the first Sabbath.

Notice verse 19 of the same chapter. The first day of the week is again referred to as the Sabbath. I want you to note that, all through the New Testament, especially after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the disciples always met on the first day of the week, or the first Sabbath. They did not meet on the Old Testament Sabbaths any longer. They might go into the synagogues and preach and teach where people were gathered, but they themselves met on the first day of the week. For instance, look in Acts chapter 20, particularly at verse 7.

Acts chapter 20 verse 7 says, “And upon the first day of the week, the first Sabbath, when the disciples came together to break bread,

Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight."

How many would stay if I preached until midnight? I have done that in times past. I was preaching in Illinois many years ago, and after I had preached an hour and something, everybody stood around talking. Nobody left, though it was a decent-sized church. I jokingly said, "Well, if I knew everybody was going to just hang around and talk, I'd preach again." They sat down, and I preached a second sermon. When I finished, the preacher stood up and preached a third sermon. We did not get out until after midnight.

The reason I do not normally preach until midnight is that, if you read this passage, there was a young man named Eutychus who went to sleep in a window and fell out. He broke his neck, or at least killed himself. Paul went down and raised him from the dead. I cannot raise anybody from the dead, so I quit preaching at midnight.

Notice that they came together on the first day of the week. The first Sabbath is what it says. First Corinthians chapter 16, verses 1 and 2, states: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I've given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do you. Upon the first day of the week, the first Sabbath of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." He says that on the very first day, which is the Christian Sabbath, when you are meeting, you take up this collection for the poor saints.

Here is what you have to conclude from reading through the New Testament: The era of the old Sabbaths had come to an end, inasmuch as those Sabbaths typified the personal work of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, in the New Testament, has now come and completed and finished His work. May I remind you of what is said in John chapter 19 and verse 30? Jesus Christ is on the cross, and what did He cry? "It is finished."

Hebrews 4: The True Sabbath Rest in Christ

When he cried, the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. The old covenant era has gone away, and the new covenant era has come to pass. The first Sabbath of the week is Sunday, known

as the Christian Sabbath. It is also a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, nearly every church will have what is called an Easter Sunday service. Many people think, “Christ was raised from the dead on Easter Sunday.”

Let me tell you something. Easter Sunday is not a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He was raised on the first day of the week. The first day of the week commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ—not just once a year, but every week. Every Sunday is a fresh commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now, with all this, turn back to Hebrews chapter four, because I want to share these things with you and show you exactly what is being talked about. Let us read at least the first nine verses again, to see the text in its context.

“Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left of us entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”

Now we are talking about the people who came out of Egypt. The word did not profit them, although they heard the gospel and the truth, because it was not mixed with faith. “For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, as I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest, although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. Note now, for he spake in a certain place on the seventh day on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all of his works. And in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest, seeing, therefore, it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom he was first preached entered not in because of unbelief. Again, he limited a certain day, saying unto David, Today, after so long a time, as it is said, Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”

"For if Jesus had given them rest, then he would not have afterwards spoken of another day." In Hebrews chapter 4, verses 1 through 8, we see the creation rest, the Hebrew rest, and the Canaan rest; and we will see the Christian rest as well. The word rest, as

listed in verses 1 through 8, is katapausis, and it literally means a rest or resting place.

The reason I am telling you this is that it is not Sabbaton or Sabbatismos. It has nothing to do with the Sabbath per se, except that this happens to be a metaphor indicating the heavenly blessedness in which God dwells and which he has promised to those who believe on him and in him through his person and work in Jesus Christ. Thus, the word rest in verses 1 through 8 simply means rest or resting place. It is not the word for Sabbath.

The second thing to point out in verses 1 through 8 is the word Sabbath. The word for Sabbath is hebdomas, and it literally means seven or seventh. That is all; it does not mean anything beyond seven or seventh.

I learned to count in Greek years ago, after taking Greek for three years. We had to learn the masculine, feminine, and neuter. Mia would be feminine; it means one. Eis would be masculine. Hen, hen, hen would be neuter. So eis, mia, hen means one in three different ways in Greek. The way we always remembered it, we shortened it to "HaSme'en." But it is just one. That is all. This word seven simply means seven or seventh.

Look at verses one through three and verses five and six. This refers to the Hebrew rest, the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt. Verses one through three say: "Let us therefore fear lest the promise being left us of entering into his rest any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached as well as to them, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into the rest, as he said, I've sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest, although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."

Now look at verses five and six: "And in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest, seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief."

How many of the original Israelites who came out of Egypt actually got into the Promised Land? Two: Joshua and Caleb. The

rest were killed in the wilderness. That is what he said in 1 Corinthians chapter 10: "But with many of them God was not well pleased for they were overthrown in the wilderness." God killed each one of them in the wilderness because of their rebellion and unbelief. They did not enter in; the only two who entered were Joshua and Caleb.

Now look at verse 4. Verse 4 speaks of the creation rest: "For he spake in a certain place on the seventh day on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all his works." Certainly, God was not tired. All it means is that God ceased from his labors; he ceased from work. His creation had been completed, and so he ceased working.

Verses 7 and 8 speak of the Canaan rest, when Joshua led the people into the conquest of Canaan. Verse 7 says, "Again he limited a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time, as it is said, Today if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Watch this: "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not have afterwards have spoken of another day." The word Jesus here is the word Joshua. The word for Jesus in the Greek happens to be Iesous, and it means Jehovah is salvation.

Joshua in the Greek is Yahashua, and it simply means Jehovah is salvation. So now we are talking about the Hebrew rest, the creation rest, and the Canaan rest. Which rest do you celebrate? Which rest were you a participant in and part of? Were you there to rest with God when He ceased His creative activity? The answer is no.

Were you there when the Israelites were delivered out of Egypt? The answer is no. Were you there with Joshua when the land was conquered? The answer again is no. If the creation rest is not our rest, if the Hebrew rest is not our rest, and if the Canaan rest is not our rest, what is our rest? Where do we rest?

Look at verse 9, Hebrews 4:9. After the first eight verses, he has discussed the creation rest, the Hebrew rest, and the Canaan rest. He now says, “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.” There remaineth. There is a rest for the people of God. The others are not our rest. We were not participants in those, but there is a rest for the people of God. Here is the word for rest in verse 9:

Sabbatismos. There is a Sabbath rest for the people of God. There is a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

Now look at the word remaineth. The word remaineth is the Greek word apoleipo. Apo, A-P-O, is a preposition meaning to separate, to depart, to separate a part from the whole, or to take away. The word leipo means to leave, to leave behind, and to forsake. So the word remaineth is saying that there are some things we are forsaking, leaving behind, and departing from. What are we departing from? We are departing from the Old Testament Sabbaths, all those holy days, and all of those festivals, because we now have the reality. We have the fulfillment of all of those in the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything in the tabernacle, everything in the temple, and everything in that ceremonial law were pictures, types, shadows, and emblems of the reality, Jesus Christ.

Christ Our Rest in All of Life

Do you remember what I told you the essence of the Old Testament Sabbaths was? It was rest. That was the essence. They demanded rest. In fact, the word Sabbath itself simply means rest. Look at Matthew 11:28: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you..." What will he give us? Rest. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden light."

Now wait a minute. Who is the real, genuine rest? Is it the Old Testament types and shadows and emblems, or is it the reality, the Lord Jesus Christ?

Now remember, if you would, we're leaving some things behind. We're separating from some things. What about creation? I hope you're thankful for God's creation, or without it you and I would not even be here. If he made us, without the world we would not have a place to live. We are thankful for God's creation; that's for sure. But although I want to rejoice in God's creation and use it the way he has ordained for me to use it, there is another creation that is even more important. What is that? That is the new creation of Jesus Christ.

What does the Bible say in 1 Corinthians 5, verse 17? “For we are his creation in Christ Jesus. All things have passed away, all things have become new.” The Bible says in 2 Corinthians, chapter 4 and verse 6, that God has shined in our hearts to give us a knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. God has shined in our hearts just as God shined in creation. God spoke, and He created us anew in Christ Jesus. So we are celebrating in Christ Jesus the new creation.

What about the deliverance from Egypt? You and I were not there; we were not delivered from Egypt. That was the Passover. What does the Bible say in 1 Corinthians, chapter 5 and verse 7? “Even Jesus Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.” In other words, the deliverance of the Hebrews out of Egypt in the Old Testament was nothing more than a shadow and a type, saying that Jesus Christ is the true Deliverer.

He delivers us from slavery, sin, and bondage. The Bible says, “If the Son of God shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.” It also says, “Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage where Christ has made you free.” Christ is the real, true Passover. The picture of Israel being led out of Egypt and delivered from slavery and bondage merely typified the real deliverance we have in the Lord Jesus Christ.

What about the conquest of Canaan? It was nothing more than a picture and a type of the real victory we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Word of God says in 2 Corinthians, chapter 2 and verse 14, “Now thanks be unto God who always causes us to triumph in Jesus Christ.” Jesus Christ is our true Joshua. He is our captain, the One who leads us to victory—absolute and total victory.

We have left the tabernacle and the temple for the real temple, which is Jesus Christ. We have left the Passover lamb for the real Passover, Jesus Christ. We have left the physical high priest for the real High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. We have left pain and victory for the real, genuine victory in the Lord Jesus Christ. We have left the old Sabbaths and the old festivals that merely pictured the reality of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ came and was made under the law, made of woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. In accordance with the law, he yielded to it an absolutely perfect

righteousness. He was obedient in every area, and he gave himself as a sacrifice on our behalf.

Jesus Christ died in order that we might be forgiven for our sins. He was perfectly obedient to God the Father; thus, he worked out a perfect righteousness in which we could be clothed. Now we have a perfect righteousness, a perfect obedience, and a perfect sacrifice; we have been forgiven.

Hebrews chapter 4 and verse 9 says: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God, a Sabbath to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

Are you working to be saved? I hope not, because Jesus Christ is your salvation. There is no more struggling, fussing, fighting, or feuding. You have ceased and are trusting only in his perfect obedience and his perfect sacrifice. You are not working to be saved. You might work because you have been saved, but you are trusting only in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. His work is perfect. It cannot be added unto or taken apart or from. He is absolutely perfect.

People have told me, "Well, I just don't feel saved." I said, "Well, I'm a fan of that." When they looked at me funny, I explained, "The reason I'm glad you don't feel saved is because salvation is not in feelings. Salvation is an objective fact and an objective reality."

That is the person and work of Jesus Christ, outside of you. It is still true, no matter how you feel. Feelings have nothing to do with it. It is a fact. We have ceased from our labor; we are not working anymore. The Passover has ended, and the Lord's Supper has begun. Circumcision has ended, and baptism has begun. The Old Testament Sabbaths have ended, and the New Testament Sabbath has begun. Therefore, in the Christian Sabbath, on the first day of the week, we are not celebrating creation, deliverance from Egypt, or the conquest of Canaan.

These were all types and shadows. We are celebrating the new creation in Jesus Christ, the full deliverance from bondage and sin in Jesus Christ, and the true victory over every sin and over every enemy in the Lord Jesus Christ. We worship on the first day of the

week because that is the Christian Sabbath. It is that rest which God has given to us. In Him, we worship and glory because He is the true rest of God, and we have ceased from all of our labors.

Jesus Christ is our Lord, our Savior, our Mediator, and our Redeemer; that is for sure. But we do not only rest in Him for salvation. We rest in Him for every other area of our lives as well. There are things that go wrong in our lives, things over which we have no control, and things that happen to us in God's providence which we probably would not desire to have happen, but they happen. So what do we do? We fulfill our duties, responsibilities, and obligations in faith, doing it for God's honor and God's glory. And then what? We rest. We trust Him to work it out.

Suppose Steve and I could have a knockdown drag-out and be at each other's throats. I could come up to him and say, “Steve, this is not right. We both need to repent. I want to repent. I want you to forgive me.” He could look at me and say, “Get out of my sight. I don't want to see you again.” That would be bad. So what would I do? I would take two brethren and come back to him again, saying, “Look, Steve, I want to make things right. Let's forgive each other. Let's get this thing settled.” He could say, “No, I'm not going to do that. I don't want to see you. I don't want to listen to those fellas either. I don't care what they say. Get out of my sight.”

What could I do next? I could bring him to the church. He might not even hear the church. But if I came to him repeatedly and he would not make things right, brought brethren and he would not make things right, and brought him before the church and he would not make things right, here is my question: What could I do next? Nothing except rest. “Lord, I've done what I am obligated to do and responsible to. Lord, he's in Your hands.”

"You have to work in his heart. I can't do anything else." It does not matter whether the matter is familial, economical, or personal. We can do only what God requires of us, and then rest: "Lord, you will work it out in your time. I fulfill my responsibilities. I can do nothing else. It is in your hand, and that is exactly where I will leave it. I will rest and trust you to work it out."

Jesus Christ is our Sabbath and our rest. He fulfilled every shadow, type, and emblem in the Old Testament. He is the Son of God, the Savior, the Redeemer, the mediator, the propitiation, and our all in all.

Father, help us to see the greatness, majesty, and beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to understand that He is indeed our all and in all. May we trust in Him, look to Him, and worship Him. May each Sunday be in our minds a fresh commemoration of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. May we learn to trust Thee and rest in Thee. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

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