

*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

*"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"*

Eze. 7:6 (Moffat)

GOD'S REST

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"God's TRUE REST"

M. L. ANDREASEN

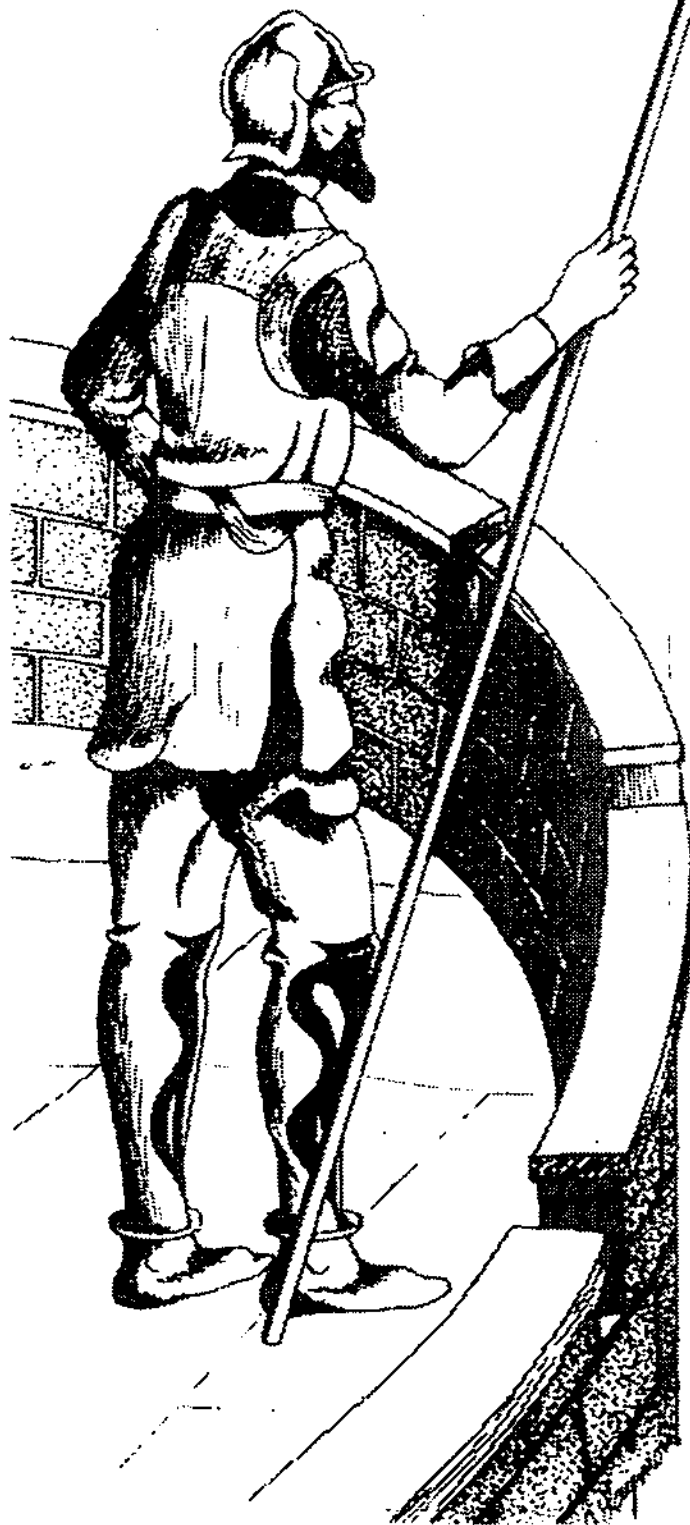
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Editor's Preface

There are a number of happenings within the community of Adventism upon which we could comment and would like to comment. This is being written as the General Conference is still in session at Toronto. Reports that I am receiving, at least on the surface, reveal that politics as usual, were at play. I will leave to other independent publications their analysis of what happened, and why possibly some men were placed in positions of leadership which their experience did not so qualify them.

Organization serves a purpose, and is needful, but when organization becomes a tool for the exercise of power, it corrupts not only the one who exercises it, but the whole structure is corrupted. It is obvious from 20/20 hindsight vision, that the original protest to the apostasy in the Church should not have heeded a lone, strong voice who opposed all organization. What a different picture might be seen today had simple "Gospel Order" prevailed. That is past, and cannot be recalled. We must, however, press on to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

This means truth, pure and unadulterated, must become basic as well as all pervasive. First, it gives freedom from the oppression of a human driven religious organization. Jesus said to the Jews who were so controlled - "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Secondly, it is the vital part in one's preparation for Heaven. Jesus, in His High Priestly prayer, requested of the Father - "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth" (John 17:17). Truth brings the receiver into God's rest. This will be our continued emphasis in each issue of WVN. One aspect only is to be found in this issue; others will follow.



The Review Continues:

God's Rest

As one reads the story of Creation in Genesis 1, there is an interesting repetition: "And there was evening, and there was morning" (Gen. 1:5 Heb). This summation is followed consecutively through the days of the first week to "day the sixth" (Gen. 1:31 Heb). In the second chapter of Genesis, the seventh day is noted, but it closes with no such notation. It states simply but emphatically that "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made" (2:3). It was God who had worked; it was God who rested.

On the sixth day God created the land animals and lastly, man in His own image (Gen. 1:24-27). Before Adam, all appeared and he named them (2:19-20). Not finding "an help meet" for Adam, God in the waning hours of the sixth day, brought forth Eve. Neither had lived a full day before they entered into rest with God. It was God's rest. Since the formula which closed each day of creation is omitted for the day of God's rest, is there a suggestion that God's intent was for Adam and Eve to live in a perpetual Sabbath - a day that would not end?

The work assigned Adam as he was placed in the Garden of Eden was "to dress it and to keep it" (2:15). But what did that mean? This can be understood in part by noting what happened after sin became a way of life. In the curse, the vegetation was altered. "Thorns and thistles" would appear (3:18). Labor would be required - "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (3:19). Work would enter the picture, far different than merely dressing and keeping the garden.

From the contemplation of God as revealed in nature, man would face the meaning of sin day by day in work. Thus man would require rest from work. So that which was planned as an eternal experience, was made a weekly event. The record reads - "At the end of the days" Cain and Abel came to worship before God with their offerings (4:3, Heb, margin). God desired to bestow His rest upon them. For man to understand the redemptive

meaning that God's rest was to be, the offering brought in worship was specified (4:3-5). The works of man's labor were unacceptable; only a life offered as a substitute would be acknowledged.

From this first reference of worship by Cain and Abel "at the end of the days," there is no further reference in the Scriptures of a "rest" until the confrontation between Moses and Pharaoh. When Moses returned to Egypt in answer to God's call, he and Aaron introduced a period of rest for the children of Israel which incited the wrath of the Egyptian king (Ex. 5:4-5).

After the deliverance from Egypt, God provided sustenance for the children of Israel, but with it He specified certain regulations. He sent manna six days, but none on the seventh day (Ex. 16:27). He "rested." Moses had told the people that the day was "the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord" (16:23). But some of the Israelites failed to heed the instruction to gather a double portion on the sixth day, and went out on the seventh day to get their food supply for the day. This brought a strong remonstrance from the Lord:

How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread for two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place [to gather bread] on the seventh day. (Ex. 16:28-29)

Several important factors are stated and implied in God's reaction to the actions of the faithless Hebrews. In the giving of the manna, there was divine intervention. The same God who created the world in six days, gave food for all seven days, but the food for the Sabbath came in a double portion on the sixth day. The Lord who rested the first seventh day from creation, also "rested" in the giving of the manna to Israel each seventh day. This weekly routine was followed by God through all of the vicissitudes of Israel for forty years till they arrived safely in Canaan. (Joshua 5:12) This is saying something as to how God regards HIS day of rest. This same God declared of Himself, "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. 3:6).

This daily provision for food and its weekly lesson was given to Israel prior to the uttering of the Law from Sinai in which God incorporated into its very heart the command to observe HIS day. That

command 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, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, not thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 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. (Ex. 20:8-11)

The Sabbath was declared the sabbath of the Lord God as the Creator of all. Man's accountability is set in the framework of the six days of creation and the rest he lost because of sin limited to one day. It was proclaimed in a universal setting which stipulated what man's relationship to God, and to his fellow man was to be. Yet within forty days the Sabbath command was separated from the Law and given to Israel for a unique purpose. At the end of the forty days of communion with God in the mount during which time instruction was given to Moses for the building of the sanctuary and the establishment of its typical priestly ministry, the Lord's final word was:

Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: ... Six days may work be done, but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: ... Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed. (Ex. 31:13-17)

The same basic elements are retained: It is God's sabbath given to man to keep holy; its origin was following the six days of creation. However, a new element was added. It would be a sign of God's sanctifying power between Him and the people whom He had called to be His own "peculiar treasure ... above all people" (Ex. 19:5). It was not involved in a stature of limitations; it was to be the evidence of a "perpetual covenant" and a sign "forever" between the Lord and "the children of Israel."

In the call of the prophets for reformation in Israel and Judah during the Old Testament period the

Sabbath was a focal point. Isaiah challenged:

Thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. 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; and shalt honor him, not doing thy own ways, nor finding thy own pleasure, nor speaking thy own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; ... for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (58:12-14)

Jeremiah was instructed by the Lord to stand in the royal gate of Jerusalem and warn the kings, princes, and people of Jerusalem to bring no burden in or out of the city on the Sabbath but to "hallow ye the sabbath day" as He had "commanded" their fathers (Jer. 17:19-22).

Ezekiel was commanded of the Lord to review for the Jewish elders who came to inquire of the Lord in behalf of the captives in Babylon, their history of rebellion. He reminded them of the sabbath given to them "to be a sign that they might know" that it was "the Lord that (sanctified) them" (20:12). He recalled for them the words of the Lord:

I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and hallow My sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know I am the Lord your God. (20:19-20)

Then Jesus Came

The Word, who made all things "and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3) became flesh and "dwelt among us" (v. 14). He who worshipped with our first parents on the first Sabbath day, now made it His custom to worship with men in sin on the Sabbath day (Luke 4:16). During His ministry, there was constant confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders of the Jews over the Sabbath. As one reads the gospel record, it would appear that Jesus invited confrontation over the Sabbath. He went into the synagogue as was his custom and seeing a man with a withered hand asked the man to stand up "in the midst" and then challenged "the scribes and Pharisees" present with the question, "Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good?" He proceeded to heal the man. (Luke 6:6-10) In another incident, Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath and spotted a woman who had been infirm for eighteen

years and was bowed in such a way she could not walk upright. He stopped and loosed her from her infirmity to the indignation of the first elder. Jesus said to him, "Thou hypocrite, doth not each of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away for watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" (Luke 13:10-16)

In the gospel of John, two of the three miracles of healing recorded are acts of restoration performed on the Sabbath day. (Chapters 5 & 9) Other miracles noted by John were the changing of water to wine (chapter 2) and the resurrection of Lazarus (chapter 11). Discussions which ensued because of the healing miracles centered on proper Sabbath observance; but not once in all of these confrontations was there any mention, not even a suggestion, that the Sabbath had changed, or would be changed to another day. It was God's day, given to man, and Jesus as the Son of man claimed Lordship of that day (Mark 2:27-28).

As Lord of that day, Jesus sought to direct man's attention to the true significance of the Sabbath. He invited the burdened of soul and body to come to Him and find once again the original rest. He called:

Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matt. 11:28-30)

This concept of "rest" in connection with the Sabbath is found in the book of Hebrews. Recalling the rebellion of the children of Israel in the wilderness, Paul noted God's reaction to their unbelief in saying, "They shall not enter into my rest" (3:8-11). Then he challenged the Hebrew Christians:

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. 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. For we which have believed do enter into rest. (4:1-3)

Linguistically, there is a connection between the "rest" offered by Jesus, and the "rest" spoken of here

in the book of Hebrews. In Matthew, the word used is αναπαυσις, while in Hebrews it is καταπαυσις. Both are built on the same verb, παυω, meaning to cease, and thus, rest. However, there are two different words in Hebrews chapters three and four from which "rest" is translated, καταπαυσις and σαββατισμος (4:9, margin), meaning "keeping of a sabbath." This sabbath rest is linked with the rest of God at creation as Paul quotes Genesis - "For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest (κατεπαυσεν) the seventh day from all His works" (4:4). Thus the original intent for which the Sabbath was given is to be realized in the rest offered by Jesus. This "rest" which was a "sign" between Himself and those whom he chose to be His peculiar treasure, ever remains "to the people of God." - It is our heritage in Christ for "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29).

Today confusion is compounded by the "new look" Romanism is seeking to project. In the Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II released May 31, 1998 entitled, *Dies Domini*, sections 13 -15 were captioned with Genesis 2:3 - "God blessed the seventh day and made it holy." Section 14, par. 1 reads:

In the first place, therefore Sunday is the day of rest because it is the day blessed by God and made holy by Him, set apart from the other days to be, among all of them, the Lord's Day. (The Pope Speaks, Vol. 43, #6, pp. 344, 345)

Sunday is not the seventh day, neither is its origin as a day of worship, by the act or blessing of the Creator God. Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, author of "The Baptist Manual," in a paper read in 1893 before a Baptist Minister's Meeting in Saratoga, New York, carefully analyzed the question. He stated:

It will however be readily said, and with some show of triumph that the Sabbath was transferred from the Seventh to the First day of the week, with all its duties, privileges and sanctions. Earnestly desiring information of this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask, where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament, — absolutely not. There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the Seventh to the First day of the week. I wish to say that this Sabbath question, in this aspect of it, is in my judgment the gravest and most perplexing question connected with Christian institutions which at present claims attention from Christian people. And the only reason why it is not a more disturbing element in Christian thought, and in religious discussions, is because the Christian world has set

bled down content on the conviction that somehow, a transference did take place at the beginning of Christian history, and with a comfortable apathy, the matter stands, as of insufficient importance to cause any special concern, save indeed on the part of a small company of "Sabbatarian Cranks," of whom I am one only in so far as my views expressed in this paper agree with theirs ...

I do not assert that it was not the divine intention that the Christian holy day, should be the first day of the week, but there is no evidence of such intention in these [NT] instances cited. I do not assert that Christians should not commemorate the resurrection on Sunday; but as no one knows when the resurrection took place, and as there is no strong evidence against Christ's having risen on the first day of the week, it seems somewhat needless to press claims for the sanctity of that day on that ground. To me it seems unaccountable that Jesus during three years' intercourse with His disciples, giving the disciples instruction as to His kingdom, constantly coming in contact with the Sabbath question, often discussing it in some its aspects, freeing it from its false glosses, and teaching its true nature and purpose, never alluded to an transference of the day. Also that during the forty days of His resurrection life, no such thing was intimated. Nor so far as we know, did the Spirit, which was given to bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he said unto them, deal with this question. Nor yet the inspired Apostles in preaching the Gospel, founding Churches, counselling and instructing those founded, discuss or approach this subject. Of course I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of Paganism, and Christened with the name of the Sun-god. Then adopted and sanctified by the Papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism, and the Christian world, just as Easter, which the Churches hankering after ritualism are now lovingly pressing to their hearts, comes bearing the sign Manual of a heathen divinity, instead of — if something purely Christian could not be had — at least bearing the sign and designation of the pascha of the old dispensation. But in the early ages, when Christian ritualism largely received its form, the mould in which it was cast was rather Pagan than Jewish, as preferred by a carnal and secularized Church establishment. [A notarized copy of this document may be had upon request by sending a stamped self-addressed #10 envelope to Document "Hiscox," P. O. Box 69, Ozone, AR 72854]

The question faces us squarely, where do we perceive our "roots" to be? Is our heritage as Christians, pagan; or as being Christ's, we are Abraham's seed? If the latter, then God's rest is the same sign He gave to a people He wished to be His peculiar treasure - "There remaineth a keeping of a Sabbath to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9 margin). #

God's True Rest

M. L. Andreasen

God's rest is a spiritual experience into which the soul enters upon conversion. In the unregenerate man there is unrest and strife; an evil conscience make life a burden; the heart is filled with wicked thoughts; worldly ambitions hold sway; envy and pride bring heartache and sorrow; impurity dominates the mind; and man is at war with his fellow men, with himself, and with his God. Then comes the blessed day of surrender. The soul casts itself upon the mercy of God and is accepted. The former things pass away, all things become new, and all things are of God. He enters a new world, becomes a new man, has a new name, is a different person. At last there is peace in his heart --- his sins are forgiven. At last his soul is at rest; he has found God. Gone are the accusations of conscience; gone his wicked ambitions, his envy and pride, his love of the world, his love of sin. He is completely a new creature. He has entered God's rest. He has heeded Christ's call, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30).

This is the rest that was promised to Israel when God said to Moses: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (Ex. 33:14). It was of this rest Jeremiah spoke when he said, "Stand ye in the old paths, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk there-in" (6:16). Isaiah says, "The Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the bondage wherein thou was made to serve" (14:3).

This call to rest has sounded throughout all time and is still sounding. Many have heeded it, but more have rejected it. The call rings out in every generation: "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23).

The writer of Hebrews connects this rest with God's rest at creation when "the works were finished from the foundation of the world. ... And God did rest the seventh day from all His works" (4:3,4). The connection between the rest into which God invites the be-

liever and His own rest at creation, though close, may not be immediately apparent; a little reflection, however, will make it clear.

When God had finished His six days' work at creation, that which had been planned from eternity at last found visible expression. The earth stood forth in its pristine beauty, the angels rejoiced, the sons of God shouted for joy, and the morning stars sang together. With what amazement and wonder the angels watched the unfolding of the wisdom and the power of God, as "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." They saw light infiltrate the darkness, and beauty begin to take form. When as the climax, God took lifeless clay and out of it formed a man; when out of man He took a rib and builded it into a woman; when the man and the woman met, one the perfect compliment of the other; when the angels understood that what had been created for the sake of the beings just formed; when they began to fathom - though as yet only vaguely - that all this had a bearing on sin, which so mysteriously had appeared in the universe and which threatened to disrupt the previous harmony of heaven; when they realized that God in His goodness had permitted them to witness the supreme divine prerogative of the Godhead, the creation of life, and they themselves would be called upon to have a part in the unfolding drama of the eradication of sin from the universe, their joy knew no bounds. Christ, by whom God had made the worlds, had been exalted before their eyes (Heb. 1:2). They had seen Him create; they had seen Him breathe life into a lifeless form and create a man in His own image, a candidate for immortality, capable of reaching even greater heights than those of which they themselves were capable. Wonderful was their God, and equally wonderful was the One whom they had just seen reveal the power of the Godhead.

The day following the creation of man was the greatest of all days. God understood, of course, what the angels but dimly comprehended, and man not at all - the meaning and the cost of creation. He saw the future. He knew of sin and the dark days coming; but He also knew that the supreme step had been taken that would eventuate in the complete vindication of God and the final cleansing of the universe from sin. He looked forward to the time when one pulse of harmony should beat throughout creation, one song of harmony rise from every tongue, when the family in heaven and earth should unitedly raise their voices in praise to Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb. ...

When the first Sabbath came to earth, only God had worked the six previous days. The angels had looked on in wonder and admiration, but they had not created. Man had been brought into existence on the sixth day. So neither angels nor man had worked six days. Adam had indeed worked on the day of his creation in naming all the animals. But he had worked at most only part of one day. In a special sense, therefore, the first Sabbath in Eden was God's Sabbath, for He was the only one who had worked six days. It was His holy day, His day of rest. Hence, the strength and appropriateness of the Bible statements: "The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord" (Ex. 20:10). "My holy day" (Isa. 58:13). "My rest" (Heb. 3:11; 4:3, 5). "His rest" (Heb. 3:18, 4:1, 10).

"On the seventh day God ended His work" (Gen. 2:2). ... God did more than merely end His work on the seventh day. A person may stop his work without finishing it. God not only stopped His work; He finished it. And He finished it on the seventh day. Had God finished His work on the sixth day, there would have been no Sabbath for mankind. But God included the Sabbath in the creation week, and thus made His finished work include both work and rest. Having worked six days and rested the seventh, God says to man, "I have worked six days and rested the seventh; now *you* work six days and rest the seventh, for the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord." It is noteworthy that two thousand years after creation, God speaking of the Sabbath does not say that the seventh day was the Sabbath of the Lord, but that it *is*. In this Christ concurs when He affirms that the Son of man *is*, not *was*, Lord of the Sabbath.

God's ideal of perfect life, perfect communion, perfect love, joy, and peace, found expression in that first Sabbath in Eden. As we have noted, in a peculiar and distinct sense it was *His* Sabbath, *His* rest. ... The fact that He picks on the seventh day and specifically mentions that this is the day on which He rested in the beginning, and that it is "His rest" to which He invites all to enter, is significant. And that this is recorded in the New Testament in Hebrews, more than thirty years after the death of Christ, is equally significant. Christians would do well to ponder this.

Let the mind dwell upon the first Sabbath. God has finished His work and as He contemplates it, finds it "very good." God states this very modestly, for the earth and what He had made must have been surpassingly beautiful. As God beheld His creatures; as He saw Adam in his perfection of strength and manhood, and Eve in her loveliness; as He saw angels and men,

sons of God, cherubim and seraphim; as He saw "the whole family in heaven and earth" in sweet communion and fellowship, He saw life as He meant it to be - ideal, pure, complete, satisfying. And so, as He drank in the whole scene, He rested and was refreshed. (Ex. 31:17). The ideal and the climax had been reached....

The Sabbath thus became to Adam symbolic of rest with God, perfect communion, of oneness with God. It was the one commandment that God chose to honor by joining man in its observance; or perhaps better, inviting man to join Him in its observance. It is the one command that was communicated to man not only by way of law but also by God's example. Among the ten it stands unique, symbolic of God's ideal of perfection, of holiness, of rest, of ideal existence with God.

It is this idea of the seventh-day Sabbath that is introduced in Hebrews to symbolize God's rest. From the "foundation of the world" God spoke of the seventh day as His rest. (Heb. 4:3, 4). It is evident from this reading that God connects the seventh day - the original seventh day "from the foundation of the world," when He had finished His work - with entering into His rest.

There are three distinct ways in which "rest" is used in [Hebrews]: first, entering into the land of Canaan, which was Israel's understanding of rest; second, rest from sin, resting in God, having peace in the heart, rest for the soul, true conversion; and third, the perfect symbol and sign of rest, the Sabbath, instituted by God Himself - not a spurious or new sabbath, but the original seventh day of creation, which "remaineth" and which God blessed and sanctified and gave to man as a sign of sanctification. (Eze. 21:12, 20).

(The Book of Hebrews, pp. 182-188)

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"The Sabbath is a time when the spent spirit may catch its breath, and man may look into the face of God and be refreshed."

Wm. H. Mason

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Perfect Rest

Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest. [Isaiah] says, "Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee; because he trusteth in Thee." Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the wise Master-worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory. And that character which expresses the glory - character - of Christ, will be received into the Paradise of God. A renovated race shall walk with Him in white, for they are worthy.

As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, Come learn of Me, and in thus coming we begin the life eternal. Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be opened to us; and the more we know God, the more intense will be our happiness. As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. All that human nature can bear, we may receive here. But what is this compared with the hereafter?

Desire of Ages, p. 331

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In "the new heavens and the new earth...", it shall come to pass that... from one sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord" (Isa. 66:23-23).

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