

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

July 2008

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Colossians 1:2). I pray that you are all doing well. I understand that the 2008 West Virginia camp meeting went very well. I am sad that I was not able to attend this year. It was the first West Virginia camp meeting I have missed since we started having them in West Virginia. My wife has had some health issues that prevented us from making the trip, but I am glad to report that she is doing better, though we are still getting some tests done to better understand the problem. Please keep her and our family in your prayers. Let us pray for each other more now than at any other time.

Camp Meeting Announcement: *God's Word, God's Way* is hosting a camp meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, September 24-28. For directions and details, please contact Cheryl Bonner at 216-225-9400 or Willis Smith at 216-334-4414. Please do all within your power to attend this camp meeting. I hope to see you there.

The Importance of Understanding and Keeping God's Commandments

According to the Scriptures (Part 2)

by Joseph E. Lahud

Wasn't that Old "Jewish Law" Replaced by Something Superior?

Friend, the *ceremonial* law was replaced with something better when Christ gave His life for us. That law was nailed to the cross. “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” (Ephesians 2:14-16). Did He nail all the laws to the cross? What about the law of faith? Are we now not required to have faith because we are under grace?

“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law” (Romans 3:31). Establish means: “to settle or fix firmly, make permanent, to set up, to found, as an institution, to cause to be recognized or accepted, to put into effect permanently, ordain, as laws, to gain acceptance, prove as theory or argument, to appoint as (a church) an institution” (*Doubleday Dictionary*).

Persecution in the First Centuries

Although there are claims that the first century church kept Sunday as the day of Christian worship, this is not the truth. Persecution by pagan Rome led many to compromise. However, many faithful Christians did not. They chose death rather than to reject their faith in Jesus Christ and His teaching. Many faithful saints were martyred in brutal ways, such as by: crucifixion, impalement, torture, being cut in half, being burned at the stake, being given to lions and wild beasts, etc. Nero and others made sport of these faithful children of God. This persecution weeded out many hypocrites, for it cost them a lot to be a Christian. This is quite a contrast with today's “Christians,” some of whom are Christians out of convenience rather than conviction.

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by Alonzo T. Jones

When the Roman Emperor, Constantine, came to power in the early fourth century he stopped the Roman persecution of Christians, and sought to unite paganism and Christianity. After his supposed conversion to Christianity, Constantine decreed the observance of Sunday, the first day, “The venerable day of the sun,” as the proclaimed day of worship. Constantine’s initial conversion was most likely only superficial, for he was very much involved in sun worship afterward. (See *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, ninth edition, 1887, article: “Constantine.”) Contrary to Constantine’s plans to unite his kingdom and end persecution, his mingling of paganism with Christianity led to the bloodiest persecution of God’s people ever to be witnessed. For 1,000 years (known as The Dark Ages) persecution of Christians by “Christians” far exceeded pagan Rome’s persecution under Nero and other wicked men.

Many of these Christians were persecuted because they did not accept the pagan Sunday as the day of rest, but chose rather to keep the Biblical seventh-day Sabbath. Historical evidence contradicts the popular belief, among Sunday observing Christians, that Christ and His apostles changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. Many church leaders want you to believe that the earliest era of the Christian church was filled with Sunday keepers.

Let’s examine some evidence that does not support the claims that the true followers of Christ in the first century changed from Sabbath keeping to Sunday keeping. They did not mix sun worship with God’s true Sabbath. This is an abomination to God. The apostate church did mingle these things, but not God’s people. The Sabbath identifies the true Creator.

History and Prophecy

History shows the first Roman Pope was crowned “king” and given an army by the emperor Justinian in 538 AD. This Roman religious system ruled indisputably for 1260 years until 1798 when Napoleon’s general Berthie marched into Rome and arrested the pope (John Pious VI) and imprisoned him in Valence, Italy, where he died. This ended the persecution of the saints, or the Dark Ages. This is exactly 1260 years, just as the Bible prophesied in Daniel 7:25. Let’s read it: “The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and *think to change times and laws*: and

they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” (Daniel 7:23-25).

The seven “kings” or “nations” remaining after the papacy destroyed three of the ten, became the countries of Europe. The prophecy in the book of Daniel parallels the prophecy in the book of Revelation. The four beasts in Revelation represent the same kingdoms. This fourth “beast,” or kingdom, refers to a religious system. This “kingdom” is “different” since it is a political and religious power. It “devours” (consumes) the whole Earth, it “subdues” (destroys) three kingdoms (The Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths). These were three tribes in Europe which by 538 AD were literally killed and wiped off the face of the Earth. Not even their writings are to be found. This is because they refused to submit to the doctrines and teachings of this Roman religious system. These three refused Sunday worship, refused the trinity doctrine, etc. The prophecy continues to say it “shall persecute the saints.” Why do you think God’s people were persecuted? They refused to accept the false doctrines of the Roman Church system (including, among a few others, Sunday worship.) One of this beast power’s attempts to change times was the change of a day from sundown to sundown, as God had ordained, to midnight to midnight. (See Genesis 1:5.) The “law” that “he shall intend to think to change” (in other Bible translations) is the Royal Law of heaven, the Moral Law—The Ten Commandments.

What Power Claims Authority to Change God’s Laws?

“The pope has power to change times, to abrogate laws, and to dispense with all things even the precepts of Christ” (*Decretal De Translat. Episcop. Cap.*).

“The pope has authority, and has often exercised it, to dispense with the commands of Christ” (Pope Nicholas, Caus. 15, Quest. 6).

“The pope’s will stands for reason. He can dispense above the law; and of wrong make right, by correcting and changing laws?” (Pope Nicholas, Dist. 96.)

A “time” is one year or 360 days (in the Hebrew calendar there are 30 days per month or 360 days per year). “Times” is two years or 720 days, and “half a time” is half of a year or 180 days.

So you have $360+720+180=1260$ “days” or years.

God said, “I have given you a day for a year” (Ezekiel 4:6).

In the book of Revelation this prophecy is found in Revelation 13:5-7. The Scripture goes on to say; “All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Revelation 13:8).

Notice the Scripture says “All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him.” Who are they going to worship? Not God! How? What do most of the Churches share in common in this age? You got it! One of them is Sunday keeping! It is important to know who you worship and how to worship Him.

In Revelation 13:5 we find: “And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months [or 30x42=1260 years]” (Revelation 13:5). Here God is repeating His message. He really wants us to pay attention. These “Dark Ages,” when the Bible was literally locked up “chained” to a desk, the people were told that they were not capable of understanding the word of God—that they needed to be taught by the church the meaning of the word of God, insinuating that God did not have the capacity to communicate to His children through His Word. This is the reason Luther objected to the Church. God raised up Luther and others to reveal the errors of the system. Let’s read one of Martin Luther’s writings.

“They [the Papacy] allege the Sabbath changed into Sunday, the Lord’s Day, contrary to the Decalogue, as it appears. Neither is there an example more boasted of than the changing of the Sabbath day. Great, say they, is the power and authority of the Church, since it dispensed with the Ten Commandments” (Martin Luther, *Augsburg Confession of Faith*, art. 28, par. 9).

Can Proof of this Incredible Change be Found in the Bible?

In the gospels, there is no mention of such a change. Matthew was written approximately 60-66 AD, Mark was written approximately 57-63 AD, Luke was written approximately 63-68 AD, and John was written approximately 90-94 AD. James Cardinal Gibbons, Catholic scholar and writer, wrote in his famous book, *Faith of Our Fathers*: “You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday.” If a Protestant, how do you respond to this statement? Apostate Protestantism means you no longer defend what you once believed! This is where many churches are at today, defending the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church; showing obedience to the pope, rather than to God.

Nothing in the Gospels

Matthew was written 29-plus years after the resurrection of Christ. Surely we would expect to see evidence in the gospels of a change from Sabbath to Sunday. Yet they say nothing about a change. They do, however, indicate that the Sabbath was kept by the followers of Christ, even

to abstain from preparing their Lord’s body for burial because “the Sabbath drew on...” (Luke 23:54).

“In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week...” (Matthew 28:1).

“And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him” (Mark 16:1).

“And they... rested the sabbath day according to the commandment” (Luke 23:56).

The apostles kept the Sabbath as taught by Christ. Was not Christ our example? He came to reconcile us back to God?

Is it Safe to Build Upon Assumptions?

In the Gospel of Matthew Jesus is prophesying the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD. And He says: “Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day” (Matthew 24:20). This was to be thirty-seven years after His crucifixion. Are we to think that Jesus was referring to Sunday as the Sabbath? And if it were so, where is the change mentioned? It is not in the Scriptures. It can only be regarded as an assumption. Is that God’s character to leave our faith and obedience to Him to mere assumptions? Let’s not forget Uzzah’s experience. His assumption proved him wrong. God rejected Uzzah’s substitute method of executing the commandment given by the Lord. The Sunday substitute was given not by God, it was invented by another.

“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (Romans 7:12).

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:21-23).

Notice here that Jesus is rebuking a group of people who consider themselves worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven, yet He declares that He does not know them! He rebukes them and tells them that they practice lawlessness! How do you practice lawlessness? By not doing what God commands through His Laws! Consider carefully: do we teach others “lawlessness” by our words or example?

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” (1 John 2:3, 4).

God's True Worshipers

History reveals that many did not give up their faith in the truth of God as taught in the Gospels. The Waldensians, for example, were evangelists who migrated to Italy, fled their homes in Turin, and settled in the Piedmont Valleys where they practiced a life as taught by Jesus Christ. During the "Dark Ages", they traveled the globe under cover as merchants. They, under pain of death, would carry the word of God, written in small scrolls which were sown into their garments, and when given the opportunity to share the truth of God's Word, would present and preach the word of God to willing hearts. Their children were known to recite the Gospels from memory since it was illegal to possess any writings of the Word of God at this time. These people were Sabbath Keepers. "The Waldenses 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 commands of God" (*Jones' Church History*, vol. 2, chap. 5, sec. 4).

There are many accounts of Sabbath-keepers throughout history encompassing diverse countries and cultures which have kept God's true Sabbath day according to the Scriptural Commandment. "Carlstadt held to the divine authority of the Sabbath from the Old Testament" (*The Life of Luther*, p. 402). Most of the records for these true Christians have been destroyed throughout the centuries by those who oppose the true God of heaven. These Christians represent the true branch of the pure apostolic church of Jesus Christ. This was the largest body of true Christians that ever existed in the world. Persecution had weeded out the hypocrites. These were not, as false accounts would have you believe, a few scattered sects. In reality, this was the true, pure Church. The other "branch" were the ones who pursued a separation from God's truth, accepting many pagan doctrines that perverted the truth. These are the true heretics, even though they brutally persecuted faithful Christians who were labeled as heretics and infidels. "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now" (Galatians 4:29). Truth is never popular! As in the days of Christ, so it continues today.

The Waldensians possessed the pure Bible from the first century. A copy of this Bible can be found at Torre Pellize. This is regarded as the "Received Text." The Catholic bible can be traced back only to the fifth century. No further. In 1488 Pope Innocent VIII unsheathed the Papal sword, decreed to put to death all the Waldensian people (Commandment keepers), men, women and children. Mothers, pleading for mercy, were thrown off cliffs

holding their babies, being dashed to pieces on the rocks below. Heaven's record will testify of their faith.

Errors in the Churches

There is a mysterious and peculiar behavior in the "Christian" churches regarding the Scriptures and the testimony they support in favor of the day God ordained as His own—His "sign" (Exodus 31:13, 17). It seems that there is a dedicated effort to ignore what the Word of God has to say in support of the Sabbath (the seventh day). It has been my observation that many people will defend *their* church and its *teachings*, rather than defend the word of God!

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work." (2 Thessalonians 2:7, also read Daniel 7:21.)

"And in that day seven [completion or totality] women [churches] shall take hold of one man [Jesus Christ], saying, We will eat our own bread [doctrine], and wear our own apparel [righteousness]: only let us be called by thy name [Christian], to take away our reproach." (Isaiah 4:1).

Who was the Baal of the Heathen Hebrews?

"Baal, or Bel, the principal god of the Phoenicians, Chaldeans. and Carthaginians is regarded as a personification of the sun... The worship of Baal prevailed among the Jews in the time of the prophet Elijah and earlier" (*Johnson's Universal Encyclopedia*, article: Baal).

What appeal was made to the people by Elijah regarding whom they would worship? Elijah pleaded, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (1 Kings 18:21).

"Exegesis" is the method of proper study and research of Scripture (from the Greek, "to exit, or to draw out of). We cannot "study" the Word of God with a predetermined conclusion. Is this truly giving our heart to our heavenly Father in trust to guide us, to reveal His counsel? Do we rather defend or uphold "tradition" rather than the written and plain Word of God? This very study could be the means by which God has provided to reveal truth to you, desiring for you to have a proper understanding of the Sabbath. What will you do? Ignore it? I certainly hope not!

Conversion means change. Are we willing to change even if it means persecution? Whom will you follow? Ask 10 pastors why we keep Sunday and you will receive 11 different answers. Speaking of the coming of the Antichrist or "man of sin," the Bible says, "Him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion,

that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).

Dear reader, are you a follower of God or man? How do you know? By what standard do you measure this? Sun worship is detestable to God, in any form. Anyone who does any kind of search in regards to sun worship will find that this is detestable in God’s eyes. He is a jealous God. “For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God” (Exodus 34:14).

What a strange coincidence that Sunday, named for “the venerable day of the sun” is the center of controversy in regards to the Sabbath issue. To defend the Sunday position is, in itself, contrary to God’s very name: “Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?” (James 4:5).

After studying the evidence and clear Scriptural doctrine which supports the Seventh-day Sabbath, it seems suspicious and contrary for a supposed follower of Jesus Christ to continue Sunday worship in the face of such evidence. Surely one would prayerfully and earnestly study this through diligently, until God’s Spirit would direct and minister to the individual the answer to his quest. There is a religious system which boasts that there is no scriptural instruction for this change, that *she* has the ecclesiastical authority to make such a change and she did—it is her “mark.” This is the same system which, throughout history, has murdered over 200 million men, women, and children, through incredibly sadistic and horrible methods, merely because they refused to obey the false doctrines which she demanded the world to obey.

Some of these doctrines were: the immortality of the soul, purgatory (whereas a widow could deed her farm or property to a priest and he would make a special prayer which would deliver her dead husband from the limbo of purgatory), Sunday keeping, indulgences (this is where you could commit murder, rape, or steal, etc., with a promise of complete forgiveness for a prepaid fee to the priests), the doctrine of the trinity (which was invented many years after the Bible was written), confession, the ritual of the mass, the worshiping of dead saints, etc. This is why men like Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome, Luther, and the rest of the reformers were raised up by God. The only problem found with the reformers is that they did not keep reforming. Many of these men of God, gave their lives rather than compromise. Though most kept Sunday because of church “tradition,” there were many who kept God’s true Sabbath, according to the commandment.

Please remember that there are many honest and sincere people in this system which earnestly seek after God. They are not to be confused with the system itself. Some

of these will be in heaven, for God judges a man by the light (understanding or knowledge) which he is given. For some of these souls, all they have ever known is through the teachings of this system. They trust this system as being infallible. It claims authority above the Word of God.

When God instructed Moses regarding the location for the entrance to the tabernacle, He said that it must face Eastward. Since the sun rises in the east, participants would be with their backs turned away from the rising sun. This counteracted the Egyptian custom of facing the sun for their sun worship. They were influenced for 400 years! False worship has been an influence since the beginning of creation, for over 6,000 years. God desires us to love and behold Him as the only object of worship in our hearts. Sins are imputed by acts of omission, or commission. We can sin by unknowingly following false doctrines, even though the act is done with good intent.

Yet, here we are today, embracing with all our strength, defending the day of the sun. Why do we disregard God’s true Sabbath? Why do we teach others this unscriptural error? Is it the result of sincere and serious research of this doctrine, or is it an assumption based on tradition? Why would we rest our faith on assumptions? Is it because we would lose favor with others? Is it too “Jewish”? Is it because we want to fit in? Is it because all the other churches do this? Sadly, this is apostate Protestantism.

God says that friendship with the world is enmity with Him. Satan’s purpose is to cause you to sin.

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” (2 Corinthians 6:14).

God Calls His People to be Set Apart—to be Holy

“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:16-18).

What do most all denominations share in common today? The unscriptural venerable Sunday worship. This is

a substitute, tradition, and compromise. Does it really matter what day we keep holy?

A Sign Between God and His People

“Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them” (Ezekiel 20:12).

The Sabbath, as instructed by God, is to be a day devoted to Him. To be set apart from the activities of the world and consecrated for His service. For our “delight.” The clear instructions are to cease from all other regular activities. Even the “preparation day” mentioned in the gospels, was to prepare our hearts and our households for this special 24-hour period. Clothes washed, children bathed, food prepared, house cleaned, etc. Sunset to sunset is how God instructed for the beginning and ending of a day. The minds and hearts of His people are to be especially consecrated to Him at this Sabbath time. The enjoyment of nature is also to minister to us. Nature’s beauty is a testament of His love for us. Praising Him and focusing our minds and hearts upon Him on this special time is His delight. We can also do this any other time, but this is the day He has chosen as His day, He blessed and sanctified it. He did not bless and sanctify Sunday. It is not in the Scriptures!

Sunday is a Man Made Institution and its Roots Lie in Pagan Sun Worship

Have you ever noticed the activities surrounding Sunday? After church many go out to eat at their favorite restaurant, they go to Wal-Mart or other stores for their shopping, maybe they mow the lawn, do car or house repairs, play a nice round of golf, watch some sports on TV, catch up on laundry, etc. Is this a consecrated, devoted day for the Lord?

Its not an *holy day*, it’s an *holiday* with church thrown in! After church it is counted as a day of worldly pleasures.

“Thus saith the LORD; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction” (Jeremiah 17:21-23).

(When we stand before the judgement seat of God, what will our record bear? Faithfulness to God, or to man-made church traditions?) “The fear of the LORD tendeth to life” (Proverbs 19:23).

A Brief History of Sun Worship... its Origin

I would greatly encourage all pastors to pursue a dedicated study on sun worship. The history, rituals, and influence it has had upon mankind is astonishing. Do you know who “designed” sun worship? Only Satan, that old enemy of God and mankind, designed this false day of worship. One of Noah’s sons was Ham, who begat Cush, who was the father of Nimrod, who was a very unique fellow. He was the architect of The Tower of Babel. He was going to outsmart God by riding out atop a very tall structure in case God ever flooded the Earth again. I guess he did not believe God’s promise of the rainbow, by which He said He would never flood the Earth again by water.

Rebellion against God brings separation. God’s promises become of no effect in the heart of the rebellious. What about the promises and blessing declared in the Old Testament? Do they not apply for us if we are a “New Testament Church?” We cannot be *scripturally selective*? Do not reject the written Word of God. Instead, prayerfully study it and search all doctrines out for yourself. Do not just accept something “because the pastor said it from the pulpit and therefore it must be truth.” Who knows, you just might be one called to be a messenger of truth.

Disregarding the Old Testament is a grave mistake. It was given to us by God for people of all ages. Consider that some of the prophecies declared in the Old Testament are for us today, for they have not yet been fulfilled.

Nimrod had a pagan and licentious wife named Semiramis. Nimrod was eventually killed by Shem, one of Noah’s sons. What happened next is amazing. Semiramis is found to be with child although Nimrod had died long before he could have fathered this child. Semiramis declared to people (who revered Nimrod and Semiramis as sovereigns) that the rays of the Sun were from Nimrod in a glorified state and had impregnated her with divine power and fertilized her body with a god child. This child was Tamuz, who eventually got killed while hunting wild boar (the boar killed him and this is where the tradition of eating ham on Christmas originates). By the way this is also where the origins of Christmas celebration on December 25th originates, Tamuz was born on December 25th coincidental with the winter solstice). We have “Christianized” pagan rituals. Consider “Easter,” which came from Ashtaroth (a pagan fertility goddess). Where do you think cute Easter eggs and Easter bunnies came from? Originally, it was a vulgar pagan ritual, a sexual feast!

Most people attending an Easter service have no clue as to its pagan origins. It is a compromise. It is all an assumption. Please do not get me wrong, My wife and I love what Christmas represents in its ethical form. But we do

not know exactly when our Lord Jesus Christ was born. December in Bethlehem is winter, there are no sheep herders out in the fields. There would likely be snow or frost, and it would be too cold for sheep to be grazing in the field. God has veiled the date of the birth of Christ, perhaps for our own good.

Nimrod was the instigator of open rebellion against God (fresh out of the flood) and he openly defied allegiance to the God of heaven. The Bible refers to Nimrod as a “Mighty hunter before the LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel” (Genesis 10:9, 10). Just a point of interest! Nimrod was a mighty hunter of men, for he was the originator of war and conquering unprotected cities; who knew not the tragedy of war. (Please read *The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop, 1916.)

Satan used Semiramis to deceive those in Babel (later called Babylon) and surrounding areas with the lie that Nimrod was now transformed into the sun and was now able to better protect them, when it disappeared, it was going to battle for them against evil spirits and demons. When it came back up again in the sky they knew they had another day of safety. It made sense for those people who had separated their trust and faith in the living, invisible God, and raised in their hearts a visible substitute. In contrast, our heavenly Father comforts us with these words of His promise: “For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.” (Deuteronomy 20:4). Notice that this is the Old Testament. Do you reject this passage today? What about several verses back when God declares His Commandments in Exodus 20:1-17. He promises to be your God, yet this is the passage where He commands us to keep His day (the seventh) holy. We want the benefits of the Covenant but not the requirements. This is what the churches teach today—it’s ok to sin because we are under grace!

Sun Worship is an Impostor of the True God of Heaven

Sun worship was designed to be an affront against God, to be a direct, decisive act against the adoration and worship of the God of heaven, and to introduce a substitute. This is why the language used in the Fourth Commandment refers to God as the one who “made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is” (Exodus 20:11). This is descriptive of the God of creation. God blessed and sanctified the seventh day as a mark of perfection. God rested because He was pleased, not because He was tired. He designed this day to be a sign for mankind to acknowledge Him as their God. To separate His people from the many false gods which He knew would be introduced in future generations through Satanic devices, to

separate allegiance to Him through deceit, and introduce another method contrary to God’s appointment.

After the various people separated at the tower of Babel incident (when God confounded their languages—Genesis 11:1-9), groups carried sun worship with them throughout the world. The golden calf incident (Exodus 32:4-35) was a substitute as a “feast to the Lord.” Rebellious paganism!

Today you see this diabolical scheme conjured up by Satan still manifested in various forms. The most obvious and predominant evidence is the dedicated disregard by modern Christendom in rejecting God’s appointed day, the seventh-day, and substitute another—the impostor: Sunday the first day, a day which is contrary to all of the instruction in the Word of God. This day is ferociously defended by the most meek of God’s professed followers. This very fact should raise your suspicions on the subject, and require that this matter be prayerfully investigated.

Most of Christianity today slumbers, they are asleep. Given evidence of error they simply ignore the facts and rely on their religious leaders, their church, or others, rather than with earnest desire for God, research and study for themselves and their families and loved ones, to harvest the eternal benefits which God promises to those who seek after Him with all their hearts (Jeremiah 29:11-14). These are beautiful promises waiting for you to discover and claim by faith. Centuries of concessions made to the pure gospel truth has resulted in the diluting of the faith and power which is promised to be manifested by those who obey God’s holy Word.

A One-Man Crusade to Restore the Lost Back to God

It is not a very well-known fact, but Nineveh was a city of approximately a quarter million people. We know Jonah reluctantly, but finally, made his appearance there. And though he did not believe it would make much difference, the Scriptures testify of one of the most successful evangelistic efforts in the history of mankind. The whole city repented and was converted, a restoration to God was made. Unfortunately, as history reveals, eventually Nineveh slid back into its former state and even worse. Jonah was sent to preach to a city which had, at its very center, sun worship in all its fullness! That is why his reluctance was so determined, he knew that those who worshiped the sun, worshiped not the true God of heaven. Perhaps this is why Jonah disliked those rebellious people. Many today assume that membership in a church guarantees loyalty to God, and even salvation! The Bible teaches that each soul will be held accountable individually, according to their faithfulness and obedience to God.

God has given mankind the standards of measure for sin. God's holy Law is the scale which will weigh us!

God Gave His Son as a Ransom for the Broken Law

How wonderful is our Father in Heaven who gave His most treasured possession—His only-begotten Son, while we were yet sinners! Christ shed His blood for us because we transgressed the Law. If the Law was not a reflection of the Lawgiver, then why would His Son have to die for our Sins? Why didn't God just forgive Adam and Eve there on the spot and say "I'll give you another chance, just don't do it again!"? Because the Law is the reflection the Lawgiver. God is a holy God. You cannot trespass God's authority and expect no consequences. If it was not important, if it didn't matter, why did Christ have to die for our redemption? The popular teaching of today is: "The Law is done away with, because we are under grace!"

So we teach others, tender in the Scriptures and in the character of God, that the reason Jesus Christ died was to redeem them from their sins caused from the breaking of God's Commandments, His Law ("Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."—1 John 3:4).

So, now that Jesus died for our sins (breaking the law), we can continue to: love other gods, worship false gods, take God's name in vain, dishonor our parents, kill, commit adultery, steal, lie and covet? Is this what we are teaching? But someone would say "Oh no! God forbid we would teach such a thing!" Well, nine of the Ten Commandments were just mentioned, Guess which one was left out? The one which starts out with: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God..." (Exodus 20:8-10).

"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." (James 2:8-12). Note that here the Law of God is declared with reference to our liberty!

The Lord's Instructions are Very Clear


My Bible tells me of a specific day my heavenly Father ordained as His day of worship. Not that I can't worship

Him on Tuesday, or Friday, but He clearly instructs, in plain words, that there is a certain day which He blessed and sanctified for this service. This is the only day in all of Scripture which He blessed and sanctified specifically as His day, to identify His creatures with their creator. The language is so simple. The principle is pure and clear. No ambiguity! Theological seminaries and universities of Divinity are teaching error. How could intelligent, and sincere pastors, "stewards" of the Word of God, negate this precept which is so often repeated throughout both the Old and New Testaments? Is it because of pride? Ignorance? Rebellion? The love of the world more than the love of God? Is it so hard to admit that we have been taught wrong? Is it so hard to admit our error? For fear? Fear of what? Of rejection from man? Of rejection from a congregation? What about rejection from God? Isn't that more important? "To obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel 15:22).

"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17).

In Mark 7:6-13 Jesus quotes Isaiah's prophecy, in rebuking the pharisees and scribes, calling them "hypocrites." He said, "This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men... Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:6, 7, 9). He goes on to quote the fifth commandment regarding honoring your father and mother, referring to the Moral Law—the Ten Commandments.

In Mark 12:28-34 A scribe asked Jesus which is the greatest Commandment. Jesus replied, "...thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:30, 31). Here, Jesus is clearly speaking again of the Moral Law, and He has just summarized all Ten with those two; the first deals with the relationship to God, the second with the relationship with mankind.

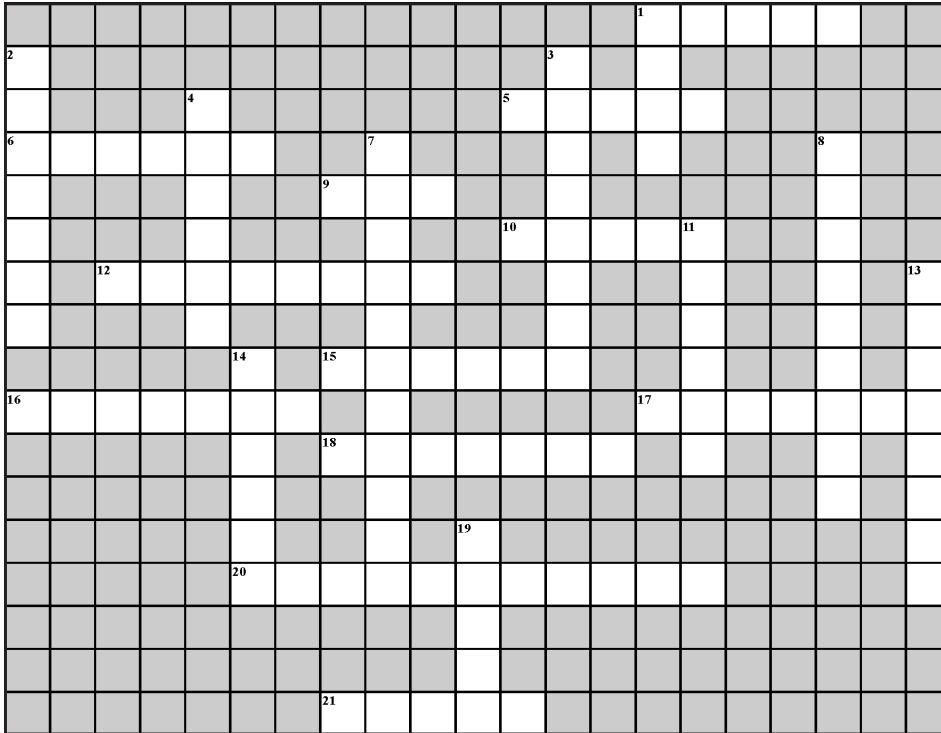
"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2). 

(This article was taken from a booklet written by Joseph Lahud. For a copy of the complete booklet, you may contact Joseph directly at: 42012 State Hwy. 32 SW, Fertile, MN 56540, or by calling 218-945-3733. *Editor*)

Something for the Young at Heart

This month we are continuing a series of crossword Bible studies that are based on a Bible Lesson printed by Richard Stratton of Philadelphia Press Ministries, PO Box 218, Florence, Colorado 81226. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line.

Dangers of Thievery



Answers will be printed next month on page 12

- "Thou shalt not ____." Exodus 20:15—**19 Down**
- Laban's ____ toward Jacob changed. Genesis 31:2—**7 Down**
- Laban ____ Jacob. Genesis 31:7—**3 Down**
- He did this by changing Jacob's ____ ten times. Genesis 31:7—**1 Across**

Note: Stealing can be done in many ways. You can steal money, goods, time, affections, etc. Laban stole from Jacob by tricking him several times, both when giving his daughters in marriage, and by changing his wages. The injustice of this unfairness was recognized at that time, demonstrating that the law was known by them.

- "The labourer is worthy of his ____." 1 Timothy 5:18—**15 Across**
- "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, nor ____ him." Leviticus 19:13—**9 Across**

- "The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all ____ until the morning." Leviticus 19:13—**10 Across**
- "The wicked ____, and payeth not again." Psalms 37:21—**8 Down**
- "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD ____." Jeremiah 48:10—**20 Across**

Note: When those in responsible positions in the church work in a deceitful manner that turns people away from God, they are stealing from God, and will be held accountable.

- "Let him that ____ steal no more." Ephesians 4:28—**21 Across**
- "...but rather let him ____, working with his hands." Ephesians 4:28—**6 Across**
- "If any would not ____, neither should he eat." 2 Thessalonians 3:10—**1 Down**

Note: "The word of God teaches that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. The Lord does not

require the hard-working man to support those who are not diligent. There is a waste of time, a lack of effort, which brings to poverty and want. If these faults are not seen and corrected by those who indulge in them, all that might be done in their behalf is like putting treasure into a basket with holes. But there is an unavoidable poverty; and we are to manifest tenderness and compassion toward those who are unfortunate" (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 122).

- God said, "Ye have ____ me." Malachi 3:8—**14 Down**
- How do we rob God? "In ____ and offerings." Malachi 3:8—**11 Down**
- "For out of the ____ proceed... thefts." Matthew 15:19—**5 Across**
- Thieves shall not "inherit the ____ of God." 1 Corinthians 6:10—**16 Across**
- God requires us "to do ____." Micah 6:8—**4 Down**
- "A false ____ is abomination to the LORD." Proverbs 11:1—**18 Across**
- "Thou shalt have a ____ and just weight." Deuteronomy 25:15—**17 Across**
- "Ye shall not steal, neither deal ____, neither lie one to another." Leviticus 19:11—**2 Down**
- "Seest thou a man ____ in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." Proverbs 22:29—**12 Across**
- We should not be "____ in business." Romans 12:11—**13 Down**

Note: Honesty in all things is the only guarantee that we will not violate God's Law that prohibits stealing.

Jones on Righteousness (Part 1)

by Alonzo T. Jones

Matthew 6:33—“Seek ye first... his righteousness,” is the subject today. We notice first whose righteousness we are to seek. It is God’s. We must seek and find it or we will not be saved. Nothing else will avail. We must know, however, where to seek for it and how, because we often seek for it in the wrong place; for instance, as many do, in the law of God, and through keeping it. We will never find it there. That is not the place to seek for it. This is not saying that the righteousness of God is not there. The commandments are the righteousness of God, but we will never find it there.

In Romans 2:17, 18, we see that the law is clearly pointed out, through which, if we are instructed, we are called of God. Then they, being the will of God, it would be impossible for the Lord himself to be better than the ten commandments require us to be. The Lord’s will must be the expression of what he is himself; hence it is impossible he should be better than his law. To keep his commandments, then, means that we shall be as good as God is, so we read in 1 John 3:7: “He that doeth righteousness, is righteous even as he is righteous.” Now see Psalms 119:138, Deuteronomy 6:35, Isaiah 59:7—the people who do the law of God are righteous, even as God is righteous, then to keep them means that man must be like God in character. Then the righteousness of God is in his law, but it is not revealed to men by the law. Romans 1:16, 17, the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel to men, and not in the law. It is in the law, but it is not revealed there to us because we are sinners, and sin has so darkened our mind that we can not see it there, and therefore our vision has to be enlightened by some other means, which is the gospel, where we must seek for it, Romans 3:21.

The righteousness of God is made known without the law. How? By faith in Jesus Christ, through the gospel, and not by the law. Now read again Romans 1:16, 17, and this will be clear. To show this further, Romans 10:4. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. Does not this say the same as the others? We have lost often the real point in this text to use it against those who claim the commandments are abolished, who claim Christ ended the law, and we claim it means “the purpose of” the law, but the point in this text is that Christ is the purpose of

the law “for righteousness” to us, as we can not get it by the law, Romans 8:3. The law was ordained to life, righteousness, holiness, justification, but because of sin it cannot be this to us, so what it cannot do Christ does for us. Then, if we seek it in the wrong place we lose the righteousness of Christ. Now, righteousness must come from the same source as does life; they are inseparable (Romans 8:3). Moses uses the terms here interchangeably, so also Galatians 3:21 showing that righteousness must come to us from the same source as life, and that is Christ. Romans 6:23: this we have always preached, but he said before this the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life, and so we have always claimed eternal life to be a gift, but we have not claimed the same for righteousness as being a gift through Jesus Christ.

Why was it necessary that something was given to have life? Because the wages of sin was death. If a law could give life, it would be by the law. If the law was a secondary form and God could have made another, and better, it would not suffice because if men could not keep an inferior law they could not keep a superior, consequently no law could give the life. Therefore Christ came to be the purpose of the law to everyone that believeth. Now we want to see what righteousness there is in the law for us, and we will become convinced it is our own, which is the very best we can ever get out of the law. If I take the highest and most comprehensive view of the law I can, and live up to it, is that a satisfying of the law? No, because it is not a high enough view of it, because the mind is all darkened by sin, and man’s comprehension is not broad enough to grasp the height and breadth of it, and so does not meet the requirements of the law. It is our own righteousness then, and not God’s we see in the law and we see ourselves (the extent of our vision) and not the face of God.

Often we think we do right and afterwards see it was not so. If it was God’s righteousness at that time, God would be imperfect. It is only in Christ that we can ever see the righteousness of God. But God is the gospel and the gospel is Christ, and so by the law can no man be accounted righteous. We must then have something more than the law to enable us to understand God’s righteousness and to comprehend the law. That something “is Christ Jesus in whom is the fullness of the

Godhead bodily.” I read now Romans 10:13; here we have a people seeking earnestly for righteousness. Where? Their own. Did they find it? No. Romans 9:31-32, being ignorant of Christ’s righteousness. They would not believe Christ or Paul, but sought it by the works of the law. Now read verse 30; the Gentiles found it having faith, and not being satisfied with their own righteousness, as did the Pharisees who trusted in themselves that they were righteous. This, too, is where the law will bring us if we try to obtain righteousness through it, but when having faith in Christ, a man sees his sins and longs for the righteousness of God, knowing that it is the goodness, purity and righteousness of Christ that makes him so, he will become righteous.

Philippians 3:4-9: here was a Pharisee who lived up to the broadest view of the law of God he could obtain and was blameless, yet he gave it all up for Christ. Galatians 2:2; if “righteousness come by the law then Christ is dead in vain,” our own righteousness is all then we can get out of the law, and that the righteousness of God can come only by Jesus Christ. What is our own righteousness? (Isaiah 64:5). Our righteousness is as filthy rags. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. What is sin? When Israel came out of Egypt, they knew not God, remembering only that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had a God, but knew nothing more. To make them understand their condition and what sin was he took one of their own words and applied it to his purpose. He took a word meaning “missed its mark” and used it to express sin. Now we have all sinned and come short—that is what Paul means—we have “missed the mark.” Then the more righteousness of the law a man has the worse he is off—the more ragged is he.

Now turn to Zechariah 3:1-8. Here we have Joshua standing clothed in his own righteousness and Christ takes it off and clothes him with the righteousness of God. Now Joshua had been doing the best he could, but would he have been saved? No. How often we hear people say “I do the best I can,” and believe they will be saved. Joshua was reclothed and was to stand with the angels. If then our righteousness is all taken away and Christ clothes us with God’s righteousness, then to walk in his law, we will stand with the angels. So then read Isaiah 54:17, first part. Christ, in all his references in the New Testament, repeats only what God had already spoken. Now Isaiah 61:10, that is the song we are to sing, therefore righteousness is the gift of God as

surely as is life, and if we try to get it in any other way we shall fail. In Romans 5:12-18, we read that as sin came by one, the righteousness of one brought the free gift of life upon men. So also Romans 3:21-26, it was to declare God’s righteousness that Christ came.

Now taking Romans 5:13-17 we find here a free gift and notice particularly verse 17. Righteousness is the gift of life to everyone who believeth, and Jesus Christ will ever be the purpose of the law to everyone who believeth. It is Christ’s obedience that avails and not ours that brings righteousness to us. Well then let us stop trying to do the will of God in our own strength. Stop it all. Put it away from you for ever. Let Christ’s obedience do it all for you and gain the strength to pull the bow so that you can hit the mark. Why did the Saviour come as an infant instead of a man? To die on the cross would have met the penalty. Because he lived a child and met all the temptations a child meets and never sinned—so that any child can stand in his place and resist in his strength; and he lived also as a youth, a man full grown, weaving for us a robe of righteousness to cover us (not to cover our filthy garments as that would be a mixture), takes the filthy garment away and puts his own in their place, so that all may have it if they will.

Now if the righteousness is the gift of God, and comes by the gospel, then what is the use of the law? There are several, but they may be used wrongfully. The law entered that the offense might abound, Rom. 3:19—the law speaks to sinners that all may become guilty before God to show people their guilt. Now verse 20, the law is to reveal sin to us—unrighteousness, not righteousness—Christ reveals the latter, the law the former. The law of God cannot allow a single sin in any degree whatever. If it did and condoned even a single thought that was not perfect it would sink a soul into perdition. The law is perfect. If it accepts imperfection the Lord must accept it and admit that he is imperfect, because the law is the representation of his character. In the fact that the law demands perfection lies the hope of all mankind, because if it could overlook a sin to a single degree, no one could ever be free from sin, as the law would never make that sin known and it could never be forgiven, by which alone man can be saved.

The day is coming when the law will have revealed the last sin and we will stand perfect before him and be saved with an eternal salvation. The perfection of the law of God is that it will show us all our sins, and then a perfect Saviour stands ready to take them all away.

When God makes known all our sins it is not to condemn us, but to save us, so it is a token of his love for us, therefore, whenever a sin is made known to you, it is a token of God's love for you because the Saviour stands ready to take it away. That is why God has given us a Saviour and the gospel. He wants us all to believe in him, come to him and be saved. Read Matthew 5:6. Are there not many here who hunger and thirst for righteousness? Do you want to be filled? Look not then at the law, but the cross of Christ. Read Ephesians 3:14-19: rooted and grounded in faith through his love in our heart. Colossians 2:9, 10, for we will be complete in Christ. There is a completeness, joy, peace, goodness, righteousness forever.

(This article was taken from a sermon preached by Alonzo T. Jones on May 11, 1889. Editor)

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Answers to Last Month's Crossword Puzzle

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