

## 97-09-21a

This is Sunday, the 21st of September, 1997. As we continue our worship service this morning, turn with me to Hebrews, chapter 4. Hebrews, chapter 4. In connection with our study of Genesis, at the beginning of chapter 2, we have seen that God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. This is something that is referred back to in many places in the Scriptures, and Hebrews, chapter 4 is one of them.

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear, lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed, the gospel was preached to us as well as to them, them being the Israelites who left Egypt and were headed for the promised land. The gospel was preached to us as well as to them, but the word which they heard did not profit them.

Why? Not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. For we who have believed do enter that rest. As He has said, So I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter my rest, although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way, and God rested on the seventh day from all His works. And again in this place, they shall not enter my rest. Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, again He designates a certain day, saying in David, Today, after such a long time, as it has been said, Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.

For if Joshua had given them rest, then he would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For He who has entered His rest has Himself also ceased from His works, just as God did from His.

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted, as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There are several points made in that chapter that bear explanation and discussion, and we will return here later on this morning as we look at the concept of the Sabbath. We've

encountered this. We're ready to move forward into the events in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2. But as we saw last week, this chapter opens with the final day of creation week.

Genesis 2, verse 1, Thus the heavens and the earth and all the host of them were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

We're all here this morning because it's Sunday, and this is our Sunday morning worship. Sunday morning worship has been a tradition in the church going back nearly 2,000 years. Why do we worship on Sunday and not on the Sabbath, Saturday? Why did Israel worship on the Sabbath, Saturday, rather than Sunday or Wednesday or Tuesday or some other day of the week? Well, this is a question that bears answering.

Why is it that we're worshiping today? Why is it that the Jews worshiped on Saturday? Well, obviously the answer to this is going to be in the Scriptures. But there are some people who have come to a different conclusion than the tradition that we follow of worshiping on Sunday. And, of course, you've got your seventh-day Adventist.

I recently received in the mail a brochure which sums up the Adventist position. And I thought, and this is not something I ordinarily do, but I want to read you a portion of this. This is the Good News Series No.

14 from the Review and Herald Publishing Association, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740. Basically, you could probably get this from any seventh-day Adventist church. It is one of their denominational publications.

How's Sunday keeping started? I've got a picture of a calendar on the front with all the Saturdays X'd out. You notice on their calendar the Saturdays are in red as well as the Sundays. So let me read you a portion of this because this is a very clear and very succinct argument.

I couldn't really condense it any further down than what this presents. A very strange situation exists among Christians today. All Christians worship the same God.

They all have the very same Jesus as their Savior. All Christians accept essentially the same Bible. Yet they have two days of worship.

On one hand, there's a large group of sincere Christians who tell us Sunday is the Christian day of worship. Another equally sincere group replies no. Saturday, the seventh day, is the day on which Christians should worship.

How can we decide the question? The only way to know religious truth is to go to God's

Word. It does not matter what a church may teach or what a preacher may preach. The only really important question is what does God say in the Bible? What is truth? Well, we're off to a good start here, aren't we? In the fourth commandment of God's wonderful Ten Commandment Law, we read, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work.

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. That's a statement in Exodus 20, verses 8 through 11.

With such a plain statement from God himself, we naturally ask, How did Sunday keeping begin? When asked, many Christians will say they observed the first day of the week instead of the seventh because Christ rose from the dead on that day and authorized Christians to observe the day in honor of his resurrection instead of the seventh day Sabbath. A woman had just given this answer to a pastor who sat in her living room. This, of course, is a Seventh-day Adventist pastor.

Could you read me the Bible text which shows that Jesus made this change? Asked the pastor. Certainly, replied his hostess as she reached for her Bible. The moments passed as she turned the pages back and forth.

I can't seem to locate it just now, she murmured at last, but I'm sure it's there. Actually, the pastor stated, the New Testament refers to the first day of the week, Sunday, only eight times. Five of these refer to the simple fact that Jesus rose from the dead early Sunday morning.

These five texts are Matthew 28, verse 1 Mark 16, 1 and 2 Mark 16, 9 Luke 24, 1 and John 20, verse 1 I'll give you those again. Matthew 28, verse 1 Mark 16, 1 and 2 Mark 16, 9 Luke 24, 1 John 20, 1 Two of these, Matthew 28, 1 and Mark 16, 1, specifically mention that the Sabbath had already passed before Sunday morning began. Why are they making that point here? Because some people think that Sunday is the Sabbath, and the scripture says, Sabbath day had passed, and it was the first day of the week, Sunday.

So you can't say that the Bible calls Sunday a Sabbath. That's their point there. Then it continues.

But notice John 20, verse 19, answered the young lady. Here the disciples are meeting on the evening of the first day to celebrate their master's resurrection. You might turn to that, by the way, John 20, 19.

Remember the disciples have gathered together to meet, and Jesus appears to them in the room. I'll continue reading this. I see you have already found the next text which refers to Sunday, admitted the pastor, but I'm sure the disciples were not meeting to

celebrate Jesus' recent resurrection.

Why not? the young lady asks. Because Mark, telling about the same meeting, says that the disciples did not believe the women who told them that Jesus had risen, and that one of the things Jesus did when he appeared to them that Sunday evening was to reprove them for not believing in his resurrection. And the parallel passage he's referring to is Mark 16, verse 11 and verse 14.

The account of the meeting itself shows why they had assembled. John says they were hiding from the authorities. And this is John 20, 19.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst. So the pastor says, You see, the disciples, not believing that Jesus was alive, had hidden from fear of the Jewish leaders in a room with the doors all shut and probably locked. They were afraid that what had happened to Jesus might happen to them next.

It doesn't sound much like they were setting a precedent for future Christians concerning a new day for worship, does it? No, it doesn't, she agreed, interestedly. But aren't we supposed to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus? Yes, indeed, replies the pastor. But not by observing a day.

Neither the day of Jesus' death nor the day of his resurrection has significance in the scriptures as a holy day or a day to be observed in honor of these two important events. However, the Lord's Supper is expressly designed to quote, show the Lord's death till he come. That's 1 Corinthians 11, 26.

And likewise, baptism by immersion is specifically set apart in remembrance of both his burial and his resurrection. As the Apostle Paul writes, and this is Romans 6, 4 and 5, we were buried, therefore, with him by baptism into death so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

So, the pastor continues, we learn from the scriptures that the Lord himself has not set aside a particular day to commemorate his death or his resurrection, but he has definitely ordained two separate memorials to honor these two important happenings, i.e. the Lord's table and baptism. Being buried in and raised from a watery grave are symbols of his burial and resurrection and no other memorials have been set aside for these events. Where does the Bible next mention the first day of the week? The young lady wanted to know.

In Acts 20, verse 7, which says, And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow,

and continued his speech until midnight. You recall that's the case where the fellow falls out of the third story window and Paul raises him up because he preached so long. Surely that was a religious meeting, since Paul preached to them, explained the young woman.

It certainly was, agreed the pastor, but we need to keep two things in mind about this meeting. First of all, it was a special meeting. Paul and his companions had stopped at Troas on their way to Jerusalem.

They stayed there seven days and on the final day of their stay, which was Sunday, Paul held a special farewell service that evening. Acts tells us that Paul's regular custom involved worshipping on the seventh day each week, just as Jesus' habit had been also. And that's an important point.

If you look in Acts, it says in a couple of different places that Paul's custom was to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath, Saturday. You will find these references are Acts 13-14, Acts 13-42-44, Acts 16-13, Acts 17-2, and Acts 18-4 and 11. Again, the notices in Acts, Acts 13-14, Acts 13-42-44, Acts 16-13, Acts 17-2, Acts 18-4 and 18-11.

And that's a valid point. Let me assure you at this point that I'm not fixing to say that we're all going to become Adventists, but you can see that this is an argument with weight from the Scriptures. Another important thing, this is the pastor talking again, another important thing to remember is this.

Nothing man can do will make a day holy which God has not made holy. Tell me, does your church have a midweek preaching service? Why, yes, every Wednesday. And does this make Wednesday a holy day? Of course not.

Then why should Paul's preaching service on Sunday at Troas make Sunday holy? You see, without a direct command from God to keep a particular day holy, man can do nothing to make it a sacred day. God has said in Exodus 20, verse 8-10, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.

Nowhere can we find a record of God's changing that command from the seventh to the first day of the week. Man cannot keep holy a day which God has never made holy. That is true, reasoned the lady as if to herself.

But you said there were eight texts which mentioned Sunday, she reminded him, and that is only seven. Yes, he says. The final text appears in 1 Corinthians 16, 1 and 2. Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

Again, this is 1 Corinthians 16, 1 and 2. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I

come. Paul was taking up a collection among the churches to help famine-stricken Christians at Jerusalem. So he wrote the Corinthian believers that each first day of the week they should set aside what they had to give.

This would make it easier for him to collect their gifts when he came through without having to wait for them to go do their bookkeeping. The offering could go to Jerusalem without delay. Some have thought that Paul was referring to the weekly offerings in church and that the Corinthians were meeting on Sunday.

But the text says that each was to lay by him in store or keep the offerings set aside at home. And even if the Corinthians had worshiped on Sunday without God asking them to, that would not prove that God had changed the day of worship, would it? So, in the only eight verses of the New Testament which mention the first day of the week, we cannot find any hint of a divine command to change the worship day from Saturday, the seventh day, to Sunday, the first day. No, I suppose not, says the gal.

But doesn't the New Testament talk about Sunday as the Lord's Day? The term Lord's Day, he replies, does occur once in the New Testament. In Revelation chapter 1, verse 10. But it does not say that Sunday is the Lord's Day.

It does not say that Saturday is either. Here is the text. This is Revelation 1, 10.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet. From this text, all we can learn is that Jesus has a special day which is called the Lord's Day. What day that might be, it just doesn't say.

We have examined all the texts which refer to Sunday and none of them call that day the Lord's Day. But in Matthew 12, 8, we do find Jesus saying, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day. The Lord's Day then is the Sabbath, the seventh day Sabbath.

In Isaiah 58, 13, the Lord calls the Sabbath, My Holy Day. Again, those two references, Matthew 12, 8 and Isaiah 58, 13. So the scriptures are clear that the only day that can be called the Lord's Day is the seventh day Sabbath.

Nowhere in all the Bible did Jesus say he was Lord of the first day of the week. The young woman stood thoughtfully in the doorway watching the pastor move down the sidewalk. The Bible evidence seems so clear.

What should she do? Well, this pamphlet continues by linking the origin of Sunday worship to the Catholic Church. It's what you might call an ad hominem argument. When you want to attack a position and you want to add some weight to your argument, you try to attack the person who holds the position or the person who originated the idea or whatever.

This would probably be an ad institutum, I guess, an argument against the institution of

the church. Since the Catholics originated it, it must be bad. Well, there's some problems with that idea, not the least of which is Sunday worship was already well established by the 2nd century.

I mean, we have documentation that they were worshiping on Sunday by the 2nd century A.D., and the Catholic Church as we know it didn't really come into being until about the 5th or 6th century. About 600 is when you really have your first popes and that sort of thing. Now they try to say that it was all the Catholic Church, but Catholic in the sense of the first several hundred years just means the universal church.

That's what the word Catholic means anyway, is universal. So these are not worth going through. And he goes on to say that Paul talked about apostasy entering into the church in the latter days and that this is what the mean old Catholics have done by making us worship on Sundays.

And he links this with idolatry and indulgences and all the other abuses that came into the church in later centuries. But this is an example of the kind of argument that can sway believers who do prioritize the scriptures as their authority for faith and practice. We have seen this type of argument made to justify a variety of teaching.

Recent examples that come into my mind are the Experiencing God series where if you read through the books it is replete with scripture. It makes powerful arguments. It says, doesn't the scripture say? And if you were able to... It's probably easier to read something like this than to hear it read.

But in my mind it makes a pretty persuasive argument. No scripture that says we're supposed to worship on Sunday. No scripture that says that Sabbath worship has been abolished.

Abundant scriptures that God hallowed the seventh day, rested on the seventh day, told Israel to keep the Sabbath. Paul the Apostle, I think that's one of the most convincing arguments, is that Paul the Apostle in Acts, in three or four places, it says it was his custom to go to synagogue on the Sabbath day. And the occasions where they met on the first day of the week don't seem to be necessarily for the purpose of worship.

It doesn't say that this was their practice. So as the pamphlet leaves the lady standing thoughtfully in the doorway, the Bible evidence seems so clear, what should she do? Well, we might ask ourselves that question. What should we do? Should we become Adventists? Well, happily, no.

But how do we justify worshiping on Sunday? What is our reason for so doing? Well, we need to first of all understand the Sabbath. As we pointed out last week, what happens at the end of Genesis chapter 1? Let's go back and just read those verses one more time. Genesis chapter 1, beginning in verse 31, God saw all that he had made, and it was very

good.

And there was an evening and there was a morning, the sixth day. God had completed his work on the sixth day. He looks around and says, it is very good.

The work of creation is finished. God is not going to do any more creating. Man and woman have both been created.

So when you get into chapter 2, verse 1, the heavens and earth and all the host of them were finished. That word host, by the way, I don't think I pointed this out last week, but when it says the heavens and the earth and all the host of them, this is the Hebrew noun sabbat, T-S-A-B. Actually, it's T-S-A-B-A, sabba.

This is not related to Sabbath, which is shabbat. It starts with a different letter. This is T-S-A-B-A.

This is the word here translated host in the singular, but if you put this word in the plural, it is sabbaoth. You've heard one of the titles of God in the Old Testament as Jehovah Sabbaoth, the Lord of Hosts. So this word host seems to be all-inclusive.

Everything God has made, creatures included, all the host of the heavens and the earth are finished. On the seventh day, God ended his work, which he had done. We saw last week that this can be, and probably should be, translated as a perfect tense.

On the seventh day, God had finished. God did not do any work on the seventh day. This is the word or verb in this context here, shabbat, to make an end of working.

When the seventh day came, God didn't do any more work. He was finished. He rested on the seventh day.

There's your verb shabbat. From all his work which he had done, then God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, made it holy, sanctified it. Because in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made.

Now, as by way of review from last week, we saw that God did not hallow every seventh day, did he? He didn't say from now on, every seventh day is a hallowed day. He hallowed this day, this one day. One of the first observations we need to bring to our analysis of this Adventist argument for Saturday worship is that there was a quite lengthy period of human history between Creation Week and Mount Sinai where Sabbath worship did not pertain.

There is nothing in Genesis that indicates that Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Seth, Methuselah, Enoch, anybody between Adam and Moses worshipped on Saturday or that there was such a thing as Saturday worship. It is unknown, unmentioned, unheard of all the way through Genesis and into Exodus. It isn't until you get to Mount Sinai that God

institutes Sabbath keeping and Sabbath worship.

We see many other things mentioned. We see animal sacrifice. We see worship.

We see prayer and so forth. But we do not see any Sabbath requirement until the law of Moses. Well, what happens at the time of Moses? Turn over to Exodus chapter 31.

Let me just take sort of a silent poll here. How many of you, having heard the arguments from Scripture from the pamphlet, can think of a good sound justification for worshipping on Sunday? So, if you're standing before the judgment seat and the Lord says, why did you worship on Sunday? You'll have something you feel you can stand on. In Exodus chapter 31, you have in verse 12, the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, Surely my Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you.

You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death. For whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.

Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. We better have this right, hadn't we? Therefore, the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath.

To observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. Now, let me ask you something. How many of us in the church age are party to the covenants of Israel? Zero.

We are not heir to the covenant. We didn't stand on Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim and say all that the Lord hath said we will do. We don't observe the dietary laws or the civil laws or the laws of animal sacrifice.

How soon do you think the SPCA would be down here if you started engaging in animal sacrifice and breaking birds in half and chopping up oxen and so forth? If you are under that covenant, you've got to keep the whole thing. People say, oh, well, you know, some of those have been set aside, but other parts we still keep. That's not what the law says.

They appeal to what the law says. What the law says, Jesus himself says, Paul says, as a Pharisee, if you're going to keep the law, you've got to keep the whole thing. And if you miss one point, you've violated the whole thing.

You can't break up the law into little pieces and say, well, I'm going to keep this piece and this piece and this piece and these other four pieces I'm not going to keep. It has integrity. It's all one thing.

It is a covenant between God and Israel. And it specifically says in verse 16, therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath. So unless I am a child of Israel, this does not pertain to me.

Now, what if I'm Jewish? What if I'm a Messianic Jew and I've come to faith in Christ now? Should I keep this? Well, do the covenants of Israel pertain to any believer in this age? They don't. If any man be in Christ, you're either in Christ or you're not. If you're saved in this age, you're in Christ.

You're a new creature. Old things have passed away. The old things that pertain to believers have passed away.

All things have become new. We have a new covenant founded on new and better promises. And I don't want the promises of the old covenant.

I'm not a party to that covenant and I don't want to be. I like the covenant that is the new covenant in the blood of Christ that makes me a member of the body and the bride of Christ, having Christ as head, being one of those that God the Father has made a present of to Jesus Christ. Jesus says in John, all that the Father has given me will come to me.

Well, God didn't give Jesus Christ the Old Testament saints. They belong to God the Father. They are His peculiar people.

We in this age have been given to Jesus Christ and we belong to Him. And that's a part of our destiny that's talked about in Romans 8. To be destined, to be pre-destined, pre-designated, to be conformed to the image of Christ is a unique part of our covenant in this age. It doesn't say anything about being conformed to the Messiah in the Old Testament.

So, Exodus 31, to which the pamphlet appeals, just doesn't read down far enough, does it? The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath to observe the Sabbath throughout the generations, their generations, as a perpetual covenant. Look at verse 17, Exodus 31. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever.

For in six days the Lord made heavens and the earth and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed. So, you can turn just a few pages over to Exodus 34 and see this aspect of the covenant reiterated. Exodus 34, 21.

Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest. In plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. Now, we need to pay attention here to what God says to Israel about the Sabbath.

What does He say about it? What are they supposed to do on the Sabbath? Well, in 31, it said don't do any work on the Sabbath. Refrain from working. Work shall be done for six

days.

Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. What does it say here in 34? Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest. So far, how many details do we have about what Israelites are supposed to do on the Sabbath? We have one command for the Sabbath.

Don't work. Okay. Just thought I'd point that out as we go along.

Look in the next chapter, Exodus 35, verse 3. This is another statement in verse 2. Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day.

No fire. What does a fire do? Fire cooks. Fire provides light.

Fire provides heat. What do you think they did in the dead of winter on the Sabbath? Bundled up. Put on an extra robe or something because not only is there no work, but there's also no fire.

No illumination. No heat. Just as an aside, I think a true Seventh-day Adventist ought to turn off the electricity.

Ought to just go out to the pole and pull the master switch on every Saturday and not cook. No lights. No heat.

Shut the heater off. Maybe 40 below up there in North Dakota, but hey, if it's Saturday, no fire. Just a thought.

Okay. You have similar statements, which you might put down just for completeness. In Leviticus 26, verse 2, you shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary.

I am the Lord. These are not synonymous statements. This is a summary of many things here in Leviticus 26.

You shall not make idols nor carved images, nor shall you set up an engraved stone, for I am the Lord your God. You shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary. Those are two separate things that they are called upon to do.

Then you have the pronouncement of blessings. Leviticus 26 is a great summary statement of the covenant that God makes with Israel. If they are obedient, there's a listing of all the blessings.

If they are disobedient, there is a listing of all the curses. And you'll also find in Deuteronomy chapter 5 and verse 12, observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy as the Lord your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the

seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.

In it you shall do no work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm. Therefore, the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

So there you go. Other passages outside the Pentateuch that pertain here, Nehemiah chapter 10, verse 31. Nehemiah 10, verse 31.

When the neighboring peoples bring merchandise or grain to sell on the Sabbath, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on any holy day. Every seventh year we will forego working the land and will cancel all debts. This, of course, is the revival, if you will, in Israel under the return from captivity, Ezra and Nehemiah time frame.

I don't find this taking place amongst the modern day Sabbath keepers, that every seventh year anybody that owes them money is forgiven and the debt is canceled, which is a part of Sabbath keeping. Sabbath keeping is not only the Sabbath day, but also the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee. This is something that Israel returned to when they returned to the land.

Also in Isaiah 56, verse 2. Blessed is the man who does this, the man who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath without desecrating it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil. Isaiah 58-14 says, Then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob. The mouth of the Lord has spoken it.

Who is it that claims Jacob slash Israel as their father? It's the nation of Israel. To whom is the book of Isaiah addressed? Israel. So, it is very clear.

By the way, there are some other passages similar to that, which we won't turn to. Jeremiah 17-21 and Ezekiel 44-24. Which once again makes the point that Israel has been enjoined to keep the Sabbath.

So, we've got that settled. God rested on the seventh day. No one observed a weekly Sabbath between the time of Adam and the time of Moses.

But it is exceedingly clear in Exodus and Leviticus and Deuteronomy and in the prophets that Israel was to keep the Saturday Sabbath and not to do any work thereon, upon pain of death. And if you continue reading along in the account in the wilderness there, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath and he was stoned to death. Sabbath breaking was a capital offense in Israel.

So, Sabbath keeping is perpetuated all the way down until the time of Christ. What do we know about Jesus Christ and the Sabbath? Did Jesus Christ observe the Sabbath? Well, let me ask you this. Did Jesus Christ observe the law of Moses? Yes, he did.

In every point. He kept it perfectly. The Son of Man has not come to, well, Jesus said, I have not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it.

Now, he was accused of Sabbath breaking, wasn't he? He was accused of healing on the Sabbath and healing in the Pharisaic mind was work. It must require work to heal on the Sabbath. And so, Jesus was accused of this.

You can see this, for example, in Matthew chapter 12, verse 12. Jesus makes a statement about these accusations. This is the case where there's a man with a withered hand and in Matthew 12, verse 10, they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath? That they might accuse him.

Then he said to them, What man is there among you who has one sheep and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath. Jesus doesn't say the law does not pertain. Jesus says, although God says do no work on the Sabbath, Jesus, the Son of God, says it's lawful to heal on the Sabbath.

So, he is not breaking the Sabbath because it's not unlawful to heal. He's not saying, well, it's unlawful but the law doesn't apply. The law does apply and Jesus says, Under the law, it's okay to heal on the Sabbath.

So, all of the cases where Jesus heals on the Sabbath are not violations of the Mosaic law and Jesus is, in fact, observing the Sabbath and not doing any work and lighting no fire and so on. Those are the only two injunctions, by the way, for the Sabbath. Do no work.

Light no fire. Now, let me ask you something. What is our primary goal when we meet once a week? Is it to do no work? Why do we gather on Sunday? It's to worship.

Does the law of Moses, does the covenant between God and Israel say that the Sabbath is a day of worship? On the contrary. If anything, there was less worship on the Sabbath than there was on the other six days of the week. On any of the other six days of the week, you could go pick out the ox or the lamb or the dove that was without spot and blemish and go down and offer a sin offering or a guilt offering or a Thanksgiving offering.

You could cut the sheaf of grain and take it down for a wave offering. You could offer your offering of firstfruits on any of the other six days of the week. But on the seventh day, there were almost no offerings.

The only offering that was offered on the Sabbath was the burnt offering offered by the

priest, the daily sacrifice, which happens every single day, even on the Sabbath. The people did not bring their own offerings down, which was an act of worship. It would often accompany a petition.

You can see that in 1 Samuel 1, when Hannah and her husband go down there to worship. There is petition and prayer at the same time as this offering is made. So, the Sabbath was not designated a day of worship.

It was designated a day of rest and a day to be observed in obedience to God's command. Another often overlooked detail about the Sabbath. But in Mark 6, verse 2, you have Jesus teaching on the Sabbath.

He went out and came to his own country. His disciples followed him. When the Sabbath had come, he began to teach in the synagogue.

Many hearing him were astonished and so forth. So, Jesus not only healed on the Sabbath, but he taught on the Sabbath, as we've already noted. This is something the Apostle Paul did as well.

You can see the same thing in Luke 6, 6 and in John 5, 9. Luke 6, 6. Now, it happened on another Sabbath also that he entered the synagogue and taught, and a man was there whose right hand was withered. Same episode as in Matthew 12. And then you have John 5, 9. When Jesus goes with his disciples to the pool of Bethesda, surrounded by crippled people, people with every form of disease and infirmity, he sees a sick man and he says, Rise, take up your bed and walk.

And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed and walked, and that day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, It is the Sabbath, it is not lawful for you to carry your bed. He answered them, He who made me well said to me, Take up your bed and walk.

But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn. And if you look at verse 16, For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath. But verse 17, Jesus answered them, My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.

Which is another reminder that God only took one day off in human history, and that was the first seventh day. My Father has been working right up to the present. God didn't cease on the seventh day of creation week and then never work again.

He just sanctified and hallowed and rested on that one day. Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also said God was his Father, making himself equal with God. They were very unhappy that he told them the truth.

Jesus answered and said to them, Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do. For whatever he does, the Son also does in like manner. So, another important passage related to the Sabbath.

Acts chapter 16, verse 13, On the Sabbath, we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there, teaching the word of God on the Sabbath. These are the early apostles, Luke and Paul and so forth.

Same thing in Acts 17, verse 2, As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days, he reasoned with them from the Scriptures. So, Paul went to the synagogue on the Sabbath and taught. We know that this was Jesus' habit and was also Paul's custom.

Well, this is quite a bit of evidence for the Sabbath. We haven't seen anything about Sunday yet. So, where does that leave us? Well, we're going to pause and take our break, and when we come back, we'll try to answer that question.

Let's stop here and take a break.