

re-think No.74

'THE SABBATH DAY'

There has been much said over the centuries and is still being discussed, about 'The Sabbath Day'. So where lies the truth and the wisdom of God? If by revelation, we can discern the heart and intention of God, then we can readily 'set our sights' on the correct vision, God's. Vision draws from one dedication and commitment. Aim at nothing and you will surely hit it!

THE SEVENTH DAY

Most folk would start digging at 'The Ten Commandments' found in **Exodus 20:8-11**. *Remember the Sabbath Day to keep in holy*. . . the rest of these verses will be covered later. The Seventh Day Adventists have taken this particular law and emphasized it as a top priority. They worship God on Saturday, the seventh day of the week. However with regard to obeying the old law to the letter, we must not overlook what is said in **James 2:10**, that if one fails in just one of the ten commandments, then it is the same as failing in them all. Why then 'major on a minor' in the natural realm?

THE FIRST DAY

The majority of evangelical fundamental Churches meet on Sundays, the first day of the week. Without going into great detail, the change from the original Old Testament 7th. Day to the present 1st. Day was because the Church of latter times wanted to recognize the 1st. Day of the week as they believed it honoured the resurrection of Jesus, without which there would be no Church. His resurrection to have taken place on that very morning of the first day of the week. Closer examination of the scriptures will reveal that Jesus died just before the end of the day on Wednesday and rose three days and three nights (72 hours) later just before the end of Saturday (see *re-think* No.68). The discovery of His rising was made on the first day of the week.

Until the release of the Holy Spirit at the turn of this century, the Church at large was very much held in bondage to the 'law' of 'the letter-word'. They had '*statements of belief*' which would dictate many laws — some originating in the Old Testament covenant, while others had been added by Theologians influenced by the Roman Catholic Church.

THE DAY HE SAYS TO YOU

If one wishes to follow 'the letter word' in this one aspect of 'Church', then your meeting times will be on a Saturday. If one wishes to 'move in the Spirit' in liberty, you will meet when He says. **Romans 14:5,6** declares, *One esteemeth* (places importance upon) *one day more than another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be persuaded* (assured) *in his own mind*. Basically verse 6 says that whatever time you choose to do certain things, it is OK. if it is done for the Lord. i.e. obeying what He has spoken to you not just following tradition.

GOD'S CHOICE IS MIGHTY

Jesus said in **Mark 2:27+28** that *the sabbath was made for the man, and not the man for the sabbath* [Strong's Concordance declares that the word 'for' denotes *THE CHANNEL FOR THE ACT*]. God has 'the man' of the sixth day of **Genesis 1+2** to be the channel/vessel for His purposes in the seventh day when God rests. A neat little verse with great implications is **II Peter 3:8** as it states a spiritual truth that one of God's 'days' equals 1000 years of time and vica- versa. In passing, traditionalists refer to God's days as 'dispensations': however the bible keeps things simple and calls them 'ages'. Remember that God didn't rest because He was tired after six days of creating! God rested in the 7th. Day because He had 'a man' that He had brought forth in the 6th. Day

who was able to complete the purposes of God perfectly. God most certainly had confidence in that 'man' and His plan has not changed even though there has been 'a fall'.

Genesis chapters 1 and 2 are like the contents page in the book. It would therefore be wise for us to go with God's vision or purposes of the 7th. Day. At the same time please bear in mind that the Holy Spirit within the believer is to *teach us all things* (John 14:26) and that includes the subject of 'the sabbath day'. When He teaches us, it is by revelation and can be labelled 'a spirit-word'. This is noted for us in 2 Corinthians 3:6.

THE SEVENTH DAY OF REST . . . RESTING FULLY FROM WORKS

All through history to the present day, the saints have rested one day in seven usually on Sundays. The Lord declared also that farmers should rest their land one year in seven. The seventh day . . . the day of rest . . . has a theme of 'achievement' running through it. Let us quote from Hebrews 4: 4-11 and it is worth including it all here.

(4) *For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.* (5) *And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.* God has chosen a 'rest' for His people to enter into. (6) *Seeing therefore it remaineth that some (NOT ALL) must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:* The huge majority of Israel of old who came out of Egypt did not go on to enter the promised land (type of rest ... also a type of the Kingdom of God). Today there is also a huge majority of 'saved' folks who will likewise fail to enter into their rest — chosen for them BY GOD — and He is their life too!

(7) *Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, TO DAY IF YE WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, harden not your hearts.* (8) *For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.* (9). *There remaineth therefore A REST to the people of God.* It is still available for God's called-out ones. (10) *For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.* Some already have but for us, maybe (11) *Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.* A matter of believing what God has made real to you — no more works of doing something in order to obtain. This now is achieving grace.

LET US KEEP GOD'S SABBATH

The word 'rest' (shown in caps. in verse 9) in the Greek means *a keeping of the sabbath*. So we can therefore conclude that there is yet to be manifested a keeping of God's sabbath, the 7th. 1000-year-day for the people of God. Verse (10) adds that the people of God are those who have ceased from their own works as God did, these ones enter into rest. Unfortunately, many today are still trying to **do**, or walk in the Old Covenant instructions in order to gain God's favour and blessing. Such efforts are labelled as '*dead works*' which every Christian should be well clear of according to Hebrews 6:1. Such efforts also do not produce rest. Each one of God's people need to be pressing towards **entering into rest** or **keeping the sabbath** as God views the situation.

The keeping of the sabbath then, was a *future* experience for those of Bible times, but now at the end of the 6th. Day which is the 6th. 1000-year-day from Genesis, we are about to enter into His rest and truly be seated with Him in His throne. This is clarified by looking at God's pattern shown in the Tabernacle of Moses. It is a 'spiritual' measuring rod or template, not a natural one! We need to see the natural pattern before we can grasp the spiritual lesson from our Teacher (II Corinthians 15:46).

YOU MUST BE SEATED TO REST

The seventh piece of furniture in this Tabernacle in the wilderness, is the Ark of the Covenant with the Mercy Seat as a lid on the top. It is in the *Holiest of All* where God dwells . . . like heaven on earth! This Ark is the throne of God which is a seat — the only place to sit and rest in the whole of the Tabernacle setup. We have been given all that we shall ever need to come to experiential perfection in Christ and thus to find ourselves in reality *seated with Him* in God. Ephesians 2: 7b+8 says that, *we are seated together in Christ in the*

heavenlies. God sees us there in Christ, who has released sufficient of His life into us that we may experience what has been decreed. If we faint not, we shall, by faith experience what it means to enter into His Rest which is keeping the sabbath. God will have *'the many'* (many membered) that He made the Sabbath for. Will you be *resting in Him* or *working for Him* when that time comes?

There were special days that were labelled 'sabbath'. For example the first day after Passover Day which was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (15th. Abib), was a special sabbath with no servile work carried on that day. Resting was always emphasized for all sabbaths. §