

Bible Study Lectures

PEOPLE speak of the “Jewish Sabbath,” the “Christian Sabbath,” “Mohammedan Sabbath,” “civil Sabbath,” and various other Sabbaths. But in reality, so far as a sacred day is concerned, there is but one. The Bible from Genesis to Revelation makes reference to one and only one weekly sacred Sabbath. It is termed “the Sabbath,” “the Sabbath of the Lord thy God,” “My holy day,” “the Lord’s day,” and “the Sabbath day according to the commandment,” various terms, but all applying to the one and only Sabbath recognized and owned by God: “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” Thus declared Pastor Mitchell in his introductory remarks to an address on “The Christian Sabbath” in the Naval Hall on Wednesday night.

He said: The Bible nowhere speaks of a Jewish Sabbath. The Jews never claimed the power to make a Sabbath. They always observed the Sabbath given to our first parents at creation, and which with the marriage ceremony and the weekly cycle has come down to us through the centuries, blessed with the fragrance and freshness of Edenic purity. Now I propose to show from Scripture that the seventh-day Sabbath so often misnamed “the Jewish Sabbath,” is in reality Christ’s Sabbath by right of creation.

BACK TO THE ORIGIN

First let it be noted that if a Sabbath exists, it must have been made. We shall now see that the Sabbath was made, and also learn how it was made, who made it, why it was made, for whom, and how long it was to continue. We notice in Mark 2:27, “The Sabbath was made for man.” Our first question now is, When was the Sabbath made? The answer is found in the first book of the Bible. The first five verses of the Bible give the account of the first day of the creation week. Genesis 2:1-3, gives the account of the seventh day of creation week. “Thus the heaven were finished, and all the host of them. 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.” Here, then, on the birthday of the creation of this world, the seventh day of creation week, the Sabbath was made.

THE SEVENTH DAY

Secondly, the same verses tell how the Sabbath was made. To make the Sabbath, God rested upon, blessed, and sanctified the seventh day. God has done that for no other day. The seventh day having been blessed, and sanctified, or set aside for a holy use, differs in that respect from all other days. There is only one “seventh day,” hence only one day of the week has the sacred recognition of heaven.

Our third question is: Who made the Sabbath? The answer is, Christ. One of the most significant and alluring of Bible revelations is that everything that God ever said or did that has to do with man and this world, He said and did through His Son, Jesus Christ. This striking truth is tersely stated in 1 Corinthians 8:6: “To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things; and we by Him.” The Father is the source, or fountain, of all things, and the Son is the active agent.

Colossians 1:14-16, makes it plain that Christ was the Creator of this world, and hence the Creator of the Sabbath at its completion: “In whom we have redemption through His blood: By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers’ all things were created by Him, and for Him.” John 1:1-3, 14 teaches the same truth—that all things were made by Him who was with the Father in the beginning. Hebrews 1:1, 2, speaking of Christ, says: “By whom also He [God] made the, worlds.”

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH

The reason is explained in verses 8-10 of the same chapter. God the Father bears testimony to the deity of the Son. “But unto the Son He said, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” And in verse 10, the Father, still addressing the Son, says: “And You, Lord in the beginning has laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Your hands.” The fact therefore that Christ was the active agent in creation, the Being who made all things, evidences the truth that it was Christ who, after He created the world, rested on the seventh day, and blessed and sanctified it. The Sabbath thus made by Christ must of necessity be the Christian Sabbath.

Furthermore, not only was it Christ who set aside the Sabbath for man’s use at creation, but it was Christ who included its observance among the eternal Ten, Commandments of Exodus 20, 2,500 Years

Bible Study Lectures

later. At this time the Israelites were journeying from Egypt to Canaan. 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 tells us that the One who accompanied them on their journey was Christ. And Nehemiah 9:6-14 tells us that He who led them also gave them the Ten Commandments.

BIRTHDAY OF CREATION

Our next question is: Why was the Sabbath made? The answer is embodied in the commandment itself: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8-11. The Sabbath, the birthday of creation, is to be observed as a perpetual memorial of the creative power of God. Psalm 111:4 states, "He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered." And this memorial is of everlasting duration, "Thy name, O Lord, endures for ever; and Thy memorial, O Lord, throughout all generations." Psalm 135:13. And Revelation 14:6, 7, giving the opening note of the final message to be heralded to the whole world prior to the return of Christ, admonishes us to worship God as the Creator.

Mr. Mitchell stated that it was his firm conviction that the reason why God has brought such a widespread and persistent agitation of the Sabbath question these late years is because it is to be especially emphasized at this time when the educational world, and the religious world to a great extent, is denying the Genesis account of creation. He stated that a two-year newspaper discussion, which the editor of the paper stated was the longest discussion ever published in any New Zealand newspaper, was concerning the Sabbath.

Our next point is, continued the speaker, For whom was the Sabbath made? In Mark 2:27 we read: "The Sabbath was made for man." The Greek word used here is the generic term "anthropos," and means all mankind. It is used 551 times in the New Testament, and refers to all peoples and nations under the heavens. The Sabbath certainly was not made exclusively for the Jew man, as is sometimes supposed. Isaiah 56:1-6 also teaches that it was for the Gentile man as well as for the Jew. It is part of the Ten Commandments the keeping of which Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14 states is "the whole duty of man."

Our final question is, How long is the world to observe the Sabbath? I answer that it is the sacred link that spans all time, from Eden's gates on into the new earth. The Sabbath of creation was the Sabbath of Sinai. It was the "Sabbath day according to the commandment" kept by the disciples when Christ was in the tomb. It was the only sacred day known to the disciples, before and after the crucifixion. It was to continue right on into the Christian dispensation. In Matthew 24:20 Christ, looking down to the destruction of Jerusalem, 40 years this side of the crucifixion, said: "Pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Revelation 14:12 pictures the saints waiting for the coming of Jesus as keeping the commandments, of which the Sabbath is a part. The last chapter in the Bible, speaking of the entrance into the eternal city of God, says: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

But my closing picture stretches right on into eternity, into the new earth: "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, said the Lord." Isaiah 66:23.

47. THE IDENTICAL SEVENTH DAY

Traced from Creation Week

WHEN in Invercargill, New Zealand I was conversing with an elderly Scotch lady, whose husband had formerly occupied the mayoral chair of the city. She was a woman of a very studious and logical turn of mind, and liked digging into the deep truths of Scripture, especially the prophecies. After attending several of my lectures she spoke to me regarding the seventh-day Sabbath saying, "Sunday must be the seventh day, for the commandment says, 'the seventh day is the Sabbath,' and we observe Sunday as the Sabbath, therefore Sunday must be the seventh day." I assured her that all scholarship and all sources of information taught that Sunday was the first day of the week, and not the seventh.

After proving my statement from the New Testament, I said: "Some of the old family Bibles have a list of the days of the week in them, and Sunday is listed as the first, and Saturday as the seventh day." She was a typical "canny Scot." She did not say much more just then. But on my next visit she produced