

In his Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apostle Paul repeats his declaration that Christ is the world's Creator:

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds But unto the Son He said, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou has loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning has laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Your hands.” Heb. 1: 1, 2, 8-10.

The disciple John declares:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.” “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” John 1: 1-3, 14.

The truth stands out in bold relief: that Jesus of Nazareth, the One who was made flesh and dwelt among us, the One by whose blood we have redemption from sin, is the One who, in the beginning, created all things. He made the heavens and the earth. When God said, “Let us make man in our image” (Gen. 1: 26), He was speaking to His Son; and the Son carried out His Father's desires. He was the Father's active agent. He was the Mediator or Middleman between God and all His works. It was the Son of God who “spoke, and it was done”; who “commanded, and it stood fast.” (Ps. 33: 9.) It was by His word that the heavens were made, “and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.” (Verse 6.) He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. “He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” Col. 1: 17.

To what conclusion then does this bring us? There can be but one answer.

Since Jesus Christ, God's Son and man's Savior, was this world's Creator, and since the Sabbath was given as a sign of the power of the Creator, the Sabbath is Christ's sign. It was He who gave it to man, that he might have it as a constant reminder that Jesus, who had undertaken man's salvation and sanctification, was the Author of the original creation. It is, therefore, the Christian Sabbath. It was because of this that Jesus could say: “The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” Mark 2: 28.

Given at Creation

The Sabbath was given to man at creation. That is when it was made. That is when it was hallowed and sanctified. Upon this holy day, the Creator rested and was refreshed. It was then that He gave it to man as a weekly reminder of His power and work in creation. Let us note the record again:

“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. 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: 1-3.

“God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.” Now to sanctify, says Cruden, means “to separate and appoint any thing to an holy and religious use.” - Cruden's Complete Concordance, Edition 1769. Therefore, the seventh day was separated from the other days of the week and was appointed by the great Creator as a day to be used and observed by His people upon earth as a holy day.

Upon this important point the following comments from a professor of Hebrew and Oriental literature at the New York City University are worthy of the most careful consideration.

“ 'And sanctified it.' Hebrew, kadash. It is by this term that positive appointment of the Sabbath as a day of rest to man is expressed. God's sanctifying the day is equivalent to His commanding men to sanctify it. As at the close of creation the seventh day was thus set apart by the Most High for such purposes, without limitation to age or country, the observance of it is obligatory upon the whole human race, to whom, in the wisdom of Providence, it may be communicated.

“This further appears from the reason why God blessed and sanctified it, viz., 'because that in it He had 'rested,' etc., which is a reason of equal force at all times and equally applying to all the

posterity of Adam; and if it formed a just ground for sanctifying the first day which dawned upon the finished system of the universe, it must be equally so for sanctifying every seventh day to the end of time.

“The observance of the day is moreover enjoined in the Decalogue, which was not abolished with the peculiar polity of the Jews, but remains unalterably binding upon Christians in every age of the world. . . . The sanctification of the seventh day in the present case can only be understood of its being set apart to the special worship and service of God.”- George Bush, Notes, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Genesis (Presbyterian), Vol. I (two-volume edition), pages 48, 49, note on Gen. 2: 3.

We add also the testimony of another, as he comments upon that same, scripture:

“By this is meant, 1. The day appointed of God, at the close of creation, to be observed by man as a day of rest from all secular employment, because that in it God Himself had rested from His work. (Gen. 2: 1-3.) Not that God's rest was necessitated by fatigue (Isa. 40: 28); but He rested, that is, ceased to work, on the seventh day as an example to man; hence assigned it as a reason why men should rest on that day. (Ex. 20: 11; 31: 17.) God's blessing and sanctifying the day, meant that He separated it from a common to a religious use, to be a perpetual memorial or sign that all who thus observed it would show themselves to be the worshippers of that God who made the world in six days and rested on the seventh. (Ex. 20: 8-11; 31: 16, 17; Isa. 56: 6, 7.) “ - Amos Binney and Daniel Steele, Theological Compend, pages 169, 170.

“As a memorial of that fact [the creation of the world], He set apart the Sabbath, kept it, sanctified and blessed it, for the benefit of all. . . . Thus the keeping of the Sabbath makes God known. Gives efficacy to His moral government.... It commemorates the work of God as Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, and Redeemer.”- Justin Edwards, The Sabbath Manual, pages 16, 19, 22.

And again:

“The Sabbath was appointed at the creation of the world, and sanctified, or set apart for holy purposes, 'for man,' for all men, and therefore for Christians; since there was never any repeal of the original institution. To this we add; that if the moral law be the law of Christians, then is the Sabbath as explicitly enjoined upon them as 'upon the Jews.’” -Richard Watson (Methodist), A Biblical and Theological Dictionary, pages 829, 830.

A fourth witness declares:

“As this was the most ancient institution, God calls them to remember it; as if He had said, Do not forget that when I finished My creation, I instituted the Sabbath, and remember why I did so, and for what purposes.” -Dr. Adam, Clarke, A Commentary and Critical Notes, Vol. I, page 387, note on Ex. 20: 8.

We find that the religious leaders are in almost universal agreement upon the fact that the seventh-day Sabbath was definitely instituted at creation as a memorial of that great event and was intended for the whole human family. Since it is contained in the moral law, every jot and tittle of which stands for ever, it is as much in force today as when it was first given as a blessing to man.

A Particular Day

It should be carefully noted in passing that the Sabbath was made of a particular day. The commandment declares “the seventh day is the sabbath.” It is nor one day in seven, not a seventh part of time, but “the seventh day.” The Sabbath is not an institution that may be shifted from one day to another at the will and caprice of man, but it is the seventh day of the week.

It was not an institution that the Lord blessed, but a day. As houses are made out of stone and wood, so the Sabbath was made out of a particular day-the seventh day, now commonly called Saturday. If, therefore, the seventh day be separated from the Sabbath, the Sabbath is destroyed. This conclusion is foregone and inevitable.

Sabbath-breaking Leads to Idolatry

It was the failure of the nations to keep the Sabbath and recognize its sanctity that led many of them into idolatry. By disregarding the Sabbath, men have lost the constant, weekly reminder of God's creative power. They have looked upon the visible objects of His creation and have been led by Satan to reverence and even worship the creature rather than the Creator.

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the un-corrutable God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” Rom. 1: 21-25.

Had the human family always regarded and observed the Sabbath, this lapse into heathen worship would have been impossible. They would have had before them a constant reminder that there is a living God who is Creator and the only true God. He being the Creator is greater than the things created and, therefore, the only object worthy of man's worship and adoration.

The Seal of God

The Sabbath is also referred to in the Scripture as the “seal of the living God.” This is because of the fact that the Sabbath command alone, of all the Decalogue, reveals the name, authority, and realm of the Author of the law. This command reveals the fact that the Lawgiver is “Lord God,” the Maker of the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is. (Ex. 20:10,11.) This is absolute proof that this law did not emanate from any of the gods of the heathen, but is the product of the mind of the Creator. This commandment stamps the entire law with His signature. It seals it as genuine.

This great seal of God is to be impressed on the minds and hearts of Christ's followers and is to constitute a sign of allegiance to His kingdom. Of one of John's visions of the redeemed, he declared:

“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.” Rev. 7: 1-3.

This seal of God will mark the followers of Christ for heaven. It reveals that He is their Lord and Savior, that they belong to Him, and that they have been saved by His grace. It is His sign that they are His.

Sabbath Not a Shadow

There are those who reason that the weekly Sabbath was one of the types and shadows in the Mosaic dispensation, and that although the other nine commandments remained in force after the cross, this particular one passed away. This reasoning usually seems to be based upon the following statement of the Apostle Paul, in Col. 2: 14-17:

‘Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.... Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.’

But the seventh day weekly Sabbath was not a shadow. As we have learned in former chapters, the shadows of the Old Testament were ordinances that had to do with the offerings and sacrifices pertaining to the sanctuary services, all of which typified the death of the Son of God upon the cross for the sins of men. It was a way by which God's people might express their faith in a Savior to come, just as through baptism and the sacrament we today express our faith in a Savior who has come.

True, there were some shadowy Sabbaths. In the ceremonial law governing the sacrifices, there were several yearly Sabbaths. Upon these days special sacrifices were offered. Of one of the annual Sabbaths we read: