

Seventh-Day Adventism

Seventh-day Adventism is a corruption of the simplicity that is in Christ. Efforts are being made to create sympathy for it, and we regret that any of the brethren should be so lacking in understanding as to be caught in the snare. Granted that the spirit of their compliance may be excellent in motive; so was it in the case of Israel, of whom Paul lamented that they had “a zeal of God, but not *according to knowledge*.”—(Rom. 10:2.) We can only please God in doing what He requires; and not only has He not required “them who from among the Gentiles are turned to God” to keep the law of Moses, but by the mouth of Peter, He has dared anyone to tempt Him by putting this yoke upon the neck of the disciples which they are not able to bear.—(Acts 15:10.) The authors and abettors of this Judaizing crusade attempt to evade the charge of contravening this apostolic interdict, by saying that they do not contend for the observance of the defunct “ceremonial law,” but only for what they call “the moral law” in the ten commandments spoken from the summit of Sinai by God Himself, in the hearing of all Israel. This human and altogether artificial distinction does not save them from the charge of seeking to bring the brethren into the bondage of the old covenant which was done away in Christ. The ten commandments were the very kernel of that old covenant. Thus Moses, rehearsing matters, said to Israel: “He declared unto you His covenant which *He commanded you to perform*, EVEN TEN COMMANDMENTS, and He wrote them upon two tables of stone.”—(Deut. 4:13.) What is called “the ceremonial law” was a mere appendix to the covenant contained in the ten. Thus the ten having been delivered and accepted, Moses was commanded as follows: “Stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee *all the commandments and the statutes and the judgements which thou shalt teach them*, that they may do them in the land which I give thee to possess it.”—(Deut. 5:31.) Nay, more than this; Paul declares that the commandments “written and engraven on stones” were “the ministration of death,” and “done away in Christ.”—(2 Cor. 3:7–11.) This is an all-sufficient answer to those who would contend that the ten commandments were not done away, and that the law of the Sabbath or the seventh day remains in force. The truth lies in exactly the reverse position. The ten commandments are done away in Christ, and have no binding force whatever on disciples. It will be asked, can we then lawfully steal, lie, and murder, which these commandments forbid? The answer is No; we may not do these things; but the reason against our doing them is *not because they are forbidden by the ten commandments*, but because they are forbidden by the law of Christ, ministered to us by the spirit speaking in the apostles. If the apostles had commanded the observance of the seventh day, the matter would have stood in a different position. Sabbath-day observance would then have been as binding as the gospel, baptism, breaking of bread, or any other of the apostolic ordinances. But, so far are they from commanding this observance, that they prohibit it and regard its indulgence as a sign of spiritual retrogression and danger.—(Gal. 4:9–11; Col. 1:16–17.) The relation of the Lord Jesus to the matter in the days of his flesh, is no guide to those who occupy our position, for he was “made *under the law*” (Gal. 4:4), and the Sabbath was doubtless part of the law which, in its entirety, he “took out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”—(Col. 2:14.) HE is “*THE END of the law* for righteousness to every one believing.”—(Rom. 10:4.) But even in the days of his flesh he asserted his superiority to the Sabbath in opposition to the Pharisees, who, judging from the appearance and not judging righteous judgment, cavilled at the disciples plucking the ears of corn and at Christ healing the infirm on the Sabbath day. He laid down the principle that even on the Mosaic Sabbath it was “lawful to do well,” and adding that “the Son of Man was “Lord also of the Sabbath.” He had authority not only to forgive sins, but to relax the claims of the Sabbath

law where it interfered with other divine obligations, as was done by God himself, (whose manifestation and mouthpiece he was) in the case of circumcision on the eighth day, and the daily sacrifice, and by himself in the case of supplying the wants of hunger or the need of the sick. To go back to pre-Mosaic times for a law for the Gentiles under Christ, is an altogether unenlightened proceeding, such as could not be expected from those who are instructed in the word. We are not in Eden: neither the seventh-day rest nor the fruit-forbidding interdict appertains to the descendants of the man who was sent accursed out of Eden to a life of toil for disobedience. Neither are we in the position of Adam at the closed gates of Eden: we offer no sacrifice: we are in the last Adam, who has accomplished the significance and the aim both of the Sabbath law and the sacrifice in himself and become “the end of the law,” and the substance of it to those who believe and obey him. Those who go back to the Eden Sabbath are bound to go back to the Eden sacrifices also.—Failing ante-diluvian and Mosaic authority, an attempt is made to extract law for us from the custom and practice of “Christians” during the first centuries of the Christian era. No wise man will insist on such an authority. It is no authority at all. The nominal Christian community of these centuries was an unapostolic and Judaized community, developed by the hurtful activity of those “evil men and seducers” who were popular among believers in Paul’s day, and of whom Paul said that they had “turned aside unto vain jangling, *desiring to be teachers of the law*, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.”—(1 Tim. 1:6–7.) His prediction concerning the energetic Judaizers of his own day was that they would “increase unto more ungodliness, and that their word would eat as doth a canker.”—(2 Tim. 2:16–17.) The sentiments of a community successfully impregnated by their evil principles is a poor authority for any practice proposed for observance in these days. However much we may respect the motives of seventh-day sympathisers, we cannot but reprobate their doctrine as a hurtful crotchet which will logically lead away from the liberty that is in Christ, and gender strifes of words and controversy, destructive of the comfortable building up in the glorious faith which ought to be the aim of every professor of the name of Christ.¹

¹ (2001). *The Christadelphian*, 16(electronic ed.), 228–229.