

63. INSTITUTION OF THE SABBATH

1. When and by whom was the Sabbath made?

"Thus the heavens and the earth 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." Gen. 2: 1, 2.

2. After resting on the seventh day, what did God do?

"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." Verse 3.

3. By what three distinct acts, then, was the Sabbath made?

God rested on it; He blessed it; He sanctified it.

Sanctify: "To make sacred or holy; to set apart to a holy or religious use." - Webster.

4. Did Christ have anything to do with creation and the making of the Sabbath?

"All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1: 3. See also Eph. 3: 9; Col. 1: 16; Heb. 1: 2.

NOTE-Christ, being the active agent in creation, must have rested on the seventh day with the Father. It is therefore His rest day as well as the Father's.

5. For whom did Christ say the Sabbath was made?

"And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Mark 2: 27.

NOTE-It was not made for the Jews alone. The Jews derive their name from Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob, from whom they are descended. The Sabbath was made more than two thousand years before there was a Jew. It was made for the human race.

6. What does the Sabbath commandment require?

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." Ex. 20: 8-10.

7. What reason is given in the commandment for keeping the Sabbath day holy?

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Verse 11.

NOTE - The Sabbath is the memorial of creation, and the sign of God's creative power. Through the keeping of it God designed that man should for ever remember Him as the true and living God, the Creator of all things.

8. Did God bless and sanctify the seventh day while He was resting upon it, or when His rest on that day was past?

"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. 2:3.

NOTES-God blessed and sanctified the seventh day then future, answering to the day on which He had just rested. The acts of blessing and sanctifying involve the idea of a future use of those things which are blessed and sanctified. Past time cannot be used. It is gone for ever. The blessing and sanctification of the day therefore, must have related to the future-to all the future seventh days.

In Joel 1: 14 we read: "Sanctify [i.e., appoint] you a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord." Wherever used in the Bible, the word sanctify means to appoint, to proclaim, or to set apart, as in the margin of Joshua 20: 7; 2 Kings 10: 20, 21; Zeph. 1:7. So when the Sabbath was sanctified, as the last act by which it was made for man, an appointment, or proclamation, of the Sabbath was given. See Ex. 19:23.

"If we had no other passage than this of Gen. 2: 3, there would be no difficulty in deducing from it a precept for the universal observance of a Sabbath, or seventh day, to be devoted to God as holy time, by all of that race for whom the earth and its nature were specially prepared. The first men must have known it. The words He hallowed it can have no meaning otherwise. They would be a blank unless in reference to some who were required to keep it holy."-Lange's Commentary, Vol. I, page 197.

9. How did God prove Israel in the wilderness?

"Then said the Lord unto Moses, 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." Ex. 16: 4.

10. On which day was a double portion of manna gathered?

"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 of the congregation came and told Moses." Verse 22.

11. What reply did Moses make to the rulers?

"And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." Verse 23.

NOTE - This was a full month and more before they came to Sinai.

12. When had God said this?

In the beginning, when He sanctified the Sabbath. Gen. 2: 3.

NOTE-In the wilderness of Sin, before Israel came to Sinai, Moses said to Jethro, his father-in-law, "I do make them know the statutes of God, and His laws" (Ex. 18:16), which shows that these statutes and laws existed before they were proclaimed on Sinai.

13. What did some of the people do on the seventh day?

"It came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none." Ex. 16: 27.

14. How did God reprove their disobedience?

"And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse you to keep My commandments and My laws?" Verse 28.

15. Why was double manna given on the sixth day?

"See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore He gives you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day!" Verse 29.

16. How, then, did the Lord prove the people (verse 4) whether they would keep His law, or not?

Over the keeping of the Sabbath.

NOTE-Thus we see that the Sabbath commandment was a part of God's law before this law was spoken from Sinai; for this incident occurred in the wilderness of Sin, before the children of Israel came to Sinai, where the law was given. Both the Sabbath and the law existed from creation.