

Selected.

THE LORD'S DAY.

BY HIRAM WALLACE.

The subject allotted to me on the programme is "The Lord's Day", a subject in respect to which there is considerable discussion in this country at present. It is a question of much scope, and, in order to its proper consideration, it requires more time than can be given to it to-day.

The relation which this day sustains to the Sabbath, or seventh day, makes it necessary to consider the Sabbath question. In the second chapter of Genesis we read that on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; that He rested on that day from all His labor, and that He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. It was to Him a Sabbath from all His creative work. That it was then given in the Garden of Eden to man, or observed by him down to the time of the Exodus of Israel, we are not informed in the sacred writings. The first mention of the rest day is in Ex. xvi: 23. Israel had come to Mount Sinai where, accompanied by the most sublime manifestations of God's presence, the law was about to be given. Moses, by divine direction, anticipates one of its commands, and gives them the Sabbath. "This is that which the Lord has said: To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: See, for the Lord has given you the Sabbath; therefore, He gives you on the sixth day the bread of two days. So the people rested on the seventh day." This is significant, as it is the first case recorded in which man was required to keep the Sabbath, and where that command was obeyed.

Now, it is not necessary to dwell on the fact that the seventh day was given by divine authority to Israel, and was required for ages to be sacredly kept by them. The question now is this, "Is the church of God now under obligation to keep that day?" There are those in this country who believe, affirm, and with much zeal advocate the observance of the Sabbath. They make what seems to some a strong plea in defence of this position, and in some places their number is slowly increasing. There are three positions held by Christian people regarding the Sabbath.

1. The one to which I have just referred. The law given at Mount Sinai says in the fourth commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." That law, some say, is still binding. No part of it has been changed; therefore, we should keep the seventh day.

2. The second position affirms that the decalogue is still in force, and that the Sabbath law is unchanged; but the advocates of it assume the untenable ground that the day has been changed from the seventh to the first day of the week, and that instead of keeping the seventh day, as the law commands, we should keep the first day.

3. The third position takes the ground that God, according to promise, has made a new covenant, that the Sabbath belongs to the old covenant, and with it has passed away, and that instead of it we have the day of the Lord's resurrection, with all its new relations, associations and sacred memories.

These positions are not in harmony with one another, and cannot all be in agreement with God's word. The second is held by more believers in the Bible than either of the others. Those therefore, who call the Lord's Day the Sabbath, and who apply to it the fourth command of the law, have the advantage of numbers, but a fuller study of the Sabbath question is leading many to abandon that position and to defend the claims of the first day on other and more substantial grounds. To show the untenable character of that position, it is only necessary to ask *when, where and by whom* was that change made, by which the first day

of the week was substituted for the seventh? It is very evident, then, that if the Sabbath law is obligatory, it enforces the keeping of Saturday and not Sunday.

Let us consider next what claims, of any, the Sabbath of the law has upon us. Whatever obligations there is that the Sabbath should be kept is found in the decalogue. It is there that the law of the Sabbath is found, and some hold that we should keep that day, because the fourth command says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." The argument is this: The ten commandments given at Mount Sinai are now binding upon all men. The Sabbath law is one of the ten commandments; therefore, the Sabbath, or seventh day, is binding upon all men. Of course, if the premises of this syllogism are correct, the conclusion must be valid; but if either premise is wrong, the conclusion must be wrong. But is the first premise "The decalogue is binding upon all men," correct? Were these laws ever given to the world? I am not considering the moral principles which they contained, and which were always to be observed. But *when and where* were these ten commands which were pronounced from the fiery summit of Sinai, and around which all the other statutes of the law of Moses gathered, ever given to the world? Look at Ex. xx: 1. "And God spake all the words saying, I am the Lord thy God who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other god before me," etc. I have noticed that those who print the ten commandments in large letters and hang them up back of the lecturer, always cut off the first two verses, and begin with "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." What is more important to the reader or hearer than to know who is addressed? Why not let them read, "I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt?" That would show that God was speaking to the Israelites whom He delivered, and to no others. Why take laws given to a nation nearly three thousand five hundred years ago, and try to bind them on men to-day? Is there any justification of such a course?

Many years after the giving of the law, Moses, referring to these events at Sinai says: "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us who are all of us here alive to-day." Deut. v. 2, 3. He then repeats the decalogue, showing what he means by the term "covenant." This law, then, was not given to those who lived before the events at Sinai, but to Israel, "to us who are alive this day." That was the day when Moses repeated the law to them. Now, then, can it be shown that the law of the Sabbath was ever given to the world? Much less can it be proven that it is yet binding on all people.

It is affirmed of these that they are fundamental, or the basis of all law. But are they? That they have moral principles, which must always have a place in all law, is evident; but they are not, all of them, moral laws. The Sabbath is a positive, not a moral institution. Moral laws are right in themselves; positive laws are right because commanded. It was right to keep the seventh day, only because God commanded it. This explains why, when we turn to the New Testament, we discover that all of the ten commandments are given in some form, *except* the Sabbath. It is not there commanded. Jesus was asked which was the greatest commandment. He does not give one of the ten, but says: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, etc. On these hang all the law and the prophets." These are higher, broader, greater than the decalogue. These are never repealed. They are immutable; but what hangs on them may be taken down, changed or removed.

That the decalogue has been repealed is taught

with great clearness in the New Testament. A few references will make this clear. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." Rom. vii 4. Also verse 5. "That now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Where now the obligation to keep any part of the law of Moses, if they were dead to it and it to them?

But we are told that this was the "ceremonial" law. Men have, for their convenience, made a division of the law into moral and ceremonial, while Paul speaks of the law without any such distinction. In close connection with the words quoted he says, "I had not known just except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." This was the tenth commandment.

I now turn to 2 Cor. iii. 1-17. I cannot now take time to read the verses to which I refer. Paul draws a bold, clear contrast between the law and the Gospel. He speaks of the Gospel as the *New Testament*, and affirms that it is written by the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone, but on the tables of the heart. He declares that it is of the Spirit, and therefore gives life; that it is the ministration of the Spirit, and therefore glorious; that it is the ministration of righteousness, and therefore exceeds in glory. The law he calls "the letter," and says of it that it "kills." He calls it the ministration of death and as if anticipating the readiness with which, in order to support a special theory, men would apply his teaching here to the "ceremonial law," he defines it to be that which was written and engraved on stone. Of the first—the Gospel—he says it remains; of the second—the law—it is abolished—done away. With equal clearness the same apostle discusses this question in the Galatian letter. In the third chapter, he speaks of the covenant made with Abraham, and of the law given 430 years afterwards, that the law was added because of transgression till Christ came. Thus the law was a school-master till Christ, so that people might learn and come to Him. But after faith had come, we are no longer under a school-master. I wonder if Christ intended that the Jews, who had been kept so long "under the yoke," should be freed from it by His Gospel, and that the neck of the Gentiles should be placed under it instead? Paul continues his argument for the benefit of those who desire to be "under the law," and gives the allegory that represented the two covenants, and those respectively under them, and draws his conclusion in the words, "Cast out the bond woman and her son, for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free." Hence his memorable words, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Then the law, moral, ceremonial, civil with all other distinctions which men have made in it, has passed away. The Sabbath is no longer in force, since Christ has nailed that old institution to the cross. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath, which are a shadow of things to come." (To Be Continued).

GREAT MEN DELUDED BY CHRISTIANITY.

There goes Saul of Tarsus on horse-back at full gallop. Where is he going? To destroy Christians. He wants no better play-spell than to stand and watch the hats and coats of the murderers who are stoning God's children. There goes the same man. This time he is afoot. Where is he going now? Going on the road to Osees to die for Christ. They tried to whip it out of him; they