

# God's Rest

**MEMORY VERSE:** “For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his” (Hebrews 4:10).

“God blessed and sanctified the seventh day, because He rested upon it from all His wondrous work of creation. The Sabbath was made for man, and God would have him put by his labor on that day, as He Himself rested after His six days’ work of creation.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 247.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 281-289. (At the bottom of this page)

## 1. TRUE DIVINE REST

Sunday, January 21

**a. Which rest is Paul talking about in Hebrews 4? Hebrews 4:1.**

### Hebrews 4:1

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

“Rest is found when all self-justification, all reasoning from a selfish standpoint, is put away. Entire self-surrender, an acceptance of His ways, is the secret of perfect rest in His love. . . . Do just what He has told you to do, and be assured that God will do all that He has said He would do. . . . Have you come to Him, renouncing all your makeshifts, all your unbelief, all your self-righteousness? Come just as you are, weak, helpless, and ready to die.

“What is the ‘rest’ promised?—It is the consciousness that God is true, that He never disappoints the one who comes to Him. His pardon is full and free, and His acceptance means rest to the soul, rest in His love.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 97.

**b. Why doesn't the gospel produce the expected result in some people? Hebrews 4:2, 6; Romans 9:30–32.**

### Hebrews 4:2

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

### Hebrews 4:6

Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

### Romans 9:30-32

What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. **31** But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. **32** Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

“Unless we mix faith with our hearing of the Word, unless we receive the truths we hear as a message from heaven, to be carefully studied, to be eaten by the soul and assimilated into the spiritual life, we lose the impression of the Spirit of God. We do not understand by experience what it means to find rest by receiving the divine assurances of the Word.”—*The Upward Look*, p. 75.

## 2. ENTERING INTO GOD’S REST

Monday, January 22

**a. When do we really enjoy God’s divine rest? Hebrews 4:3 (first part). Describe the relationship between the seventh-day Sabbath and this divine rest. Hebrews 4:4.**

### Hebrews 4:3

For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

### Hebrews 4:4

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.

“Because He had rested upon the Sabbath, ‘God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it’—set it apart for a holy use. He gave it to Adam as a day of rest. It was a memorial of the work of creation, and thus a sign of God’s power and His love.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 281.

“No other institution which was committed to the Jews tended so fully to distinguish them from surrounding nations as did the Sabbath. God designed that its observance should designate them as His worshipers. It was to be a token of their separation from idolatry, and their connection with the true God. But in order to keep the Sabbath holy, men must themselves be holy. Through faith they must become partakers of the righteousness of Christ. When the command was given to Israel, ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,’ the Lord said also to them, ‘Ye shall be holy men unto Me.’ Exodus 20:8; 22:31. Only thus could the Sabbath distinguish Israel as the worshipers of God.

“As the Jews departed from God, and failed to make the righteousness of Christ their own by faith, the Sabbath lost its significance to them. Satan was seeking to exalt himself and to draw men away from Christ, and he worked to pervert the Sabbath, because it is the sign of the power of Christ. The Jewish leaders accomplished the will of Satan by surrounding God’s rest day with burdensome requirements. In the days of Christ the Sabbath had become so perverted that its observance reflected the character of selfish and arbitrary men rather than the character of the loving heavenly Father. The rabbis virtually represented God as giving laws which it was impossible for men to

obey. They led the people to look upon God as a tyrant, and to think that the observance of the Sabbath, as He required it, made men hardhearted and cruel. It was the work of Christ to clear away these misconceptions. Although the rabbis followed Him with merciless hostility, He did not even appear to conform to their requirements, but went straight forward, keeping the Sabbath according to the law of God.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 283, 284.

“The demands upon God are even greater upon the Sabbath than upon other days. His people then leave their usual employment, and spend the time in meditation and worship. They ask more favors of Him on the Sabbath than upon other days. They demand His special attention. They crave His choicest blessings. God does not wait for the Sabbath to pass before He grants these requests.”—*Ibid.*, p. 207.

### 3. LABOR AND REST

Tuesday, January 23

**a. What kind of labor should we develop before finding the promised rest? Hebrews 4:9, 11.**

Hebrews 4:9

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

Hebrews 4:11

Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

“[Hebrews 4:9, 11 quoted.] The rest here spoken of is the rest of grace, obtained by following the prescription, Labor diligently. Those who learn of Jesus His meekness and lowliness find rest in the experience of practicing His lessons. It is not in indolence, in selfish ease and pleasure-seeking, that rest is obtained. Those who are unwilling to give the Lord faithful, earnest, loving service will not find spiritual rest in this life or in the life to come. Only from earnest labor comes peace and joy in the Holy Spirit—happiness on earth and glory hereafter.

“Let us therefore labor. Speak often words that will be a strength and an inspiration to those who hear. We are altogether too indifferent in regard to one another. We forget that our fellow laborers are often in need of words of hope and cheer. When one is in trouble, call upon him and speak comforting words to him. This is true friendship.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments]*, vol. 7, p. 928.

**b. What happens with our own works when we find rest in the Lord? Hebrews 4:10; Exodus 20:10; Isaiah 58:13; Romans 14:23 (last part).**

Hebrews 4:10

For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

Exodus 20:10

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

### Isaiah 58:13

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

### Romans 14:23

And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

“God made man in His own image and then gave him an example of observing the seventh day, which He sanctified and made holy. He designed that upon that day man should worship Him and engage in no secular pursuits. No one who disregards the fourth commandment, after becoming enlightened concerning the claims of the Sabbath, can be held guiltless in the sight of God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 247.

#### **c. What kind of works are in harmony with the Sabbath rest? Isaiah 58:6–8.**

### Isaiah 58:6-8

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? **7** Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? **8** Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

“Jesus stated to [the rabbis] that the work of relieving the afflicted was in harmony with the Sabbath law. . . .

“He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve suffering on the Sabbath. God’s holy rest day was made for man, and acts of mercy are in perfect harmony with its intent. God does not desire His creatures to suffer an hour’s pain that may be relieved upon the Sabbath or any other day.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 206, 207.

## **4. THE POWER OF GOD’S WORD**

*Wednesday, January 24*

#### **a. How powerful is the Word of God? Psalm 33:6, 9; Hebrews 4:12.**

### Psalm 33:6

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

### Psalm 33:9

For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

### Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

“There is a point beyond which human effort is in vain. While we are to preach the word, we can not impart the power that will quicken the soul, and cause righteousness and praise to spring forth. In the preaching of the word there must be the working of an agency beyond any human power. Only through the divine Spirit will the word be living and powerful to renew the soul unto eternal life. This is what Christ tried to impress upon His disciples. He taught that it was nothing they possessed in themselves which would give success to their labors, but that it is the miracle-working power of God which gives efficiency to His own word.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 63, 64.

**b. How deep are we known before God? Hebrews 4:13; Ecclesiastes 12:14.**

**Hebrews 4:13**

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

**Ecclesiastes 12:14**

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

“It is for the eternal interest of every one to search his own heart, and to improve every God-given faculty. Let all remember that there is not a motive in the heart of any man that the Lord does not clearly see. The motives of each one are weighed as carefully as if the destiny of the human agent depended upon this one result. We need a connection with divine power, that we may have an increase of clear light and an understanding of how to reason from cause to effect. We need to have the powers of the understanding cultivated, by our being partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Let each one consider carefully the solemn truth, God in heaven is true, and there is not a design, however intricate, nor a motive, however carefully hidden, that He does not clearly understand. He reads the secret devisings of every heart. Men may plan out crooked actions for the future, thinking that God does not understand; but in that great day when the books are opened, and every man is judged by the things written in the books, those actions will appear as they are.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments]*, vol. 3, p. 1160.

“God’s eye does not slumber. He knows every sin that is hidden from mortal eye. The guilty know just what sins to confess that their souls may be clean before God. Jesus is now giving them opportunity to confess, to repent in deep humility, and purify their lives by obeying and living out the truth. Now is the time for wrongs to be righted and sins to be confessed, or they will appear before the sinner in the day of God’s wrath.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 156.

**5. MERCY AND GRACE IN TIME OF NEED**

*Thursday, January 25*

**a. Who only can be our advocate before the Father and why? Hebrews 2:17, 18; 4:14; 7:25; 1 John 2:1, 2.**

**Hebrews 2:17-18**

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. **18** For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

#### Hebrews 4:14

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

#### Hebrews 7:25

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

#### 1 John 2:1-2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: **2** And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

“As a priest, Christ is now set down with the Father in His throne. Upon the throne with the eternal, self-existent One, is He who ‘hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows’ (Isaiah 53:4), who ‘was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin’ (Hebrews 4:15).”—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 69.

“You have not a difficulty that did not press with equal weight upon [Jesus], not a sorrow that His heart has not experienced. His feelings could be hurt with neglect, with indifference of professed friends, as easily as yours. Is your path thorny? Christ’s was so in a tenfold sense. Are you distressed? So was He.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 59.

**b. What do we find in the heavenly sanctuary to help us in our times of need? Hebrews 4:15, 16.**

#### Hebrews 4:15-16

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. **16** Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

“In the most holy place is His law, the great rule of right by which all mankind are tested. The ark that enshrines the tables of the law is covered with the mercy seat, before which Christ pleads His blood in the sinner’s behalf. Thus is represented the union of justice and mercy in the plan of human redemption.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 415.

“Christ offered up His broken body to purchase back God’s heritage, to give man another trial. . . . By His spotless life, His obedience, His death on the cross of Calvary, Christ interceded for the lost race. And now, not as a mere petitioner does the Captain of our salvation intercede for us, but as a conqueror claiming His victory. His offering is complete, and as our intercessor He executes His self-appointed work, holding before God the censer containing His own spotless merits and the prayers, confessions, and thanksgiving of His people. Perfumed with the fragrance of His righteousness, these ascend to God as a sweet savor. The offering is wholly acceptable, and pardon covers all transgression.”—*That I May Know Him*, p. 74.

1. Describe what it means to enter into God's rest.
2. What is uniquely special about God's rest on the seventh-day Sabbath?
3. When resting in the Lord, how do we change?
4. Explain the powerful depth of God's Word in the Christian life.
5. Why can we be so very thankful for Christ's ministry in heaven?

**Suggested Reading: *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 281-289.**

The Sabbath was hallowed at the creation. As ordained for man, it had its origin when “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Job 38:7. Peace brooded over the world; for earth was in harmony with heaven. “God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good;” and He rested in the joy of His completed work. Genesis 1:31. **(DA 281.1)**

Because He had rested upon the Sabbath, “God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,”—set it apart to a holy use. He gave it to Adam as a day of rest. It was a memorial of the work of creation, and thus a sign of God's power and His love. The Scripture says, “He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered.” “The things that are made,” declare “the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world,” “even His everlasting power and divinity.” Genesis 2:3; Psalm 111:4; Romans 1:20, R. V. **(DA 281.2)**

All things were created by the Son of God. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.... All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” John 1:1-3. And since the Sabbath is a memorial of the work of creation, it is a token of the love and power of Christ. **(DA 281.3) 1 I**

The Sabbath calls our thoughts to nature, and brings us into communion with the Creator. In the song of the bird, the sighing of the trees, and the music of the sea, we still may hear His voice who talked with Adam in Eden in the cool of the day. And as we behold His power in nature we find comfort, for the word that created all things is that which speaks life to the soul. He “who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” 2 Corinthians 4:6. **(DA 281.4)**

It was this thought that awoke the song,— **(DA 282.1)**

“Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work;  
I will triumph in the works of Thy hands.  
O Lord, how great are Thy works!  
And Thy thoughts are very deep.” Psalm 92:4, 5. **(DA 282.2)**

And the Holy Spirit through the prophet Isaiah declares: “To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him? ... Have ye not known? have ye not

heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.... To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? ... He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.” “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.” “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.” This is the message written in nature, which the Sabbath is appointed to keep in memory. When the Lord bade Israel hallow His Sabbaths, He said, “They shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am Jehovah your God.” Isaiah 40:18-29; 41:10; 45:22; Ezekiel 20:20, R. V. **(DA 282.3)**

The Sabbath was embodied in the law given from Sinai; but it was not then first made known as a day of rest. The people of Israel had a knowledge of it before they came to Sinai. On the way thither the Sabbath was kept. When some profaned it, the Lord reproved them, saying, “How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws?” Exodus 16:28. **(DA 283.1)**

The Sabbath was not for Israel merely, but for the world. It had been made known to man in Eden, and, like the other precepts of the Decalogue, it is of imperishable obligation. Of that law of which the fourth commandment forms a part, Christ declares, “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law.” So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator’s power. And when Eden shall bloom on earth again, God’s holy rest day will be honored by all beneath the sun. “From one Sabbath to another” the inhabitants of the glorified new earth shall go up “to worship before Me, saith the Lord.” Matthew 5:18; Isaiah 66:23. **(DA 283.2)**

No other institution which was committed to the Jews tended so fully to distinguish them from surrounding nations as did the Sabbath. God designed that its observance should designate them as His worshipers. It was to be a token of their separation from idolatry, and their connection with the true God. But in order to keep the Sabbath holy, men must themselves be holy. Through faith they must become partakers of the righteousness of Christ. When the command was given to Israel, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,” the Lord said also to them, “Ye shall be holy men unto Me.” Exodus 20:8; 22:31. Only thus could the Sabbath distinguish Israel as the worshipers of God. **(DA 283.3)**

As the Jews departed from God, and failed to make the righteousness of Christ their own by faith, the Sabbath lost its significance to them. Satan was seeking to exalt himself and to draw men away from Christ, and he worked to pervert the Sabbath, because it is the sign of the power of Christ. The Jewish leaders accomplished the will



of Satan by surrounding God's rest day with burdensome requirements. In the days of Christ the Sabbath had become so perverted that its observance reflected the character of selfish and arbitrary men rather than the character of the loving heavenly Father. The rabbis virtually represented God as giving laws which it was impossible for men to obey. They led the people to look upon God as a tyrant, and to think that the observance of the Sabbath, as He required it, made men hard-hearted and cruel. It was the work of Christ to clear away these misconceptions. Although the rabbis followed Him with merciless hostility, He did not even appear to conform to their requirements, but went straight forward, keeping the Sabbath according to the law of God. **(DA 283.4)**

Upon one Sabbath day, as the Saviour and His disciples returned from the place of worship, they passed through a field of ripening grain. Jesus had continued His work to a late hour, and while passing through the fields, the disciples began to gather the heads of grain, and to eat the kernels after rubbing them in their hands. On any other day this act would have excited no comment, for one passing through a field of grain, an orchard, or a vineyard, was at liberty to gather what he desired to eat. See Deuteronomy 23:24, 25. But to do this on the Sabbath was held to be an act of desecration. Not only was the gathering of the grain a kind of reaping, but the rubbing of it in the hands was a kind of threshing. Thus, in the opinion of the rabbis, there was a double offense. **(DA 284.1)**

The spies at once complained to Jesus, saying, "Behold, Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day." Matthew 12:2 **(DA 284.2)**

When accused of Sabbathbreaking at Bethesda, Jesus defended Himself by affirming His Sonship to God, and declaring that He worked in harmony with the Father. Now that the disciples are attacked, He cites His accusers to examples from the Old Testament, acts performed on the Sabbath by those who were in the service of God. **(DA 284.3)**

The Jewish teachers prided themselves on their knowledge of the Scriptures, and in the Saviour's answer there was an implied rebuke for their ignorance of the Sacred Writings. "Have ye not read so much as this," He said, "what David did, when himself was an hungered, and they which were with him; how he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread,... which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?" "And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." "Have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple." "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Luke 6:3, 4; Mark 2:27, 28; Matthew 12:5, 6. **(DA 285.1)**

If it was right for David to satisfy his hunger by eating of the bread that had been set apart to a holy use, then it was right for the disciples to supply their need by plucking the grain upon the sacred hours of the Sabbath. Again, the priests in the temple performed greater labor on the Sabbath than upon other days. The same labor in secular business would be sinful; but the work of the priests was in the service of God. They were performing those rites that pointed to the redeeming power of Christ, and their labor was in harmony with the object of the Sabbath. But now Christ Himself had come. The disciples, in doing the work of Christ, were engaged in God's service, and that

which was necessary for the accomplishment of this work it was right to do on the Sabbath day. **(DA 285.2)**

Christ would teach His disciples and His enemies that the service of God is first of all. The object of God's work in this world is the redemption of man; therefore that which is necessary to be done on the Sabbath in the accomplishment of this work is in accord with the Sabbath law. Jesus then crowned His argument by declaring Himself the "Lord of the Sabbath,"—One above all question and above all law. This infinite Judge acquits the disciples of blame, appealing to the very statutes they are accused of violating. **(DA 285.3)**

Jesus did not let the matter pass without administering a rebuke to His enemies. He declared that in their blindness they had mistaken the object of the Sabbath. He said, "If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." Matthew 12:7. Their many heartless rites could not supply the lack of that truthful integrity and tender love which will ever characterize the true worshiper of God. **(DA 285.4)**

Again Christ reiterated the truth that the sacrifices were in themselves of no value. They were a means, and not an end. Their object was to direct men to the Saviour, and thus to bring them into harmony with God. It is the service of love that God values. When this is lacking, the mere round of ceremony is an offense to Him. So with the Sabbath. It was designed to bring men into communion with God; but when the mind was absorbed with wearisome rites, the object of the Sabbath was thwarted. Its mere outward observance was a mockery. **(DA 286.1)**

Upon another Sabbath, as Jesus entered a synagogue. He saw there a man who had a withered hand. The Pharisees watched Him, eager to see what He would do. The Saviour well knew that in healing on the Sabbath He would be regarded as a transgressor, but He did not hesitate to break down the wall of traditional requirements that barricaded the Sabbath. Jesus bade the afflicted man stand forth, and then asked, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" Mark 3:4. It was a maxim among the Jews that a failure to do good, when one had opportunity, was to do evil; to neglect to save life was to kill. Thus Jesus met the rabbis on their own ground. "But they held their peace. And when He had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, He saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other." Mark 3:4, 5. **(DA 286.2)**

When questioned, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?" Jesus answered, "What man shall there be among *you*, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Matthew 12:10-12. **(DA 286.3) 3 I**

The spies dared not answer Christ in the presence of the multitude, for fear of involving themselves in difficulty. They knew that He had spoken the truth. Rather than violate their traditions, they would leave a man to suffer, while they would relieve a brute because of the loss to the owner if it were neglected. Thus greater care was shown for a

dumb animal than for man, who is made in the image of God. This illustrates the working of all false religions. They originate in man's desire to exalt himself above God, but they result in degrading man below the brute. Every religion that wars against the sovereignty of God defrauds man of the glory which was his at the creation, and which is to be restored to him in Christ. Every false religion teaches its adherents to be careless of human needs, sufferings, and rights. The gospel places a high value upon humanity as the purchase of the blood of Christ, and it teaches a tender regard for the wants and woes of man. The Lord says, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." Isaiah 13:12. **(DA 286.4)**

When Jesus turned upon the Pharisees with the question whether it was lawful on the Sabbath day to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill, He confronted them with their own wicked purposes. They were hunting His life with bitter hatred, while He was saving life and bringing happiness to multitudes. Was it better to slay upon the Sabbath, as they were planning to do, than to heal the afflicted, as He had done? Was it more righteous to have murder in the heart upon God's holy day than love to all men, which finds expression in deeds of mercy? **(DA 287.1)**

In the healing of the withered hand, Jesus condemned the custom of the Jews, and left the fourth commandment standing as God had given it. "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days," (Matthew 12:12) He declared. By sweeping away the senseless restrictions of the Jews, Christ honored the Sabbath, while those who complained of Him were dishonoring God's holy day. **(DA 287.2)**

Those who hold that Christ abolished the law teach that He broke the Sabbath and justified His disciples in doing the same. Thus they are really taking the same ground as did the caviling Jews. In this they contradict the testimony of Christ Himself, who declared, "I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." John 15:10. Neither the Saviour nor His followers broke the law of the Sabbath. Christ was a living representative of the law. No violation of its holy precepts was found in His life. Looking upon a nation of witnesses who were seeking occasion to condemn Him, He could say unchallenged, "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" John 8:46, R. V. **(DA 287.3)**

The Saviour had not come to set aside what patriarchs and prophets had spoken; for He Himself had spoken through these representative men. All the truths of God's word came from Him. But these priceless gems had been placed in false settings. Their precious light had been made to minister to error. God desired them to be removed from their settings of error and replaced in the framework of truth. This work only a divine hand could accomplish. By its connection with error, the truth had been serving the cause of the enemy of God and man. Christ had come to place it where it would glorify God, and work the salvation of humanity. **(DA 287.4)**

"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," Jesus said. The institutions that God has established are for the benefit of mankind. "All things are for your sakes." "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." 2 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Corinthians 3:22, 23. The law of Ten Commandments, of which the Sabbath forms a part, God gave to His people as a blessing. "The Lord commanded

us,” said Moses, “to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive.” Deuteronomy 6:24. And through the psalmist the message was given to Israel, “Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.” Psalm 100:2-4. And of all who keep “the Sabbath from polluting it,” the Lord declares, “Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer.” Isaiah 56:6, 7. **(DA 288.1)**

“Wherefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” Mark 2:28. These words are full of instruction and comfort. Because the Sabbath was made for man, it is the Lord’s day. It belongs to Christ. For ( 1 )“all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” John 1:3. Since He made all things, He made the Sabbath. By Him it was set apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him as both the Creator and the Sanctifier. It declares that He who created all things in heaven and in earth, and by whom all things hold together, is the head of the church, and that by His power we are reconciled to God. For, speaking of Israel, He said, ( 2 )“I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them,”—make them holy. Ezekiel 20:12. Then the Sabbath is a sign of Christ’s power to make us holy. And it is given to all whom Christ makes holy. As a sign of His sanctifying power, the Sabbath is given to all who through Christ become a part of the Israel of God. **(DA 288.2)**

And the Lord says, “If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; ... then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.” Isaiah 58:13, 14. To all who receive the Sabbath as a sign of Christ’s creative and redeeming power, it will be a delight. Seeing Christ in it, they delight themselves in Him. The Sabbath points them to the works of creation as an evidence of His mighty power in redemption. While it calls to mind the lost peace of Eden, it tells of peace restored through the Saviour. And every object in nature repeats His invitation, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. **(DA 289.1)**