



FOUNTAIN OF BLESSING

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The Blessing of the Father's Delight

Psalm 33:8-9 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

How amazing it would have been to be one of the angels beholding the Master Builder speak this world into existence. What is even more amazing is this Master Builder "created all things by Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 3:9). Here are more testimonies revealing this fact:

John 1:1-3,14 In the beginning was the Word, and **the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** The same was in the beginning with God. **All things were made by him;** and without him was not any thing made that was made ... And **the Word was made flesh,** and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Colossians 1:12-17 Giving thanks unto the Father ... Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of **his dear Son:** In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: **For by him were all things created,** that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.**

Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, **Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.**

The Son of God is the Word of God, God's thoughts made audible. "His name is called The Word of God." (Revelation 19:13). All of the Father's creative power was given to His Son to speak the world into existence.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**

John 8:28 I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

As Christ spoke the Words of His Father, the world came into existence. As the grass, trees and flowers emerged from the earth by the Word spoken, the Father turned to His Son and said, "This is good, Son." The book of Proverbs records the Son's words expressed at that time:

Proverbs 8:22-30 The LORD possessed me **in the beginning** [cf. John 1:1] of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, **I was brought forth** [cf. John 8:42]; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth [cf. Hebrews 1:5]: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, **as one brought up with him** [See John 1:1]: and **I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.**

Each day of this creation, the Son of God felt the delight of His Father in Him. The Son of God rejoiced in the blessing of His Father through the creation process. As each day passed, the rejoicing and delight of Father and Son grew. As they watched Adam and Eve stand in awe of the creation that surrounded them, the Father and Son felt such joy in the gift they gave so freely. They rejoiced together in their *agápe* (selfless) love. Then finally the Sabbath came, and as the Father beheld the works of creation; as He looked upon the mountains, valleys, and streams, and all the creatures roaming on the earth He spoke with joy to His Son, saying:

You are my Beloved Son in whom I delight.

Upon this day the Son of God was blessed by His Father as "the Lord of the Sabbath" (Luke 6:5). The Spirit of the Most High rested upon Him and the Son was refreshed.

Exodus 31:17 ...in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

The word *refreshed* in Hebrew means breathed upon. This breathing upon the Son was the Father's delight in His Son. The Son responded with adoration and worship of His Father for giving all things to Him.

John 3:35 The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.

John 8:29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for **I do always those things that please him.**

John 17:1-7 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As **thou hast given him power over all flesh**, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. **I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.** And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with **the glory which I had with thee before the world was.** I have manifested thy name [character] unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and **thou gavest them me;** and they have kept thy word. **Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.**

The blessing that God placed in the Sabbath, which is remembered every week, is the refreshing that the Son experienced through His Father's delight.

Genesis 2:3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

Every seventh day Sabbath the Son of God is breathed upon by the Father in memorial of that delight He felt for His Son when the creation week was completed. Those who are in Christ receive of this blessing. We become inheritors of this blessing through Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in**

heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

The greatest spiritual blessing we can receive in Christ is to know we are loved by the Father. By faith we see the Father put His arm around His Son in Fatherly delight and kiss him with Fatherly affection and tell Him: “You are My Son, and I delight in You!”

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. **The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father,** He has declared *Him*.

What else could the Son of God experience except complete and perfect rest in that blessing spoken over Him. Is there anything else you could desire other than to be in the bosom of the Father and know – know with absolute certainty – that you are loved and delighted in by Him?

This is the completed work to which the gospel brings us.

Hebrews 4:2-4 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them [ancient Israel]... For we which have believed do enter into rest, ... the works were finished from the foundation of the world. **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.**

The work of creation and redemption are the same. Both of these bring you into the arms of the Father to be embraced by Him and experience complete rest and joy in Him. This experience is opened to each of us through the Lord Jesus Christ, and as each seventh day comes to us we can enter into that same rest that Christ experienced from the foundation of the world. Each Sabbath we can taste in greater measure the delight of the Father for us through His Son. Jesus partook of our humanity, our “flesh and blood” (Hebrews 2:14). The word that was spoken to Jesus at the Jordan, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” embraces all humanity. God spoke to Jesus as our representative. With all our sins and weaknesses, we are not cast aside as worthless. “He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.” (Ephesians 1:6).

This is the blessing contained in the Sabbath. It is the refreshing and renewal of the bonds of love between us and our Father through Christ. Each Sabbath engraves more deeply upon our souls the Father's name (character) by the breath of His mouth. How precious is the Sabbath day to the children of God! Oh for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise. In Him I am connected to the delight of my Father; I am accepted in the Beloved.

The Loss of Sonship Through Sin

This was the condition of Adam before he fell. He dwelt in the assurance of the Father's love through the Son of God... until the destroyer came between them. Satan refused to submit himself to the Son of God, and in so doing he placed himself outside of the delight of his Father. The Spirit of the Father's delight only flows through His Son. If we desire the blessing and delight of the Father, we must drink from the fountain found in Christ Jesus. When Satan turned from Christ he also turned from his own identity as a son of God. In order to be a son we must behold the Son, for by beholding we are changed. Satan rejected his sonship to God and began to erase from his mind the seal of the Father, replacing it with a mystery that allowed him to worship himself.

Isaiah 14:12-14 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

If Lucifer had remained in submission to the Son of God he might have continued to drink the delights of the Father through Christ; he might have remained a son through the Spirit of the Son. Sadly, he rejected this, and in stepping out from his position he fell into the darkness of worthlessness. Ezekiel 28:12-15 symbolically describes the fall of Lucifer. He was "full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty." He was "in Eden the garden of God" – in a state of perfection. He was covered with "every precious stone" representing the Father's precious character of righteousness. His melodious voice and his instruments of praise echoed throughout the universe in adoration to his

Maker. He “walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire”, meaning in complete harmony to God’s law of love upon which the reality of life operates (Deuteronomy 33:2). He was perfect from the day he was created “until iniquity” was found in him. He walked away from the “stones of fire”, and from giving praise to his Maker. All the covering precious stones of a Christ-like character he left at the door.

In his new found condition all happiness was gone. The light that shone around him and his sympathizers was now gloomy and despairing. His selfish quest to rise above the Most High came tumbling down upon his own head. Self-guilt and condemnation rested upon him causing him much grief.

Isaiah 57:20-21 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

Satan’s gloom and despair were inherited by Adam and Eve when they ate of the fruit from which they were commanded not to eat. This gloom and worthlessness came directly from the loss of identity. It was lost because of turning away from the Father’s delight resting in His Son. It was the sorrow of a self-imposed orphan. This same loss and sorrow exist today:

1 John 2:23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.

It is not hard to understand that when a person feels of little or no value it will manifest in self-destructive worthlessness. Sin is the manifestation of the belief that the One who gave us life does not value us. The serpent insinuated this in the garden.

Genesis 3:5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Satan suggested that God was hiding something from Adam and Eve that would prove a blessing to them. Such a belief led to the thought that God did not truly love them. The thought that God does not truly love us leads to sin, “and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.” (James 1:15).

The remedy for sin therefore is the revelation of the love of God for us as our delighted Father. The place where this love is fully manifested is in the delight that God expressed for His Son on the first Sabbath in Eden. The Sabbath is therefore the agency through which the delighting Spirit of the Father restores to our minds His truly loving care for us. It is upon this day that we are breathed upon through Christ and our minds are sanctified into an understanding of the love of the Father.

We can only receive the complete blessing of the Father through Christ. As Christ's Lordship is found in the Sabbath, we therefore can only receive the complete blessing of the Father through the Sabbath. This is why the Sabbath is the sanctifying sign or miracle of our God.

Ezekiel 20:12 Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign [Strong's H226 miracle] between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them.

The issue of our sonship and daughtership to God is the key to the war between Christ and Satan. Satan revealed this when he said to Christ:

Matthew 4:3 ... **If thou be the Son of God**, command that these stones be made bread.

Satan questioned Christ concerning His Sonship and how it was defined. The Father had told Christ 40 days earlier at the Jordan River that He was His Son. Would Christ believe the Father's word or try to *prove* it by His power? Christ rested in the word of His Father and trusted that God truly was His Father by faith (Matthew 4:4). To seek to prove He was a Son would have meant that He did not accept it by faith in the word of God. See the book *Identity Wars* for more on this subject at fatheroflove.info

As the Son of God received the seal of His Father's blessing on the first Sabbath of creation, so also we are completely restored and sealed in our sonship to God through the Sabbath.

No Sabbath Without Sacrifice

Would it not have been a simple thing for Adam and his children to come to the Sabbath each week to receive the Father's blessing and start the

restoration process of the Father's delight in His children? This was not possible, for when Satan turned from his sonship to God, he rejected the Spirit of sonship found in Christ. In fact, Satan had wanted to kill the Son of God from the very beginning:

John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

When Adam submitted himself to Satan he was overtaken by an orphan spirit that hated Christ and wanted to be acknowledged as an equal rather than being a son. As Satan said in the beginning:

Isaiah 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

It is impossible to receive the Father's delight if we refuse to accept that our hearts are naturally at war with the Son of God. God does love us, but we can't receive His love unless we return to sonship. So in order to come into Sabbath rest we must acknowledge that by nature we reject the Son of God due to our orphan mindset. Every desire to be first, every effort to prove oneself better than another, every effort to display personal power as a reason why we should be valued is always moving towards an attempt to destroy the Son of God.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

To glory in our own wisdom, might, or wealth is to not glory in knowing the Father. It is not acknowledging that all things come from Him. The Son of God is constantly in a place of acknowledging that all He has comes from His Father.

John 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth

the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

John 3:34-35 The one whom God sent speaks the words of God, because **God does not give the Spirit in limited measure** to him. The Father loves the Son and has put everything in his hands. (*ISV*).

It is therefore impossible to receive the delight of the Father in us when we do not come to Him in the Spirit of His Son. The only way to do this is to acknowledge that by nature we have warred against the Son of God, and our attitudes and behaviour have been such that given the chance, we would kill the Son of God.

The means by which we make this acknowledgement is to confess the death of Christ for us. When we accept that He was wounded by our transgressions, and He was bruised by our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5), then the door is opened into the sanctuary of our Father for us to receive His blessing. Every selfish desire wounds and tortures the Son of God. We dare not simply accept that Jesus suffered for us 2000 years ago, but “today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” (Hebrews 4:7). *Today* He is wounded, *today* He suffers from our selfishness, *today* He is despised and rejected of men (Isaiah 53:3). When our eyes are opened to this reality, then, and only then, can we come into the true Sabbath experience.

The point here is that **it is impossible to come into the Sabbath rest when we do not accept the sacrifice of Christ for our soul**. His death shows us our nature towards Him and gives us the choice to repent of it. No one can have rest in Christ while he is at the same time crucifying Him and putting Him to an open shame (Hebrews 6:6). Therefore we cannot appear before the Lord empty (Exodus 23:15). We must come with a sacrifice. Our sacrifice is not a bloody animal, but a contrite heart and a broken spirit (Psalm 51:16,17) in acknowledging our natural selfishness and therefore our fallen nature’s hatred towards Christ. Sacrifice and Sabbath are always connected. The one provides entrance into the other. These truths must be understood for us to win the war to reclaim our identity as sons and daughters of God. Until we accept that in our sinful state we are trampling the Son of God under foot we can never enter into true sonship to God. Until we acknowledge the sufferings of the Son

on our account we cannot become sons, but rather we remain orphans without purpose who cannot cease from sin, for sin is the evidence of lost sonship or daughtership; it is evidence that we have not found rest in the true love of the Father.

With these thoughts in mind we see that the Sabbath becomes a beacon of hope as a remedy for sin. When we see the broken Saviour upon the cross we see what our wicked desires have done to Him, and then we turn to God in repentance and receive the blessing of Christ and taste of the sweet delight that God has for His Son. We become accepted in the Beloved, and all the spiritual blessings that Christ possesses become ours by faith. In this sonship to God we cease to sin because we cease to doubt His love, and we rest in perfect joy knowing the Father will always love and cherish us and only do what is best for us.

What a precious thought! What sublime consolation we have in Christ and His Sabbath! So we see, on the Sabbath, how the Spirit of Christ pours forth from the throne of God carrying the delight of the Father and seeking entrance into all hearts open to acknowledge Him. Those who accept Christ's sacrifice and then embrace His commandments connect themselves to the Sabbath and then by faith enter into all the fullness of sonship or daughtership to God. Every Sabbath day connects us to the Father's delight in His Son. The arm placed around Him is inherited by us. The joy and delight of the Son is experienced by us every Sabbath.

We find that the cross at the heart of the gospel, and the Sabbath at the heart of the law, kiss each other and release to us the Father's delight that we might exclaim:

1 John 3:1-2 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: ... Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

The gospel is a revelation of how and when the Father comes to us and tells us how precious we are to Him and how much He loves us.

The Gospel in the Law

From the beginning the Lord revealed to the patriarchs the seasons of refreshing from the Lord when the Father's delight would be revealed in Christ. When the patriarchs would offer a lamb by faith at the time appointed, they would then connect to the Spirit of Christ which possessed the delight of the Father and, being led by the Spirit, would be affirmed in their sonship to God.

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

Satan quickly moved to pervert the times and sacrifices which God had appointed to come to bless His children. After Israel came out of Egypt, Christ restored to Moses a complete explanation of the gospel through the commandments, statutes and judgements of the Lord that had been lost in Egypt. The Scripture says of Abraham:

Genesis 26:5 ...Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

Abraham walked in harmony with God's "commandments, statutes, and laws" because God had preached the everlasting gospel of righteousness by faith unto Abraham (Galatians 3:7-9).

After beholding God's law for 40 days and 40 nights Moses came down from the mountain with his face glowing from the glorious gospel in the law (Exodus 34:29-35). The light that shone on Moses face was not a symbolic light; it was real light that caused the children of Israel to request Moses to cover his face. The light had come from his beholding Calvary by faith and from seeing how the Father connects His children to Himself through the Sabbath and the Cross.

Before the first set of commandments were broken by Moses, God connected the Sabbath with creation:

Exodus 20:11 **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.

Later, after a new set of commandments were made, God also connects the Sabbath with deliverance from bondage:

Deuteronomy 5:15 And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that **the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm:** therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

In these two passages we see that the Sabbath is a channel leading us to the Source of our existence and the Source of our redemption. The Sabbath is as much a part of the gospel today as it was in the beginning.

Hebrews 4:10-11 For he that is entered into his [God's] rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Moses was given the specific times when a sacrifice was to be offered for the nation. The sacrifices and their timing were significant. The time at which the sacrifice was offered provided a channel for the blessing of the Father to be poured out as He poured out His blessing on His Son on the first Sabbath.

Let us examine when the sacrifices were to be offered according to the law.

1 Chronicles 23:30-31 And to stand every **morning** to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at **even**; And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the **sabbaths**, in the **new moons**, and on the **set feasts**, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD.

2 Chronicles 8:12-13 Then Solomon offered burnt offerings unto the LORD on the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch, Even after a **certain rate every day**, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the **sabbaths**, and on the **new moons**, and on the **solemn feasts**, three times in the year, even in the **feast**

of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.

The law reveals that sacrifices were offered:

1. Morning
2. Evening
3. Sabbath
4. New Moon
5. Feast of Passover/Unleavened Bread
6. Feast of Weeks
7. Feast of Tabernacles

We find a beautiful connection between the sacrifices and the Sabbath in the use of the number seven. In the table below we will add to the end of the annual cycle some extra sevens mentioned in the law.

The times for these sacrifices are not random events but are carefully connected to the number seven in order to reveal the Sabbath-Seven-Principle connected to all the major divisions of time. It is found in each day, week, month and year. The seventh day is the day upon which the Father blessed His Son when the six days of work were completed. When the work is completed through the period of six units, the seventh unit provides a time for reflection and to taste of the delight of the Father and to renew our sense of identity as children of God.

Because the Sabbath is God's sign of our creation and redemption, God requires His people to count by sevens lest we should forget our Creator and Redeemer who created the earth in six days and rested on the seventh.

Time frame	Event	Sixes, Sevens and Rest	Reference
7 th Hour	Daily Sacrifice	6 hours between morning and evening sacrifice. 6 hours that Christ laboured on the cross then rested.	Mark 15:25; 15:34; Acts 3:1; Ps 141:2; Num 28:8
7 th Day	Sabbath	6 days of work then rest	Ex 20:8-10
7 Days	Unleavened bread	7 days of Unleavening	Lev 23:6
7 Weeks + 1 Day	Pentecost	Count 7 weeks to Pentecost then rest	Lev 23:15
7 th Month Count 7 Moons	Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles (7+1 days)	Count 6 months then 3 feasts in 7th month	Lev 23:24-39; Isa 66:23, 2 Kings 4:23; Eze 46:1
7 th Year	Land Sabbath	Count 6 years then 7 th year of rest	Lev 25:3
7x7 Years + 1	Jubilee	Count 7x7 years to Jubilee then rest	Lev 25:8-10
7 th x1000 Years	Millennium	Count 6 times 1000 years then rest	Rev 20:6

Is it possible that our Father wants to write into every division of time His great love for His Son and for us through Him? The human body has 30 trillion cells which perform about 10,000 chemical functions. Every cell has one trillion bits of data (equal to every letter in ten million books). Each one also replaces itself every **SEVEN YEARS**.

“Bird's eggs ALL hatch in a perfect multiple of **seven day periods** from laying. Hens hatch in **21** days, common ducks **28** days, Muscovy ducks **35** days, Emperor Penguins **49** days, Emu **56** days, Golden and Imperial eagles **35** days, large owls **28** days, Cassowary **42** days, **ALL MULTIPLES OF SEVEN**. In humans the menstrual cycle is exactly **28** days (as is the cycle of the moon). Each stage of embryo development is in periods of **28** days. There are 10 periods of **28** day cycles making the normal gestation of the human **280** days (note that

this is equal to 40 weeks, the number 40 is the NUMBER OF WEEKS FOR HUMAN GESTATION, and is used over and over in the Bible. Gestation for mammals are as follows: Mouse **21** days, Cat **56** days, Hare **28** days, Dog **63** days, Lion **98** days, Sheep **147** days. **ALL MULTIPLES OF SEVEN**. The first bone marrow cells appear on about day **49**. This day has been given special significance. Day 49 has been elected to be the final day of the scientifically recorded day to day diary of development. On this day the embryo is **SEVEN** weeks old and is considered to be essentially COMPLETE. Fevers and intermittent attacks of gout, ague, and similar complaints have a period of operation of **7, 14** or **21** days known as critical days. We're told the pulse beats slower every **SEVEN** days as if it were in accord with the **SEVENTH** day of rest proclaimed in the Genesis creation week. The average pulse beat is **70** beats per minute. 'And God formed man of the dust of the ground' (Gen. 2:7); science confirms the human body is made of the same **14** elements (2 x 7) found in your average handful of dust. If you pass sunlight through a prism, it produces **SEVEN** colors; the three primary colors and four secondary ones. The Periodic Table of the known Elements has **SEVEN** levels of periodicity. So from just these examples we can see that God has ordained a pattern of **SEVENS** in nature. All things of nature, be they matter, energy, time or space were DESIGNED and ordained by the Lord God. Therefore, rest assured that our Holy Bible is the infallible Master Textbook of true science."

(TheHiddenLighthouse.blogspot.com)

We see that the number seven is intimately integrated into the formation of life, the dealing with disease in some cases and many other things in nature. It makes sense then that the number seven is intimately connected to God's timing for worship.

Like a Fountain Flowing

There is a beautiful illustration in the book of Exodus that gives us a deeper appreciation of what happens at the time of sacrifice.

Exodus 17:3-6 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou

hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; **and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it**, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

The rock that Moses struck was a symbol of Christ slain for us.

1 Corinthians 10:4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and **that Rock was Christ**.

Matthew 26:31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, **I will smite the shepherd**, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

Through the symbolism of the smitten rock we see the life-giving stream that flows forth at the moment it is struck. We also have another symbol of this in the very death of Christ on the cross.

John 19:34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

The symbolism of the slain lamb combined with the smitten rock allows for the life-giving streams of redemption to flow out during all these sevens. If we acknowledge the sacrifice of Christ in the morning when we rise, the living stream opens for us, and we are breathed upon with the Father's delight through Christ. Jesus was crucified at "the third hour" (Mark 15:25). After a period of six hours (the ninth hour) the evening sacrifice is remembered. This is the exact hour Jesus "cried with a loud voice" and died (Mark 15:33-37). The apostles marked the ninth hour as a time of prayer.

Acts 3:1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being **the ninth hour**.

For those who acknowledge the sacrifice of Christ and pause to remember, for us the fountain opens and we can swim in the current of the Father's love towards us.

This continues into each Sabbath, each new moon, and then in each of the appointed feasts when the lamb was to be slain. In each and every one of these appointments the Father sends out to us His delight through His Son. When we acknowledge the Son, the streams enter into our hearts, and we are sanctified in the process; in our restful sonship we cease to sin and no longer express our former self-imposed orphaned worthlessness.

If the sacrificial system was designed to point to one event in six thousand years, wouldn't this be better reflected in the sacrifice of one lamb a year or one lamb in seven years? Does not the sacrifice every day, week, month and year suggest the flowing forth of the streams of love at the times that these sacrifices were offered? If there were no life-giving streams coming at these times, then the slaughter of thousands of animals served no meaningful benefit to those offering the sacrifices. They only served to keep alive the teaching of the future Messiah. It would be impossible for Moses to have the light streaming from Calvary shining on his face if he was not living in that precious current of the Father's delight through the sacrifice of the Son of God who was "a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Revelation 13:8).

When we see the Sabbath as the time when the Father expresses His delight in His Son in a complete manner, then is it really that hard to see the Father as desiring to send this message into every aspect of time? Each day, every week, every month, every year, every seven years, and every seven times seven years plus one the Father is calling out to His children. The living stream of the Father's love pours upon us in greater measure at the times appointed. What a precious thought. It makes the Sabbath so sweet and creates a sense of anticipation. Just think about it. When you wake up in the morning and come to morning worship, can you now open your heart to your Father in greater realisation of the fact that at that time His Spirit is truly being poured out upon you and telling you, "You are my beloved child in whom I delight"? The same occurs each evening and then each Sabbath, and on and on it continues. Is this something you desire? Take up your bed and walk in these statutes of love!

Seasons of Refreshing

There are many who would say, "I don't need to wait for any special time to know that I am a child of God through Christ Jesus. I know this every second of every day." Would you say something similar to your wife or children? "We don't need any special times to remember the specialness of our family, we know we love each other and we can tell each other at any time. There is no need for anniversaries or any special events in our lives." Does a wife say to her husband, "You know that I love you, and therefore we don't need any special times of intimacy to celebrate our relationship." It is a self-evident truth that we have seasons for all things of life. We eat at set times rather than eating all day. We have set times for work, play and sleep. We also have dedicated times for worship in which we cease other activity to focus on what we are doing. This is a biblical principle clearly revealed.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

The Bible tells us that when we listen to God's commandments then our righteousness from Him is like the waves of the sea.

Isaiah 48:18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.

Waves come in sets that ebb and flow. This is how the appointments of our Father come to us through the statutes. Each wave moves up the beach and then recedes into the ocean. At a broader level the tide moves up the beach and then recedes down the beach. Then at new moon and full moon they move very high up the beach. All these natural wonders teach us how the righteousness of our God comes to us.

Notice what the Scriptures tells us about when the refreshing occurs:

Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the **times** of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

This verse shows us that there are *times* of refreshing. The word in the Greek is plural and tells us that there is more than one time of refreshing. The blotting out of sin is speaking about the sealing, and the sealing is connected to the Sabbath.

Revelation 7:2-3 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having **the seal of the living God**: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, **till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.**

Isaiah 8:16 Bind up the testimony, **seal the law** among my disciples.

The words “sign” and “seal” can be used interchangeably:

Romans 4:11 And he received the **sign** of circumcision, a **seal** of the righteousness of the faith.

Deuteronomy 6:6-8 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. **And thou shalt bind them for a sign [seal] upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes [forehead].**

Ezekiel 20:12, 20 Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a **sign [seal]** between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them ... And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a **sign [seal]** between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God.

How is it possible for the Sabbath to be the seal of God unless we believe that it is a miracle of God between us and Him? What is that miracle? It is the melted heart of the child of God when he accepts the words of the Father, “You are my beloved son in whom I delight.” He accepts this truth in the face of all his wickedness against God. He believes he is forgiven and rests in the Father’s arms in Christ.

Magnification of the Blessing.

The things of nature speak to us of the love of God in many ways. The tides of the ocean are affected by the sun and the moon. At the time of new moon and full moon, the tides upon the earth are much higher. The Scriptures tell us that the sun and moon were also created for seasons:

Genesis 1:14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for *seasons* [H4150], and for days, and years:

The word seasons in the Hebrew is *moéd*.

Strong's Concordance H4150 From H3259; properly an appointment, that is, a fixed time or season; **specifically a festival.**

In the *Holman Christian Standard Bible* it is translated like this: "They will serve as signs for festivals and for days and years." In the footnote it says, "Or for the appointed times."

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible: "The Targum of Jonathan [Aramaic translation] is, 'and let them be for signs and **the times of the feasts**, and to reckon with them the number of days, and, sanctify the beginnings of the months, and the beginnings of the years, and the intercalations of months and years, the revolutions of the sun, and the new moons, and cycles.' And so Jarchi [medieval French Rabbi, a.k.a. Rashi] interprets 'seasons' of **the solemn festivals**, that would hereafter be commanded the children of Israel; but those uses were not for a certain people, and for a certain time, but for all mankind, as long as the world should stand."

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible: "[Seasons, Moédim] - For the determination of the times on which **the sacred festivals** should be held. In this sense the word frequently occurs; and it was right that at the very opening of his revelation **God should inform man that there were certain festivals which should be annually celebrated to his glory.** Some think we should understand the original word as signifying months, for which purpose we know the moon essentially serves through all the revolutions of time."

So the sun and the moon are to be used to determine appointments and especially festivals or feasts. These festivals are part of God's design even before sin had reared its ugly head upon this earth. What is most interesting is the description of the woman in Revelation 12.

Revelation 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the **sun**, and the **moon** under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

This "woman" prophetically represents God's church – His faithful people. God has said, "I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman" (Jeremiah 6:2), and then says, "... Zion, thou art my people." (Isaiah 51:16). Paul wrote: "I have espoused you [the church] to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2 Corinthians 11:2).

In the book of Revelation the church of God is clothed in the timing of her God. The sun, moon, and stars are provided for determining the seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Paul partly speaks to this when he said to the Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 5:1 But of the times and the *seasons*, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

The Greek word for *seasons* used here is exactly the same used in the Greek Old Testament for seasons in Genesis 1:14. This word is *moéd* in the Hebrew.

So the Church of God as revealed in Revelation 12 is clothed in the light of God's love. This love is revealed in seasons of refreshing connected to the numbering of sevens in accordance with the Sabbath-Seven-Principle. The Sabbath is the time in which the Father manifested His supreme delight in His Son. We see the apostle John wearing this garment when he states:

1 John 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:

This is the garment Christ wore when confronting Satan in the wilderness. He clung to this assurance at His baptism.

Matthew 3:17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I delight. (*Tyndale*)

The Church of God overcomes by the blood of the lamb (sacrifice) and the word of their testimony, and their testimony is that they are indeed children of God, loved of the Father. This testimony comes to them especially in the Sabbath-Seven-Principle.

So if we come back to the sun and moon in relation to the tides, we notice that the weekly Sabbath is observed by counting the seventh movement of the sun in relation to the earth. The annual festivals all occur in the first seven months of the Hebrew year and require a counting of seven cycles of the moon in relation to the earth. If the sun and moon have an effect on the tides of the ocean, could it also be that when the Sabbath of the week falls within an annual Sabbath (like Passover and Tabernacles) there could be a high tide of spiritual blessing?

John 19:31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for **that sabbath day was an high day,**) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

Christ was crucified on the Friday, during the time of Passover. Just as He finished His work of creation on the sixth day of the week and rested upon the seventh (Genesis 2:1-3), Christ cried out "It is finished" upon the sixth day of the week and rested upon the seventh (John 19:30; Luke 23:54-56). The day following Christ's death was the seventh-day Sabbath and since this Sabbath was during the feast of unleavened bread, John called this a high Sabbath. This was a weekly Sabbath joined with an annual feast. The word in the Greek can also be translated *great, large or loud*. Is it possible that when the Sabbath and the feast align, the voice of our Father to His children speaks louder to us and reaches more deeply into our hearts when we respond to His call? Like the higher tide of the ocean, is it possible that there is a higher tide of the Spirit speaking into our souls at these times?

By reading Numbers chapters 28 and 29 you will see that upon the weekly Sabbath the amount of offerings, flour, and oil are doubled from the daily offerings. Then from there they continue to double upon each New Moon and yearly Sabbaths. Flour and oil make up the bread which represents our Messiah (John 6:48-51). The meaning is clear -- upon every Sabbath (as well

as all His Appointed Times) we receive a double portion blessing of His Holy Spirit — the very Presence of Jesus Himself (Galatians 4:6-7).

The woman stands on the moon in Revelation 12. And the book of Psalms says:

Psalm 104:19 **He appointed the moon for seasons [moédim]:**
the sun knoweth his going down.

The Lord has appointed the moon for seasons or *moédim*. When we listen for our Father's voice according to His appointments, then His voice is perceived more loudly to us and says, "You are my beloved child in whom I delight."

This is in complete harmony with the Father and Son relationship. As the Son of God is the brightness of the Father's glory, so also the annual appointments make brighter the Father's love for us through Christ His Son in the weekly appointment. For more on this principle see the book *Divine Pattern of Life* available at fatheroflove.info.

If the apostle John called the combination of the first day of unleavened bread and the weekly Sabbath a high day, then what can be high about it except for that which the Sabbath was originally intended – a blessing from our Father in greater measure. Taste for yourself and see.

Revelation 14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the **mount Zion**, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, **having his Father's name written in their foreheads.**

When we are sealed with His Spirit we are sealed with His name – His character. The same selfless character of which the Sabbath is a sign. God's name (character) will be fully reproduced in His people as a final witness against Satan's lies. God will accomplish His great work of "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:5) and we will fully enter into God's rest.

Revelation 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb [Jesus] is come, and his wife [His church] hath made herself ready.

We can see all of this in the breakdown of the Hebrew word for Sabbath — *Shabbath*. **SH = Name** (for example: *Shem* means *Name*). **AB = Abba/Father**. **B = Dwelling Place** (for example: *Bethlehem* means "dwelling place of bread")

and *Bethel* means “dwelling place of God”). **ATH = Oath/Sign**. Putting this all together reveals what the *Sabbath* means to us: “**the dwelling place of the sign of the Father.**” Given the truth that the Father’s name will be sealed in our foreheads we must look no further than the Sabbath sign — **sABBAtH**.

Galatians 4:6 And because you are sons [children], God hath sent forth the Spirit [presence] of His Son into your hearts, crying, **Abba, Father.**

If the seventh day Sabbath is a moral blessing and the feasts take the name of the Sabbath upon them, then do they not inherit this blessing also? As Christ inherits the full blessing of His Father, then do not the feasts inherit the full blessing of the Sabbath? As the Son of God is the brightness of the Father’s glory, then are not the feasts the brightness of the Sabbath’s glory?

Is it really so hard to see that Satan really does not want people to receive the full blessing of the heavenly Father through Christ? He will do everything he can to stop this. He has thought to change the sacred festivals and the law. Satan does not want you to be blessed, my friend. He does not want you to be touched by that sweet Spirit of Jesus that comes in high tide at the times appointed for refreshment. Behold He stands at the door and knocks for those hungering and thirsting at the fountain of righteousness.

The Testimony of History

Every Sabbath the Jews to this day read what’s called, “The Torah and the Haftarah.” These are Scripture portions from the Torah and the Prophets that relate to each other. When Jesus said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the Prophets ...” (Matthew 5:17), He was referring to “the Torah and Haftarah.” When Jesus read Isaiah 61:1-2 on one Sabbath, as recorded in Luke 4:16-21, He was reading the Haftarah portion for that particular Sabbath.

Luke 4:18-19 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach **the acceptable year of the Lord.** ”

Practically all commentators agree that the “acceptable year of the Lord” refers to the sabbatical year (the seventh year) or the Jubilee year (the fiftieth year, after seven Sabbaths of years). It is significant that Christ in His opening address announces His Messianic mission in the language of the sabbatical year. These full-year-Sabbaths became the liberator of the oppressed. During these times ...

1. The land was to lie fallow, to provide free produce for the poor, the dispossessed and the animals (Exodus. 23:11; Leviticus 25:6.; Deuteronomy 24:19-22; Leviticus 19:9-10).
2. Debts owed were forgiven (Deuteronomy 15:1-6).
3. Slaves were set free (Exodus 21:2-6; Deuteronomy 15:12-18).
4. The restoration of property to the original owner (Leviticus 25:29-34).

It is clear from reading the New Testament and history that all of Jesus’ followers continued to keep the times of refreshing long after His death.

“Everywhere, especially in the East of the Roman Empire, there would be Jewish Christians whose outward way of life would not be markedly different from that of the Jews ... for them the new covenant, which Jesus had set up at the Last Supper with His disciples and sealed by His death, did not mean that the covenant made between God and Israel was no longer in force. **They still observed the feast of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles;** they also continued to be circumcised, **to keep the weekly Sabbath** and the Mosaic regulations concerning food. ... they must have been so strong that right up to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 they were the dominant element in the Christian movement.” (W.D. Davies, *Paul and Jewish Christianity*, p. 72).

The Sabbath: Mark 1:21; 6:2; Luke 4:16, 31; 6:6; 23:56; Acts 13:14; 42-44; 15:21; 15:13; 17:2; 18:4. (Note: All of God’s Sabbaths, weekly or annually, are determined by the sun and begin at sunset. Lev. 23:32; Neh. 13:19. The weekly Sabbath begins at sunset Friday and ends at sunset Saturday. Isaiah foretold God’s people will be

observing the New Moon and the Sabbaths upon the new earth. (Isa. 66:22-23).

"The primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the day in devotion and sermons. And it is not to be doubted but **they derived this practice from the Apostles themselves,** as appears by several scriptures to the purpose." (Dialogues on the Lord's Day, p. 189. London: 1701, By Dr. T.H. Morer; *A Church of England Divine*).

"...The Sabbath was a strong tie which united them with the life of the whole people, **and in keeping the Sabbath holy they followed, not only the example, but also the command of Jesus.**" (*Geschichte des Sonntags*, pp.13,14).

"The ancient Christians were very careful in the observance of Saturday, or the seventh day ... It is plain that all the Oriental churches, and the greatest part of the world, **observed the Sabbath as a festival ...** Athanasius likewise tells us that they held religious assemblies on the Sabbath, **not because they were infected with Judaism, but to worship Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath,** Epiphanius says the same." (*Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Vol.2 Book XX, chap. 3, sec.1, 66. 1137,1138).

Passover/Unleavened Bread: Luke 22:13-16 (Note: Jesus commissions His people to continue celebrating Passover, not with a bloody animal sacrifice, but with unleavened bread and unleavened (unfermented) wine. He states the festival of Passover is not abolished by His death, but that it remains "until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God" thus referring to "the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Revelation 19:9); Acts 12:4 (Note: the KJV uses the word Easter in Acts 12:4, but the Greek word is *pascha* (Passover); Acts 12:3; 20:6; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 (Note: There would be no need for Paul to correct their behavior during the Passover season if the Passover was not to be observed by Christian believers. The problem here isn't the festival of Passover, but what's being taught and done during the festival. The church at Corinth included some Jews (1 Corinthians 7:18-19), but it was largely composed of Gentile converts (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 8:7; 12:2).

One of the disciples of John gives us a picture of what the apostle John believed. John believed that the observance of Passover was part of the gospel.

Polycrates (195 AD): "Therefore we keep the day undeviatingly, neither adding nor taking away, for in Asia [Minor] great luminaries sleep, and they will rise on the day of the coming of the Lord, when he shall come with glory from heaven and seek out all the saints. Such were Phillip... and two of his daughters... **There is also John who lay on the Lord's breast**... And there is also Polycarp at Smyrna, both bishop and martyr, and Thraseas, both bishop and martyr, from Eumeneae...[Also] Sagaris,... Papirius,...and Melito...**all of these kept the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the gospel, never swerving, but following according to the rule of the faith.** And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, live according to the tradition of my kinsmen, and some of them have I followed. For seven of my family were bishops and I am the eighth, and my kinsmen ever kept the day when the people put away the leaven. Therefore, brethren, I who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord and conversed with brethren from every country, and have studied all holy Scripture am not afraid of threats, for they have said, who were greater than I, 'It is better to obey God rather than men.'" (Eusebius. *Church History*, Book V, Chapter 24; *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series Two, Volume 1).

Firstfruits: There's no specific mention of this feast in the New Testament, but the symbolic meaning is clearly referred to in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23. In Ezekiel 45:21 it says, "In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten." As can be seen by this verse Passover spans the whole period of Unleavened Bread. This would include Firstfruits which falls on the first day after the first Sabbath during the days of unleavened bread.

Feast of Weeks/Pentecost: Acts 2; 20:16.

Feast of Trumpets: There's no specific mention of this feast in the New testament, but the symbolic meaning is clearly referred to in 1 Corinthians 15:52; Revelation 8:2,6.

Day of Atonement: Acts 27:9 (Note: The term “the Fast” mentioned here refers to the Day of Atonement which is most-often considered a day of fasting); Revelation 11:18-19 (Note: The ark of his testimony in the KJV refers to the ark of the covenant. On the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, the high priest would go into the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary where the ark of the covenant was. There he would cleanse the sanctuary symbolically cleansing the people from all the lies that Satan has instigated against God, Leviticus 16; Daniel 8:14. The feast of Trumpets and Atonement were historically considered a solemn time of sealing and of judgment. See, also Revelation 14:6-7).

Feast of Tabernacles: John 7. There’s no specific mention of this feast further in the New testament, but the symbolic end-time meaning is clearly referred to in Revelation 21:3. (Note: Zechariah chapter 14 speaks of God’s people keeping this feast even after the second coming of Christ).

When you accept that the delight of the Father is given to His children through Christ in the Sabbath-Seven-Principle, it is a simple thing to see all the appointments of the Lord as part of the gospel.

There are many who believe that the feasts of the Lord were not actually spiritual feasts for those living before the Cross. They believe that the feasts were only symbolic of Christ’s work hundreds of years after their day. Such a belief denies the work of Christ in the gospel before the cross and that the light of Calvary shone from the face of Moses. **There is only one way you can obtain rest, and that is through the Spirit of Christ.** All of the following texts speak of rest, the resting in the Father’s delight in Christ.

Exodus 16:23 And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the **rest** [H7677 - Shabathon] of the holy sabbath unto the LORD:

Exodus 31:15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of **rest** [H7677 - Shabbathon], holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

Leviticus 16:30-31 For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before

the LORD. It shall be a sabbath of **rest** [H7677 - Shabbathon] unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

Leviticus 23:24 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a **sabbath**, [H7677 - Shabbathon] a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.

Leviticus 23:39 Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a **sabbath**, [H7677 - Shabbathon] and on the eighth day shall be a **sabbath**. [H7677 - Shabbathon].

Notice that for each of the above times the word *Shabbathon* is used. The word *rest* here is the very *rest* found in Christ. It is impossible to rest or *Shabbat* outside of Christ.

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you *rest*. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

Hebrews 4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

The word *rest* used by Christ is *sabbaton* which is the Greek equivalent of *Shabbathon*. So the fourth commandment can only be kept within the gospel, a gospel that brings to us the Father's delight by the Spirit of Christ.

The Sabbath More Fully

We have seen that true Sabbath keeping is entering into "His rest" (Hebrews 4:11), not our own. God did not rest because He was tired: "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?**" (Isaiah 40:28). This is why simply resting on the seventh day of the week from your own work as a "duty" is not keeping the Sabbath day at all. This is what Jesus was teaching His Jewish hearers, calling out to them to repent and enter into "God's true Sabbath rest" by resting (believing) in His creative works that He so desires to

do in man, re-creating us into a new (selfless) creature, and restoring us back into His likeness and image. As Jesus taught in Matthew 11:28 above, it is only His *presence* that can make a thing holy and bring true rest.

Exodus 33:14 And he said, My **presence** shall go with thee, and I will give thee **rest**.

I have been a Sabbath keeper all my life. I have attended church services through all of this time. The Sabbath had been explained to me as a special time to fellowship with the Lord. It is His special day. Not once in all that time was it explained to me that the Sabbath is, in fact, a special gift of the Holy Spirit. When I studied the writings of A.T. Jones in relation to the Sabbath, I came across the following statement in one of his sermons:

What was it that made the day holy? [Congregation: "The presence of God."] **The presence of God makes things holy. It makes a place holy. It makes a man holy. The presence of God made the day holy. Then the holiness of God is attached to the day.** The presence of God, the holy presence of God, is attached to the seventh or Sabbath day. **Well then when the man comes to that day, as only man can come to it, spiritually-minded--with the mind of the Spirit of God--and receives the spiritual rest, the spiritual refreshing that is in it, the spiritual blessing that is in it, does he not also receive that presence, become a partaker of that presence, in which is the holiness of God to transform him? He does indeed. And that is Sabbath-keeping.**

Well then He sanctified the day, but I need not rehearse those texts either. What is it that sanctifies? [Congregation: "The presence of God."] Then the presence of God, His sanctifying power is in the seventh day. Is that so? [Congregation: "Yes."] **Then the man who comes to the Sabbath of the Lord according to the Lord's idea of the Sabbath of the Lord, and his intent, obtains spiritual rest. He finds that there. He finds spiritual refreshing, delight; he finds spiritual blessing. He finds the presence of God and the holiness which that presence brings to transform him.** And he finds that sanctifying power in that presence which

sanctified the day to sanctifying him. For what purpose was all this done? Why was the sabbath made? [Congregation: "For man."; Mark 2:27]. It was made for man. **Well then, God rested and put His spiritual rest upon the day for man, did He? [Congregation: "Yes."] God's refreshing, His rejoicing in that day was for man. The blessing with which He blessed it was for man.** The holiness which His presence brought to it and which His presence gave to it, was for man. His presence sanctifying it was for man. Well then was it not that man through the Sabbath might be a partaker of His presence and be made acquainted by living experience with the spiritual rest of God, the spiritual blessing, the holiness, the presence of God to make holy, the presence of God to sanctify him? **Is not that what God intended the Sabbath to bring to man? Well, the man who gets all that in the Sabbath is the man who is a Sabbath-keeper. And he knows it too. He knows it and he is delighted to know it.**

Now another thing: Who was the real present agent in creating? [Congregation: "Christ."] **Who was it that rested? [Congregation: "Christ."] Who was refreshed? [Congregation: "Christ."] Who blessed? [Congregation: "Christ."] Whose presence made it holy? [Congregation: "Christ's"] Whose presence is in the day? [Congregation: "Christ's."]** Then the man whom the presence of Jesus Christ does not sanctify, and does not make holy and does not bless and to whom it does not bring rest, why, he can't keep the Sabbath. **Don't you see, it is only with Christ in the man that the Sabbath can be kept; because the Sabbath brings and has in it the presence of Christ.**" (A.T. Jones *GCB Sermon 20*, 1893).

Notice how the late A.T. Jones carefully reveals that the blessing in the Sabbath is the presence of God and the presence of Christ. I did not have this understanding previously, despite the fact that I had been "keeping" the Sabbath all my life. Why is it not trumpeted to the nations that the fullest measure of the gift of the Holy Spirit is found in the Sabbath? This is the only possible way that the Sabbath can be the seal of God, for we are sealed by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are **sealed** unto the day of redemption.

Eph 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were **sealed with that holy Spirit of promise**.

The Holy Spirit of promise comes to us at the seasons of refreshing. The Holy Spirit is promised to us at the times appointed. To illustrate this point, consider the timing of the promised gift of the Holy Spirit after the resurrection of Christ.

Acts 1:7-8, 2:1-2; 4, 7-8, 13-15 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But **ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you**: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth ... And when **the day of Pentecost** was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting ... And **they were all filled with the Holy Ghost**, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance ... And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? ... Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but **the third hour of the day**.

The Holy Spirit was poured out with great power after counting seven weeks plus one day after the feast of Firstfruits. It came during *the third hour* which is the time of the morning sacrifice.

We recall that there is a gift of the Spirit every day according to the morning and evening sacrifice. The morning sacrifice was at the third hour and the evening sacrifice came after an interval of six hours. So the gift of the Spirit

came on the appointment of the day of Pentecost at the time of the morning sacrifice. This is not a random event but exactly according to the timing of our Father. The woman who stands on the moon and is clothed in the sun knew to gather during this appointed time in order to receive a blessing of our Father through the Lord Jesus.

So indeed, there is a special blessing that comes each day. It comes with the morning and the evening sacrifice. For us today this means a gathering for morning and evening worship in order to receive the gift of our Father through recognition of the sacrifice of our Saviour.

For years I found morning and evening worship very difficult to maintain. Now that I know that these are special appointments from our Father to receive a daily gift of His Spirit, they have become a delight, and not a burden. It is not a work that is done in order to merit salvation, but rather it is receiving the righteousness of Christ by faith and coming when He calls. Do you wish to receive the gift of the Spirit that comes morning and evening? Do you need such a gift? If our Father is offering it to us, then does this not suggest that we DO need it?

Isaiah 58:13-14 "If you keep your feet from trampling the Sabbath, from pursuing your own interests on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath **a delight** and the LORD's holy day honorable; and if you honor it by not going your own ways and seeking your own pleasure or speaking merely idle words, **then you will take delight in the LORD**, and he will make you ride upon the heights of the earth; and he will make you feast on the inheritance of your ancestor Jacob, your father. Yes! The mouth of the LORD has spoken. (*ISV*)

A true Sabbath keeper is one who believes that our Father sends His Spirit to us at appointed times. Just as we eat at set times and are carried on the strength of that meal for five or six hours, so also we receive gifts of the Spirit at set times and walk in the strength of those appointed times. This is the Sabbath more fully.

Why do the righteous proclaim the Sabbath more fully? It is because through the Sabbath they are receiving special gifts of the Holy Spirit. Does Satan want people to receive these things? Certainly not! Notice Revelation 12:17:

And the dragon [Satan, see verse 9] was wroth with **the woman**, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, **which keep the commandments of God**, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

God's people "keep the commandments of God." This is the reason why Satan worked through the "little horn" power to change the sacred festivals.

Daniel 7:25 And he [the little] shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, **and think to change TIMES and laws**: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

Or, as the *New Living Translation* says:

He [the little] will defy the Most High and oppress the holy people of the Most High. **He will try to change their SACRED FESTIVALS and laws**, and they will be placed under his control for a time, times, and half a time.

The Little Horn

Before we begin this section, we would like to emphasize that we are not casting judgment upon anyone. Anyone who condemns and judges another only condemns and judges themselves, because we all do the same things (Romans 2:1; Matthew 7:1-2). We have all sinned and come short of the glory (character) of our non-condemning Father. (Romans 3:23). Events played out in human history are but magnified reflections of *our* fallen nature's hatred of the Son of God instigated by the master enemy Satan himself. These events are shadow pictures and evidences of a spiritual battle of truth versus a lie – the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

But just how were these "sacred festivals and laws" changed? This question requires a study of history to learn the long and sad story of how the Little Horn changed the Sabbath and the festivals. For a general overview of this history please read the books *Great Controversy* and *Life Matters* both available at fatheroflove.info. We will give a basic outline of the Identity and

activities of the Little Horn to address this question as to how the sacred festivals and laws were changed.

Earlier in Daniel chapter 7 Daniel says this “little horn” power rises from the fourth of four beasts he saw in vision. The angel Gabriel informs Daniel that these four beasts represent four world kingdoms. As to the fourth beast Gabriel says:

Daniel 7:23-24 ... The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, ... And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another [the little horn] shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

Although we will not be dissecting all this in great detail, we would like to inform the reader that Bible scholars and teachers have taught for centuries that these four beasts represent the four world kingdoms of Babylon (represented by a lion), Medo-Persia (represented by a bear), Greece (represented by a leopard) and Rome (represented by dreadful looking beast which had ten horns). Daniel said this “little horn” rises from among these ten other horns on this fourth beast (cf. Verse 8), so this power must rise from Rome. Over time Rome has had two phases – Pagan Rome and Papal Rome. When Papal Rome gained dominance, the church of Rome incorporated all the pagan dogma into Roman Catholic Christianity and began to enforce her doctrines by using the State. Thus this fourth kingdom is indeed “diverse from all kingdoms,” as it is a religio-political power with the church controlling the State.

In Daniel chapter 8 Daniel sees this same little horn in its political pagan phase as it “waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.” (Daniel 8:9). Then in verse 10 the papal phase takes over as it begins to delve more into religious matters.

Daniel 8:10-12 And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host ... and **it cast down the truth to the ground**; and it practised, and prospered.

Casting heavenly truths to the ground is symbolic of taking God's methods and truths and resetting them in a fallen human framework. This system would present God's kingdom in the framework of all the beastly kingdoms of the world. God's kingdom would be "changed" from love and freedom to a kingdom of war and coercion.

Because of mankind's fall into sin we now naturally disbelieve in God's forgiveness. Sin has caused our mindset to change towards God, thinking that we now have to perform, earn merits, and appease God in order for Him to accept us. Much like Judaism throughout history, the Church of Rome presented God's law as a legislative code which must be enforced with punitive punishments upon those who break it. During these "Dark Ages" God's holy law was "changed" in our minds from being spiritual (Romans 7:14) to an arbitrary list of rules which can be amended or even abrogated. This bad theology has also flooded modern Protestant Christianity. Satan has deceived us into thinking that if one breaks God's rules He will then have to carry out divine justice of punishing us with plagues, sickness, or even death. However, God's law does not operate as human law. God's law is a law of design that reflects the character of the Lawgiver. It is the law of love on which the reality of life operates. Yes "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), and "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), but it is not God who kills the sinner for breaking any rules. Death is the NATURAL consequence of a life of sin. Much like death is the NATURAL consequence of jumping out of an airplane at 35,000 feet without a parachute.

James 1:14-15 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and **sin**, when **it** is finished, bringeth forth death.

When we choose to walk outside of God's will, beyond God's protective law/hedge, God will not interfere with our freedom of choice and we will naturally reap what we sow. God is not an abusive Father. He's not a blood-thirsty tyrant. He is forever "merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." (Exodus 34:6). When sin came into this earth God and His law did not change. God's law is a transcript of His own divine character of righteousness.

Isaiah 51:6-8 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished. **Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law;** fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

The only thing that changed after sin entered was all of us. Our minds, characters, and personalities changed. Our thoughts toward God changed. We no longer see Him as a loving and forgiving Father, but see Him as an angry god whose justice demands the death of anyone who dares to disobey His rules. Thus was the case and example we have when, after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve hid themselves from the presence of God, and when questioned by God Adam said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and **I was afraid**, because I was naked; and I hid myself." (Genesis 3:10).

Just listen to how Satan deceived the Church of Rome and convinced most of the world that God's law is an arbitrary list of rules and that it can be changed or abrogated:

"The pope has power to **change times**, to **abrogate laws**, and to dispense with all things, even the precepts of Christ ... The pope has authority, and has often exercised it, to dispense with the command of Christ." (*Decretal, de tranlatic Episcop. Cap.* [The Pope can modify divine law], *Ferraris' Ecclesiastical Dictionary*).

"It is well to remind the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and all other Christians, that the Bible does not support them anywhere in their observance of Sunday. Sunday is an institution of the Roman Catholic Church, and those who observe the day observe a commandment of the Catholic Church." (Priest Brady, Elizabeth, N.J. "News" of March 18, 1903).

"We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday." (Peter Geiermann, CSSR, *A Doctrinal Catechism*, 1957 edition, p. 50).

"We have made the change from the seventh day to the first day, from Saturday to Sunday, on the authority of the holy, Catholic, apostolic church of Christ." (Bishop Seymour, *Why We Keep Sunday*).

"Protestants ... accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change ... But the Protestant mind does not realize that ... on observing the Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the church, the Pope." (*Our Sunday Visitor*, February 5, 1950).

The Roman Church not only changed the Sabbath, but all of God's festivals:

"... The Catholic Church abolished not only the Sabbath, but all the other [so-called] Jewish Festivals." (Bishop T. Enright, *Letter*, April 26, 1902).

We referred earlier to Polycrates and his admission of Christians, including Jesus' disciples, celebrating the festival of Passover on the 14th day of the first Jewish month. The church of Rome debated this, wanting to change the date to coincide with their Ishtar (Easter) festival. The debate was never about IF we were to observe Passover, but WHEN we should observe it. History confirms that the replacement of the biblical date of Passover with Easter Sunday lead the way in solidifying Rome's change of the Sabbath from the seventh day of the week (Saturday) to the first day of the week (Sunday).

"The early development of the celebration of Easter and the attendant calendar disputes were largely a result of Christianity's [or, false Christianity's] attempt to emancipate itself from Judaism. Sunday had already replaced the Jewish sabbath [meaning God's Sabbath] early in the second century, and despite efforts in Asia Minor [by Polycrates and others] to maintain the Jewish Passover date of Nisan 14 ... the Council of Nicaea adopted the annual Sunday following the full moon after the vernal [Spring] equinox (March 21)." (Walter Elwell, editor, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, "Easter," 1984).

"The detachment of Gentile Christians from their Jewish roots was influenced by the repressive policies adopted by Roman emperors against the Jewish people and religion as well as by the defamatory campaign waged by Jews against the Christians. These factors encouraged Gentile Christians to develop a 'Christian' theology of contempt toward the Jews as a people and toward Judaism as a religion. A whole body of 'Against the Jews' literature was produced by leading Fathers who defamed the Jews as a people and emptied their religious beliefs and practices of any historical value. **Two major casualties of the anti-Jews campaign were Sabbath and Passover. The Sabbath was changed to Sunday and Passover was transferred to Easter-Sunday.**" (Samuele Bacchiocchi, *God's Festivals in Scripture and History, The Spring Festivals*, p. 103).

The holy days of God's calendar have been replaced within Christianity by holidays which originally celebrated the gods of sun-worship. Today many Christians unwittingly are following the traditions of men while rejecting the commandments of God. Holidays such as Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day, and Halloween all have pagan origins and are not given to us by God in His Word. The whole world knows these festivals, but how many know the festivals of God outlined in Scripture (Leviticus 23) which give to us the Holy Spirit in greater measure, celebrate God's great plan of salvation, and give us rest in our sonship and daughtership to our heavenly Father? Why is it we know these pagan times, but are oblivious to God's?

"From Rome there came now another addition to the sun-worshipping apostasy. **The first Christians being mostly Jews, continued to celebrate the Passover in remembrance of the death of Christ, the true Passover; and this was continued among those who from among the Gentiles had turned to Christ.** Accordingly the celebration was always on the true Passover day—the fourteenth of the first month. Rome, however, and from her all the West, adopted the day of the sun [Sun-day] as the day of this celebration ... The rule of Rome was that the celebration [of Easter] must always be on a Sunday—the Sunday nearest to the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish year [Aviv/Nisan]. And if the

fourteenth day of that month should fall on Sunday, then the celebration was not to be held on that day, but upon the next Sunday." (A.T. Jones, *Great Empires of Prophecy*, pp. 213-214).

Interestingly, Scripture says that another beastly power would rise and "cause" (legislate/enforce) the world into worshipping this ten-horned beast of a revived Roman Empire and "make" (enforce) its "image" (policies) to be accepted (see, Revelation 13).

Revelation 13:15-16 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak [legislate], and cause [enforce] that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a **mark** in their right hand, or in their foreheads.

Have we not seen that God's Sabbath sign (mark and miracle), is to be sealed in the same place as the mark of the beast – our hand and forehead? Could it be that the mark of the beast has something to do with the changes of God's "festivals and laws"? Let's hear from Rome herself:

"It's the **MARK** of our authority to over-rule God's law." (Father Enright, *History of the Sabbath*, p. 802).

"Of course the Catholic church claims that the change [from Saturday to Sunday] was her act. And the act is the **MARK** of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters." - (C.F. Thomas, Chancellor of Cardinal Gibbons, *Faith of Our Fathers*, p, 14).

Today modern Protestants echo the church of Rome. In April of 2015 Reverend Dr. Demetrios Tonias of *The Lord's Day Alliance of USA* stated:

"By definition, each and every Sunday is a call to Christian unity since it is on this day that we are called to communion with the Lord, by the Lord ... In order to fully appreciate Sunday as a **MARK** of Christian unity we must expand our definition of unity."

Catholic Professor Malachi Martin explains that the Pope "insists that men have no reliable hope of creating a viable geopolitical system unless it is on the

basis of Roman Catholic Christianity” (*Keys of This Blood*, p. 492). Ever since their fall from power in 1798, the church of Rome has been doing double duty to reinforce its religio-political policies and unite all churches. The Pope says that, if there is going to be any union among the world’s religions, it would have to be based on “Roman Catholic Christianity.”

Although this will not mean that every single doctrine will have to be united, it will mean that the world’s religions will look to one church head — the Roman Church (the Papacy) — and the “mark” of that “Christian unity” is Sunday sacredness and Sunday sacredness points to “Roman Catholic Christianity.” But what exactly is that?

“The great men who built up the Western Church were almost all trained Roman lawyers. Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, Gregory the Great (whose writings form the bridge between the Latin Fathers and the Schoolmen) were all men whose early training had been that of a Roman lawyer, — a training which molded and shaped all their thinking, whether theological or ecclesiastical. They instinctively regarded all questions as a great Roman lawyer would. They had the lawyer’s craving for exact definitions. They had the lawyer’s idea that the primary duty laid upon them was to **enforce obedience to authority**, whether that authority expressed itself in external institutions or in the precise definitions of the correct ways of thinking about spiritual truths. **No branch of western Christendom has been able to free itself from the spell cast upon it by these Roman lawyers of the early centuries of the Christian church.**” (Thomas Lindsay, *A History of the Reformation*, p. 168).

Sabbath and Sunday represent two signs pointing to two completely different systems of government and their festivals. Since the act of “changing” the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day in nearly all the minds throughout the world is the “mark” of the Papacy’s authority in religious matters, then Sunday sacredness is the “sign” or “flag” pointing to one’s allegiance in the methods of coercion to “enforce obedience to authority.” The Sabbath points to the kingdom of God, a kingdom based upon design law where truth and love reign supreme while leaving others free to reap what

they sow “whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness” and life. (Romans 6:16). Sunday became a day of rest, not by design, but by man-made legislative decision and action. It is an imposed rule, and imposed rules do not produce holiness, only slaves.

Believing in this method of man-made enforcement will bring the mark in your “forehead” (the symbol of your reasoning), while practicing this beastly method will bring the mark upon your “hand” (the symbol of your works or allegiance). Anyone who doesn’t believe and practice this method, which the Sunday flag represents, will be put to death while the world wrongly believes this is God’s justice carried out (Revelation 13:15). In John 16:2-3 Jesus said, “... yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.” May we all have the character of Jesus at that time and pray, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34).

We would like to emphasize that we are not pointing the finger at anyone else, but at OURSELVES as corporate humanity. In our fallen condition we all possess the same spirit of the little horn to “cause craft [deceit] to prosper in [our] hands [works]” and to “magnify [ourselves] in [our] hearts.” (Daniel 8:25). Without Christ living and reigning within us, we display this beastly antagonistic spirit by our use of force, coercion, and retaliation upon others. Thus we seek corporate repentance (for the whole human race) for our disbelief in our Father of love, and rest in His bosom as He gently teaches and redirects our path of selfishness to a path of unconditional love and service toward Him and our fellow humans whom Christ has purchased with infinite cost to Himself. Healing our sin-ravaged souls is a painful experience for us, and we can only follow through on it completely if we completely believe God loves us.

The Sabbath design is a channel for receiving the presence of God which alone makes us holy, not just upon the Sabbath, but every day. The Sabbath-Seven-Principle is a sign of a *lifestyle* based upon our Creator’s image and likeness. Your concept of God’s character reflects upon how you view your relationship

with your heavenly Father. Is He a Father who demands obedience to a set of rules and enforces punishments upon the rule-breaker, even killing them at times? Do you live in this kind of fear towards your Heavenly Father where obedience is a mere obligation in order not to get Him angry? Or is He an unchanging, never-violent Father whose laws are designed for your physical and spiritual health and happiness and is forever bearing your burdens, faults and guilt, seeking His lost child to come home and rest in His bosom?

Isaiah 57:19 Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

It is obvious why Satan wants to change the sacred festivals when you know that through these appointments the children of God are renewed in their sense of sonship and daughtership to God and receive assurance of mercy and forgiveness. They enter into the delight of the Father for His Son that He expressed on that first Sabbath day. In Christ we receive this spiritual blessing in its fullness.

The Midnight Cry

The parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25 plays a key role in the experience of God's people just before the close of probation.

Matthew 25:1-6 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And **at midnight there was a cry made**, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

The difference between the wise and the foolish virgins is that the wise virgins have extra oil in their vessels with their lamps. The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The wise virgins have received more of the Holy Spirit than the foolish. How do they receive it? The wise virgins stand on the moon clothed in the sun. They respond to the call of Christ:

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The wise come when He calls them. Here is an example of Jesus calling:

John 7:2,37-39 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand ... In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive ...

Jesus called them during the time of the feast of Tabernacles, for this was an appointed season of the Father to give a higher tide of the Spirit. We make the point again that we can come to Christ at any time day or night, and yet the promptings of the Spirit will call us especially during these times; for these are the seasons of refreshing that operate on the Sabbath-Seven-Principle. They are seasons when the Law of God is written more deeply into our hearts by the Spirit that comes in abundance during these times. They settle us into a rhythm in our relationship with God, increasingly giving us confidence and stability and faith in our Father.

Some of those present at the feast accepted His call while others rejected it. (Verses 40-42), "So there was a division among the people because of him." (Verse 43). Notice above that Jesus said "as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow **rivers of living water.**" He showed this to be true the very next day, "early in the morning" when "he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him and sat down, and taught them." (John 8:2). It was at this time when the "scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery" and tested Him on the matters of the law (Verses 3-6).

Scripture says, "But Jesus stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not." (Verse 6). What was the essence of what He was writing in the dust upon the stone pavement of the temple during the time of the feast of Tabernacles?

Jeremiah 17:13 O LORD, the hope of Israel, **all that forsake thee shall be ashamed**, and they that depart from me shall be **written**

in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, **the fountain of living waters**.

They had rejected Him as the Messiah, “the Lord of the Sabbath.” The very One who wrote upon the stone tablets with His own finger (Exodus 31:18) was now writing upon the stone pavement of the temple with that same finger.

John 8:7-11 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, **being convicted by their own conscience**, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

Both the Pharisees and the woman were convicted of their sin. The Pharisees walked away in shame and self-condemnation, still rejecting the forgiveness Jesus had freely offered them. The woman however, realizing who Jesus was, and that no condemnation came from Him nor His Father, entered into His *rest* as a daughter of the Most High and walked away free from the chains of sinning.

The conviction of sin came through Christ’s creative voice and holy finger. Luke quotes Jesus as saying, “But if I with the FINGER of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.” (Luke 11:20). However, Matthew quotes Him as saying, “But if I cast out devils by the SPIRIT OF GOD, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.” (Matthew 12:28). “Finger” here is a Hebrew metaphor for “Spirit.” We have seen that the Hebrew concept of “hand” represents “work.” So, the Hebrew concept of “finger,” since it is connected to the hand (work), is a “detailed work” as the finger can pinpoint (fine-tune) more exactly than the entire hand. The “work” of the Holy Spirit is to “fine-tune” (write with His finger) the law in our hearts and minds.

2 Corinthians 3:3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but **with the**

Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in **fleshy tables of the heart.**

Referring to the New Covenant experience, God said:

Hebrews 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; **I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts:** and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.

This writing of His law in our heart is the detailed work of sanctification to set us apart for holy use. Jesus said the work of His Holy Spirit is to guide us into all truth (John 16:12,13), fulfilling the promise when God said: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause [empower] you to walk in my **statutes**, and ye shall keep my **judgments**, and do them." (Ezekiel 36:26-27). Thus we see that the natural result of being filled with God's Spirit is to walk in harmony with all His commandments, statutes and judgments. The third chapter of Malachi is quoted all throughout the Christian churches to call people to the tithing principle, but what is written in the fourth chapter is most often rejected:

Malachi 4:4 Remember ye the **law** of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the **statutes** and **judgments.**

Immediately after this verse we are told:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. (Malachi 4:5-6)

The work of Elijah comes when we remember the law of Moses. Jesus told us that He did not come to remove anything from the law but rather to uplift, honour and fulfill it.

Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. (Matthew 5:17-18)

Nothing is going to pass from the Law until the heaven and earth we now live in pass away. Also, the word until does not suggest that it will pass away after this but that it will simply exist through all of human history before the coming of Christ.

What a treasure are the laws given to us through Moses. I stand with David when he said:

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. Psalm 1:1-3

Walking in the Law of the Lord results in an outpouring of the Spirit so that we are trees planted by the river of God's Spirit. Come, taste and see that the Lord and His commandments are good.

Called Out of Darkness¹

I want to testify to the beauty of the appointments of God and how they have blessed me and helped me in my journey.

Just under three weeks after the New York twin towers came down on September 11, 2001, I was presenting some meetings just north of Sydney in Australia. The presentations contrasted two kingdoms. The kingdom of God provides us value by our relationship to our heavenly Father through Christ. The kingdom of Satan creates value by personal power, position, and performance. The fall of Satan was presented as the fall from his sonship to

¹ These personal experiences are related by Adrian Ebens

God into a cycle of worthless emptiness. The human race inherited this worthlessness when it fell into sin. The key to overcoming this kingdom was to enter into the Sonship of Jesus by faith. The Father revealed our true sonship in Christ at His baptism and also in His conflict with Satan in the wilderness. We are accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6). The words of the Father to His Son at the baptism are ours by faith.

What event sparked all these thoughts for me? In the first half of 2001 I was taking a walk on Sabbath morning. Due to illness I had not been able to attend church for a number of weeks. As I was walking, I began to think about the day my firstborn son came into the world a few years earlier. I remembered the joy I felt when my wife handed him to me. Looking into his eyes, I stood transfixed by this bundle of joy in my arms. I prayed at that moment: *Dear Lord don't let anything come between me and my son and I just want him to know me for who I am.* As I recalled that thought prayer, I heard a voice in my mind at that moment: *Adrian, that is how I feel about you.* It took me completely by surprise. Deep within me there came this spirit of resistance. *But Lord, how could you love a sinner like me?* The thought alarmed me because I believed in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and yet at a deeper level this doubt surfaced that I never knew was there. When my heavenly Father found a way through my son to tell me how precious I was to Him, it brought my worthlessness to the surface and I found myself fighting against Him even when I didn't want to. The words of my Father were like a fire in the midst of my soul. These words confronted my worthlessness and were eager to devour it. This wrestle went on for several minutes until finally I heard a voice in my mind: *Are you going to reject my love for you?* I was taken aback again, and I immediately confessed my sin and said in my heart: *Lord, I accept your grace through Christ's sacrifice, it is simply too wonderful to grasp but I accept it.* Through my son, my heavenly Father reached to the core of my being to reveal His love for me through His Son. He unearthed my feelings of worthlessness and won my heart. It is very interesting that it was on the Sabbath that He expressed His delight in me through His Son.

Yet, even though I tasted this freedom, the enemy would not give up without a fight. The flames of love would need some time to consume my worthlessness. These new thoughts completely transformed my way of thinking, and set me on a path I could never imagine. Preaching the freedom of our sonship in Christ is one thing, but realising how much the other kingdom has a hold of your heart is another, and so I discovered personally for myself the Great Controversy in the form of an identity war. I found myself shifting back and forth between kingdoms, but my awareness of my vain performance-based thinking became clearer and clearer. Each time I fell into the wrong kingdom I could come to the banks of the river and once again hear the voice – “You are my beloved Son through Christ Jesus.” I had found the key to the kingdom! I inherited my sonship through Christ’s Sonship.

This awaking of my true sonship to God through Christ drew me to the Scriptures where Jesus blessed the children. The blessing I felt through knowing my true sonship caused me to want to bless others.

The Blessing

At one of the churches I was pastoring at the time, I invited the children to come to the front, and one by one I laid my hands on them and blessed them. I prayed silently before each prayer: *Lord, what do you want me to tell this child?* Once I understood that the Father poured His blessing through human channels, I saw the vital role I must play in speaking the Word of God into the lives of the families in my congregations. My prayer went something like this:

“Dear Father, thank you for Marion. She is your precious daughter in whom you delight through Christ our Lord. May she always know that you love her and give her the grace to obey her parents and may she grow to be a woman of God always standing for the right. We thank you in Jesus name.”

“Father, thank you for Stephen. He is your beloved son in whom you are well pleased through Christ Jesus. May he know we love him as a church family and that he will honour his parents always, and grow to be the man of God you have called him to be.”

I would then add some things that came to mind and close the prayer. The next morning one of the mothers rang me and said “Do you know what my daughter just said? She said ‘Mum, I am precious.’ To which I asked, ‘why is that honey?’ ‘because the pastor said so,’ came the reply. Now I have told my daughter that many times, but she has never been impacted like what happened yesterday.”

It was a pivotal moment for me. The thought crossed my mind – *Now I know what it means to be a pastor*. The light began to dawn about the role of fathers, elders, and pastors.

James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [*and*] to keep himself unspotted from the world.

The pure religion of the elders and fathers in the church is to visit the fatherless and the widows and speak to them the words of the Father. It is their *duty* to tell them that the Father loves them, and that they are precious to Him. This is what keeps a person unspotted from the world. It is the principle of the blessing that underlies one of the key qualifications of an elder in the church:

1 Timothy 3:4-5 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (5) (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

If a man does not know how to bless his wife and children, then how can he bless and care for the church? Being a son of Abraham took on a whole new meaning in the context of the blessing.

Genesis 12:2-3 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: (3) And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

The joy in my soul I desired more to share with others as one called to serve our Father. As I called people to receive the blessing I had received, I began to notice these blessings were greater during the hours of the Sabbath.

Many years later I would study and accept the feasts, and I wondered if this blessing experience would also occur at those times.

I was invited to speak at a Feast of Tabernacles, and I decided to invite people to come forth to receive the prayer of blessing from the Father on the Seventh Day Sabbath during the Feast of Tabernacles. It was a feast within a feast. The Sabbath itself is a feast within the greater Feast of Tabernacles.

The outpouring of the Spirit was amazing. It was not a wild excitement. It was a calm, gentle, loving joy manifested amongst the people as they came forth to receive prayer and to hear that they are beloved children of the Father. It was indeed a high Sabbath. John called the Sabbath during unleavened bread a high day.

Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day)... John 19:31

The reason it is a high day is because of the high tide of the Spirit of God that is available at these times. Praise to our Father for pouring out His love upon us at the times when He calls us.

It is true that our Father loves us always and we can always hear this from Him in His Word. Yet, there are special times when we are invited to receive this love through His Spirit in greater measure.

As I have gone back over my life, I can see special times where I made decisions to respond to truth and walk more decidedly in the will of God. Many of these have happened during the appointments of our Father, which I only became aware of after the fact.

Conclusion

The Sabbath and the Festivals of God are a fountain of blessing to us. These are special times when our Father draws us close through His Son and holds us in His arms and blesses us.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

It is this blessing that will give to us the seal of God, for we will be sealed with the Father's name or character. As we rest in His arms by faith, we will become like His Son Jesus and all our fears will be removed. As the Son of God is the magnification of the Father's glory, so also are the feasts the magnification of the Sabbath glory.

We will have strength to face the beast and its image which will demand the world to worship on Sunday and keep its festivals. To take such an action would take away the fountain of blessing and the seal of God, losing precisely that which is to save us.

Let us hold fast the fountain of blessing found in the Sabbath and the feasts of our Father. Let us open the door that the Son of God can come in and feast with us and abide with us.

Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Fountain of Blessings

Entering into God's REST through the Channels of His Appointed Times

The Words that the Father spoke to His Son at His baptism echo the blessing He poured upon Him on the first Sabbath of Creation. Daily the Father delighted in His Son, and the Son rejoiced before Him. On the Sabbath the Father breathed upon His Son and the Son was refreshed in His Father's love. This intimate connection between Father and Son was placed permanently in the Sabbath, and each Sabbath the Father breathes out His refreshing rest upon His Son and all those who accept the Son.

The love of the Father for His Son is continual, yet is expressed at certain appointed times that reflect the Sabbath Principle. As we come up to these appointments we enter into the Father's delight in His Son. As we become part of the woman who stands on the moon and is clothed with the sun (Revelation 12:2) we know the times and the seasons of refreshing sent from our Father's throne.

Our Father now calls us into a fuller Sabbath experience. We are called into all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus as children of Abraham (Galatians 3:27-29). Jesus says to us, "Behold I stand at the door and knock" and He knocks at the time appointed.

Will you open to Him and sup with Him?

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