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EDITORIAL.

THE SABBATH AND THE LORD'S DAY.

Many regard the Sabbath day and the Lord's day as one and the same, and some speak of the "Christian Sabbath." But as we are permitted to speak only where the Bible speaks we must observe a clear distinction between these two days, as they always occupy a separate place in the scriptures. In this article we will treat of the Sabbath day, hoping in the next issue of THE CHRISTIAN to speak particularly of the Lord's day. We ask the reader to examine carefully the scriptures referred to as well as others bearing on the subject and to give the whole matter a full and candid study. We should do this, if for no other reason than a proper respect for the many pious worshippers of God who so highly venerate what they consider the Sabbath, and are so careful to prevent themselves and families from breaking the Sabbath. But the solemn appointment of the Sabbath by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the great reason why we should examine it with reverence and godly fear.

I. We ask who were the people commanded to keep the Sabbath day? The first we read of who was thus commanded was the nation of Israel, in the wilderness. God commanded them to gather manna for six days and rest on the seventh. He provided for the strict observance of this command. They were ordered to gather a double portion on the sixth day, which kept good for the use of the following day but could not be preserved on any other day. (Ex. xvi. 22, 27). By this command He tried them whether or not they would be obedient. But He gave this command to no other nation. He brought Israel out of the land of Egypt, therefore He commanded them to keep the Sabbath. (Deut. v. 15). He commanded them to keep it as a sign between Him and that nation. (Ex. xxxi. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17,) (Ezek. xx. 12, 20). Other nations could no more claim what God had given as a sign between Himself and Israel, than we can claim a letter mailed to another man, or a legacy left to another family. There is no account in the Bible of Gentiles being commanded to keep the seventh day. When the crimes of the heathen are enumerated in the New Testament, Sabbath-breaking is not mentioned among these crimes. For where no law is there is no transgression. But as the law of the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments it is contended that it binds Gentiles as well as Jews. Until it can be shown where the decalogue was given to the Gentiles this contention has no force. The law was given by Moses to the Jews but not to the Gentiles. It stood as a wall between them—the Jews inside the Gentiles outside of that wall. They never did and never could come together until that wall was broken down. This Jesus accomplished by

the death of the cross. Hear a converted Jew address converted Gentiles: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace who hath made both one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace" &c., &c (Ep. ii. 12, 15)

The Apostle to the Gentiles in magnifying his office largely elaborates the matter as if earnest to prevent all from error and establish the truth. In II. Cor. iii. he contrasts the law and the gospel, showing that God had made them able ministers of the one and not of the other. The law he calls a ministration of death written and engraven in stones, which was once glorious but which was *done away* and all its glory completely swallowed up in the excellency glory of the gospel. "For if that which was done away was glorious much more that which remaineth is glorious." If that law was glorious which showed the justice and purity of God in punishing every Jew with death who broke it, how shall not the law which remains and points every Jew and Gentile to Him on whom God has laid the iniquity of us all, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have eternal life, be rather glorious? After Paul tells Colossian Christians in chapter ii., of their completeness in Christ, and by what steps they were cut off from sin and buried and risen with Him, he proceeds, "Having forgiven you all trespasses, 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 the cross. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly triumphing over them in it." What is his conclusion of the foregoing facts? "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. He speaks also in other epistles to the same end, showing very plainly and very fully that the law which bound the Jews to observe the seventh day was abolished in the death of Christ, and that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Rom. x. 4,). That the law was their school master unto Christ that they might be justified by faith. But that after faith was come they were no longer under the school master, but both they and believing Gentiles were all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus &c., &c. (Gal. iii. 24, 25, 26.) How strange to think that Jews are now under that abolished law, and Gentiles to whom it was never given!!

II. We next ask how the law was to be observed? It reads thus: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou 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 man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates."

Here we observe that no manner of work was to be done by them, their children, servants nor cattle. Who that now professes to keep the Sabbath attempts the like? or attends to the following specifications:—

1 "Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day. (Ex. xxxv. 3).

2. Abide ye every man in his place (house or tent) let no man go out of his place on the Sabbath day. (Ex. xvi. 29).

3. Bear no burden on the Sabbath day nor bring

it in by the gates of Jerusalem, neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day. (Jer. xvii. 21, 22.)

4. Whosoever doeth any work on the Sabbath day that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Every one that defileth it shall be surely put to death." (Ex. xxxi. 14, 15.).

No fire was to be kindled in their houses, no man was to go out of his house, no burden was to be carried in or out of their houses or gates. Whoever did any of these things was to die without mercy. When a man was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath, at God's command he was stoned by the congregation till he died. (Num. xv. 32).

The above items are a few of the many which might be selected from the Old Testament to show how the law was to be kept by the nation of Israel, and what was the penalty for breaking the Sabbath.

III. The Sabbath was a *commemorative* institution. 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. (Ex. xx. 11).

This is the reason why Israel was to *remember* and sanctify it. Nature has divided time into days, months, and years. Art has divided it into hours, minutes, and moments. But neither nature nor art has divided it into *weeks*. The weekly division is divine. And Israel, who had the oracles of God and the worship of God, proclaimed to surrounding nations in darkness and crime *by the rest of the seventh day*, that "The Lord is God," and that he created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested from all His works on the seventh. Thus the Sabbath was to be observed until the coming of Christ, the promised seed, "The desire of all nations."

Christ did not come to break the law but to fulfil it. Although basely charged with breaking the Sabbath He did good on that day, and worked even as His Father had hitherto worked. Although Lord of the Sabbath He was under the law and kept it till its close. The last week He worked day after day. Before the sun went down on the sixth day, and after the darkness was over the whole land from the sixth until the ninth hour, Jesus cried "It is finished" and bowed His head and gave up His spirit to His father. He who was with God and by whom all things were, made now entered His rest and ceased from His own works as God did from His. He fulfilled the law and spent the last Sabbath in Joseph's tomb. He is the beginning and the end. He began the seventh day with rest and ended it. So that every eye and every heart is thence forward to look unto Jesus.

The divine wisdom and goodness underlining and pervading God's dispensations, whether Patriarchal, Jewish, or Christian, as they shine in each are called their glory. The gospel, because it reveals Christ, is the focus of all these glories. There is a divine wisdom manifest in the law of Moses in the division of time into weeks, but as the division shines more gloriously in the arrangements of Christ no one need be alarmed to hear that Moses is not our lawgiver, but Christ He is Lord of all, He is everything to us. The mariner is not alarmed when star after star fades from his sight, when he knows that their vanishing light but heralds the approach of the King of day.

D. C.

THERE is, at times, great difficulty in giving credit of money to the proper persons. If time or space permitted we could fill three columns enumerating the difficulties, but here is one for example—A J. Williams writes:—Please send to my address,—Mrs. Olives, Madison Co., Mass., THE CHRISTIAN, and I will remit money in a few days. The name and address as here given are carefully written in our books and the paper sent. After a while a letter comes and on opening it find.—