



Ceremonial Sabbaths.

WHAT was the result of blotting out the handwriting of ordinances?

“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 his 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 days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*” Col. 2 : 14-17.

2. Upon what were the ten commandments written?

“And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; *and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.*” Deut. 4 : 13.

3. In what manner were they written on these tables of stone?

“And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, *graven upon the tables.*” Ex. 32 : 16.

NOTE.—The law of God was *engraved* in stone, which would not admit of its being *blotted* out; neither would the expression “nailed to the cross” be applicable to tables of stone.

4. For whom was the weekly Sabbath made?

“And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made *for man*, and not man for the Sabbath.” Mark 2 : 27. If made *for* man, it could not well be one of those things that were *against* him.

5. When was the Sabbath made?

“Thus *the heavens and the earth were finished*, and all the host of them. . . . 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 : 1-3.

6. What was man's condition then?

“And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, *it was very good.* And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” Gen. 1 : 31.

7. Had man faithfully obeyed God from the beginning, would he have been counted a sinner?

"For not the hearers of the law are just before God, *but the doers of the law shall be justified.*" Rom. 2 : 13. In that case, man would not have needed the Saviour, and consequently Christ would not have died in man's behalf. The Sabbath of the Lord, then, was in man's possession before he needed a Saviour.

8. For what purpose were the sabbaths instituted which formed a part of the "handwriting of ordinances"?

"Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Col. 2 : 17. They pointed forward to Christ.

9. To what does the Sabbath of the fourth commandment direct the mind?—Back to creation.

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore [for this reason] the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20 : 11. It is not, then, a shadow of "things to come," but a memorial of God's creative power, and therefore excluded from the sabbaths "which are a shadow of things to come."

10. Were there any sabbath days in the old dispensation that were local and shadowy?

"In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath." Lev. 23 : 24. "Also the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement. . . . It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls." Verses 27-32.

11. What were these days for?

"These are the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering, a sacrifice, and drink-offerings, everything upon his day." Verse 37.

12. Were these entirely distinct from the seventh-day Sabbath?

"Beside the Sabbaths of the Lord, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your free-will offerings, which ye give unto the Lord." Verse 38.

NOTES.—It is very evident from the study of this subject that the "Sabbath of the Lord" and the shadowy sabbaths were altogether different institutions, and that they were for widely different purposes. The first was to commemorate God's great creative work, while the others were shadows, pointing to the substance—Christ. When he to whom they directed the mind was come, they were no longer needed; for since his death the memory of him is preserved through the memorial of the Lord's Supper.

Dr. Adam Clarke says: "The apostle speaks here in reference to some particulars of the *handwriting of ordinances*, which had been *taken away*; viz., the distinction of *meats* and *drinks*, what was *clean* and what *unclean*, according to the law; and the necessity of observing certain *holy-days* or *festi*

vals, such as the *new moons* and particular *sabbaths*, or those which should be observed with more than ordinary solemnity; all these had been taken out of the way and nailed to the cross, and were no longer of moral obligation. There is no intimation here that the *Sabbath* was done away, or that its moral use was superseded, by the introduction of Christianity. I have shown elsewhere that, *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy*, is a command of *perpetual obligation*."—*Notes on Col. 2 : 16*. Justin Edwards says, in a note on Col. 2 : 16, that "the days referred to are those required to be observed in the ceremonial law—days associated by God with meats, drinks, and new moons. The passage does not refer to the Sabbath of the moral law, associated with the commands forbidding theft, murder, and adultery. This weekly Sabbath was never against men or contrary to them, but was always for them, and promotive of their highest good. The observance of it caused them to ride upon the high places of the earth, and to possess the heritage of God's people."—*Notes on the New Testament, published by the American Tract Society*.

—♦—

GOD'S perfect law converts the soul,
Reclaims from false desires;
With sacred wisdom his sure word
The ignorant inspires.

The statutes of the Lord are just,
And bring sincere delight;
His pure commands of living truth
Assist the feeblest sight.

His perfect worship here is fixed,
On sure foundations laid;
His equal laws are in the scales
Of truth and justice weighed;

Of more esteem than golden mines,
Or gold refined with skill;
More sweet than honey, or the drops
That from the comb distill.

My trusty counselors they are,
And friendly warning give;
Divine rewards attend on those
Who by thy precepts live.