



The Sabbath in History.

WHEN and by what acts was the Sabbath made?

"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. 2:2, 3.

2. What important division of time is marked off by the Sabbath?—
The week.

NOTE. — "One of the most striking collateral confirmations of the Mosaic history of the creation, is the general adoption of the division of time into *weeks*, which extends from the Christian states of Europe to the remote shores of Hindostan, and has equally prevailed among the Hebrews, the Egyptians, Chinese, Greeks, Romans and Northern barbarians, — nations, some of whom had little or no intercourse with others, and were not even known by name to the Hebrews. It is to be observed, that there is a great difference between the concurrence of nations in the division of time into *weeks*, and their concurrence in the other periodical divisions into years, months, and days. These divisions arise from such natural causes as are everywhere obvious; viz., the annual and diurnal revolutions of the sun, and the revolution of the moon. The divisions into weeks, on the contrary, seems perfectly arbitrary; consequently, its prevailing in distant countries, and among nations which had no communication with one another, affords a strong presumption that it must have been derived from some remote tradition (as that of the creation), which was never totally obliterated from the memory of the Gentiles, and which tradition has been older than the dispersion of mankind into different regions." — *Horne's Introduction*, vol. 1, p. 69.

3. Two thousand five hundred years after creation, the Sabbath was proclaimed, with the other moral commands, from Mount Sinai. Why did God say he had put his blessing upon that day?

"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. 20 : 11.

4. What befell the city of Jerusalem when it was captured by the king of Babylon ?

"And all the vessels of the house of God . . . he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire." 2 Chron. 36 : 18, 19.

5. Of what prophecy was this a fulfillment ?

"But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day ; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." Jer. 17 : 27. Compare this text with 2 Chron. 36 : 21.

6. After the restoration of Israel from the Babylonian captivity, what was said to have been the reason of their punishment ?

"Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day ? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city ? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath." Neh. 13 : 17, 18.

7. How did Christ regard the Sabbath during his earthly ministry ?

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up ; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4 : 16.

8. How did he wish to have it regarded by his disciples at the siege of Jerusalem, nearly forty years after his death ?

"But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Matt. 24 : 20.

9. What does Morer say of the Sabbath in the early church ?

"The primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the day in devotion and sermons, and it is not to be doubted but that they derived this practice from the apostles themselves, as appears by several scriptures to that purpose." — *Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, p. 189.

10. What was the first effort of the Roman Church in behalf of the recognition of Sunday ?

"In A. D. 196, Victor, bishop of Rome, attempted to impose on all the churches the Roman custom of having Easter fall every year on Sunday." — *Bower's History of the Popes*, vol. 1, pp. 18, 19.

11. What was one of the principal reasons for convoking the Council of Nice ?

“The question relating to the observance of Easter, which was agitated in the time of Anicetus and Polycarp, and afterward in that of Victor, was still undecided. It was one of the principal reasons for convoking the Council of Nice, being the most important subject to be considered after the Arian controversy.” — *Boyle's Historical View of the Council of Nice*, p. 22, ed. of 1839.

12. How was the matter finally decided?

“Easter day was fixed on the Sunday immediately following the new moon which was nearest after the vernal equinox.” — *Idem*, p. 23.

13. In urging the observance of this decree on the churches, what reason did Constantine assign for it?

“Let us then have nothing in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews.” — *Idem*, p. 52.

14. What had Constantine already done, in A. D. 321, to help forward Sunday to a place of prominence?

He issued an edict forcing “the judges and town people and the occupation of all trades” to rest on the “venerable day of the sun.” See *Encyclopedia Britannica*, art. Sunday.

15. Eusebius was bishop of Cæsarea, and one of Constantine's most trusty supporters. Who did he say had changed the obligations of the Sabbath to Sunday?

“All things whatsoever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day.” — *Eusebius's Commentary on the Psalms*, quoted in *Cox's "Sabbath Literature," vol. 1, p. 361.*

16. What did Sylvester, bishop of Rome, do for the Sunday institution in the fourth century by his “apostolic authority”?

He changed the title of the first day, calling it the LORD'S DAY. See “*Historia Ecclesiastica*” per M. Ludovicum Lucium, cent. 4, cap. 10, pp. 739, 740, ed. Basilea, 1624.

17. What did the Council of Laodicea decree in A. D. 364?

“The Council of Laodicea . . . first settled the observation of the Lord's day, and prohibited the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath under an anathema.” — *Dissertation on the Lord's Day Sabbath*, pp. 33, 34, 44.

18. But did Christians of the early church keep the Sabbath?

“Down even to the fifth century, the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church.” — *Coleman's Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, chap. 26, sec. 2.

19. What day was observed in the Dark Ages by some of the Waldenses?

“They kept the Sabbath day, observed the ordinance of baptism according to the primitive church, instructed their children in the articles of the Christian faith and the commandments of God.” — *Jones's Church History*, vol. 2, chap. 5, sec. 4. They were also called “Sabbati,” or “Sabbatati,” because they observed the seventh-day Sabbath. See *Benedict's "General History of the Baptist Denomination," pp. 412, 413, ed. of 1813.*

20. We have seen that paganism brought Sunday to the forefront as a "venerable" day, and popery gave it the title of "Lord's day." What claim is now made by the Roman Church concerning the change of the Sabbath to Sunday?

"*Ques.* — Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?

"*Ans.* — Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her, — she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority." — *Doctrinal Catechism.* This is taught also in nearly all Catholic books of instruction.

21. Among the early Reformers, were there any who observed the seventh day?

"Carlstadt held to the divine authority of the Sabbath from the Old Testament." *Life of Luther, p. 402.*

22. What did Luther say of Carlstadt's Sabbath views?

"Indeed, if Carlstadt were to write further about the Sabbath, Sunday would have to give way, and the Sabbath — that is to say, Saturday — must be kept holy." — *Luther, against the Celestial Prophets, quoted in the Life of Martin Luther in Pictures, p. 147.*

NOTE. — Through the efforts of those who opposed the Sabbath during the Reformation, Sunday was brought from Catholicism into the Protestant church, and is now cherished as an institution of the Lord. It is clear, however, that it is none of his planting, but rather that of his enemies. The Lord sowed different seeds in the field; but "an enemy hath done this," to lead God's people away from the truth. A proclamation is now going forth, however, to revive the truth on this point. Some will heed the call, and when the message closes, God will have a people who are willing to recognize him fully by keeping his down-trodden Sabbath. To these he will say, "Well done."

