

May 18

We which have believed do enter into rest. Hebrews 4:3

OUR rest in the Lord is as complete as is our belief in Him. He who believes fully rests fully; he who believes only partially

R1532 "Some Christians seem to look for the increase of divine favor and peace through other agencies than the knowledge of God; but such is not God's order. Our Lord prayed for his disciples, saying, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." The knowledge of the truth is the sanctifying power, the peace-and-joy-imparting power, and is the precious evidence of divine grace or favor. Those who expect to be sanctified without this divinely provided agency and who expect to enjoy abiding peace without it, make a great mistake."

(Heb 11:1 Diaglott) "But Faith is a Basis of things hoped for, a Conviction of things unseen"

R1822 "Faith has in it the two elements of intellectual assurance and heart reliance... With some it is all emotion; with others it is all intellectuality; but neither of these can stand the tests of fiery ordeal: they must abide together if they are to endure to the end and be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

R5116 "There is a difference between intellectual belief and heart-reliance. The person who knows God best will trust Him most. Our Lord Jesus in His glorified position trusts the Father most perfectly at all times. But with us, whose trust is imperfect, it is different. Not until the First Resurrection shall we have perfect trust. The greater the knowledge of God's character, the greater will be the heart-reliance upon Him..."

The faith of the Church will be of a higher character than is that of the angels or than will be that of the world restored. The faith of the Church will have been wrought out amidst the darkness and obscurity of this Age, which are being permitted for the very

rests but partially. The ideal condition of the spiritual Israelite is the attainment of a perfect rest, a perfect Sabbath-keeping, in his present experience, and a waiting and laboring for another and still more complete rest--the actual rest of the perfected condition--

purpose of developing that faith; for the Church is called to occupy a place much higher than that of angels or men-- called to be partakers of the Divine nature.--2 Pet. 1:3,4."

(Heb 4:3 KJV) "For we which have believed do enter into rest..."

R5433 "REST PROPORTIONATE TO FAITH...One might have an intellectual belief in these promised blessings without entering into the rest mentioned in our text. But this form of belief is evidently not in the Apostle's thought. To the extent that the individual recognizes those facts, accepts them and acts upon them, to that extent he enters into rest. If he believes partially, he rests in that proportion..."

The expression of the text, "We who have believed," implies that the belief has reached the *heart*, and will thus affect our course in life. And the second part of the statement, "do enter into rest," implies that the rest is gradually coming to him because he has believed. He has first believed; and the fulness of rest is a condition to be attained gradually as his faith grows stronger, and as he learns to appreciate more fully what he has accepted.

"With the *heart* man believeth," and not merely with the *head*. It is not a mere *intellectual* belief. When we accept the Gospel as a *fact*, and enter fully into it, we begin at once to have a measure of this rest; and as we learn by our experiences how true the Lord is to all His promises to us, the rest becomes more deep and abiding. The belief was at first a full belief in the Message of God; but as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of God, the more firm and established does our faith become, and our rest is proportionate."

R2534 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

NEHEMIAH'S CORRECTION OF SABBATH-BREAKING

--DEC. 3.--NEH. 13:15-22.--

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."--Exod. 20:8.

NEHEMIAH remained with his people as its Persian governor for twelve years, when he was recalled to the palace by Artaxerxes. (Neh. 13:6.) He returned to Jerusalem by the king's permission probably five years afterward. Meantime the interests of the Israelites had prospered in temporal matters, but suffered from a moral and religious standpoint. Malachi prophesied during this period, and from his book we get a clear insight into some of the degeneracy of that time. The demoralization seems to have started with the desire to be on friendly terms with the gentiles in that vicinity, contrary to divine command.

This led to more mixed marriages, and correspondingly to a growing lack of interest in the divine law and worship. The high priest's grandson, Manasseh, married the daughter of Sanballat, once a prominent enemy of the Jews, and a man of influence; and one of the tithe-chambers of the Temple was desecrated by fitting it up as a dwelling place for Tobiah, the Ammonite, who by marriage became related to the high priest: and this policy, sanctioned by such high authority, was greatly followed by others. (Neh. 13:4,5,28; Mal. 2:14-16.) It is not surprising that such disregard of divine law led naturally and quickly to the neglect of tithes for the support of the ministers of the Temple, leading also to further selfishness, which, if it brought a sacrifice to the Lord at all was disposed to bring the poor, the lame and the blind of the flock, not the unblemished fat-

the rest that remains for the people of God. "Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest [Sabbath], lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" [of fleshly Israel].-- Hebrews 4:9-11. Z. '99-253 R2534:5

R1582 "Knowledge of God is not only an intellectual knowledge of his great and loving plan: it includes also a personal acquaintance with God, a heart to heart communion and fellowship with him--an established sympathy of love and common interest and co-operation. Such a knowledge or acquaintance with God is gained through the study of his precious word with reverence and diligence, through the personal application of the principles of that word in every day life and through secret prayer and communion with God."

R1274 "Let all who aspire to the inheritance of the saints make sure that they have the Christ character *formed* in them, that the principles so notable in Christ's character are established in them. Let us each see that we do not hinder the development of this character by giving our time, our vitality, our means, etc., to the pursuit of the things of this world. Have you *love*? Is it manifested in fervent zeal for the honor of God, the spread of his truth and the blessing of his children? Are you seeking and finding opportunities for thus showing the Lord how much you love? Have you *faith*? Is it unmistakably manifested, not merely in profession, but in bold and definite acts of faith? If a million dollars were promised to any man who would walk from Pittsburgh to Buffalo, and a dozen men professed faith in the promise, and yet only one actually started out and walked, the natural and correct inference would be that the other eleven did not have the faith. If they had the faith in such a promise it would rouse them to activity. And just so, any man who appreciates fully and believes the exceeding great and precious promises of God to the church, will make haste and run for them; and he will closely observe the directions, too, that he may not run in vain."

ling. It is no wonder, either, that there followed in the wake of these things sorcery, adultery, false swearing, oppression, defrauding of widows and fatherless, etc.--Mal. 1:7,8; 3:5,9.

But our lesson deals particularly with another evil of that time--Sabbath-breaking. The policy of those who succeeded Nehemiah on his return to Persia was, as we have seen, to conciliate foreigners, and this, no doubt, largely in the interest of commerce. With the coming of heathen wives and the relaxing interest in the Lord and his commandments, and the frequent intercommunication with heathen who observed no Sabbath day, Sabbath day regulations were quickly broken down.

We may draw a lesson here for Spiritual Israel, and apply the Apostle's words, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and our Lord's words, "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world." The Spiritual Israelite is commanded to be separate from the world, and to seek his fellowships with his *own* people, the Lord's people, and not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. (2 Cor. 6:14.) We may apply this specially to marriage, but to some extent it might be regarded as applicable also to business partnerships, etc. As the heathen peoples surrounding Israel exercised a continual pressure upon them, so worldly influences surrounding the Spiritual Israelites continually press them with the spirit of worldliness, which needs to be continually repelled; for once this spirit is admit-

ted to the citadel of the heart it wars against the spirit of holiness, devotion to God, etc., and to whatever extent the worldly spirit invades the family, in that proportion the sanctifying of the spirit of truth is antagonized and off-set. Let us, as Israelites indeed, be continually on guard against all alien and alienating influences of the world, the flesh and the devil.

Nehemiah, on his return to the governorship, at once addressed himself to the rectification of the disorders described, beginning with the cleansing of the Temple, the restoration of its service, and the proper supplies for its ministers. Then he came to the question of Sabbath desecration, with which our lesson particularly deals. He remonstrated with the nobles against such a violation of the divine command--the fourth in Israel's Decalogue. He pointed out to them the fact that Sabbath desecration had much to do with their Babylonish captivity. It will be remembered that in explaining the seventy years' desolation of the land of Israel the Lord declared that he would make it desolate seventy years until it should have fulfilled its Sabbaths--its Jubilee years. (2 Chron. 36:21.) True, those were year-Sabbaths, and not day-Sabbaths, but we are to remember the Sabbath system (the seventh day and the fiftieth day, the seventh year, and the fiftieth year) was a *connected whole*: and doubtless had Israel properly observed their Sabbath days they would also have properly observed their Sabbath years and Jubilees.*

Nehemiah, after thus discoursing with the nobles on the propriety of the matter and the danger to the nation of thus violating the divine Law, began a reformation by closing the gates of Jerusalem at sundown of the sixth day of the week (Friday), and keeping them closed until sundown of the seventh day of the week (Saturday). The foreign tradesmen coming for business on the Sabbath were disappointed and obliged to camp outside the city; but in expectation that the reformation would be shortlived they came in like manner the next Sabbath. Nehemiah then warned them that to come again for Sabbath trade and to keep up a commotion around the gates of the city on the Sabbath day would subject them to arrest as disturbers of the law and peace of the city, and they were thus restrained.

We must all commend Nehemiah's devotion to the divine Law and must concede that he in no sense of the word exceeded its requirements.

The Spiritual Israelite, altho in no sense of the word under the Law of Sinai, which was given exclusively to the fleshly Israelite, has nevertheless his Sabbath day--his rest day. It is a larger and a fuller day than was the Jewish one, as his rest is a grander and more perfect rest than the physical one of the Jew. The spiritual Israelite rests in faith, rests in Christ. Having taken upon him the yoke of this new Master he finds, as was promised, *rest to his soul*, and not merely rest to his flesh--mind-rest, not merely bodily rest. (Matt. 11:29.) This is the rest or Sabbath mentioned by the Apostle (Heb. 4:3) saying, "We which have believed do enter into rest."⁽¹⁾ Our rest in the Lord is as complete as is our belief in him. He who believes fully *rests* fully; he who believes only partially *rests* but partially. The ideal condition of the spiritual Israelite is the attainment of a perfect rest, a perfect Sabbath-keeping, in his present experience, and a waiting and laboring for another and still more complete rest--the actual rest of the perfected condition--the rest that remains for the people of God. "Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest [Sabbath], lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief [of fleshly Israel.]" --Heb. 4:9-11.

While the Spiritual Israelite should never lose sight of these, his real Sabbaths, the antitypes of fleshly Israel's Sabbath *days* and Sabbath *years*, and while he should never forget that he is completely freed from the Law of Sinai respecting any and all Sabbaths, holy days, new moons, etc. (Col. 2:16), nevertheless he does rejoice in and should avail himself of any arrangements of nominal Christendom which may appear to be favorable to his spiritual resting, his continual Sabbath-keeping.

It so happens that nominal Christendom has set apart one day in seven as a Sabbath of rest--not the seventh day, which was commanded to the Jews, but the first day of the week, which was never commanded to anyone by divine authority. No matter by whatsoever misconception this first day of the week, called Sun-day in commemoration of the ancient heathen worship of the sun, was originally set apart as sacred and is still set apart by the laws of Christendom, it contains a great blessing, not only to the people at large but especially to the true Israelites.

(1) To the people at large it means a day of rest from toil, a day

of recreation, refreshment, change; a day for different sights and sounds, a day different from other days immersed in toil; a day of opportunity for mental development according to the best lines they may have knowledge of and be willing to follow. For a time some laborers, mechanics and merchants regarded the compulsory cessation of toil as a hardship, injurious to their interests, but they very generally have come to see that there is an over-supply of labor anyway, and that as far as the whole people is concerned, the labor of the six days will be worth exactly as much as the labor of seven. Consequently we find that now labor organizations are earnest for the enforcement of Sunday laws, and that practically the only persons of contrary mind are those who own and operate machinery. In 1886 a thousand carpenters in Berlin petitioned the government for protection against Sunday labor; in the same year a Socialistic congress in Belgium propounded as one of its chief demands Sunday rest. In Holland there is at present in progress an effort for emancipation from Sunday work; and recently in Wisconsin a Law and Order League was organized to enforce Sunday laws, etc. Working men are finding that in losing Sunday they gain nothing to compensate them.

While the fourth commandment to Fleshly Israel was chiefly in the nature of a type, foreshadowing the rest coming to Spiritual Israelites, nevertheless, like every divine law, it was in no wise injurious, but on the contrary very beneficial to Fleshly Israel to observe the seventh day, even as it is now beneficial to all mankind to observe a seventh day--whether the first day of the week, observed by Christendom, or the seventh day of the week observed by the Jews. Experience proves that such a rest is necessary from the human and physical standpoint.

(2) To the true Spiritual Israelite Sunday is and for long centuries has been a great boon, a great blessing--the only drawback has been that not infrequently he has been mistaught to believe that Sunday is the Jewish Sabbath or a divinely appointed substitute for it, and in consequence has been brought under a bondage--the bondage of the Jewish Law, with which really the Spiritual Israelite has nothing whatever to do, he being under a *new* covenant with a *new* law and a *new* Mediator.⁽²⁾ (Heb. 8:6.) But the Spiritual Israelite, already resting in heart (Sabbath-keeping antitypically, by faith in the Redeemer's finished work), rightly understanding the matter and appreciating the privileges which a general Sunday observance brings, may use this day to wonderful profit and blessing. And the fact that he has an opportunity so to do means to him an obligation so to do; because, tho without stipulations of law to bind him, he is under the general Law of Love, and by it is obligated to do with his might what his hands find to do--to glorify the Lord, to bless the brethren, and to do good unto all men as he may have opportunity: and the day and customs are favorable to his exercise in all these respects.

The Spiritual Israelite is to esteem that whatever mistaken notions humanity may have had which led them to set apart the first day of the week, the matter has nevertheless been evidently of divine providence to present special opportunities for profit and progress to the Spiritual Israelites now called to be of the Royal Priesthood. And such are prompt to avail themselves of these privileges and opportunities; to assemble themselves for the study of the divine Word, for praise, for prayer and for spiritual fellowship,--building one another up in the most holy faith.

In view of the fact that the majority of the Lord's consecrated people are poor,--not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich--how necessary it has been that the Lord should provide such an opportunity as this day affords for release from earthly toil and spiritual refreshment; and how fortunate it is for such that the masses of Christendom esteem rest on this day to be compulsory from the divine standpoint.

Of all the people in the world, therefore, those who enjoy the light of present truth and recognize this day as a God-given *privilege*, and not as compulsory, should be the very last to either do or say anything which would bring discredit on the day and its sacred observance as a day of rest. This, of course, does not mean that we should advocate its observance with the usual arguments; but it does mean that all such should be careful in their observance of the day for three reasons:

(1) Because they would not wish to see the day fall into disuse or disrespect in the esteem of the world in general, for humanity's sake, as well as for their own sakes--physical and spiritual.

(2) Because they would not wish to do anything which would lead others to a violation of a less enlightened conscience, remem-

* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., Chap. 6.

⁽¹⁾ May 18 Manna, Heb. 4:3

⁽²⁾ Important: See Volume 6 Forward New Covenant clarifications

bering that the conscience is the most valuable as well as the most tender and easily injured quality of the human nature.

(3) Because they do wish to maintain a proper religious influence with their neighbors, whose minds are not clearly and fully enlightened on this subject-- to the intent that they may exercise the greater influence for good and for the truth as time and opportunity shall offer.

For all these reasons we urge upon the readers of this journal a glad and careful observance of Sunday as a sacred, a holy day, providentially set apart by human law. Let it be entirely separated from business, and so far as possible from all labor not actually necessary; let it be employed in the upbuilding of themselves, and their families, and the household of faith, and as many as the truth shall draw into their sphere of influence,--in moral and spiritual directions.

In the concluding verse of the lesson Nehemiah asks the Lord's blessing upon himself, in view of the work which he had done in the name of the Lord. He was fighting valiantly for God's cause, and thereby making many enemies; and hence while not flinching from

his duty it was not unreasonable, but very proper, that he should think of the Lord's faithfulness toward all faithful to him. Had Nehemiah lived in our day, with its Gospel high calling and privileges, we doubt not he would have been one of the "saints," and then, assuredly, he would have known definitely and clearly of the exceeding great and precious promises given to the Gospel Church. But he lived before the "high calling" began, before the exceeding great and precious promises were made. He knew not what he would receive of the Lord for his faithfulness, but we may know, because instructed of the holy Spirit through the Apostle's writings. We may be assured that if Nehemiah continued faithful to the end of his career he would be amongst the worthies of the past mentioned by the Apostle in Hebrews 11--those who wrought righteousness, and were valiant on the side of God and his Law. We are assured that these were acceptable with God and will ultimately be made perfect--in the future, after the Church, the elect body of Christ has been completed, been made perfect, and glorified in the heavenly Kingdom. -- Heb. 11:39,40.

(Heb 4:3 KJV) "For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."

F46-52 "THE SEVENTH EPOCH-DAY OF THE CREATIVE WEEK

And on the Seventh day God ended the work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made...

God rested, not in the sense of recuperating from weariness, but in the sense of ceasing to create. He beheld the ruin and fall of his noblest earthly creation through sin, yet put forth no power to stay the course of the death sentence and started no restitutional procedures. Indeed, by the law which he imposed, he precluded any opportunity for his exercise of mercy and clemency toward Adam and his race, except through a ransomer. The penalty being death, and that without limit--everlasting death, "everlasting destruction" --and it being impossible for God to lie, impossible for the Supreme Judge of the universe to reverse his own righteous decree, it was thus rendered impossible for the Creator to become directly the restorer of the race, or in any sense or degree to continue his creative work in the condemned man or in his estate, the earth.

Thus did Jehovah God manifest his confidence in his own great plan of the ages, and in his Only Begotten Son to whom he has committed its full execution. This confidence of the Father in the Son is used by the Apostle as an illustration of how our faith should so grasp the Anointed One that we also can trust every interest and concern to him, as respects ourselves and our dear friends and the world of mankind in general: the Apostle's declaration is--"We who have believed do enter into rest....He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Believers, like God, have perfect confidence in Christ's ability and willingness to carry out all of Jehovah's great projects in respect to our race, and therefore *rest*, not from physical weariness, but from concern, from anxiety, from any desire to take the matter out of Christ's charge, or to attempt to secure the result by any other means. [F49]

If our Creator's resting, or desisting from coming promptly to the relief of his fallen creatures, has in any degree the appearance of indifference or neglect, it was not really so, but merely the outworking of the wisest and best means for man's assistance--through a Mediator. If it is suggested

that the restitution work should have commenced sooner, we reply that the period of the reign of Sin and Death, 6,000 years, has been none too long for the bringing forth by births of a race sufficient in number to "fill the earth"; none too long to give all a lesson in the "exceeding sinfulness of sin" and the severe wages it pays; none too long to let men try their own devices for their own uplift and note their futility. The coming of our Lord at his first advent to *redeem* (purchase) the world so that he would have a just, equitable right to come again to bless, uplift and restore all who will accept his grace, although it was more than 4,000 years after the blight of sin and death entered, is, nevertheless, declared in Scripture to have been in God's due time: "In due time God sent forth his Son." Indeed, we see that it would not even then have been due time, except for the divine purpose to call and gather and polish and make ready the elect Church to share with the Redeemer in the great Millennial work of blessing the world--God foreseeing that it would require this entire Gospel age for this election, sent his Son for the redemptive work just long enough in advance to accomplish it.

THE PERIOD OF DIVINE CESSATION, OR REST, FROM CREATIVE AND ENERGIZING ACTIVITY IN CONNECTION WITH THE EARTH

How long is it since Jehovah ceased, or rested in, his creative work? We reply that it is now a little more than six thousand years. How long will his rest, or cessation, continue? We answer that it will continue throughout the Millennium--the thousand years of the reign of the great Mediator, effecting "the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the [F50] world began." (Acts 3:21) Will the confidence of Jehovah in the outworking of his plan, which led him thus to rest it all in the care of Jesus prove to have been fully justified? will the conclusion be satisfactory? Jehovah God, who knows the end from the beginning, assures us that it will, and that the Son, at whose cost the plan is being executed, "shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." (Isa. 53:11) Yea, all believers who are resting by faith in their Redeemer's work--past and to come--may have full assurance of faith that "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath in reservation for those who love him," specially for the Church; but also the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love and mercy and restitutional blessings, for all

those of the non-elect world, who in their Millennial day of grace shall heartily accept the wonderful divine provisions on the divine terms.

Six thousand years past and one thousand years future, seven thousand years of Jehovah's "rest," will carry us to the time when the Son's Millennial reign shall cease because of having accomplished its design--the restitution of the willing and obedient of mankind to the divine image, and the subjugation of the earth under man, as his estate, his kingdom. Then the Mediatorial throne and reign having served their purpose, and all corrupters of the earth having been destroyed, "the Son shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father"--by delivering it to mankind for whom it was originally designed, as it is written.¹ (1 Cor. 15:24-28) "Then shall the King say unto them...Come, ye blessed [approved] of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"--mundane creation. Matt. 25:31-34

It is the *length* of this Seventh Epoch-Day, so distinctly marked by history and prophecy, that furnishes us the clue to the length of all the other epoch-days of the creative [F51] Week. And the whole period of seven times seven thousand years, or forty-nine thousand years, when complete, will lead up to and introduce the great Fiftieth, which we have already noted² as prominent in the Scriptures, as marking grand climaxes in the divine plan; Israel's day Sabbaths culminating in 7 x 7 equals 49, leading to and introducing the fiftieth, or Pentecost, with its rest of faith; their year Sabbaths 7 x 7 equals 49, introducing the fiftieth, or Jubilee, year; the still larger cycle of 50 x 50, marking the Millennium as Earth's great Jubilee. And now, finally, we find the Sabbath, or seven-day system, on a still larger scale measuring earth's creation, from its inception to its perfection, to be 7 times 7,000 years equals 49,000 years, ushering in the grand epoch when there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain and no more dying, because God's work of creation shall then have been completed so far as this earth is concerned. No wonder that that date should be marked as a Jubilee date!

The angelic sons of God "shouted for joy" (Job 38:7) in the dawn of earth's crea-

¹ See Vol. I, p. 305; Vol. V, p. 469; Vol. IV, pp. 617, 644, 645.

² See Volume II, Chap. vi.

tive week, and after witnessing step after step in the development, finally saw man, its king, made in the divine image. Then came the fall by disobedience into sin and death, and the frightful experiences of fallen angels who kept not their primary estate, and man's selfish and bloody history under the reign of Sin and Death. Then successively follow the redemption, the selection of the Anointed One (head and body) through sacrifice, and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom with its wonderful restitution of all things spoken by God through the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. No wonder indeed that there should be a Jubilation in heaven and in earth when all of Jehovah's intelligent creatures shall thus behold the lengths, heights and breadths and depths, not only of God's Love, but also of his Justice and Wisdom and Power."

QB759 "CREATIVE "Day" How Long is the Seventh? *Question -- Please give the Scripture evidence for the statement that the seventh creative "day is a period of 7,000 years (Questioner.) Harmonize with the fourth commandment. (R.M.)*

Answer -- The Scriptural evidence that this is a period of 7,000 years is clear "God rested (from His work of creation) on the seventh day." When Psalm xcv was written God was still resting; nor had any change taken place when the Epistle to the Hebrews was written, for there (ch. iv) is held out to the Church the offer of sharing in God's rest. Even when the Kingdom of Heaven is established God's rest continues, for the work of the Kingdom is committed into the hands of the Son. At the close of that reign of 1,000 years (Rev. xx) the Son will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, "That God may be all in all." Since there are about 6,000 year from the creation to the second coming of Christ, and 1,000 years of Christ's Presence, it follows that God's day of rest is about 7,000 years long. During His long 'day' God has not been entirely idle, but has done such Sabbath-day works as have in His wisdom been deemed works of necessity. The work of restoring the human race from its degradation -- during the last part of that day will also be Sabbath work. Like the ox or ass, it has fallen into a pit, and God has made provision for its restoration.

That fourth commandment does not say that God worked six days of twenty-four hours and then rested the other twenty-four. The Jewish Sabbath and its system of Sabbaths are types of the grater Sabbath -- the heavenly."

F390-394: "ISRAEL'S SABBATH TYPICAL

We have already noticed that the Sabbath obligation of the Jewish Law announced at Sinai was given to no other nation than Israel...

In giving the command of a seventh-day rest to Israel, God identified their keeping of a 24-hour period with his own rest on a larger and higher scale; and this leads us to infer that, aside from whatever blessing Israel obtained from a weekly rest, there was, additionally, a *typical* lesson in it for the New Creation; as indeed we find typical lessons in connection with every feature of that people and their Law.

The seventh day, the seventh month,

and the seventh year were all prominent under the Law. The seventh day, as a period of cessation from toil, a period of physical rest; the seventh month as the one in which the atonement for sin was effected, that they might have rest from sin; and the seventh year, the one in which came release from bondage, servitude. In addition, as we have already seen,³ the seventh year multiplied by itself (7 x 7 equals 49) led up to the fiftieth or Jubilee Year, in which all mortgages, liens and judgments against persons and lands were canceled, and every family was permitted to return to its own estate-- relieved from all the burdens of the previous errors, wrongdoings, etc. We have already seen that the antitype of Israel's Jubilee year will be the Millennial Kingdom, and its general "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets," the antitype being immensely larger than the type, and applicable to mankind in general.

Let us now notice particularly the typical seventh day. Like the seventh year it leads (7 x 7 equals 49) to a fiftieth or Jubilee Day, which expresses the same thought as the seventh day; viz., rest, but emphasizes it.

What blessing to spiritual Israel, the New Creation, was typified by natural Israel's seventh day Sabbath, or rest? The Apostle answers this question (Heb. 4:1-11), when he says, "Let us, therefore, fear lest a promise having been left us of entering into his rest [Sabbath] any of you should [F392] seem to come short of it...For we which have believed do enter into rest [the keeping of the Sabbath]...Seeing, therefore, it remaineth that some must enter therein, and that they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief...there remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God; for he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Here the Apostle sets before us a double lesson: (1) That it is our privilege now to enter into rest; and, as a matter of fact, all who have truly accepted the Lord, and are properly resting and trusting in him, are thus enjoying the antitypical Sabbath, or rest, at the present time--the rest of faith. (2) He also points us to the fact that in order to maintain this present rest, and to insure entrance into the eternal Sabbath "rest that remains for the people of God," the heavenly Kingdom, it will be necessary for us to abide in the Lord's favor--continually to exercise toward him faith and obedience.

It is not necessary to point out to the members of the New Creation when and how they entered into the rest of faith--when and how the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, began to rule in their hearts, and full confidence in him began to drive out fear and discontent. It started with our full acceptance of the Lord Jesus as the High Priest who made the sacrifice, by which our sins were covered by the imputed merit of the Redeemer, the Messiah; it increased as we recognized him as the Head of the New Creation, and heir of the

Abrahamic promise, and ourselves as being called of God to be his joint-heirs in that Kingdom of blessing. The *perfect rest*, or Sabbath enjoyment, came when we submitted our *all* to the Lord, accepting joyfully his promised guidance through a "narrow way" to the Kingdom. There we *rested from our own works*, from all effort to justify ourselves; we confessed ourselves imperfect and unworthy of divine grace, and unable to make ourselves worthy. There we gratefully accepted divine [F393] mercy extended toward us in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus our Lord and the promised "grace to help in every time of need," and undertook to be disciples of Jesus-- followers in his steps, "even unto death."...

We see clearly where our rest began, as individual members of the New Creation; but it will be profitable also if we glance backward and note the beginning of this rest as respects the New Creation as a whole. We see that the apostles enjoyed a measure of rest and trust while the Lord was with them in the flesh, but not the full rest. They rejoiced because the Bridegroom was in their midst--rejoiced in him, though they understood not the lengths and breadths of his love and service. When the Master died, their rest and joy and peace were broken... When he had risen from the dead, and appeared to them and proved his resurrection, their doubts and fears began to give way to hopes... [F394]

They waited in expectancy--how long? We answer that they waited for seven times seven days--forty-nine days, and the day following, the fiftieth day, the Jubilee Sabbath day, God fulfilled to them his gracious promise, and granted that those who had accepted Jesus should enter into his rest--the keeping of the higher Sabbath of the New Creation. They entered into his rest by receiving the Pentecostal blessing which spoke "peace through Jesus Christ"-- which informed them that although Jesus had died for sinners, and although ascended up on high and absent from their sight, yet he was approved of Jehovah, his sacrifice made acceptable for sin, and that they might thus *rest in the merit of the work which he had accomplished*--rest assured that all God's promises would be yea and amen in and through him...

All of the New Creation, then, who have received the holy Spirit, have entered into the antitypical rest, and instead of keeping any longer a seventh day of physical rest, they now keep a perpetual rest of heart, of mind, of faith in the Son of God. Nevertheless, this rest of faith is not the end--not the full antitype. The grand "rest that remaineth for the people of God" will come at the end--to all those who shall finish their course with joy. Meantime the *rest of faith* must continue, for it is our earnest, or assurance, of the rest beyond. Its maintenance will require not only obedience to the extent of ability in thought, word and deed, but also trust in the Lord's grace. Thus we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, to walk in his footsteps. Our rest and trust must be that he is both able and willing to bring us off "more than conquerors," and grant us a share in the great work of the Antitypical Jubilee."

³ Vol. II, Chap. vi.