

The Old Testament Sabbath and the New Testament Christian

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The outstanding nation of all the nations of the earth was Israel, the chosen people of God. Not in sinful pride, but in a God-fearing patriotism Moses could say of this people, Deuteronomy 7 verse 6 and 7; "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you." Also David, a God-fearing king of Israel could say of his people divinely inspired, 2 Samuel 7, 23 and 24: "And what one nation of the earth is like Thy people, even like Israel whom God went to redeem for a people to Himself and to make Him a name and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before Thy people, whom Thou redeemedst to Thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? For Thou hast confirmed to Thyself Thy people Israel to be a people unto Thee forever; and Thou, Lord, art become their God." In Romans chapter 9 verses 4 and 5 St. Paul enumerates the many advantages his people had over all the nations of the earth. We read there these words: "Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory and the covenants, and the giving of the Laws and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all.

To the people of Israel God had given His Law on Mount Sinai. To His people had He given the promises concerning the coming of the Messiah, His Only Begotten Son, for the eternal salvation of all mankind. Jesus Christ is the content of the Old Testament Scriptures given by God to the people of Israel. To the two disciples of Emmaus Jesus said after His resurrection, Luke 24, verses 25, 26, and 27, "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoke., ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

In the Old Testament are many types of Christ proclaiming His salvation to a world lost in sin. My assignment for this Conference deals with one of the Old Testament types of our Savior. The assignment is: The Old Testament Sabbath Day and the New Testament Christian. Concerning "the Old Testament Sabbath" we shall consider the following main thoughts: 1. Its Institution and 2. Its Requirements.

1. The Institution of the Sabbath Day.

The Seventh Day Adventist Church claims that the Sabbath Day was instituted by God after the sixth day of creation. They base their claim on Genesis 2, verses 2 and 3, which read: "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 days and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." In these words, however, we have no command from God that the seventh day of the week, namely the Saturday, was to be observed by Adam and Eve and all their descendants as the Sabbath Day, the day of rest. There we are merely told what God did after His creation of the heavens and the earth, but we are not told what man was to do on the seventh day, as the Seventh Day Adventists ascertain.

God rested on the seventh day; that means, He created nothing now after the sixth day of creation. With the sixth day of creation His creation had become a finished product. In connection with the Sabbath Day at a later date in Israel's history God did indeed remind the faithful in Israel of His creation of all things in six days as well as His resting on the seventh day. However in Genesis 28 verses 2 and 3 God merely states that He rested on the seventh days but He did not give to Adam and Eve the command to observe the seventh day as a Sabbath Day, as a day of rest. Throughout the patriarchal age we never read of a Sabbath Day observance. Why not? The Sabbath had as yet not been instituted.

The Sabbath Day had its beginning during Israel's history, more specifically, during the days of the leadership of Moses. The Giver of the Sabbath Law was God. The Prophet Ezekiel associates the giving of the Sabbath Law with Israel's exodus out of Egypt. In other words, it was instituted after Israel had left the land of Egypt, the land of bondage. We read these words in Ezekiel 20, verses 10 to 12: "Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them my statutes and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Nehemiah specifically identifies Moses as the one through whom God had instituted the Sabbath Day. We read from the book of the Prophet Nehemiah, chapter 9, verse 14: "And madest known unto them Thy holy sabbath, and commandest them precepts, statutes and laws by the hand of Moses Thy servant." The words of our Lord in Ezekiel 20 verses 10 to 12 and in Nehemiah chapter 9 verse 14 prove the Seventh Day Adventist Church to be in error when it makes the claim that God instituted the Sabbath Day right after the sixth day of creation. God's Word establishes for us the sacred truth that the Sabbath Day was instituted by God through His servant Moses after Israel had left the land of Egypt.

The question now arises, when did God institute the Sabbath Day during the days of Moses. The first time we read of a Sabbath is in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus. Here we see Israel in the wilderness. Verse 2 of this chapter reads: "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. Their hearts were filled with thanklessness toward God who had so graciously and miraculously led them out of Egypt, the house of bondage." They say, verse 3: "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the flesh pots and did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill the whole assembly with hunger." With a sinful desire do the people of Israel long for the flesh pots of Egypt. Sinfully do they accuse Moses and Aaron of willfully leading them into the wilderness there to die by starvation. And God? Does He rain fire from heaven to destroy His people because of their ingratitude and rebellion towards Him and His Moses and Aaron? No, nothing of the kind. He rains bread from heaven to feed His people in the wilderness. He takes Moses aside and says to him; verse 4: Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. Moses and Aaron make known God's instructions concerning the manna to the peoples, Exodus 16, 11-15, 22: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 'I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel; speak unto them saying: 'At evening ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that am the Lord your God.' And it came to pass, that at evening the quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning the dew lay round about the host And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, 'It is manna'; for they wist knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them, 'This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.' And it came to pass that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and all the rulers came and told Moses." Now comes verse 23, where we have mentioned for the first time in the Holy Scriptures the word Sabbath. Verse 23 reads: "And Moses said unto them: 'This is that which the Lord hath said: 'Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; And that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.'"" Verse 24: "And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein." Verse 25: "And Moses said, 'Eat that today; for today is a Sabbath unto the Lord; today ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none.'" Verse 29: "*See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath*, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days. Abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."

To what conclusion must we come to on the basis of the words of Exodus chapter 16? Is it not this: here we have the institution of the Sabbath Day? It was instituted at the time when the Lord God of Israel first began to rain manna from heaven to feed His hungry people miraculously in the wilderness.

In summary, the Sabbath Day was not instituted on the day after creation. It was instituted by God and made known to the people of Israel through Moses in the wilderness at the time when the Israelites began to receive manna from heaven. We shall now speak of the requirements of the Sabbath Day.

Its Requirement

Moses as the mouthpiece of God says to the people of Israel, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy," Exodus 20:8. The word "remember" presupposes that Israel had a previous acquaintance with the Sabbath Law. By this word the Lord is asking the people of Israel to remember the strict requirements which He had given them concerning this commandment as well as the further restrictions He would impose upon them in the generations to come. The observance of the Sabbath Law was not left to the choice of the people. It was a "must" because of the command of their God. In many other passages in succeeding generations did our Lord place a stern reminder and a great emphasis on the observance of the Sabbath Law. Let us now consider the Lord's Sabbath Day. We quote a few passages concerning this requirement.

Exodus 16, 23: "Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." Verse 26 of the same chapter: "Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none." In Exodus 20, verse 10 we read: "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, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." Deuteronomy 5, 14: "But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord Thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy sons nor thy daughters nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservants nor thine ox, nor thine ass nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou."

At times the Lord gave the command to remember the Sabbath Day with a promise of blessing. In Leviticus 26, verses 2-4: "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: "I am the Lord. If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them, then will I give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increases and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit." Isaiah 58, verses 13 and 14: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

At other times the Lord gave the command to remember the Sabbath Day with threats of severe punishment if the commandment were not obeyed. An example of this we have in Exodus 31, 14 and 15, where we read: "Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you. Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death. For whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among my people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath Day, he shall surely be put to death." Exodus 35, 2: "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord. Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death." Nehemiah 13, 15 to 18: "In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, figs and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath Day. And I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish and all manner of ware; and sold on the Sabbath unto the children of Judah and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, 'What evil thing is this that ye do and profane the Sabbath? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath.'"

The one requirement of the Sabbath law was an absolute obedience of it. Obedience was demanded as we have just heard sometimes with a promise of blessing, sometimes with a threat of punishment if the Sabbath Law would be transgressed.

God required of Israel not only a mere observance of the Sabbath Day by abstaining from physical labor, but He also made the requirement that the Sabbath Day be kept holy, be sanctified., by the people of Israel. They were to set the Sabbath Day aside for the Lord God of Israel. In it they were to call to their remembrance the meaning of the rest on the Sabbath Day, God's gracious covenant with them, the creation of the world by the mighty hand of God in six days, and their miraculous deliverance from the cruel slavery of the Egyptians. Their faith in the Messiah led them to follow God's instructions.

The Sabbath Day was a day of rest to the people of Israel. It was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. It pointed the people of Israel to the physical rest which the Messiah would bring to them. The Ceremonial Law, and this included the Sabbath Law., was a yoke upon the neck of the Jewish people. It entangled them with a yoke of bondage. It, however, is true, that their faith in the Messiah led them to observe the Sabbath Law with delight: Yet the people of Israel were looking forward to the coming of the Messiah who would bring them freedom from the Ceremonial Law. They were looking forward to that physical rest.

But the Sabbath of the Old Testament, not only pointed the people of Israel to a rest from the burdens of the Ceremonial Laws but especially did it point them to the coming of the Messiah who would bring rest to their souls. Believing in the Messiah who was to come the Israelites enjoyed soul-rest in the Old Testament dispensation. To the people of Israel the Sabbath Day was a proclamation of the Gospel of Christ with the emphasis on rest for the soul by the forgiveness of sins through the vicarious sufferings and death of the Messiah.

The Sabbath Day was also to remind the people of Israel of God's covenant with the patriarchs of the Jewish nation, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. To Abraham God had given the promise, Genesis 12, verses 2 and 3: "And I will make of thee a great nations and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee. And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." In those words God made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants that the Savior of the world would be born of a descendant of Abraham. Enroute to Canaan God reminded Israel again and again of that covenant. This covenant they must never lose sight of. On their Sabbath Days they will call to their remembrance God's gracious covenant with them, for God's covenant of grace in the Messiah was intimately associated with the Sabbath Day. We read these words in Exodus 31, verse 16: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant." In verse 13 of the same chapter the Lord says to Moses: "Speak thou also to the children of Israel, saying, 'Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep. For it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.'" The Sabbath is a sign that sanctifies them makes them holy. This is only possible through the Messiah, their Savior from sin. God's covenant of grace centers in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son. In His covenant with Israel God had promised to send His Son into the world to save them as well as all mankind from sin and the temporal and eternal punishment of sin. According to God's covenant with Israel God's Son would receive the human nature from a descendant of Abraham. This covenant made by "the Lord their God" would encourage Israel to remember that covenant on their Sabbath Days and find great joy in it. Their faith in the Messiah would lead them to do this.

The Sabbath Day brought with it another remembrance to the people of Israel. It reminded them of God's creation. In connection with the Sabbath commandment God several times added the words: "For in six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the seas and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day and hallowed it," Exodus 20, 11. In Exodus 31, 17 we read: "It (the Sabbath) is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested., and was refreshed."

The Sabbath Day of the Old Testament reminded the people of Israel in a very emphatic way of God's glorious creations. Every Sabbath Day the people of Israel were reminded of the fact that the heavens and the earth and everything in them were creations of God created within a period of six lunar days. God created everything by the power of His Word. He gave the command and it was created. Everything was created for the good and the enjoyment of man. The trees, the flowers the shrubs would their hearts with joy and happiness.

The animals, the fruit, the vegetables provided for them the necessities of life. The heavens declared the glory of God and the firmament shewed His handiworks. In God's creation God's chosen people beheld the almighty power of God as well as His divine love for them and for all mankind. From the creation story the people of Israel were to see anew God's infinite goodness toward them.

The Sabbath Day also reminded the people of Israel of God's miraculous deliverance of them from the bondage of the Egyptians. In Deuteronomy 5, 12 to 15 we read: "Keep the Sabbath Day to sanctify it, as the Lord Thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt 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, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle... nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt., and that the Lord thy God brought thee out of thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm. Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath Day.

On the Sabbath Day the Israelites were to recall to their remembrance God's gracious work of love toward them by freeing them from the bondage of the Egyptians. The ten plagues, the Passover meal, Israel's passage through the Red Sea on dry ground, and the death of Pharaoh and all his men of war in the Red Sea, all these were vividly called to the remembrance of Israel on their Sabbath Days. On the Sabbath Days Israel was to remember God's goodness to them in freeing them miraculously from the bondage of the Egyptians.

The requirement of the Sabbath Day was to hold it sacred, they were to sanctify it. This day was to be set apart by the Israelites for the Lord. This was done by absolute rest on this day which reminded them of the soul-rest in the Messiah, God's goodness to them in His covenant with them concerning the salvation of the world through His Son Jesus Christ, of God's goodness to them in His work of creation, and of God's goodness to them in His gracious deliverance of them from the bondage of the Egyptians.

We read question 52 of our Catechism: How were the people of the Old Testament to keep the Sabbath Day holy? Answer: They were to rest from their labor, and they were to remember the Lord's goodness in providing rest for their souls.

We've considered the Old Testament Sabbath Day – its institution and its requirements.

We now come to the second part of my assignment, namely, New Testament Christian in relationship to the Old Testament Sabbath Day. Here we shall first speak of the termination of the Old Testament Sabbath.

Termination of the Old Testament Sabbath Day

The Sabbath Day was to be in force for only a certain period of time. In Exodus 31, 16 we read: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant."

We usually think of the word "perpetual" as continuing without end. The Hebrew word for "perpetual" is עולם, "*olam*." The meaning of this word in its original meaning is "wrapped up." Applied to time it is a "wrapping up" of time into a certain period of time. When the word *olam* is applied to God it has reference to His eternal existence. At all other times it has reference to "an indefinite long period of time." According to the word *olam*, the perpetual covenant, the Sabbath Day of Exodus 31, 16 is not an eternal institution of God, extending into the New Testament dispensation and lasting until the end of time. The observance of the Old Testament Sabbath Day was to be for an indefinite long period of time. That perpetual covenant, that indefinite long period of time, is the Old Testament era. With the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ for man's salvation the Sabbath Law was fulfilled and the perpetual covenant spoken of in Exodus 31, 16 had been terminated.

The word *olam* is also used in Exodus 12,14 in connection with the institution of the Passover festival. We read there these words: "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever. The Hebrew word for "forever" is *olam*, an indefinite long period of time. Again the long period of time is the Old Testament.

The word *olam* is also used for the priesthood of Aaron and his sons. We read in Exodus 29, 9: "And thou shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and put the bonnets on them; and the priests office shall

be theirs for a perpetual statue; and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.” Again the Hebrew word for perpetual is *olam*. The priesthood of the Old Testament was terminated when Christ the Highpriest offered up Himself as the sacrifice for sin.

The Sabbath Day was instituted by God for the Jews during the period of the Old Testament. At no time had God instituted a Sabbath Day for the Gentiles of the Old Testament, nor for the Christians, Jews and Gentiles alike, in the New Testament. It was instituted for the people of Israel when the Lord began to feed the people of Israel with manna. In Exodus chapter 20, verse 1 we are told: “*I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*” From these words we can see that the Sabbath Law applied to the people of Israel, to that people which God had led out of the land of bondage miraculously. To the Jews God said Exodus 20, 8: “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.” In Exodus 31, verse 16 we read: “Wherefore *the children of Israel* shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant.” Other passages of the Old Testament, and there are many of them., can be adduced from which we can see that the Sabbath Day was instituted for the Jews of the Old Testament and for them only.

In the New Testament neither Jesus nor the writers of the books of the New Testament ever made mention of the fact that the Christians, Jews and Gentiles alike, were to observe the seventh day of the week as their Sabbath Day. In the New Testament mention is made again and again of the Moral Law of God and of its observance, but no mention is ever made of the Sabbath Law and its observance. This is of great importance in our study of the “Old Testament Sabbath and the New Testament Christian.” Because of its importance, let us study this thought in detail.

First Commandment: “Thou shalt have no other gods.” In Matthew 4 verse 10, Jesus says: “Get thee hence... Satan, for it is written, ‘Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God...and Him only shalt thou serve.’” I Corinthians 10, verse 14: “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, flee from idolatry.”

Second Commandment: “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain.” Matthew 5, 34, Jesus says: “But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne.” Matthew 5, 37: “But let your conversation be yea, yea, nay, nay for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”

Fourth Commandment: “Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth.” Ephesians 6, verses 1 to 3: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and thy mothers, (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth.”

Fifth commandment: “Thou shalt not kill.” Matthew 5, 21 to 26: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, ‘Thou shalt not kill;’ and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift before the altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altars and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judges and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.”

Sixth Commandment: “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” Matthew 5, 27,28,31,32: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old times ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery.’ But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. It hath been said, ‘Whosoever shall put his wife away, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.’”

Seventh Commandment: “Thou shalt not steal.” - Ephesians 4. 28: “Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

Eighth Commandment: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbors.” Ephesians 4, 25: “Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor.” James 4, 11: “Speak not evil one of another, brethren.”

Ninth Commandment: “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house.” **Tenth Commandment:** Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbors.” Romans 7, 7: “What shall I say then? Is the Law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the Law; for I had not known lust, except the Law had said ‘Thou shalt not covet.’” Ephesians 5, 3: “But fornication, all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as it cometh saints.”

Our Savior and the Apostles make many references to the Moral Law and to its obedience. But what about the words pertaining to the Sabbath Day: Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy? Does our Savior or the Apostles ever refer to its observance? No reference is made to the observance of the Sabbath Law throughout the New Testament. Its observance is not even faintly hinted at. To the elders of Ephesus St. Paul said: “For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God,” Acts 20, 27. Nothing is mentioned about the observance of the Sabbath Day in all his writings. We must therefore conclude that the Sabbath Day is no longer in force for us Christians of the New Testament. With the death of Jesus Christ the Sabbath Law was abrogated. It was forever annulled.

The observance of the Sabbath Law is even spoken against in the New Testament writings. These are St. Paul’s words by divine inspiration to the Christians in Colosse and also to us, Colossians 2, 16 and 17: “Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drinks or in respect of an holy day, or of the Sabbath Days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” Judaizers had come to the Christians in Colosse, demanding of them that they obey the laws of Moses concerning clean and unclean foods. They insisted also that the festivals of the Old Testament, the new moons and the Sabbath Days be observed. St. Paul’s advice to the Christians in Colosse is this: Let no man pass an unfavorable judgment on you for not observing the laws of clean and unclean food as prescribed by Moses. Also, let no man criticize you and condemn you for not obeying the Sabbath day of the Old Testament. All the prescriptions of the Ceremonial Law, and this includes the Sabbath Law, served as a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ. They were types of Christ. They had served their God-intended purpose. With the coming of Christ and with Christ’s completion of the work of man’s salvation with His death on Calvary the types had fallen into disuse. The shadow was replaced by the body of Christ, which the types prefigured.

In Galatians 4, verses 9 to 11, St. Paul writes: “But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements (The Ceremonial Law, including the Sabbath Law) whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days and months, and times and years (according to the Mosaic Law).” Beginning to live in the Ceremonial Law the Christians of Galatia brought sorrow and sadness to the heart of the Apostle Paul. He expresses that sorrow in these words: “I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.” Paul had preached to the Christians in Galatia that they are not saved by works, by obeying the Ceremonial Law, but they are saved by grace, as a gift of God, through Christ and His work of salvation. But because of the Judaizing teachers in Galatia, many of the Galatian Christians had placed their hopes of salvation on obeying the Ceremonial Law of God. Thus they rejected the teaching of the Apostle Paul, “saved by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ.” St. Paul strongly rebukes the Christians of Galatia for observing days, and months, and times, and years prescribed in the Law of Moses. St. Paul opposes the observance of the Sabbath Law, for it opposes salvation by free grace through Jesus Christ. It encourages salvation by good works. He therefore gives this strong admonition to the Christians in Galatia: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage,” Galatians 5, verse 1. We must then conclude that the observance of the Sabbath Law, was contrary to the teachings of the Apostle Paul. He therefore advocates: “Stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made us free.

In Mark 2, verses 23 to 28 we are told that Christ's disciples broke the Sabbath Law by plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath. Our Savior gives approval to this act of His disciples. The Pharisees bring accusations against the disciples of our Lord. They say to Jesus, 2:24: "Behold, why do they on the Sabbath Day that which is not lawful?" Jesus defends His disciples by three arguments. He first of all makes reference to David, who, when he and his men were hungry, ate of the showbread which under ordinary circumstances only the priests were permitted to eat. Christ's disciples were hungry, therefore did He permit the disciples to pluck the ears of corn, rub them with their hands, and then eat the grain. Jesus does not accuse them of a sin in doing this. A second reason in defense of His disciples is this: The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for the welfare of man, man was not made for the Sabbath, to be a slave to it and a drudgery for keeping it. His third argument to His enemies in defense of His disciples is this: The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath. In the 5th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath Day who had been sick for 38 years. Jesus could have healed this man on a Friday or on a Sunday, but He does it on the Sabbath Day. Thereby does He prove to His disciples as well as His enemies that He is the Lord of the Sabbath and the time will come, when He as the Lord of the Sabbath will abolish it forever. This He did with His death.

The Sabbath Day is no longer in force in the New Testament dispensation. It was discontinued with the death of Jesus Christ. Was the Sunday, the first day of the week substituted for the Sabbath Day in the New Testament? This is the teaching of some of the churches. Now it is true that Jesus met with His disciples for the first time after His resurrection on a Sunday, Easter Sunday evening. His second meeting with His disciples was also on a Sunday. According to the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, the Apostles did occasionally gather for public worship on a Sunday. In the Book of Acts, the 20th chapter, verse 7, reference is made to the first day of the week. We read, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight. In 1 Corinthians 16, verse 2, St. Paul gives these instructions to the Christians in Corinth: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come. In the Book of Revelation Chapter 1, verse 10, St. John says of himself: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." Some churches draw the conclusion from these passages that the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, the Sunday was instituted by God as a day for public worship. In the New Testament, according to their teaching, the Sabbath Day of the Old Testament was replaced by the Sunday. It must, however, be said of Christ's apostles that they met for public worship not only on a Sunday, but on other days as well including the Saturday. Their conclusion therefore to say the least is not even a logical deduction. Furthermore, nowhere in the New Testament do we have a command from God that we must observe Sunday or any other day of the week for public worship. This God did in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament we have no such command. In the New Testament the law fixing particular days of rest or worship have been revoked.

But why do we observe Sunday for public worship? As before mentioned we do this not because of a command of God. The early Christian Church chose Sunday for public worship, for it was on a Sunday that the Savior rose from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus Christ confirms Christ to be the Son of God; the resurrection of Jesus Christ confirms the sacred truth that Jesus has brought salvation to a world lost in sin by His sufferings and death; His resurrection confirms the joyful news that God the Father by raising His Son from the dead has accepted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as man's Substitute; it confirms the sacred truth that all mankind is declared just by God on the basis of the vicarious death of His Son Jesus Christ.

Augsburg Confession, page 91, paragraph 53: "What then are we to think of the Sunday and like rites in the house of God? To this we answer that it is lawful for bishops and pastors to make ordinances, so that things be done orderly in the Church, not that thereby we should merit Grace and make satisfaction for sins." Paragraphs 57, 58 and 59: "For those who judge that by the authority of the Church the observance of the Lord's Day instead of Sabbath Day was ordained as a thing necessary, do greatly err. Scripture has abrogated the Sabbath Day; for it teaches that, since the Gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be

omitted. And yet, because it was necessary to appoint a certain day that the people might know when they ought to come Together, it appears that the Church designated the Lord's Day for this purpose; and this day seems to have been chosen all the more for this additional reason, that men might have an example of Christian liberty, and might know that by keeping neither of the Sabbath nor of any other day is necessary."

The Sunday in the New Testament was not a replacement of the Old Testament Sabbath. It is not an institution of God for public worship. It has its origin for public worship with the early Christian Church in commemoration of Christ's resurrection and in witness of our Christian liberty.

We have considered the Sabbath Law in its relationship to the Christians of the New Testament. The Old Testament Sabbath Day was terminated with the death of Jesus Christ. It is therefore no longer in force for us Christians of the New Testament. We come to that conclusion on the basis of the following reasons which we have considered:

1. The Hebrew word for "perpetual" (*olam*) means an indefinite long period of time, namely, the period of the Old Testament.
2. The Sabbath Day was instituted by God for the Jews of the Old Testament alone, not for the Gentiles of the Old Testament and not for the Christians of the New.
3. Neither Jesus nor the writers of the New Testament books ever demand observance of the Sabbath Law.
4. The observance of the Sabbath Day in the New Testament is opposed by the Apostles in the New Testament writings.
5. Christ's arguments against the Pharisees in defense of His disciples plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath Day.

We therefore conclude that the New Testament Christians are not under the Sabbath Law of the Old Testament to observe it. Also, the Sunday is not a replacement for the Saturday.

We quote from the Large Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther: "This Third Commandment therefore, according to its gross sense, does not concern us Christians; for it is altogether an external matter, like other ordinances of the Old Testament which were attached to particular customs, persons, times, and places, and now have been made free through Christ," Triglotta, page 603, paragraph 82.

Since we are made free from the Sabbath Law of the Old Testament through Christ, does it then follow that we of the New Testament can receive no blessings from a study of the Old Testament Sabbath Day? In Romans 15,4 St. Paul tells us: "For whatsoever things were written in our time (namely in the Old Testament) were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures (Old Testament) might have hope. The Old Testament Scriptures in their fulfillment, according to St. Paul, are for our instruction. This certainly also applies to the Sabbath. Day of the Old Testament.

Now it is true *the command* for the Sabbath Day observance does not apply to us Christians of the New Testament. The *rest*, however, prefigured by the Old Testament Sabbath Day, is of paramount importance to us. Our Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled the Sabbath Law for all people of all time. By His perfect obedience of the Sabbath Law and by His sufferings and death on the cross He has brought rest to the souls of men prefigured by the rest on the Sabbath. Jesus now invites sinners to come to Him and receive the rest which He has won for them. The invitation is "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am, meek and lowly of heart and ye shall find *rest unto your souls*." Blessed for time and for all eternity are they who by God's grace and the working of the Holy Spirit have accepted that invitation. They have rest for their souls. The unconverted person lives in a constant soul-fear. His conscience accuses him, God's Law condemns him., his heart is filled with uncertain thoughts of the future and especially of eternity. There is no soul-rest for the person who does not have Christ as his Savior from sin.

We as Christians have soul-rest, for we have the forgiveness of all our sins in Christ. "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins," Ephesians 1,7. We have rest for our souls on our pilgrimage

into eternity. "We have no fear of God, for we are reconciled to God through the death of His Son," Romans 5, 10. In Christ we become the adopted children of God, so that we may come before Him in prayer and say: "Our Father who art in heaven." We as Christians have no fear of death, for "death is swallowed up in victory," 1 Corinthians 15, 54c. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Corinthians 15, 57. We are not afraid of the punishment, "for there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus," Romans, 8, 1a. In Christ we are living in a continual Sabbath, enjoying the rest which He has won. As Christians we look forward in joyful hope to that eternal rest in heaven. In Hebrews 4, verse 9 we read of that rest: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." The Greek word for rest is one which can be translated sabbath. In heaven we shall celebrate the eternal Sabbath in the presence of our risen and ascended Savior. There we shall be free from sin. In that eternal Sabbath we shall be delivered from all evil, all tribulation, all trials, all sicknesses, all afflictions, and all miseries. The heavenly Sabbath will be a Sabbath of endless joy and rejoicing.

In every season, every place,
may we regard Thy Word of grace
Until when life's brief day is past
We reach eternal joy at last

And, keep with angels in Thy rest
The endless Sabbaths of the blest,
This grant to us through Christ, Thy Son,
Who reigns with Thee upon thy throne.

Truly, the rest in Christ, prefigured by the Old Testament Sabbath Day, is joyful Gospel message for us in the New Testament. This rest in Christ is offered to us in the Word of our God. Therefore does Luther in his explanation of the Sabbath Day place the emphasis on the Word of God. This is his explanation: "We should fear and love God that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it." The rest in Christ proclaimed in our churches will be an inducement to every Christian not to despise preaching and His Word but gladly hear and learn the Word of rest for their comfort and strengthening of their faith. With Christ in our hearts by a living faith we will say with the Psalmist: "I was glad when they said unto me: 'let us go into the house of the Lord.'" This we will not only do on Sundays, but we will do this whenever the church doors are open for the proclamation of the Gospel of soul-rest in Jesus Christ. Every sermon of the pastor must point his hearers to Christ the Savior, to Christ our Rest.

This however does not exclude the preaching of the Law. This is necessary to create soul-rest in the hearts of the hearers and thus lead them to the knowledge of their sins and show them the need of the Savior from sin. But the preaching of the Law must always be followed by the preaching of the Gospel. The remedy for sin must always be applied to the sin-sick soul.

Church attendance cannot be encouraged in the use of the words: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." These words simply cannot be used in encouraging our members to a faithful church attendance. I quote the words of Professor Paul Eickmann, Professor of Hebrew at Northwestern College, in regard to the Third Commandment. The quotation is taken from his book of adult instruction entitled "The Wonderful Works of God." This is the quotation: "What did the Old Testament rest foreshadow? Jesus invites sinners: 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. and Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly of hearts and ye shall find rest unto your soul'" (Matthew 11, 28,29). By His Word Jesus gives to God's children the comfort of the forgiveness of sins. Therefore "receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1, 21); "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Hebrews 10, 25); "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it" (Luke 11, 28). On the other hands those who despise God's Word are told: "He that is of God heareth God's

Word; ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God” (John 8, 47). End of quote. We note that Professor Eickmann does not use the Third Commandment for encouraging church attendance.

Christians need encouragement on Gospel terms to attend church faithfully. True, the Law will bring people to church, but the God-pleasing church attendance is motivated by the Gospel. It is easier to drive people to church with the club of the Law than to allure them by the Gospel., writes a German theologian.

Question 62 of our Catechism: Why, then, do we observe Sundays and festivals of the Church Year?

Answer: We observe Sundays and festivals of the Church Year, *not because of any law*, but to hear the Word of God and to praise Him in public.

“Come unto Me, ye weary, And I will give you rest.”
O blessed voice of Jesus, Which comes to hearts opprest
It tells of benediction, Of pardon, grace, and peace,
Of joy that hath no ending, Of love which cannot cease.

“And whosoever cometh, I will not cast him out.”
O patient love of Jesus, Which drives away our doubt,
Which, tho’ we be unworthy Of love so great and free,
Invites us very sinners To come, dear Lord, to Thee.