

Catholic Church who brought about the change in practice of Christendom of worshiping on the first day of the week instead of the seventh, are agreeing with that which actually happened, and with the statements of the prophecy of Daniel 7:25 concerning what would take place under the influence of the little-horn power.

On page 148 of his book, Walter Martin quotes the excellent statement of Peter Geiermann, acknowledging that Saturday is the Sabbath day and that the Catholic Church in the Council of Laodicea transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday. Mr. Martin quotes another statement of Mr. Geiermann which reiterates the same thing and emphasizes that 'I 'this change the church was authorized to make by the power conferred upon her by Jesus Christ' " (page 149). But he also mentions such texts as Revelation 1:10; Acts 20:7; and 1 Corinthians 16:2 as Biblical authority for the observance of the first day of the week. Not one of these texts state that Sunday is the Lord's day, nor do they cite a divine command that Christians should observe the first day of the week. We accept the second statement of Professor Geiermann too, for in it he also says that the Catholic Church had authority to decree that Christians should keep the first day of the week. We quoted him in the first instance because he so claimed. His assertion that this authority was theirs by virtue of the Scriptures, we reject, but doing so in no way weakens his testimony as to the part the Roman Catholic Church played in the attempt to change the Sabbath. We see nothing inconsistent in citing Geiermann as a witness.

### **Adventism Unmoved**

Mr. Martin attempts to make a strong argument out of the fact that Arthur E. Lickey, an Adventist writer, in showing the relationship between the Sabbath and the cross, put his argument in the form of a statement by God and ended it by saying, "What I have joined together, let no man put asunder." Mr. Lickey was showing how Calvary did not abrogate the Sabbath, but rather strengthened its claim to be the Christian day of rest because it is a sign of God's creative, redeeming power, as is Calvary. Mr. Martin says he is shocked to find that Mr. Lickey quotes Matthew 19:6, which is speaking of marriage, and applies it to the Sabbath and Calvary. He claims that this is an illustration of the way we use scriptures out of context.

Actually, anyone reading Mr. Lickey's statement will recognize that he is using the words of Matthew 19:6 as a literary borrowing. It is a very common thing among many Christian writers to borrow the phrasing of a certain Biblical passage and to use it in an entirely different setting because of the apt phraseology. It is apparent that Mr. Lickey is not trying to use these phrases as Biblical support for his argument, nor is he exegeting Matthew 19:6. It would not be difficult to find many instances of this literary borrowing of phrases in practically any Christian book. To magnify this literary borrowing the way Mr. Martin has is evidence only that there has been much searching to try to find a little weakness to pick on. In this connection, however, we should say that neither Mr. Lickey nor any Seventh-day Adventist would attempt to make the Sabbath of equal importance with the cross. The cross is the most important event in Christian history, and nothing can equal it. On the other hand, it is certain that nothing happened at Calvary to change the fact that God said it is His desire and will that His children observe the seventh-day Sabbath, which is a memorial of His creative power just as the cross is an even greater sign of God's creative-redeeming power. After the cross, the seventh-day Sabbath was still the will of God for His people. Calvary ratified the new covenant, and after a covenant or testament has been ratified no one can make any changes in it. The institution of Sunday, or the observing of the first day of the week, came too late to be included in God's new covenant for His people. Sunday keeping is merely man's unilateral covenant, and God has nothing to do with it. Sunday has no part in God's gracious covenant with mankind, and is therefore only a human institution.

## **6. The Sabbath or the Lord's Day?**

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THIS SECTION OF Mr. Martin's book begins as follows: "Seventh-day Adventists from the beginning have always attempted to equate the Sabbath with the Lord's Day. Their principal method for accomplishing this is arguments against their position, i.e., the Lord's Day as opposed to Sabbath observance." - Page 151. We do not comment on this, for we cannot understand the thought of the writer in

that second sentence. Let us try the author's next sentence to see if there is better logic in it. "They reason that since 'the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath' (Mark 2:27, 28), when John says he 'was in the Spirit on the Lord's day' (Revelation 1:10), the Sabbath and the Lord's Day must be the same!" We leave it to the reader to judge whether this reasoning deserves an exclamation point or not. It seems to us that if the Savior is Lord of the Sabbath day-by His own statement-it is only logical for us to conclude that the Lord's day is the Sabbath. There is one thing we can certainly say for sure, that is that in Revelation 1:10 John did not say he was in the Spirit on Sunday! Neither did Christ ever say that the first day of the week is "the Lord's day." No other passage of Scripture can be adduced to put with Revelation 1:10 that could by the remotest stretch of the imagination suggest that "the Lord's day" is Sunday.

Our friend Walter Martin makes a very meaningful admission when he says, "John did not mean that the Lord's Day was the Lord's possession, but rather that it was the day dedicated to Him by the early church, not in accordance with Mosaic law, but in obedience to our Lord's commandment of love." (Italics supplied.) We do not admit for a moment that the apostles specially dedicated the first day of the week to the worship of Christ, for we find Paul, after having kept the Sabbath with the believers, leaving late on Saturday night for an all-day walk to catch a ship (Acts 20:7-11), and commanding the Corinthian believers to arrange their financial matters on the first day and to store up at home some funds for the great offering for the poor in Jerusalem (1 Corinthians 16:2, ff.). But we do agree with the author that the first day of the week is merely a human institution. We marvel, however, how one can observe the first day of the week "in obedience to our Lord's commandment of love" but cannot observe the seventh day on the same basis!

Let us continue with Walter Martin's argument: "The weakness of their position is that they base their argument on an English translation instead of on the Greek original. When one reads the second chapter of Mark and the first chapter of Revelation in Greek, he sees that there is no such interpretation inherent in the grammatical structure. The Greek of Mark 2:28 clearly indicates that Christ did not mean that the Sabbath was His possession (which the Adventists would like to establish); rather, He was saying that as Lord of all He could do as He pleased on the Sabbath. The Greek is most explicit here.

"Nothing could be clearer from both the context and the grammar. In Revelation 1: 10 the Greek is not the genitive of possession, which it would have to be in order to make tj-kuriaki (the Lord's) agree with himera (day)." - Page 151.

We do not base our interpretation on the English alone. Let us examine these scriptures and Walter Martin's statements about them. First of all, Adventists do not desire to establish that in Mark 2:28 the phrase "of the Sabbath" is a genitive of possession, nor do we make any major point to the effect that "the Sabbath was His possession," as Mr. Martin states. He is putting arguments in our mouth. We do not state that Christ "possessed" the Sabbath any more than Sunday advocates speak of Christ as "possessing" Sunday. On the other hand, when Mr. Martin says the Greek is most explicit that "of the Sabbath" is not a genitive of possession, we are startled at his positiveness, for any first year Greek student knows that one cannot tell from the Greek what kind any genitive is. In the Greek language there are objective and subjective genitives, genitives of possession, source, relationship, description, time, place, reference, apposition, as well as others. They all look exactly the same, are spelled the same. On the basis of the Greek, despite what the author says, one cannot tell what kind of genitive Mark had in mind when he translated our Lord's words from Aramaic into Greek and left them for us to read. This can be determined only from the context, and then excellent scholars will often disagree with one another. The author is protesting too much, and we are sure that no one who understands Greek will accept his arguments.

Personally, we agree with Mr. Martin that this is not a genitive of possession. Who said it was? We think this is an objective genitive, meaning that "the noun in the genitive receives the action, being thus related as object to the verbal idea contained in the noun modified" (H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, pp. 78, 79). This simply means that the Sabbath (which is in the genitive) receives the action of Christ's lordship. He created the Sabbath. He governs it. He says what should be done on it. He commanded men to keep it holy, and by His own example observed it as it ought to be observed (Luke 4:16). The Sabbath commandment is Christ's commandment, and to us He says, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

However, Mr. Martin says that "when one reads the second chapter of Mark and the first chapter of Revelation in Greek, he sees that there is no such interpretation inherent in the grammatical structure." Is he saying that inasmuch as "Lord also of the Sabbath" in Mark 2:28 is a genitive construction, and "the Lord's day" of Revelation 1:10 is an adjectival construction in a different case, that the two days cannot be the same? Is he implying that "on the Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10) would have to be a genitive in order for it to refer to the Sabbath? It appears that he would have the reader get this impression. Such is not true

by any means. In a Greek sentence the case of a phrase is determined by its usage in the sentence, and by the choice of the author. Whether the author used a genitive construction or an adjectival construction was purely a matter of choice. By this I mean that John could have said “on the day of the Lord- as well as “on the Lord’s day,” whichever he chose, and the meaning would not have been different. In both Greek and English, speakers and writers freely alternate adjectival and genitive construction, as for instance in such expressions as “God’s church” or “the church of God.”

Actually, many noted scholars say that Revelation 1: 10 refers neither to the Sabbath day nor to the first day, but that it might have been any day of the week. They think that John was saying “I was in the spirit on a Lordly day” or “on an imperial day,” and it could perfectly well be so translated as far as the Greek phrase goes. It could mean that John was in vision on one of the holidays set aside in honor of the emperor’s birthday or anniversary of his accession to the throne. We think, however, that the apostle John used this phrase of the seventh-day Sabbath, which God Himself, speaking through Isaiah, called “my holy day” (Isaiah 58:13). The phrase certainly was not used of the first day of the week, for it “is the recognized principle of historical method, that an allusion is to be interpreted only in terms of evidence that is previous to it in point of time or contemporary with it, and not by historical data from a later period. This principle has an important bearing on the problem of the meaning of the expression ‘Lord’s day’ as it appears in the present passage. Although this term occurs frequently in the Church Fathers with the meaning of Sunday, the first conclusive evidence of such use does not appear until the latter part of the 2d century in the Apocryphal Gospel According to Peter (9, 12; ANF, Volume 9, p. 8), where the day of Christ’s resurrection is termed the ‘Lord’s day.’ Since this document was written at least three quarters of a century after John wrote the Revelation, it cannot be presented as a proof that the phrase ‘Lord’s day’ in John’s time refers to Sunday. Numerous examples might be cited to show the rapidity with which words can change their meanings. Therefore the meaning of ‘Lord’s day’ here is better determined by reference to Scripture rather than to subsequent literature.” The SDA Bible Commentary, on Revelation 1:10.

No one is able to show that the Scriptures anywhere state that the first day of the week is the Lord’s day, but there are numerous Scripture passages indicating that the seventh day is the Lord’s special day-Isaiah 58:13; Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20: 11; et cetera. Not the least is Mark 2:28, where an unprejudiced reader cannot but see that Jesus said the Sabbath is the Lord’s day.

But let us get back to Mr. Martin’s argument. He says, “In Revelation 1: 10 the Greek is not the genitive of possession. which it would have to be in order to make tj-kuriaki (the Lord’s) agree with himera (day).” Again, we are at a loss to know how to comment on this statement, for tj-kuriaki does agree with himera. It agrees in gender, number, and case, which is all the ways a Greek adjective can agree with the noun it modifies. Evidently Martin has not made clear the thought that was in his mind, or he is not sufficiently acquainted with Greek to recognize that the grammatical agreement he says is necessary is actually there.

This is true also of his enigmatic closing paragraph for this section: “We may certainly assume that if the Sabbath had meant so much to the writers of the New Testament; and if, as Adventists insist, it was so widely observed during the early centuries of the Christian church, John and the other writers of Scripture would have equated it with the Lord’s Day, the first day of the week.”

We confess that we are unable to make any sense out of this sentence. Why, if the Sabbath were widely observed during the early centuries, would John and other writers of Scripture have equated it with the first day of the week? We cannot see any reason or logic whatsoever in this statement. As to the first part of the sentence, to the effect that if the Sabbath had meant so much to the writers of the New Testament, why didn’t they say more about it, we answer this: simply that no one back there, at least no Christian, was keeping the first day of the week. All Christians at that time kept the seventh day Sabbath-the only Sabbath of which the Bible speaks. There was no problem, and therefore no cause for the writers of the New Testament to make any comment about the present Sabbath-Sunday question. The only difficulty was that certain Judaistic Christians looked upon the keeping of God’s requirements from a legalistic viewpoint, as though they could ‘earn their acceptance in God’s sight by these observances. The New Testament writers dealt fully with this problem, but there was no need for them to deal with the matter of the observance of Sunday because such did not exist in their day.

Mr. Martin closes this section by stating that the Adventists have little scriptural justification for their Sabbatarianism. To this we reply that numerous passages in the New Testament indicate that the disciples and the followers of Christ kept the seventh-day Sabbath. We seek no other justification than this.

## **The Testimony of the Fathers**

“The Church Fathers provide a mass of evidence that the first day of the week, not the seventh, is the Lord’s Day,” Mr. Martin writes. Let us state at the outset that we do not rest our case upon what the Church Fathers say, but upon what the Scriptures say.

The citations brought forth from the Church Fathers are those that have been explained many times, and we are particularly surprised that Walter Martin brought forth again the statement of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, which he cites as follows: “If, then, those who walk in the ancient practices attain to newness of hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but fashioning their lives after the Lord’s Day on which our life also arose through Him, that we may be found disciples of Jesus Christ, our only teacher.” It is an incontrovertible fact that in this passage the original Greek contains no word day. Rather, in the most reliable manuscript, the word following ZUQLUXA (Lord’s) is the word life. An accurate, literal translation of the passage is, “If, therefore, those who walked in ancient customs came to a new hope, no longer sabbatizing, but living according to the Lord’s life, in which also our life sprang up through him and his death . . .” The thought of Ignatius is that Christians were no longer to fashion their lives on the basis of Jewish legalism, but were to follow the life of Christ as their pattern; for it is by means of the example of the Lord’s dedicated life and vicarious death, brought home to the mind by the working of the Holy Spirit, that man’s spiritual nature may be revived and strengthened (see Ephesians 2:1-6). On this basis only can one successfully live a truly spiritual life.

Despite the clear intent of Ignatius, many keep trying to twist this passage to make it refer to Sunday keeping. It is indefensible to insert the word day into this early document on the basis that xulaxa (the Lord’s) in later centuries was used as a technical term for Sunday. The fact that the word day is not present in any of the major manuscripts (the only manuscript that has it is an Armenian translation), but that the word life is coupled with “the Lord’s- in the best manuscripts, ought to settle this matter. We may remark, however, that it is difficult to arrive at the exact Greek text as Ignatius wrote it. The Epistles of Ignatius in existence have been greatly conflated and interpolated. Scholars agree that parts of the Ignatian letters are forgeries. The short recension, which scholars agree most closely represents the true Ignatius, is nowhere extant in a pure form (The Apostolic Fathers, Volume 1, p. 168. The Loeb Classical Library). It behooves all careful scholars to refrain from using Ignatius as proof or support for any doctrine. The misinterpreted passage from the supposed Ignatian Epistle, widespread though it is, certainly adds no strength to Mr. Martin’s position.

Mr. Martin cites also from the forged Epistle of Barnabas, which used the Jewish ceremonial requirement of circumcision that occurred once in the lifetime of the Jew, on the eighth day of his life, as an argument for the observance of Sunday, which would be the eighth day of the week. This Gnostic-flavored speculative argument certainly is a weak basis for the observance of Sunday. It is apparent, however, that anti-Semitism caused Christian people at a very early date to have a desire to dissociate themselves from the seventh-day Sabbath, and instead to worship on the first day of the week to avoid being classed as Jews. Those early Christian leaders who in order to avoid persecution favored this practice found in the resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week a flimsy support for turning away from God’s unequivocal commandment concerning the Sabbath. However, there is absolutely not one shred of Biblical support for the observance of Sunday. We Adventists dare not set the practice of some church leaders above the plain commands of the Holy Scriptures.

## **Authoritative Quotations**

Mr. Martin states that we weaken our position by quoting scholars who, while they may state in their published works that there is no Biblical evidence for the change of the day from Saturday to Sunday, themselves keep the first day of the week and argue in other places in favor of observing it (page 155). It is not a weakness on our part when scholars are inconsistent with their own statements. Some scholars admit that the Bible does not support the first day of the week, but take the position that the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross and that therefore the seventh day of the week has no binding claim upon Christians. They assert that the Christian church possesses authority to teach Christians to keep the first day of the week in honor of Christ’s resurrection.

It is our contention that the cross of Christ did not change the will of God regarding the day that He would have His children keep. God made the Sabbath for man, and not only for the Jews. It was God’s plan and will that His children observe the seventh day as the memorial of His creative power. Although it

was necessary for Christ to die on the cross in order for the transgressions of mankind to be forgiven and for man to receive the impetus and power to live a Christian life, yet this by no means meant the institution of a different day of worship. We Christians do not keep the law of God to earn our salvation. We trust in Christ for our righteousness as a free gift, but because He has said, "If you love me, keep my commandments," we gladly do His will; and we believe His will is expressed in the Ten Commandments as well as in other parts of the Holy Scriptures. It is our contention that the church does not possess authority to command Christians to observe the first day of the week, and for her to do so puts her in opposition to the plain teaching of God's Word.

## **Creation in the Sabbath**

In his effort to show that Seventh-day Adventists are wrong in maintaining that the Christian church should observe the seventh-day Sabbath, Mr. Martin attacks our position on the Creation week. He says, "No doubt, one of the basic reasons for their tenacity is that their Sabbath theory would suffer a real setback if it could be shown Biblically and scientifically that the days of creation were actually eras or long periods of time during which the earth's great geological structures were formed."-Pa-e 157. In this Mr. Martin is correct. We believe that the seventh-day Sabbath exists as a memorial of God's creative power in fitting up the earth as an abode for man in six literal twenty-four-hour days, and by adding the seventh as a day for man to rest and worship, thereby constituting a weekly cycle by which He desired that mankind should live. We will not here go into the scientific evidence regarding the age of the earth. We would merely point out that the time clocks which the scientists use in showing the great age of the earth and of the organic materials upon it are based upon a theory of uniformity of which there is no scientific proof whatsoever.

Mr. Martin stands firmly with those who do not believe in a twenty-four-hour Creation day. He quotes with approval another author who says, "The question is, what do the Scriptures teach in regard to the length of the creative days described in Genesis chapters 1 and 2? This is primarily a question of hermeneutics and exegesis."- He is right; this is the question here, not the theories of scientists. Scientists have evidence, but they do not have absolute proof as to the age of the earth. Let us then confine our discussion here to the Bible. Mr. Martin holds that the word "day" used in Genesis 1 is figurative, and represents a period of time of undesignated length. We ask him, therefore, What is the meaning of the Biblical statements in Genesis 1: "And the evening and the morning were the first day," et cetera?

In the Bible record of the Creation week it is absolutely clear that the days referred to consisted of a period of darkness followed by a period of light. The fact that each of the six days is described in the terms, "the evening and the morning were the second day," and "the evening and the morning were the third day," et cetera, certainly gives evidence that these were days of the type that mankind has known since the dawn of history. To state that these were figurative days of undesignated length and yet claim that this view is based upon sound hermeneutics and exegesis leaves us amazed. The context and the grammar of Genesis 1 certainly point to days exactly like the days we know now. Furthermore, to appeal to Psalm 90:4 ("A thousand years in thy [God's] sight are but as yesterday when it is past") and to introduce this into a discussion of Genesis 1, in which we are told that the evening and the morning made up the day, is certainly questionable hermeneutics. Mr. Martin says, "It is hard to see how this fourth day could have been a literal 24-hour day," yet previously he had said, "Of course we know that God could have created the earth in six literal days." If we believe that God could have created the earth in six literal days, then it seems the part of the Christian to accept the obvious meaning of the record of Genesis 1 when it speaks in terms of days just like the type of days that we now know.

Our case does rest upon the literal twenty-four-hour-day Creation theory. Like all the rest of our teachings, our doctrine of the Sabbath is based on the Word of God, and not on the theories of scientists. While we recognize that Genesis 1 was not designed as a complete scientific account of Creation, yet at the same time we do not believe that the clear intent of Genesis 1 is untrue. It is our conviction that to attempt to make the days of the first chapter of Genesis into vague, indeterminate periods does violence to the Bible, and in effect such teaching places the assertions of scientists above the Word of God. The last word of science has yet to be given on the age of life upon the earth, and in the meantime we will stand by the clear intent of the Word of God and rest our case upon it.

We think that is far better than to be content with the vague allusions and innuendoes such as given in the following sentence of Mr. Martin: "In view of the evidence from natural science, and certain