



The Sabbath Recorder.

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J. V. HULL, EDITOR.

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THE JEWISH OR SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH.

What the Bible says about it. Some one has sent us the Advent Christian Times of Sept. 23d, having an article in it on the Sabbath question, under the above heading, by J. W. Burroughs, which we propose to publish in paragraphs just as printed, with notes and criticisms of our own after each paragraph.

1. It was not made a Sabbath in Eden. Ex. 16: 23-30; Deut. 5: 2, 3, 12.

The passage referring to the Sabbath in Eden says, "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Gen. 2: 2, 3.

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The Sabbath was not made in Eden? The course of reasoning here pursued would equally prove that in Eden there was no law against theft and murder, or even against idolatry.

Nay, more, for in Eden, these were not mentioned, in so far as the record goes, but the Sabbath was.

3. It was not given to man until about 2,500 years after creation, or Adam's day. Ex. 15: 22-25; 16: 23; 31: 16-18.

The Sabbath was not given to the Jews until about 2,500 years after creation, but how does this prove that it was not given to man then, seeing the seventh day was then sanctified, that is, set apart, and that Christ says the Sabbath was "made for man." Is there any reason in supposing that it was not given to man when it was made, seeing that man was then on the earth and in need of it?

4. It was in the "first covenant given at Mount Sinai." See Ex. 20: 1-17; Gal. 4: 24.

5. The Sabbath was given to the Jews, and not to other people, as a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Ex. 12: 14, 17, 26, 27; Deut. 6: 20-25.

The passage quoted from Exodus does not refer to the Sabbath at all, but to the Passover. The one in Deuteronomy makes no separate reference to the Sabbath, but summarizes all the statutes and testimonies and judgments that God had given them, as witnesses that they were his elect people, redeemed by him from the bondage in Egypt.

6. It was not given to Adam nor to any one else to observe as a Sabbath day of rest for over 2,000 years after the creation.

The above is an assertion without a particle of proof to support it, and is therefore without authority.

7. The first place it is mentioned in the Bible is Ex. 16: 23.

8. It is first mentioned in Gen. 2: 2, 3, where it is said that God rested the seventh day and blessed it, and set it apart or sanctified it, which is the same thing.

9. It was a type or shadow of our complete rest in Christ. Col. 2: 14-17; Heb. 3: 19; 4: 1-11.

The annual sabbaths of the Jewish economy were, with the other ceremonies of that dispensation, shadows of things to come, the body of which was Christ. The first passage in Hebrews referred to does not refer to the Sabbath at all, and the other employs it as a type of the rest in heaven.

10. It was "done away" in Christ. Eph. 2: 6-11; 2 Cor. 3: 6-5, 11.

The passage in Ephesians does not refer to the Decalogue, but to the "middle wall of partition" between the Jews and the Gentiles, of which the Sabbath was no more a part than was the law against covetousness or murder. The second contrasts the ministry of Moses and Christ, showing that the latter was the more excellent, and that the former was done away.

11. "He taketh away the first that he may establish the second," or new covenant. Heb. 8: 6-9, 13; 9: 1-18; 10: 9.

That the old covenant is abolished or taken away we know, as also that the new is established. But what of it, seeing that all the commandments of the Decalogue shared alike in the operation?

12. The old covenant was called "the law of commandments," and was "abolished" in Christ's flesh. Eph. 2: 15; Col. 2: 14; 2 Cor. 3: 13.

13. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes" in him. Rom. 10: 4; 7: 14.

Yes, Christ is indeed "the Lord our righteousness." Jer. 23: 6; 1 Cor. 1: 30.

14. Christ "changed" "the law of commandments" "which Moses delivered" on Mount Sinai. Acts 6: 14; Heb. 7: 12.

This is a false statement, because in the first case the reference is not to the ten commandments delivered by God on Mount Sinai, but to the "customs" delivered by Moses to the people. The word "customs" is never used to designate the Decalogue. In the second case, the law of the Levitical priesthood, and not the law of the Decalogue is referred to. This is so distinctly stated that this is not in error about it.

15. He could not have changed but one of the ten commandments without doing violence to the moral law. In him, therefore, was changed the seventh-day Sabbath to the first-day Sabbath, which was the "day of atonement," or the day on which Christ rose from the dead, according to the law, or according to the Scripture. 1 Cor. 15: 3, 4; Lev. 23: 5-7, 29, 30, 35, 39; Heb. 9: 24.

The Scripture referred to (1 Cor. 15: 3-4) says Christ rose according to the Scriptures, but it does not say he rose on the first day of the week, according to the Scriptures. The second passage refers to the passover which was to be celebrated on the fourteenth day of the first month, and to the feast of unleavened bread, the first day of which occurred on the fifteenth day of the first month, in the first day of which was to be held a holy convocation, and no servile work was to be done in it. This, of course, once in seven years, fell upon the first day of the week, but it was not appointed to

be held on that day as represented in the paragraph above.

16. Jesus rose on that day, and the Scriptures tell us to commence our Sabbath on "the morrow after the seventh (or Jewish) Sabbath." Lev. 23: 15, 16.

It may be that Christ rose on the first day of the week, but the Scriptures do not say so. Their statement is, that when his tomb was visited early on the first day of the week he had already risen. This is all. Lev. 23: 15, 16 refers exclusively to the feast of Pentecost.

17. The Scriptures tell us that that "self-same day" shall be "a day of atonement," that we shall not do "any work in that same day." Lev. 23: 21, 28-30.

Yes, on the first day of atonement no work might be done, and if our writer is a Jew he probably keeps the law. Doing so, once in seven years he would keep it on the first day of the week.

18. Christ made an atonement for his people on the first-day Sabbath, in that he rose on that day. Luke 24: 1, 18; Rom. 4: 24, 25; 1 Cor. 15: 4, 17.

The Scriptures nowhere accord our redemption to Christ's resurrection, but to his death. It is by his blood that we are redeemed. When on the cross he said, "It is finished." John 19: 30.

19. Christ's disciples gathered together on that day, and Jesus met with them. Luke 24: 33-36; John 20: 19.

On the evening of the first day, after his resurrection, the disciples were together partaking of their evening repast, but not to commemorate Christ's resurrection, for they did not believe he had risen. At this time, he came in and reproved them for their unbelief, in not crediting the testimony of those who had seen him after his resurrection. Mark 16: 14.

20. They met together the next First-day. John 20: 26; Rev. 22: 2.

Yes, just as they met before Christ coming this time to convince Thomas of the fact of his resurrection.

21. The disciples met together "on the first-day" Sabbath. Paul preached and they break bread at least twenty-five years after the ascension. Acts 20: 6, 7.

Some twenty-seven years after the ascension of Christ, the disciples at Troas, having been favored with a visit by Paul on his departure, held a meeting in the night for the purpose of breaking bread. This meeting continued all night, the breaking of bread occurring after midnight, as any one can see by reading Acts 20: 9-12. There was no meeting in the day time, in so far as the account shows.

22. It is called "the Lord's day" over half a century after Christ's ascension. Rev. 1: 10; Matt. 12: 8.

Not until two hundred years after Christ was the first day of the week called the "Lord's day." This was done by Tertullian. The quotation from Rev. 1: 10 does not show that the first day of the week is meant, and it is certainly Matt. 12: 8 refers to the weekly Sabbath, and not to the first day of the week.

23. It has been kept as a Sabbath by the great mass of Christians from the days of Christ until now, in memorial of Christ's resurrection and our atonement. Rom. 14: 5-9.

That it has largely been kept by the church since the days of the apostasy is not denied, but not by Scripture requirement. The passage quoted from Rom. 14: 5-9 does not refer to the first day of the week, but to the Jewish annual festival days.

24. The Jews reject it and keep the seventh, or Saturday, because they wish to reject Christ. Gal. 5: 4, 18.

The Jews did not reject the keeping of the first day, for it was not proposed during the apostolical period. The first day is not referred to in Gal. 5: 4, 18.

25. Jesus never commanded any one to keep the Jewish Sabbath after his resurrection.

There was no need that he should, for both himself and his disciples unquestionably kept it.

26. The apostles nor any inspired writer ever commanded any one to keep the Jewish Sabbath since Christ's resurrection. Acts 15: 5, 24.

Precisely, for the reason that the keeping of it was not called in question by any one.

27. The great mass of unbelieving Jews keep Saturday, or the Jewish Sabbath, in contempt of Christ.

The Jews keep the Sabbath because commanded to do so by God. Acts 15: 24.

ple, heathen character, and among the heathen.

32. Therefore, there is no other Sabbath but "the Lord's day" of the first day of the week, "which is binding on any person or persons in this dispensation. In fact, those that keep the Jewish Sabbath are really Sabbath-breakers, in that they "do not regard it unto the Lord."

After the reasoning above, and the heterogeneous massing of Scripture quotations that we have followed through, we are not surprised at this "therefore," nor should we have been at almost any other conclusion reached. But the idea that the first day of the week is the Sabbath "in this dispensation," should receive a little careful consideration.

In the Bible, no statement of the kind is made. Every student of the Bible knows that it is not referred to in such a connection. The arguments put forth in its support by its friends are multitudinous, and as contradictory as they are multitudinous. One defends it for one reason, and another for another, and still another for another. One gives it one character, and another another, and so they "fire into each other like a confused and distracted army, fighting in the dark." Now, by those learned in this question, the correctness of the statement of Dr. Augustus Neander that "Sunday was always only a human ordinance," must be accepted as containing the exact truth.

The statement at the close of the article we have criticized—"In fact, those that keep the Jewish Sabbath are really Sabbath-breakers, in that they do not regard it unto the Lord," is so unreasonable that one hardly knows how to suitably reply to it. The statement, that those who keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment do not do it unto the Lord, and therefore they are Sabbath-breakers, is not only uncharitable but unjust, false in the extreme. That there are persons among Sabbath-keepers who do not observe the day to the Lord is altogether probable, but to judge the mass of Sabbath-keepers by these is to do them the greatest injustice. It is precisely because they love God that they regard his commandments. They say with David, "How love I thy law." Certain it is that they more honor God by obeying his own appointments, than they could by keeping any number of human appointments. To neglect an ordinance of God and keep one of human appointment is to stultify every principle of religion as revealed in the Bible. "In vain," says Jesus Christ, "do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." It is not indeed extraordinary that only those who keep the commandments of men, profess to honor God, please him? Only they, then, who keep the commandments of men, are Sabbath-breakers! Well, we remember that we are living in an age of progress, and of course must expect new things.

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without producing any other than a surface effect.

We do not say this to produce discouragement, but rather to call attention to this matter, so as to get our thought before the mind. We place, then, before the reader, Christ as a power, rather the power that saves. Let all the Christians work with their faith directed toward him as the source of their help. Put faith in him. Let all the forces of the soul be concentrated on him. Do we not look to the means employed for the power residing in Christ alone? Means are to be employed as means, and as such only. We do not despise them, but warn all against their use, in the sense of according to them original powers. Nor in this do we say that Christians are to be indifferent as to the character of the means they employ for the salvation of men. None can well go beyond us in our preference for the use of well-chosen instrumentalities in the presentation of gospel truth. What we urge, that a clear line of distinction be kept in the mind between the Christ preached and the preaching of this Christ.

But it is impossible that those who attempt to produce power should know for themselves that he is the power they represent him to be. He must have his abode in them. They must carry him about with them. If they would preach Christ's love, they must love as he did. If they would hate sin as he did, they must do it from the motives that impelled him in his hatred of it. Also, they must love souls as he did, if they would win them to him. His love was sacrificial, and so must be ours. He practiced self-denial, and so must we. How essential that we be put in living connection with him in whom is the residue of the spirit, that we may be instruments of salvation to others.

But we make a special appeal to ministers of the gospel, because they are examples to the Lord's flock, and because they are the leaders in the great work of salvation. What a curse is a worldly and backslidden ministry! And is there not ground to fear that hundreds of pulpits are filled with just such worldly and backslidden men? "Be ye clean who bear the vessels of the Lord." We call for a reform, and pray, that it commence with the publishers of salvation. Let the leaders lead in this matter, and we are sure the church will follow.

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The statement at the close of the article we have criticized—"In fact, those that keep the Jewish Sabbath are really Sabbath-breakers, in that they do not regard it unto the Lord," is so unreasonable that one hardly knows how to suitably reply to it. The statement, that those who keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment do not do it unto the Lord, and therefore they are Sabbath-breakers, is not only uncharitable but unjust, false in the extreme. That there are persons among Sabbath-keepers who do not observe the day to the Lord is altogether probable, but to judge the mass of Sabbath-keepers by these is to do them the greatest injustice. It is precisely because they love God that they regard his commandments. They say with David, "How love I thy law." Certain it is that they more honor God by obeying his own appointments, than they could by keeping any number of human appointments. To neglect an ordinance of God and keep one of human appointment is to stultify every principle of religion as revealed in the Bible. "In vain," says Jesus Christ, "do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." It is not indeed extraordinary that only those who keep the commandments of men, profess to honor God, please him? Only they, then, who keep the commandments of men, are Sabbath-breakers! Well, we remember that we are living in an age of progress, and of course must expect new things.

40. There is no other Sabbath but "the Lord's day" of the first day of the week, "which is binding on any person or persons in this dispensation. In fact, those that keep the Jewish Sabbath are really Sabbath-breakers, in that they "do not regard it unto the Lord."

After the reasoning above, and the heterogeneous massing of Scripture quotations that we have followed through, we are not surprised at this "therefore," nor should we have been at almost any other conclusion reached. But the idea that the first day of the week is the Sabbath "in this dispensation," should receive a little careful consideration.

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