

- 41 Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*, p. 131.
- 42 Ibid., p. 142.
- 43 Justification often has been depicted as entirely extrinsic, a totally forensic transaction, and the fact that the Holy Spirit also is active in justification, enabling the sinner to respond, believe, and obey has been ignored. Justification by faith often is understood to be the antithesis of salvation by works. Yet according to Scriptures, faith does not exclude works but gives rise to them.
- 44 Ronald Sider, "Theological Education and Liberation Theology: An Invitation to Respond" *Theological Education*, 16 (Autumn, 1979): 56.
- 45 Núñez, *Liberation Theology*, p. 179.
- 46 Orlando Costas, *The Church and It's Mission: A Shattering Critique From the Third World*. (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1974).
- 47 Exodus 3:7, 8.
- 48 The affirmation of violence is not general among liberation theologians; it is countenanced as a last resort when changes are not possible through non-violent means. For an interesting discussion about the "unjust violence" of the oppressed who feel forced to use it to achieve their liberation, see Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 108, 109.
- 49 The term *conscientization* "refers to learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality."—Myra Bergman in an explanatory note to Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury Press, 1970), p. 19. Miquez Bonino points out that "the mobilization for a 'popular uprising' and the *takeover of power* requires a serious and extended work of politicization of the masses, helping them to become aware of the contradictions of the system under which they suffer."—*Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation*, 24 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 81.
- 50 Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 156.
- 51 Gutiérrez observes that "what Karl Marx wrote more than a hundred years ago is still valid: 'The present generation is like the Jews whom Moses led through the desert. Not only does it have to conquer a new world, it also has to perish to give room to the men who are to live in the new world.'" Ibid., p. 146.
- 52 Segundo Galilea, "Liberation as an Encounter with Politics and Contemplation", *Concilium*, 6 (June, 1974): 31.
- 53 Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 158.
- 54 Ibid., p. 91. A new man and a new society cannot be reached through capitalistic paths because the moving force of every type of capitalism is private profit and private ownership for profit.
- 55 Milovan Djilas, *The New Class. And Analysis of the Communist System* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957), p. 65.
- 56 Jacques Ellul, *Jesus and Marx. From Gospel to Ideology*. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), p. 13.
- 57 Psalm 147:19, 20. See John H. Yoder, "Exodus and Exile: The Two Faces of Liberation," *Cross Currents*, 23 (1973): 297-309. He forcefully points out that Goshen is prior to Exodus, that "peoplehood is the presupposition, not the product of Exodus."
- 58 John L. McKenzie, *A Theology of the Old Testament* (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1974), p. 145.
- 59 Yoder, "Exodus and Exile," p. 304.

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A THEOLOGY OF THE SABBATH

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Introduction

Does the Sabbath play an essential role in salvation, or is the Sabbath only peripheral to salvation or perhaps, as some have claimed, even detrimental to it? Within what context does the Sabbath have its true and proper meaning? This talk adapted to a paper will attempt to develop not only the theme that the Sabbath is representative of the entire Christian experience, but that it is also an essential ingredient of initiation and maturation in the Christian life, a safeguard to Christian experience and a basis for the comprehensive unity of Christian doctrine.

Role of Doctrine in Christian Experience

In order to place the doctrine of the Sabbath in its proper context within Christianity, it will be helpful to give consideration to the broader context of which the Sabbath is a part, namely the role of doctrine in Christianity. How does doctrine relate to the central theme of Christianity, salvation through Jesus Christ which restores mankind to the relationship with God that was first broken by sin (Romans 5:8-10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)?

Christianity needs to be described in terms of personal knowledge rather than speculative or empirical knowledge. Christ Himself defined salvation as knowing God and Jesus Christ (John 17:3). That this knowledge of God is not to be interpreted speculatively may be determined not only from the general Hebrew context, which viewed knowledge as practical rather than theoretical, but

also from within the immediate context which stresses God's plan to create unity and love between God and man (John 17:23, 24). This theme of the personal relationship of man with God is so central to Scripture that the analogy of marriage is used to describe it. Paul himself likened the relationship between Christ and the church to the marriage relationship (Ephesians 5:25). Hosea saw the broken relationship between God and Israel reflected in a broken marriage relationship. He emphasized God's purpose to reestablish relationships with His people (cf. Hosea 2:19, 20).

Ellen White likewise portrays Christianity as the intimate relationship of the believer with Jesus Christ:

As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, Come, Learn of Me, and in thus coming we begin the life eternal. Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be opened to us; and the more we know of God, the more intense will be our happiness. As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. All that human nature can bear, we may receive here. But what is this compared with the hereafter? There "are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."¹

If then Christianity may be defined in terms of personal relationship between man and God, why should Christians be concerned about doctrine? Why not simply be concerned with relationships?

It is not the primary goal of Christianity to expound the authority of Scripture nor to establish correct doctrine. The goal of Christianity is the reestablishment of our relationship with God. What role then do Scripture and doctrine play? Scripture, and doctrine stemming from it, are among other things essential to our relationship with God because they provide the authoritative foundation, guide and content of the relationship. (As an aside, the theological far-right tends to go astray when it makes doctrine the total goal of Christianity, and the far-left tends to go astray when it makes the experience of the relationship the foundation of Christianity.) Doctrine plays its rightful role when it founds, guides and enhances our relationship with God.

Two central themes permeating Ellen White's *The Great Controversy* are righteousness by faith and the authority of Scripture. Righteousness by faith, or the restoration of man's relationship with God, is the *goal* of Christianity; Scripture is the *norm* or test of Christianity—that restored relationship. Doctrine is essential to the establishing of saving relationships because doctrine describes the content of such relationships. Doctrine reveals the nature of God, the nature of man, and the proper relationship that is to exist between them. The first two categories are essential to personal relationships. But let us illustrate the third since it may not be so obvious. The nature of a proper relationship will obviously vary greatly depending upon whether one is relating to his wife, son, daughter, secretary, President of the United States, or the Queen of England. To ignore the distinctions between those relationships would finally be to distort, if not to destroy, what might otherwise be a very healthy relationship. Thus doctrine informs the aspiring Christian. It describes the God who offers man a relationship, it illumines the nature of man himself (self-knowledge is also essential for maturing relationships), and it describes the relationship which may properly exist between God and man.

Doctrine is an essential ingredient in Christian experience for another related reason. "It is a law of the mind, that it will narrow or expand to the dimensions of the things with which it becomes familiar."² If we admire God most in our life, the character will be formed according to His character. However, if our conception of God is false, then our character will be shaped by an idol rather than the true God. As one's character is formed in harmony with the true God, it becomes possible to develop a fuller, more mature relationship with Him.

Thus, doctrine must be viewed not only from the theoretical level, but also from the practical and in such a way as to illumine the role which each doctrine plays in initiating, defining, and instructing man's relationship with God. (This has important implications for witness, for we do not simply share a theory, but a transforming message which has pervaded our own lives and which has brought us closer to Christ than would ever have been possible apart from the fullness of God's message which He intends to disclose through this church.) The proclamation of the Sabbath is

not just an additional point to be checked off in a baptismal class. Rather, it is the revelation of the nature of the God to whom we wish to relate, and it provides the possibility of our coming ever closer to God.

If an individual fails to accept some truth in isolation, his Christian life is not necessarily marred. But if he rejects permanently the person of God, his life is changed for eternity. Since the Sabbath involves God's revelation of Himself to us and indicates His desire to enter into personal relationship with us, we must study the Sabbath from the standpoint of what it says to us about this God, what it tells us about man himself, and how it defines the proper relationship between God and man. This will allow us to understand the Sabbath in its bearing upon the Christian life as a whole so that the Sabbath may play its role in bringing individuals to Christ by initiating them into the joy of, and bringing them to maturation in, the fullest possible love relationship with Him.

Personal God of the Sabbath

The Sabbath reaffirms the general teaching of Scripture that the heart of Christianity is the development of a personal relationship with God, for it tells us that God Himself is personal. It is significant that God was with man the very day of man's creation. It should be of supreme interest to us today that the all-powerful, creating, sustaining God of the universe has set aside a special time in which to become acquainted with us. God is personal and, in spite of His almightiness, He desires to know us individually because He loves us. The Sabbath, therefore, provides the occasion for fulfillment of God's purpose in man's creation. God created man in His own image in order that He might fellowship with man. The Sabbath, therefore, is a special period of time for intimate communion with God.³

The fact that God established His memorial in time rather than in space also points to the personal nature of God. God created His temple in time rather than in space, because He wants us to know Him, to be reminded of Him, and to worship Him as a person rather than as a thing. Personal relationships are not based upon space alone. They are primarily formed in time to shift man's eyes from the material to the spiritual, and from a greed for things to a

love for God, from the temptation to relate to God as an object to the joy of entering a personal relationship with Him.

The Sabbath is a perpetual sign and everlasting covenant of the relationship between God and His people in order that they might know who it is that created them (Exodus 31:17) and sanctifies them (Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12), and that they might recognize Him as the Lord their God (Ezekiel 20:20).

The Sabbath as a sign of the Creator points to His ownership and authority. As Creator, He is distinguished from other gods; His sphere of ownership and authority is heaven and earth. Thus a meaningful observance of the Sabbath indicates the acceptance of God as Creator/Owner and acknowledges His authority over all creation including oneself.⁴ The Sabbath, then, is a sign that points to creation, to redemption, and, as an everlasting covenant, to eschatological fulfillment.⁵ The observance of the Sabbath is thus a mark or sign that those who honor the day acknowledge Jehovah as their God.⁶

Sabbath and the God of Creation

The Sabbath is first of all associated with God's finished work in creation (Genesis 2:1-3). From Mt. Sinai God placed importance upon the Sabbath because "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:11, RSV). The New Testament points to Christ as the member of the Godhead responsible for creation (Colossians 1:16; John 1:3). The Sabbath thus becomes full of meaning for the Christian. It is a reminder that the One who came to save us was also our Creator. It is a reminder that man is not the work of his own hands. It is a reminder that, in the beginning, man came forth from the hand of God. The Sabbath is a sign of a relationship between God and His people, because it commemorates the day when, having made man, God ceased from His labors in creation (Exodus 31:15, 17).

What does the doctrine of the Sabbath say about the nature of God, the nature of man, and the proper relationship between them? God is the Creator, we are His creatures. The Sabbath thus points

to the power, authority, and Lordship of Christ the Creator, and it indicates our dependence, as creatures, upon Him.

In the twentieth century man sees himself as the creator—he is the maker of the automobile, the designer of moon and planet rockets, the developer of home conveniences, the conqueror of disease, and the creator of his own destiny. Forgetting his true origin, he now sees himself as the autonomous ruler of the world, if not the universe. What message does man need more today than to be reminded that he lives in dependence upon the Creator God? The Sabbath, when kept meaningfully, is a tie between Christ and His people because it demonstrates man's recognition of his dependence upon God as Creator and Sustainer. The worshiper who truly observes the Sabbath is manifesting, living out in practical form, his dependence upon Christ.

Sabbath and the God of Redemption

The Sabbath was and is a memorial of Israel's deliverance from slavery in Egypt and, by analogy for the Christian, of deliverance from sin (Deuteronomy 5:17).⁷ It reminds us that the One who had the power to create man out of nothing has the power to deliver man from his situation in sin and to recreate him in the image of God. As a sign of sanctification, it points to God's power to restore man to His own image. It represents God's desire to bring man back into full harmony with Himself. "I gave them My Sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them" (Ezekiel 20:12, NASB; cf. Exodus 31:15). The Sabbath then not only reminds the Christian of the creatorship of Christ but also of His redeeming power.

Sabbath and the God of Eschatology

The Sabbath also has eschatological implications, for it points to the future fulfillment of God's purposes in creation and redemption. Isaiah spoke of a new heaven and a new earth in which all people would gather together "from one Sabbath to another" before the Lord (Isaiah 66:22, 23).⁸

In John 14 we are reminded that it is Christ who is preparing the heavenly home for His children. The Sabbath thus looks forward in a prophetic sense to the time when Christ will recreate the

earth for the enjoyment of His children. Furthermore, the Sabbath is itself a foretaste of the spiritual rest that the Christian will have in the new earth (Hebrews 4).⁹

The Sabbath then is an indication of God's love and of His desire to restore our relationship with Him completely by barring all traces of sin from the heavenly land and the earth made new. Meaningful Sabbath observance now is a living demonstration of one's faith that Christ is preparing a home where our relationship with Him will be fully restored.

When the Sabbath has been kept meaningfully, then its observance is a witness to the fact that the believer has entered the rest that comes from complete trust in our Sustainer-Redeemer and that the believer is willing to leave even his future in the hands of his heavenly Father.

Thus the Sabbath is a reminder of God's total plan for His children. It is a great arch spanning time from a perfect creation to a perfect recreation. It represents Christ's activity in the creation of man, in the redemption of man, and in the recreation of man's original home.

Sabbath Rest

The word "Sabbath" is related to the Hebrew verb translated "to rest" (Genesis 2:2) which carries with it the ideas of "to cease," "to abstain," "to desist from." God "rested" or "ceased from" His work on the Sabbath day (Genesis 2:2, 3; Exodus 20:11; 31:17). The cessation of God's work was not a necessity to Him, but rather an example for man who is in the image of God.¹⁰

As Hebrews 4 points out, the rest that God intends for His people is not only physical but also spiritual rest. God had delivered Israel from Egypt and brought her safely to the land of Canaan. There she entered the physical rest that God had intended. But due to unbelief and disobedience, she never entered God's intended spiritual rest. A warning is then given for Christians to enter God's rest by ceasing efforts to obtain salvation by works and by placing trust alone in God's salvation. The rest that the Christian enters through faith in Christ is compared with the rest of the Sabbath day (Hebrews 4:9). The spiritual rest of the Sabbath is a symbol of the spiritual rest one finds now when placing his faith in Christ.¹¹

The Sabbath, a Time for Rejoicing

The Sabbath is to be a delight (Isaiah 58:13). It was a time for Israel to rejoice in her deliverance from slavery (Deuteronomy 5:15). The Sabbath is observed as a time of delight by the Christian as he worships God in the exuberance of life, praising Him for His wonderful creation. Furthermore, the Christian rejoices in deliverance from sin and in the recreating gift of salvation, and he longs expectantly for the day of the Lord in which man will be eternally reunited with God in complete fulfillment.

Sabbath Observance

So what does one do now on a day set apart for fellowship with God? What activities lend themselves to the observance of the day established as a memorial of creation, redemption, and the expressed hope of eschatological reunion with God? On what principles does one come to decisions regarding the appropriateness of Sabbath activities? Since God Himself made the request for the weekly appointment, it would seem appropriate that He be the one to establish its activities, its perimeters and parameters.

Just as God blessed, sanctified (Ezekiel 20:20; 44:24), and made holy the Sabbath day (Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:11), so man is commanded to keep the Sabbath "holy" (Exodus 20:8; Deuteronomy 5:12) first by refraining from work (Exodus 20:10, Deuteronomy 5:14).¹² The Sabbath is thus to be a day of "complete rest, holy to the Lord" (Exodus 31:15; cf. 20:10). The command to "observe" the Sabbath (Deuteronomy 5:15) is a reference to man's obligation to keep his part of the covenant.¹³ The goal of the Sabbath is "to keep it holy" (Deuteronomy 5:12; Exodus 20:8), that is, to consecrate it to the service of God.¹⁴

Jeremiah indicated that destruction could be avoided if Israel would respond in true repentance. This would be evidenced by keeping the Sabbath holy and by doing no work upon it, by refraining from desecrating the day, or by carrying burdens upon it. If Israel should respond thus, the Lord would keep His covenant relationship with them and save them from destruction.¹⁶ Nehemiah also forbids any trade on the Sabbath. "He stopped the foreign traders from peddling their wares on the Sabbath by closing the gates of Jerusalem from sunset on Friday to sunset on Sabbath

and made the winepress operators, farmers, fruit growers, and transportation workers to sanctify the Sabbath."¹⁶ Even the body of Christ was not anointed on the Sabbath day, rather the women rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment (Luke 23:55-24:1).¹⁷

The purpose of the Sabbath is that we might live (Ezekiel 20:13, 21). However, God resolves to pour out His wrath in the annihilation of those who profane the Sabbath (Ezekiel 20:13, 21, 24; 23:38). Amos rebukes those who long for the Sabbath to be over in order that they might go about their everyday business. The glory of proper Sabbath observance is described in its fullness in Isaiah 58:13, 14. If man refrains from his own business affairs,¹⁸ from doing his own ways and from conversation related thereto, then he will be freed for joyful relationship with God. "The idea of delight with regard to the Sabbath combines both worship of the Lord and finding enjoyment through and in Him and what He provides both spiritual and physical."¹⁹

The Sabbath was made for man (Mark 2:27). Its universality is rooted in Creation and reinforced by the fact that as a sanctuary in time it comes to everyone. Thus it was not established to be observed by one nation, sect, or class. Rather its privileges and obligations are universal. The injunction to observe the Sabbath includes sons and daughters, male and female servants, and even guests (Exodus 20:10).²⁰

Obedience to the law of Sabbath observance is not an end in itself. Rather, proper observance of the Sabbath provides a climate for a relationship with God. The dedication of our time to God gives Him priority in our lives.

Sabbath and the Authority of God's Word

Ellen White points out that the Sabbath commandment is unique, containing "the seal of God's law." It alone "brings to view both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given."²¹

The arbitrariness of the Sabbath points to the authority of

God's Word. The Sabbath is to be kept simply because God has declared it. There is no other logical or natural reason for its observance. Raoul Dederen has emphasized this point for us:

In an arbitrary manner God appointed that on the seventh day we should come to rest with His creation in a particular way. He filled this day with a content that is "uncontaminated" by anything related to the cyclical changes of nature or the movements of the heavenly bodies. That content is the idea of the absolute sovereignty of God, a sovereignty unqualified even by an indirect cognizance of the natural movements of time and rhythms of life. As the Christian takes heed of the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, he does so purely in answer to God's command, and simply because God is his Creator. Thus, the Sabbath command comes nearer to being a true measure of spirituality than any other of the commandments, and, as in the days of Israel of old, it is often more of a test of loyalty to God than is any of the others. To be willing on the Sabbath day to withdraw from the tyranny of the world of things in order to meet the Lord of heaven and earth in the quiet of our souls means to love God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies.²²

The Sabbath thus points to the absolute sovereignty of God and His Word, a sovereignty unqualified even by an indirect cognizance of the rule of other powers. As Sakae Kubo points out, "ultimately the keeping of the Sabbath on the seventh day is an active obedience and self-renouncing faith and the recognition of God's sovereignty over us."²³

Even the arbitrariness of the day is a safeguard to our experience with God. And it is an indication that God is God and man is man, and that man must not place himself in a position whereby he attempts to manipulate God. To do so would be to create his own idols.

If the purpose of the Sabbath is to be of service in the establishment of man's relation with God, we may ask, Why was the day arbitrarily designated by God? Suppose God had said, "Let us meet together once a week in fellowship and worship. You pick the day and I will be there." The temptation for man to manipulate that day would have been too great and the day would eventually have been crowded out by the everyday concerns of mankind. Thus it is that God has established the day as a safeguard, as a reminder of our relationship with Him and He has established it in such a way

so as to guard man against the problems of idolatry that come from setting priorities ahead of God. The sovereignty of God's Word is preserved for those who willingly acknowledge the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is thus an arbitrary "tree of knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden." It is a test of and a witness to true allegiance to the God of the universe.

The seventh day is the day that God has separated from the rest of the days (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:11), and thus the Sabbath is designated as holy (Exodus 16:23; 31:14, 15; 35:2; Isaiah 58:13).²⁴ The Sabbath is to be kept because God has so commanded (Deuteronomy 5:12). The Sabbath will be a test in the last days, dividing between those who wish to give allegiance to God's Word and those who wish to give allegiance to other powers. Revelation 14 presents a message calling man to worship Him who made heaven and the earth and sea (vs. 7) and takes note of the final perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and have faith in Jesus (vs. 12).²⁵

What are the implications if one who understands the God-given significance of the Sabbath either rejects it or fails to observe it as God has designed? In effect, such an one is saying, "God, I do not believe You are the Creator, the Redeemer, nor the basis of any future hope. I am placing confidence in myself and establishing myself as authority, for I do not believe or accept the fact that You have established a special day with specific perimeters and parameters as a time and a basis for the development of a mutual relationship between us." In effect, then, we are saying, "God, if a relationship is to be developed, it must be upon my terms rather than upon Yours."

Sabbath a Safeguard to Man's Relationship with God

Scripture points to the Sabbath as a representation of the entire Christian life. In principle, it encompasses man's entire relationship with God. The Sabbath holds together the past, present, and future. It is an indication that God has acted on the behalf of man in the past, that He is acting on man's behalf in the present, and that He will act for man in the future.

The Sabbath is like a hedge protecting man's friendship with God. God has given the Sabbath because He knows that those who

worship meaningfully on that day will grow and mature in their love-relationship with Him. The Sabbath becomes a hedge about man's relationship with God, first of all by providing the time that is essential for the development of that relationship. The Sabbath also clarifies the relation between God and man. It points to God as the Creator in an age when man would like to fill that role in the universe. In an age when man is ruled by the material, it points him to the spiritual and to the personal. It lifts man above the humdrum of mechanical living to real life that relates to God and man. What are the implications of forgetting the Sabbath day to keep it holy? Such a failure on the part of man can only lead to the distortion and eventual destruction of his relation with God. For to do so is virtually to forget that God is the Creator and to conceive of oneself or someone else as the All-wise Planner and Designer. It is to forget that Christ is the Redeemer and to place dependence by contrast upon one's own skills. And it is to ignore the fact that God is in control of the future. God wants us to remember the Sabbath because He wants us to remember Him. Thus, as Raoul Dederen points out, "The Sabbath issue involves far more than the mechanics of keeping the right day as a holy day of rest and worship. Essentially, it is a matter of belief or disbelief in Jesus Christ as Creator and Redeemer, as revealed in the Scripture; therefore it bears upon the future orientation of one's entire way of life."²⁶ The failure to observe the Sabbath as God designed finally means the failure to accept the Word of God as authority in one's life.

Since all human beings have been created by the hand of God, since redemption and a heavenly home are part of God's plan for all human beings, the Sabbath is equally meaningful to the experience of all human beings—even modern human beings. Since these things remain—the creation of God, the Creator-creature relationship, man's dependence upon God, redemption, a future heavenly home, and the authority, Lordship, and love of Christ—there also remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. God said "remember" because He wants human beings to remember Him—even twentieth century human beings.

Endnotes

- 1 E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 331-332.
- 2 E. G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 127. Cf. *Testimonies*, p. 202: "The mind and heart must be disciplined and brought under proper restraint in order for the character to harmonize with the wise laws that govern our being."
- 3 Cf. Raoul Dederen, "Reflections on a Theology of the Sabbath," *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, ed. Kenneth A. Strand, p. 296.
- 4 Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Sabbath in the Pentateuch," *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, ed. Kenneth A. Strand, (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publ. Assoc., 1982), p. 35, 36.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 36, 37.
- 6 F. D. Nichol, ed., *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publ. Assoc., 1955), 4:464. "Several chapters in the latter part of the book of Isaiah 56:1-8; 58:13, 14; 66:13 contain very important references to the Sabbath. The Sabbath is mentioned repeatedly in Isaiah 56:1-8. We find here an identification of the Sabbath as Yahweh's Sabbath 'my sabbath,' (vs. 4), a theme that is known elsewhere in the Old Testament. Blessedness is pronounced over the person 'who keeps from profaning the sabbath' (vs. 2). The opposite of this beatitude is the profanation of the Sabbath. To 'keep my sabbaths' (vs. 4) means to hold fast 'my covenant' (vs. 6). Sabbathkeeping is identified with covenant keeping. 'Whoever keeps the covenant keeps the sabbath, and whoever profanes the sabbath breaks the covenant' (Leviticus 26:42, 45). The reason for singling out the Sabbath as the particular occasion for maintaining the covenant between God and His community is the fact that the Sabbath is understood as the covenant sign (Exodus 31:13, 17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20)," Gerhard F. Hasel and W. G. C. Murdoch, "The Sabbath in the Prophetic and Historic Literature of the Old Testament," *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, p. 47.
- 7 Cf. Dederen, p. 298, 299; Hasel, p. 32.
- 8 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 49.
- 9 Dederen, p. 300.
- 10 Hasel, p. 23-25.
- 11 Cf. Sakae Kubo, *God Meets Man* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publ. Assoc., 1978), p. 67; Bacchiocchi, Samuele. *From Sabbath to Sunday* (Rome: Pont. Bibl. Institute Press, 1977), p. 25, 63-69; *Divine Rest for Human Restlessness* (Rome, 1980), p. 137-40.
- 12 Hasel, p. 25.
- 13 Hasel, p. 33.
- 14 Hasel, p. 25-27, 33. Many Biblical passages contain counsel regarding appropriate activities for the Sabbath. "The Pentateuch has a number of specific instructions regarding activities prohibited on the Sabbath. Exodus 16:23 prohibits baking and cooking on the Sabbath, indicating rest also from the daily chores of women. Exodus 34:21 enjoins the Sabbath rest also in the seasons of plowing and harvesting, indicating that the Sabbath is not kept holy only during times of normal activity. Exodus 35:3 directs that no fire is to be kindled, and Numbers 15:32 that no wood is to be gathered. These specific prohibitions illustrate the broad aspects of keeping the Sabbath holy. Yet, priests do not profane the Sabbath

when they put the shewbread in order (Leviticus 24:8) and bring additional sacrifices (Numbers 28:9." In the case of the collection of manna in the wilderness, described in Exodus 16, the Sabbath became a test of man's relationship with God. "Some Israelites went out 'either through unbelief or through curiosity' to collect manna" (vss. 25-27). God's rebuke was, "How long do you refuse my commandments and my laws" (vs. 28)? A refusal to keep the seventh-day Sabbath means a refusal to obey God's will as expressed in His commandments and laws. The Sabbath has the character of a test of obedience and faith. God demands of His faithful a particular life style."

15 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 49, 50: "The book of Jeremiah contains a key prose sermon on the observance of the Sabbath (chapter 17:19-27). Jeremiah reveals that he was to preach publicly a sermon that demonstrates the conditional nature of the prophecies of doom. Destruction could be avoided if sinful Israel would evidence true repentance. The reference to the Sabbath commandment comes in connection with the phrase 'as I commanded your fathers' (vs. 27; cf. chap. 7:1-8, 30), and it is explicit in the expression 'sabbath day' (yom hassabbat, chap. 27:21, 22, 24; cf. Ex. 20:8, 10, 11; Deut. 5:12, 14, 15) and in the precepts 'keep holy the sabbath' (Jer. 17:22, 24; Ex. 20:9, 10; Deut. 5:14). If Israel would be obedient to God's law (Jer. 7:8-10; cf. chaps. 5:30, 31; 6:13-15; 14:14) by turning from its apostasy (chaps. 6:20; 7:21, 22, 30, 31; 19:5) and from desecrating the Sabbath through refraining from the carrying of burdens (chap. 17:21, 22, 24, 27) and from working (verses 22, 24), and would keep the Sabbath holy (vss. 22-24) and obey the Lord wholeheartedly (vss. 24, 27), then the Lord could maintain His covenant relationship with them and save them from fiery destruction (vs. 27). Sabbathkeeping is a condition of salvation, but not the only one, because wholehearted obedience, though inclusive of the Sabbath, goes beyond the keeping of the covenant sign. It includes right living in all areas of life—moral, social, and religious (chap. 22:1-9)."

16 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 52. "The penitential prayer in Nehemiah 9:6-37 mentions the 'holy sabbath' (verse 14) as a gift from God through Moses, The so-called code of Nehemiah (chap. 10:31-40), which put obligations on the community that were sealed by a covenant, forbids any trade on the Sabbath (verse 31). It is likely that this regulation resulted from the practices noted in Nehemiah 13:15-22, but undoubtedly it is rooted in the pentateuchal laws that command the keeping of the Sabbath. Evidently when Nehemiah came to Jerusalem, he found a lax attitude toward Sabbathkeeping. The precept against buying or selling on the Sabbath is also extended to 'a holy day' (yom qodes), which means either the other holy days in the sense of the yearly festivals (Numbers 23, 28, 29) or more likely any holy days, including the monthly new moons and all other festivals. This reform was necessitated because of the widespread disregard for the Sabbath in Judah and Jerusalem. The Sabbath was 'profaned' (Neh. 13:17, 18) by working and trading (verses 15-22). Nehemiah also reminded the returnees that it was 'this very thing for which our God brought upon us and upon this city all this misfortune.' Here the reformer Nehemiah reflects the announcements of the prophets (Jer. 17:19-27; Eze. 20:12-24), who referred among other things to the violation of the Sabbath as the cause of future misfortune."

17 Cf. Walter F. Specht, "The Sabbath in the New Testament," *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, ed. Strand, p. 104.

18 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 48. "Recent lexicographers have suggested that the best rendering of the term *hepes* in our text is 'business, affair,'"

19 Hasel and Murdoch, p. 49; cf. Dederen, p. 297: God's rest on the seventh day has theological implications not only for fellowship but also for obligation: "God, because He is the God of history, is also the God of the covenant and of the promises. Man is the goal of Creation; but Creation, because it means fellowship, is also obedience, partnership in a covenant. This covenantal relationship, strongly emphasized in the Scripture, affirms anew the astonishing proximity of the creature to the Creator. It testifies, on the one hand, to God's sovereign power in history. His goodness and loyalty to His covenanted people, while on the other it calls for man's allegiance—allegiance expressed, among other ways, in his grateful observance of the Sabbath rest, the 'sign' of this covenant. This underscores the religious character of the Sabbath, which is no longer merely God's gift, but also a day 'to the Lord,' the sabbath 'of the Lord,' a day 'holy to the Lord' and consecrated to Him. As Ellen G. White has expressed it, 'Its observance was to be an act of grateful acknowledgment, on the part of all who should dwell upon the earth, that God was their Creator and their rightful Sovereign; that they were the work of His hands and the subjects of His authority'."

20 Cf. Hasel, p. 32.

21 E. G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 452.

22 Dederen, p. 302.

23 Kubo, p. 41

24 Hasel, p. 25.

25 Bacchiocchi, p. 189; *SDA Bible Commentary 4*: 646, comments on Ezekiel 20:12.

26 Dederen, p. 295.