

# THE SABBATH REST.

LESSONS ON THE "SEVENTH" AND "EIGHTH" DAYS  
OF SCRIPTURE.

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WE purpose to trace out a little the *Sabbath rest* spoken of in Gen. ii. 2, 3, and Heb. iv. 1-9; for, we believe, the thoughts of Scripture as to this are vague in the minds of many, and that any light and help from the Scriptures will be welcomed by many lovers of the truth. "All Scripture is profitable," and we believe the lessons of Gen. ii. 2, 3, and what they foreshadow, are seasonable and wholesome for our study and meditation.

The lessons we have in Heb. iv. open up the blessings God has in store for us, and are worthy of our careful inquiry; and the lessons, when read aright and compared with other lines of truth, are seen to *harmonize* and form a part of a complete, perfect whole.

The Word will bear searching: yea, we are blessed if we search it prayerfully and carefully with one thought before us—to acquire the knowledge of His will, to learn His truth. And as we open the precious volume, we feel there is much of this good land not yet possessed, though the whole land flows with milk and honey, and drinketh in the rain from

heaven. Let us who have been privileged with much light, still approach the Book thus, and great and fuller blessing will be ours.

We will examine the subject before us under the following heads, which, we believe, give us the main lessons of the entire subject:

First—The *historic* Sabbath.

Second—The *prophetic* Sabbath.

Third—The *typical lessons* of the Sabbath—the full answer to the Sabbath type.

Fourth—The *eighth day*, and the place it occupies.

*1.10 f*  
**First.**—In the opening of Genesis (chaps. i., ii.) we get the account of the *six days' work*, and at the close of all that vast work a *seventh day*, in which *God rested*. His work of creating and making was all finished, and He rested from all His work; then He *blessed and sanctified* that day.

This is the first *Sabbath rest*: but sin soon entered the world (Gen. iii.) and God's rest was broken; therefore the testimony of our Lord in healing on the Sabbath is, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v. 17).

In Gen. ii. we have the first stage of the Sabbath history—"God *rested*," that is a thing of the past; for since sin entered, God does *not* and *cannot rest*—He "worketh," and so does our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Ex. xvi. we have another stage of the historic Sabbath. In bringing His people Israel out of Egypt, and in the wilderness, God gave the Sabbath day to them for rest, and commanded them to observe and keep it sacred. It was a sign between Jehovah and Israel (Ex. xx. 8-10; xxxi. 12-17), and

for them a day of rest—reminding them continually of *God's rest* (Gen. ii. 1-3). But Israel failed (as did Adam in Gen. iii.) in this respect as in all else: from Num. xv. 32-41 down through the prophecies we are reminded of this fact again and again. This Sabbath day (the seventh day) was never given to the *Gentiles*; and we never read in the pages of the New Testament that such was given to the Church or the Christian: they observe another day—"the *first day of the week*"—the "*Lord's day*."

With these outlines of the historic seventh day, or Sabbath rest of the Old Testament, we may now further proceed:—

**Second.**—Israel failed, as we have said, to observe all that Jehovah had enjoined upon them; hence, the blessings promised them under law they lost by their disobedience. The golden calf shows how *soon* and how *far* they went astray, and other things follow.

But God abides faithful, notwithstanding all their failures and their sins. He sends His servants, the prophets, and they prophesy of a Deliverer, a *Saviour*, to deliver them from their sins; and this places in their hands "the *prophetic* Scriptures." In them the dawn of a new day appears, and those who loved those sacred prophecies ever looked for this "day-dawn," when the shadows would pass away; yea, "the bright morning without clouds" (2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4; Sol. Song ii. 17).

At the present time they are passing through the night of their sorrow; but the prophetic Scriptures are as a lamp that shineth in a dark place until the

day dawn, and "the Sun of Righteousness arise" (Mal. iv. 2). *They* look for this. *The Church* looks for "*the Morning Star*;" and so heaven, not Palestine, is our hope (Rev. ii. 28; chap. xxii. 16).

This new day that prophecy opens up for *Israel* and the earth, is called "the day of the Lord." The siege of Jerusalem (A. D. 70) was the beginning of sorrows (Matt. xxiv. 8). The "great tribulation" by and by will be, for "the remnant," their closing sorrows.

When "the Sun of Righteousness" arises, and His feet stand upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. xiv. 4), the sorrows of the nation will pass away (Isa. xxxv. 10; lx. 18-22), and "the day of the Lord," the bright day of Millennial glory, will begin. Let us pause here a little, and examine those scriptures, lest we misapprehend what that "day" shall be.

The *Millennial age* is the great period kept in view for Israel and the earth in the prophecies; but this is not the eternal state. We get the Millennium in Rev. xx.; after that, the eternal state in Rev. xxi. 1-5—a very different thing. Israel and the earth look for "the day of the Lord," of which the prophets speak very fully: but the New Testament carries us further, and tells us of another day—"the day of God." *They* look for the first; we Christians really look on to the latter. See 2 Peter iii. 10-12. To distinguish them in 2 Peter iii. is a great help.

The Millennium is "the *age to come*," but the eternal state will be the "*age of the ages*." Eph. i. 21, and Heb. ii. 5, refer to "the age to come;" Eph. iii. 21, to the eternal state. (See J. N. D.'s translation.)

The Millennium will be the day when the Lord Jesus will rule and put down all His enemies—hence,

"the day of the Lord." The eternal state will be the age that will have no end, when "God shall be all in all," and God shall rest—hence, "the day of God," "the day of eternity" (2 Pet. iii. 18, J. N. D.'s translation).

The 1000 years will begin by judgment and close with judgment: at the beginning, the Lord judges the quick, and at the close He judges the dead. The remnant of Israel delivered will be blessed on the earth during the 1000 years.

The *nations* converted at that time will also be blessed under Christ's rule, and enjoy the days of heaven upon *the earth* (Deut. xi. 21).

Yet this Millennial Age does not give the full sum of blessing; there will not be *perfection* then, and therefore not perfect rest. This "day of the Lord" will be rather a *preparatory* age, preceding the eternal state, or "the age of the ages."

During the 1000 years there will be minor judgments also, whenever sin appears (see Psa. ci. 6-8; Isa. xxvi. 9; xxviii. 17-19; Zeph. iii. 5; Zech. xiv. 17-19). In view of this we could not rightly say God had His *rest*—the rest that Heb. iv. speaks of, and which Gen. ii. *foreshadows*.

In the Millennium righteousness will *reign*, and Christ will hold the rod of iron; yet some indeed will give but "*feigned obedience*" (Psa. xviii. 44; lxvi. 3, marg.). But in the *eternal state* ("the day of God," "the day of eternity," the "age of ages") we view a *new heaven* and a *new earth*, in which righteousness will *dwell*—not merely *reign*, as in the Millennium. In this new heaven and new earth sin shall never enter to break or disturb that rest of God.

In the Millennium Satan will be bound, shut up in

the abyss; but in the eternal state he shall be cast into the *lake of fire*. In the Millennium sin will yet be in men's natures, on earth. In the eternal state there will be no more sin in either the new heavens or the new earth.

In that great and glorious scene, when all will be peace, joy, rest, righteousness, holiness, perfection, we will know better the value of two passages, John i. 29, and Isa. ix. 6—"The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and "The Father of Eternity."

As "the Lamb of God," He shall cleanse away the sin of the world on the basis of His work of atonement.

As "the Father of Eternity," He shall bring in the new and blessed scene, and fill it with those who shall be to His own praise and glory. Here, and here only, could God rest, and rest forever.

A careful reading of the prophecies will be a great help here. Rev. xx. gives us the 1000 years of *Christ's reign*. Then follows "the little season" when "Satan shall be loosed out of his prison," and men again break out in open rebellion, closed up by fiery judgment from heaven: then the last enemy—death itself—will be destroyed.

Let us now pass on to the seventh day of Gen. ii.—the Sabbath rest.

Third.—The *typical* lessons of the seventh day are now before us, and Hebrews iv. will open the subject. Whatever rest Israel enjoyed in Canaan in the days of Joshua, it was not what the seventh day of Gen. ii. *foreshadows*. Heb. iv., quoting from Psa.

xcv., is proof of this: "There remaineth therefore a *rest* (Sabbath rest) for the people of God."

This verse carries us on to the end of all labor in a world where sin is, to that rest when creation shall rest with God forever.

And it is clear that Heb. iv. does not point to the Millennium (that was the theme of prophecies for Israel); but now we have, in this epistle, the *Christian's blessings*—and *they* are eternal. In Hebrews we read of eternal *salvation*, eternal *redemption*, eternal *inheritance*, eternal *covenant*, eternal *judgment*, etc.; and if chap. iv. is read aright, it is the unbroken, undisturbed rest of God for all eternity which, in contrast with the present labor and toil, God's people are to enjoy with Him forever.

Now, to get the proper lay of these lessons, we will examine Gen. i. and ii. more carefully. If those days in Genesis are carefully noted, we will see a contrast between the *sixth* day and the *seventh*. It closes the previous five, and contrasts with the seventh: it is, we believe, the first Millennial type of the Bible.

In the sixth day Adam got *dominion* over the whole earth: Adam is a figure of Christ (Rom. v. 14), whose dominion over the earth in the Millennial day we have in Psa. viii. He is the true Adam, the Head. His bride is with him the sixth day, and they receive dominion, and together are the beings of note that day. The seventh day, when all work is finished, *God rests*. And here looms up before us the first type of *God's rest—eternity itself*. There is no need of pressing the seventh day in Gen. ii. as a Millennial type—it strains the lesson out of shape, and will not fit.

But if the sixth day is taken as it is given, then we see a beautiful type of Christ, the last Adam in dominion and rule, and His companion-bride with Him over the whole earth; this is "the day of the Lord."

In the seventh day it is "God" who is foremost: He is the one who appears, and He rests. It was *Adam in dominion* on the sixth day; but *God resting* on the seventh.

The sixth day was the day of *Adam*.

The seventh day was "the day of *God*."

One foreshadowed the Millennium; the other, the "day of God"—the eternal state. The Millennium will be partial blessing; the eternal state, complete and perfect. The seventh day points to *perfection* as well as *rest*; the sixth does not.

Then again it will be noted that the sixth day (as the other five) has an *evening* and a *morning*—a beginning and an end; but when we read of the *seventh*, the typical day of eternity, there is *no evening nor morning* mentioned. Can we say this omission has no meaning when we see inspiration at every step and upon every line—yea, with every jot and tittle? The *omissions* of the sacred Scriptures are for a purpose as well as what is given.

As we meditate on the seventh day, and look at the lessons there given, we think of the vastness of eternity! There never was a morning there—never a beginning; and the sun will never set there—never a nightfall; it is "*the perfect day*," and has  
NO END.

Viewed thus, these seven days all drop into line

from Genesis to Revelation, as the parts of a perfect whole, with no clash or discord.

By a careful reference to 2 Peter iii. 7, 10, 12, 18, with the aid of the R. V. (or J. N. D. trans.), the two points are strikingly put before us:—

First, "*The day of the Lord*," verse 10; this is "the day of judgment" of verse 8, and lasts for 1000 years. It is "the day of judgment" because it begins with the judgment of the *quick*, and closes with a judgment of the *dead*; and all through there will be cases of judgment or punishment, if evil rises—righteousness will *reign*.

The last part of that day, "the day of the Lord" (the nightfall of the dispensation) "the heavens shall pass away, and the earth shall be burned up" (compare verse 10 and Rev. xx. 11). Everything will pass under the judgment, and all evil cleansed away to give place to eternity—to new heavens and a new earth. This shows us how that "the day of the Lord" will be one of preparation for a grander and more glorious one beyond.

The New Translation will help in verse 12: "Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God," *because*, or "by reason of which, the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements, burning with heat, shall melt." This judgment, then, will take place at the close of the *day of the Lord* for a special reason—to clear the way for the *day of God*. In this day of God (eternity), all being then perfect, God's rest will also be reached: this is what the Christian looks for. In the New Translation, verse 18 closes with "to the *day of eternity*"—the last word of the epistle. To this the seventh day of Gen. ii. points, and is the subject of Heb. iv. 4-11.

Fourth.—Another point needs examination now. It has been urged that the “*eighth day*,” and not the *seventh*, gives us the thought of eternity. No part of Scripture need be kept in the background, or hidden, while giving another a place. As we have said, all forms part of a perfect whole, and all are but different touches on the same canvas and by the same Hand. The whole is perfect, and each part only brings out the whole more perfectly.

In examining the “*eighth day*,” it will be well to observe, at the outset, that there is no eighth day in Gen. i. and ii. None is needed there. The Millennial age and the eternal state are perfectly set before us in the sixth and seventh days, completing the cycle of God’s labor and final rest. But the “*eighth day*” appears further on in the Scriptures, and we will examine each place, and see what they point to.

Abraham circumcised Isaac on the eighth day, and the eighth day became the day of circumcision (Gen. xxi. 4).

The lesson here is *moral* rather than dispensational. Circumcision kept in view the work of the Cross (Col. ii. 11); and at the Cross circumcision has its fulfilment. *Seven days* passed over the history of every male child before circumcision; and we believe that seven days fairly set forth the whole period of man’s history, from the time sin entered by Adam until Christ came and was “*cut off* out of the land of the living”—“the circumcision of Christ.”

The trial of man for 4000 years (forty centuries) is full proof of his depravity and corruption; and so, in the cross of Christ the first man passes under the judgment of God and is set aside. In Col. ii. 11 we have the effect of this judgment for the children of

God—“the putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” Here we learn the lesson of the “*seven days*.” That Cross, which was the end in judgment of sinful man and his corrupt flesh, lays the basis for a new creation, a new race, a new family; and Christ rises the *eighth day*, the Head of the new creation, the beginning, the first-born from the dead. Here we get the lessons of Gen. xvii. and xxi.—the lessons of circumcision, the eighth day, and the seven days previous.

We now pass on to Lev. viii. and ix., and we read of another “*eighth day*,” but the lessons are far different to Gen. xxi.: a proof that the Scriptures are not like cast iron, which can bear no change. Nay, Scripture is perfect; it is, in the master Hand, to serve His perfect will at every step; yet never a clash, never a flaw.

Here, in Lev. viii. and ix., Aaron and his sons were consecrated for the priest’s office—a type of Christ and His Church. Their consecration lasted *seven* whole days, and during this time they were shut inside the sacred enclosure—the fine-twined linen court—and feasted in all this period upon “the things wherewith the atonement was made” (see also Exodus xxix.). What a lovely sight as we view them in that sacred enclosure; what a beautiful picture spreads before us on the canvas for seven whole days! What a contrast to the previous seven days before circumcision! The lesson there was man’s trial and what it brings out; here, in Aaron and his sons, we believe the seven days are this whole present period, while Christ is “hidden.” And we, who belong to the same sphere, are shut in with Him; and our food, meat and drink are the things where-

with the atonement was made. But this period ended, as our present period shall also: Aaron and Moses *reappeared* that eighth day, and "the glory of the Lord appeared also" (Lev. ix. 1, 22, 23). This eighth day points to the time when our Lord shall return as the King-priest with uplifted hands to bless—the Millennial glory. Here we are on dispensational lines; the previous seven days answer more to the whole period of our dispensation, and our happy occupation. The eighth day, therefore, is the Millennium, as in this connection the eighth does not apply to the eternal state, but rather to the 1000 years, if we allow it, as all Scripture, to fill its proper place. In Gen. xxi. the eighth day answered well in type to the beginning of the *new creation*; here, in Lev. ix. to the beginning of a new day, or era, for Israel and the earth—the "regeneration" of Matt. xix. 28.

Another application of the "eighth day" is quite parallel—in Mark ix. and Luke ix. 28, where the transfiguration is spoken of as "about an eight days after"—which none can doubt to be a Millennial picture. *Seven* days had preceded this, as in Gen. xxi. and Lev. ix. The Lord had announced to them His *sufferings*—the cross; then seven days run their course, and then we see His Millennial glory upon an *eighth*. In these last two cases the "eighth" is uniform, and fits well with the *subject*.

Next, we will see another "eighth day" in Lev. xxiii. 33-43, where we get the Jewish calendar for the whole year, describing the appointed feasts, or "seasons" of Jehovah in order.

The *seventh*, and last of all, in the Autumn, was the "Feast of Tabernacles;" in which they were to

build booths (tents), and rejoice seven days before the Lord: the season was ending, and the harvest was past; and they rejoice in God's goodness seven whole days. We believe this points to the whole period of Millennial joy, the last of the *dispensations*, which will eclipse all the previous ones; and the *seven* days represent the whole period.

The *first seven* (in Genesis), before circumcision, represents the trial of man—the whole trial (past). The *next seven* (in Lev. ix. and Luke ix.) foreshadow the *present* period, of Christ on high, and our association with Him, etc. But in Lev. xxiii. it is a *future* period that is before us—a Millennial picture of Israel in fulness of joy. Here, one might think, all was complete; but Jehovah adds another day to the list, and says there was to be an *eighth* day, and this eighth was also to be a *Sabbath* (vers. 36, 39).

Now the question fairly rises, To what can the *eighth* day here refer? None could say that it was the same as Lev. ix. or Luke ix. In those places it suited well as a type of the Millennium; but here, in Lev. xxiii., the seven days, clearly, are a beautiful Millennial type; and the "eighth" points to the *new age*, "the age of the ages"—*eternity*. Here it suits *eternity* well, as a new scene—new heavens and a new earth. But it is a *Sabbath* also, and foreshadows the same period as the Sabbath itself in Gen. ii. Thus, instead of a *clash*, it gives added *lustre* to the truth that it is meant to teach and illustrate. Thus we see the largeness and freeness of the ways of God in using days as types to serve His pleasure and purpose. What a mine of wealth here lies open before us, and each added thought only enhances the beauty

and perfection of the word of our God from beginning to end!

Oh that "critics" would only open their eyes to see these perfections and beauties! and that Christians also, who believe God's word, would be free from that narrow prejudice that hinders the soul enjoying the whole scope of Divine Truth!

In Gen. i. and ii. we see that the sixth day is a grand Millennial picture, and the Sabbath almost a perfect type of eternity.

In Lev. ix. and Luke ix. the eighth is a passing picture of the Millennium.

In Lev. xxiii. an *eighth* day is also a picture of *eternity*, as well as the seventh in Gen. ii.; and the two are joined together in Leviticus by the eighth day, itself being there a *special Sabbath*.

These beautiful lessons concerning the days of Scripture touch a subject precious to every child of God: may the reader follow on further in this mine of wealth!

Lev. xxiii. begins with the Sabbath as a theme (ver. 3); and the Feast of Tabernacles, of seven days' duration, closes with an *eighth day*, which is also a *Sabbath* (ver. 39). The theme kept before the mind at the *beginning* and the *close* of the year, in their "set seasons," is the Sabbath. *Rest*—the rest of God—is *His* thought. The Israelite saw but little of those typical lessons; perhaps scarce a ray of light beyond the yearly feasts. But the Spirit has added further light and truth, enabling us to see in those Scriptures the shadows of *good things to come*. Hence Lev. xxiii., beginning with *rest* and closing with

the same, gives us God's thought, and His appointed "seasons," from *eternity to eternity*.

A. E. B.

We append a few lines from two servants of Christ—both now "present with the Lord"—as a further testimony on these lines of study:

"It is also clear that the teaching looks forward through the whole vista of time, even to the eternal future of bright glory, the never-ending Sabbath of the blessed God.

"That glorious time is briefly spoken of in Rev. xxi. 1-8, where it is written, God will make all things new, and the tabernacle of God shall dwell with men; death, pain and sorrow shall be no more, and God Himself shall wipe away all tears. Then will He rest in His love, and His people share the rest of God through an unclouded eternity. Bright indeed the present prospect to energize the Christian's daily labor, and to calm amid the conflict, as the Holy Ghost leads into the realities of the rest secured by Jesus for the people of God."—W. K., "Notes on Sabbath, Lev. xxiii.," *Bible Treasury, New Series*, Vol. 5, No. 1.

(1.) "There remaineth therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb. iv. 9).

"*We* are entering into rest, we who have believed; but we have not entered. From the nature of it, as described presently, no one could enter into it in this life. We are going on to it, and God has been always speaking of it, as in the Sabbath type, keeping it before men from the beginning. God rested on the seventh day from all His works. That was at the beginning; but man violated that rest, and it remains for us only a shadow of what is yet to come. The apostle quotes also David's words, long after Joshua's day, as showing that Israel's coming



into the land was still not rest. After they had come in, it was still said, 'To-day, if ye will hear His voice.' The rest remains, then, a true 'keeping of Sabbath' for the people of God—a rest which will be *God's* rest also—or what good could be in it? A rest, too, in which he who rests ceases from all the labor which sin has imposed. Such a rest has not come for us. This carries us, in fact, on to eternity, the eternal rest, of which we have seen long since that the Sabbath is the type, and not of any Millennial anticipation of it. The thousand years are a time in which the earth has indeed come to its regeneration. Sin does not *reign* any more. Righteousness reigns, but still sin exists; and it is after the thousand years that death, 'the last enemy,' is put under Christ's feet, and the judgment of the dead comes with that. As a consequence, what we speak of sometimes as Millennial *rest*, is not strictly correct. God cannot rest except with the perfect accomplishment of perfect blessing. He cannot rest while there are enemies yet to be put under the feet—before sin and death are cast alike into the lake of fire."—F. W. G., *Numerical Bible*, "Notes on Heb. iv. 9."



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