

# SABBATH NOT A LAW FOR CHRISTIANS

By Robert K. Sanders

Many Seventh-day Adventists have written to challenge why I renounced keeping the 7th day sabbath that begins sundown Friday through sundown Saturday. Renounced the Sabbath after 47 years. To answer their objections is the reason for this article, "Sabbath Not a Law for Christians".

When I was a sabbath keeper, I was questioned by non-sabbath keepers, "why do you still hold on to the sabbath and renounce the other old covenant teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church"? They asked, "would not the same arguments that I use to show that tithing and unclean meat are no longer binding on Christians be the same arguments to show the sabbath is no longer binding on Christians"? After careful study I have had to conclude they were correct.

## THE COVENANTS

Seventh-day Adventists arbitrarily divide the old covenant into two divisions, moral and ceremonial. They claim that the Ten Commandments are moral and the rest of the law/covenant is ceremonial. They have offered no biblical evidence to support a two-part division of the old covenant. There are moral and ceremonial commands in the whole law as well as a ceremonial command in the Ten Commandments.

- The Bible writers never declared the old covenant was a two-part covenant. The Jews understand that there is but one law/covenant and it is all equally holy and binding. When Israel vowed to keep the covenant, it was one covenant not a two-division covenant.
- Ex 24:3 (NIV) 3When Moses went and told the people all the LORD'S words and laws, they responded with one voice, "Everything the LORD has said we will do."
- There are 613 commands in the old covenant that Israelites were required to keep perfectly.
- The Ten has one ceremonial command, the sabbath which is not a moral command.
- Sabbath keeping was given to Israel as a weekly ritual "to rest" from labor. It was never commanded as a communal day of worship. Israel was commanded to remember their deliverance from Egypt and that God created the world. The sabbath is not a moral command as no person has ever been charged with sin for breaking the sabbath except Israel of the old covenant.
- The Old Covenant is a binding agreement God made with Israel at Sinai.
- It was made with no other nation on earth. It includes the entire Mosaic Law which includes the Ten Commandments written on tablets of stone by God. It was ratified by the blood of animals. Ex 24:8 (NIV) 8Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."
- SDAs teach that the sabbath is binding on all nations and all people for all time when in fact it was given only to one nation Israel. Circumcision was the entry sign into the covenant. Gentiles could only legally keep the sabbath and be accepted by God, if they joined the Israelite community through circumcision and kept all the covenant.

- The sign of the old covenant between God and Israel was the sabbath. God never made the sabbath a sign for Christians in the new testament. Do you find Christians mentioned in the text? Can you legally enjoin on Christians that which God has not enjoined on them?
- Ex 31:16 - 17 (NRSV) 16Therefore the Israelites shall keep the sabbath, observing the sabbath throughout their generations, as a perpetual covenant. 17It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.”
- Circumcision is just as much a perpetual covenant for Israel as the sabbath. Circumcision was first made with Abraham as an "everlasting covenant"
- Gen 17:9 - 10, 13 (NIV) 9Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. 10This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. 13Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. 14Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”
- God then gave circumcision to Israel along with the sabbath in the law of Moses.
- John 7:21 - 24 (NIV) 21Jesus said to them, “I did one miracle, and you are all astonished. 22Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. 23Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath? 24Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.”
- The old covenant ended at Calvary with the death of Jesus. When a party to a covenant dies, said covenant ends. In this case it was Jesus who died, and He made that covenant with Israel. Thus the old covenant ended, even as a marriage covenant ends upon the death of either party. The surviving person is free to marry again, even as Jesus now takes the church as His new bride. If a mate dies, the surviving person is no longer married to a corpse. Rom. 7 shows this comparison of marriage and dying to the law through Christ. SDAs are married to the old covenant corpse. They read sabbath keeping in the old covenant (contract) God made with Israel and apply it to themselves. They do not accept the fact that they were never a party to that covenant. The only way for them to legally keep the sabbath is through circumcision and they are then obligated to keep ALL the old covenant with its 613 commands, which they do not do. They refuse to kill sabbath breakers and stay at home on sabbaths as the law requires. Thus they are lawbreakers, and subject to the condemnation of that law.

## **WHAT ENDED AT THE CROSS?**

- Jesus Abolished Israel's law with ten commandments and regulations.
- Eph 2:15 (NIV) 15by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.
- Notice, "the law" is singular that was abolished, not laws. There was just "one law" the Mosaic law with many commands and regulations, and it was abolished by Jesus.
- God canceled the written code and regulations nailing it to the cross. SDAs claim that the "written code" was not the Ten, but the law that Moses wrote.
- Both God and Moses wrote the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments written on stone tablets by the finger of God were placed inside the Ark of the Covenant, and they were also written by Moses on parchment and placed outside the Ark in the Book of the Covenant. Otherwise you would not be reading it in your Bible. Col 2 and Ex 24 explains this.

- Col 2:13 - 14 (NIV) 13When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you <sup>^</sup> alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.
- Ex 24:3 - 4 (NIV) 3When Moses went and told the people all the LORD'S words and laws, they responded with one voice, "Everything the LORD has said we will do." 4Moses then wrote down everything the LORD had said. He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel.
- vs. 7, Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, "We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey."

Bill: Any reason the above is indented?

- Jesus was taken down from the cross, but the law with the sabbath remains nailed to the cross for eternity. SDAs <sup>^</sup> try their best to pry the nails from the cross to make the sabbath binding on Christians.
- "The first Covenant" had "stone tablets of the covenant."
- There is no way to avoid the fact the the old covenant included the Ten Commandments.

Heb 9:1 - Heb 9:4 (NIV) 1Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. 2A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand, the table and the consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place. 3Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, 4which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant.

- The Old Covenant with the Ten Commandments are obsolete.

Heb 8:7 - Heb 8:13 (NIV) 7For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. 8But God found fault with the people and said, "The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. 9 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. 10 This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people. 11 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will forgive their wickedness <sup>^</sup> and will remember their sins no more." 13By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

- The Ten Commandments were a ministration of death and condemnation.

2 Cor 3:6 - 9 (NIV) 6He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 7Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, <sup>^</sup> 8will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 9If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!

- Only one who was a party to that law/sabbath could die to that law/sabbath. No one alive today was a party to the old covenant. For someone to insist on keeping the sabbath and other old covenant points of law is to insist on being bound to a dead mate.
- Christian Jews are "released from the Law" and now serve the Spirit and not in the way of "the written code".
- If you have not died to the law/sabbath you are holding onto a corpse. Good luck with that!

Rom 7:4 -6 (NIV) 4So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. 5For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore

fruit for death. 6But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

- The law was a witness against Israel not Christians.
- God gave the law to Israel to show them their sins and the law was a witness to it. They were a stiff-necked, rebellious, idolatrous, faithless nation.

Deut 31:26 - 27 (NIV) 26“Take this Book of the Law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God. There it will remain as a witness against you. 27For I know how rebellious and stiff-necked you are. If you have been rebellious against the LORD while I am still alive and with you, how much more will you rebel after I die!

- The law was a school master (paidagogos) to bring Israel to Christ, not Christians who were never under that law. How can SDAs who claim to be justified by faith, want to be under Israel's schoolmaster (law)?

Gal 3:23 - 25 (KJV) 23But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

A paidagogos was one who accompanied a child, who was usually a slave of the parents of the child, and even administered punishment as required. Once the child came of age and was mature, the paidagogos was dismissed from this oversight of the child. Those who insist on living by that law demonstrate their immaturity; still needing a law to tell them everything they are to do or not do.

- Christ is the end of the Law for Israel.
- The law made no one righteous and no one could keep it perfectly.

Rom 10:3 (NIV) 4Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Rom 3:20 (NIV) 20Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

- The Law of Sin and Death is the Ten Commandments.

2 Cor 3:6 - 7 (NIV) 6He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 7Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was,

- The law was made for rebellious Israel, not Christians with the spirit of God.
- Do Christians need a law to tell them not to worship idols, not to murder and steal?

1 Tim 1:9 - 11 (NIV) 9We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, 10for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine 11that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

- How can Christians be righteous before God without the law?

Christians will receive their righteousness from the gospel and will live by faith.

Rom 1:17 (NIV) 17For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

- Paul was not under the Law.
- Be like Paul and win SDAs and other Sabbatarians that put themselves under the law.

1 Cor 9:20 (NIV) 20To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law.

Rom 6:14 (NIV) 14For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Gal 5:14 (NIV) 14The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Gal 5:18 (NIV) 18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

- The Apostles opposed the Judaizers that were trying to impose the law on Gentiles.
- The issue was keeping the law of Moses. Notice that the sabbath was not included in the discussion. In the Jewish mind a gentile must first be circumcised before he could keep the sabbath. This would have been an excellent time to tell the gentiles to keep the Ten as do SDAs.

Acts 15:5 (NIV) 5Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses."

Acts 15:10 - 11 (NIV) 10Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? 11No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are."

Acts 15:19 - 21 (NIV) 19"It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. 20Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. 21For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath."

- Mount Sinai Covenant is Slavery represented by earthly Jerusalem. Jewish and gentile Christians are free in the New Jerusalem in heaven which is of faith.
- What was given on Mount Sinai? The Ten Commandments with the sabbath.

Gal 4:21 - Gal 4:31 (NIV) 21Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says? 22For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. 23His son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way; but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a promise. 24These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. 25Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. 2

6 But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. 27 For it is written: "Be glad, O barren woman, who bears no children; break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labor pains; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband." 8Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 At that time the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now. 30 But what does the Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son." 31 Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman

- The New Covenant is God writing his laws on the Christian's heart.

Hebrews 8:10 (NIV) 10 This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people.

- What are the laws that God has written on our hearts?

SDAs would have you believe that God is writing the same old covenant law of sin and death on our hearts. The Apostles tell us what they are.

Law of Faith. To know we are justified before God without keeping the old covenant.

Rom 3:27 - 28 (NRSV) 27Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

Law of the Spirit. Has set us free from the law of sin and death.

Rom 8:1 - 4 (NIV) 1Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. 3For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, <sup>^</sup> 4in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

- Live by the Spirit. If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Gal 5:16 - Gal 5:21 (NIV) 16So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. 19The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, 20idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- Law of Christ.

Gal 6:2 (NIV) 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

- Law of liberty.

James 2:8 - 11 (NIV) 8 If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. 9 But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. 11For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

- James mentions two distinct laws—that is, (1) the royal law and the law of liberty (which are identical) and (2) "the whole law" (which includes the entire Torah, all the Laws of Moses). James tells us that the royal law is "Love your neighbor as yourself." This law, found in Leviticus 19:18, is one of many laws that the Lord gave to Moses to instruct Israel regarding how to live moral lives and develop good interpersonal relationships with others. James also states that, as in the old covenant law, if you broke even one point of the whole law, you were guilty of the entirety of the old covenant, likewise, if you fail to show proper love for even one person by showing partiality, you are guilty of breaking the law of Liberty. Therefore to break one point in the Ten or in the "whole law" consisting of 613 commands, YOU are a lawbreaker.

- Jesus gave a new commandment to love one another.

- Will a Christian that loves one another, murder, steal, commit adultery, and worship idols? There is no need for that obsolete law or the Ten Commandments. Love does no harm to one's neighbor therefore love fulfills the law. Keeping the law does not fulfill it. Another way to look at this is that, if a Christian has love for even his enemies, he would not commit these acts, seeing as these things are a result of an unconverted heart, not motivated by love. Do you trust the spirit to guide you? If not you have no faith just as Israel.

- John 13:34 - John 13:35 (NIV) 34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." The world will know you are Jesus' disciples if you love one another.

- Paul tells Titus what to teach. Do you notice nothing is said about teaching the law/sabbath.

Titus 2:11 - Titus 2:15 (NIV) 11For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. 12It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. 15These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

## **DO SABBATARIANS FOLLOW JESUS' EXAMPLE?**

Sabbatarians enjoy pointing to Jesus as our example to keep the Sabbath. Is this a valid argument? If we are to follow Jesus' examples of how he lived under the old covenant, we should consider this:

Do Sabbatarians Follow Jesus' Example? No!

- Jesus wore tassels on a robe with a blue cord.
- Jesus paid tax to the temple and supported temple worship
- Jesus went to a Jewish synagogue on Sabbath and read from the Torah in Hebrew.
- Jesus spoke out against the Jewish Leaders.
- Jesus limited his study only to the Torah.
- Jesus kept all 12 sabbaths including eating the Passover lamb.
- Jesus did not baptize anyone.
- Jesus did not own a home, did not marry, was not employed, had no income, stayed in other peoples homes, rode a donkey.

Paul Used the Sabbath For Evangelism

- Whenever the Apostles are mentioned in connection with the Sabbath, it was for evangelism and not Sabbath Keeping. Paul often went to the Temple and synagogues to preach Christ to both Jews and Gentiles. It is never recorded that Paul or the Apostles preached Sabbath keeping to Jews or Gentiles. Notice <sup>^</sup> Acts 17:2, Paul did not go to the synagogue to keep the Sabbath or to worship. Worship was done at the Temple, not the synagogues. The synagogues were used to teach the Torah. Paul taught from the Torah how Christ fulfilled the prophecies found in the Torah. Not once in the book of Acts is the Sabbath a point of discussion. Gentiles were coming into the church by the thousands and were not taught to keep the Sabbath Command or the penalties for breaking the Sabbath.

Acts 17:2 - Acts 17:4 (NIV) 2As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ, he said. 4Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women.

Does Paul quoting the Ten Commandments prove that the sabbath is binding on Christians?

Paul was always silent when it came to Sabbath keeping. He does quote the Ten Commandments, but not as a duty for the church. Paul is saying the duty for Christians is to love your neighbor as yourself and it is this that <sup>^</sup> fulfills the requirements of the Torah/Law. The Jewish audience that Paul was addressing believed that if they kept the Ten Commandments they were fulfilling all the Torah/Law but they were not, if they did not love their neighbor.

Rom 13:8 - Rom 13:10 (NIV) 8Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. 9The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 10Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

## **ANSWERING SABBATH COVENANT ARGUMENTS**

Here is a list of some often-used arguments to support sabbath keeping:

### **1. Argument: God rested on the Sabbath at creation; he made the day holy, and sanctified the day. Therefore all mankind is bound to keep the day holy.**

Gen. 2:2-3 (NIV) 2By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 3And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because <sup>^</sup> on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

- The term "Sabbath" is not mentioned in the creation account. God rested from creating on THAT seventh day; He didn't continue creating by creating a repetitive day of rest. God rested/ ceased from His creating on that particular seventh day from the creation that was completed the sixth day, and He sanctified THAT particular seventh day, and not the recurring seventh day.
- God "rested" from that work because He was done with that work. A lawyer in court "rests" his case when He is done and has no more to offer to the court. Genesis also shows that that day shows having no end. God is still at rest from that work, and, according to the author of Hebrews 4, believers have the opportunity to enter into God's rest that He began then. The believer enters into God's rest "Today" seeing as that day has yet to end. This is the rest the sabbath pointed to, and was a shadow of.
- By using this argument that "this rest couldn't possibly be just for God" a rationalization is made to include Adam and Eve, and the rest of mankind into a physical, seventh day rest. If this rest were not just for God, then mankind would be given the potential to enter into this same rest, right? And isn't that what the author of Hebrews is getting at? We can enter into God's rest, so why would we want to enter into that shadow rest that pointed to Christ, and is indeed this rest? See Col. 2:15-16. Sabbatarians' logic gets sidetracked due to their preoccupation with the weekly, physical sabbath that was but the shadow.
- It is not logical to conclude, that we therefore enter into another rest that God did not enter into; the weekly sabbath. God commanded Israel to rest on that reciprocal seventh day, and did not command Himself or claim He rested on weekly sabbaths.
- Sabbatarians desperately needs to establish the recurring seventh day sabbath here in order to make the case for it applying to Christians who were not a party to the old covenant, and to make the case that the sabbath is somehow special and "eternal."
- The term "Sabbath" is not used in the Genesis account and there is no internal evidence God sanctified every seventh day. It was that THAT first seventh day that God sanctified and rested; not every seventh day thereafter as recorded in John 5:16-17. God kept the manna that he gave Israel in the wilderness from spoiling on the sabbath day. God preserves life and holds the worlds in place on the seventh day.
- The Father and Jesus works on Sabbath.
- John 5:16 - 17 (NIV) 16So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him. 17Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

### **2. Argument: Adam and Eve kept the sabbath.**

- There is no internal evidence Adam and Eve were commanded to keep the weekly sabbath, or anyone else prior to Israel being at Sinai when the law of Moses was put forth and codified. It is more wishful thinking. Their line of reasoning here has been one of "once holy, always holy" and this includes Christians, so why isn't that ground at Sinai not still holy? You can't have it both ways. Those that claim Adam and Eve kept the sabbath are doing so by speculation.
- The Bible does tell us that the Sinaitic Covenant which includes the Sabbath was not made with the fathers such as Adam, Noah, Isaac, Jacob and Abraham.

Deut 5:2 -3 (NIV) 2The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. 3It was not with our fathers that the LORD made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today.

### 3. Argument: Abraham kept all God's commandments therefore he kept the Sabbath.

Gen 26:5 (NIV) 5because Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws.”

- This is another false claim that is speculation. The sabbath was not included in God's covenant with Abraham. Circumcision evidently was more important to God than the sabbath as God made circumcision the covenant sign and not the sabbath with Abraham.

Gen 17:10 - 11 (NIV) 10This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. 11You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you.

### 4. Argument: The Sabbath is a lasting covenant. Therefore it will never end.

Ex 31:16 -17 (NIV) 16The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. 17It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested.”

- So if the sabbath stands now because it was an eternal, everlasting covenant, then so does circumcision.
- Gen 17:13 - 14 (NIV) 13Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. 14Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”
- The new covenant will not be like the old covenant!
- Jer. 31:31 - 33 (NIV) 31 <sup>^</sup> “The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel <sup>^</sup> and with the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand <sup>^</sup> to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. 33 “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, <sup>^</sup> and they will be my people.
- God told Israel the time would come that he would stop their Sabbaths.
- Hosea 2:11 (NIV) 11 I will stop all her celebrations: her yearly festivals, her New Moons, her Sabbath days—all her appointed feasts.
- SDAs want to make just the 7th day sabbath holy and an "eternal covenant" to meet their agenda and discard the other ten rest sabbaths found in Deuteronomy 23. The sabbath was a shadow of the finished work of Christ. Why Sabbatarians want to live in the shadows and deny the finished work of Christ is a mystery to me. Paul tells us that these weekly, monthly and yearly Sabbaths are **temporary**[.] "a shadow" and that the reality **if [is]** found in Christ.
- Col 2:16 - Col 2:17 (NIV) 16Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

### 5. Argument: Isaiah proves the Sabbath is eternal, as it will be kept in the earth made new.

Isa 66:22 - Isa 66:24 (NIV) 22“As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me,” declares the LORD, “so will your name and descendants endure. 23From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me,” says the LORD. 24“And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”

- If the messages of Isaiah applies to the Christian Church, then we are faced with a lot of problems. Read this carefully:

Isa. 65:17, tells about when God will create a new heaven and earth. vs. 20, <sup>^</sup> people that do not live to be 100 will be accursed. (People will die in the new earth?) vs. 22, people will live as long as a tree. (Many trees do not live 20 years) vs. 23, women will bear children. (Jesus tells us, there will be no marriage in heaven.) As you can see this has nothing to do with the Christian belief of the New Heaven and the New Earth. If Israel had been faithful/obedient to God these blessings would have come to them. Isaiah's prophecy applies only to Israel and not to new covenant Christians. Will the saints really need a weekly sabbath to rest from their labor, to remember they were delivered from Egypt and that it was God that created the world? I think not.

- Every sabbath in the new earth you can go out each sabbath and view dead bodies and worms that do <sup>^</sup> not die.
- Isa 66:22 - 24 (NIV) 22“As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me,” declares the LORD, “so will your name and descendants endure. 23From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me,” says the LORD. 24“And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”
- There is no death or dead worms in the New Earth. As you can see Isaiah's prophecy has nothing to do with the new covenant description of the New Heaven and the New Earth.

## **6. Argument: The Sabbath will be kept in the New Jerusalem!**

Rev 21:23 - Rev 21:25 (NIV) 23The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. 24The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. 25On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

How indeed can the sabbath be kept in the New Jerusalem without any night to define the start and end of the day? Is God going to ring a bell? It is ridiculous to think the saints will need a day "of rest" once a week to commune with God or to rest from work. God does not rest on the seventh day, why would the saints?

## **7. Argument: Jesus did not abolish the Ten Commandment law; therefore the Sabbath is binding.**

*Bill: What follows is mine, and used by Robert Sanders with my permission. You might want to give me credit here?*

Matt 5:17 - Matt 5:19 (NIV) 17“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

- The above declaration by Jesus Christ is interpreted by those who hold to sabbath keeping as proof that the ten commandments, including the sabbath command, is binding on Christians. At first glance, this appears to be true, until one subjects the above to proper Biblical scholarship and critical analysis.
- If it were a matter of being points of law, then the phrase "law or the Prophets" would not make sense, seeing as there is no law codified in the Prophets to "fulfill". It is erroneously concluded that it is the law that is "fulfilled" and not the prophecies located in the law and prophets. If it were a matter of being points of law, then the phrase "law or the Prophets" would not make sense, seeing as there is no law codified in the Prophets to "fulfill".
- The first problem that arises is over the interpretation of "fulfill" in verse 17. The Sabbatarian argument is that this "fulfill" is to be understood as "filling to the full" or "filling up" the law. Jesus came to bring it up to full strength, as it were. This view forces a conclusion that Sabbatarians overlook in this interpretation. The law was deficient or incomplete; the same law they claim to be "God's law" and a perfect, eternal law.

- And if it is being "magnified" in this regard, how can this be accomplished without altering it way beyond jots and tittles? What of those portions of "God's law" that are sacrificial and ceremonial in nature that the Sabbatarian insists are not binding on Christians? What happened to their "jots and tittles?"
- And finally, how can you fill up or fulfill the law in that portion of scripture referred to as "The Prophets" where there is no codification of law? The opening declaration again states: Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. How can one "destroy" the prophets, and how can one "fulfill" the prophets?
- So here we have a situation where one cannot fulfill that section of the Bible called the Prophets regarding law, seeing there is no law codified in the Prophets that has the potential to be fulfilled or destroyed. But this potential exists in the law and the prophets in regards to prophesies, as there are prophesies in the law and the prophets.
- The next question to be asked is, did Jesus come to fulfill prophesies found in the law and the prophets? Yes he did. At this point, we need to address the context of verse 18:
- Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.
- Seeing as the law and prophets are addressed in the preceding verse, we cannot quickly assume that now just the law, or the first 5 books (the Pentateuch) are being solely addressed, for quite often the term "the law" is used to indicate the entire old testament.
- Those who hold to the "fill the law to the full" view are quick to point out that not all things were fulfilled prophetically by Jesus; the heavens and earth are still here, ergo the context is about filling up the law. If not A, then B is the logic, without examining any other possibilities. This is commonly called "black and white thinking" and is poor Biblical scholarship. We have already seen how this does not hold up in regards to verse 17, and when we try to apply this understanding to verse 18, even greater problems arise.
- If this is about filling up the law, then we have a condition here that once the law is filled up, completed, or brought up to full strength, then it passes away with the passing of heaven and earth. Does it make sense to build up the law for the purpose of doing away with it, especially in light of a belief that insists this law is eternal?
- Do we run into such illogical errors when we conclude it is a matter of things prophesied to occur culminating in a new heaven and earth? Not at all. When all things foretold in the law have come to realization, then all things have been done and there is an end to those things followed by the new heavens and earth.
- What then of the apparent conflict where it is claimed Jesus did not "fulfill" all prophesies that culminate with the passing of heaven and earth? It is a result of trying to connect two things that are actually separate in the context of the two verses.
- Verse 17: Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.
- This needs to be taken in the context of that moment. Did Jesus come at that time; at that moment to fulfill all things as related to in verse 18, or did he come at that time to fulfill what was prophesied concerning his coming then and there?
- And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. — Luke 24:44
- Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. — Luke 18:31 Is Jesus here referring back to when he spoke the words here in Matthew 5:17? It sure looks that way.
- What is so conveniently overlooked by Sabbatarians is that verse 18 compliments verse 17 from this time perspective. First, Jesus came to fulfill those things written of him in the law, prophets, and psalms. Verse 18 begins a new thought that follows this same line of reasoning concerning fulfillment of scripture. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

- Likewise, absolutely everything written in the law culminating in the passing of this heaven and earth will also be fulfilled. Nothing will be left undone. No prophecy will go unfulfilled. Everything will be done "by the book."

- Jesus came at that time to fulfill "all things" concerning him for that time and place. Likewise, all things prophesied to occur in this age will also come to pass. After all these things have been accomplished, this heaven and earth pass away and the new age begins, starting with the new heavens and the new earth, as also prophesied. Jesus speaks from the perspective of then and there to the perspective of the future from then and there

- If we were to enter that time and listen to what was being said then, and take into account what the people were thinking then about Jesus and the confusion surrounding him and what he taught, we might have concluded he had come to do something contrary to the prophecies in scripture, seeing as he was not doing those things they thought and believed the coming Messiah would do regarding Israel and the kingdom restored to her. It would be like Jesus saying to us:

Don't think I am going to act contrary to what was written and prophesied concerning me and my appearing; I am going to do exactly what was written of me. Likewise, all things will be done written in the law foretold to the end of the age and time. He then continues his dissertation to the people concerning the kingdom of God (heaven) and talks about those who will be great and those who will be least, depending on how well they heed his words that followed.

- This sermon on the mount was not about law; it was about Jesus the Messiah preaching the gospel and his coming kingdom, often couched in parables as a veil to their understanding. Those who attempt to read into the narrative their pet beliefs will surely not understand the gospel being preached even now.

- Now we come to verse 19: Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

- Notice the context says "these" commandments and not "the" commandments. Does the context leading up to verse 19 indicate that Jesus was talking about commandments? No. Does Jesus begin referencing commandments following this verse? Yes, unless one wishes to redefine what a commandment is, as though Jesus did not proceed to give commands to those followers of his that he was addressing.

- The Sabbatarian likes to conclude that Jesus was talking about old covenant commandments by force-fitting them into the preceding verses, and ignores that Jesus proceeds to give commandments to his followers in the context of that statement in what follows. Jesus then goes about, quoting from the law commandments in the law, and proceeds to alter points of law beyond jots and tittles! How is this possible if he was claiming just moments before that none of the law was to be altered even down to the strokes of the letters of the law until heaven and earth had passed? But this sort of cognitive dissonance is common when holding to misinterpretations and misrepresentations of scripture.

- The pattern now is one of "the law says this, but I say unto you that" where in some cases the law is totally nullified in the process. For example, performing one's oaths. But Jesus commands that his followers swear not at all. To not make an oath to begin with. It is also stated in the law that one was to hate their enemy and love their neighbor. Jesus declares we are to love even our enemies.

- The most telling of all is Jesus' teaching on divorce. The law (this same law called "eternal" and "perfect" and not to be altered even down to the strokes of a letter) allowed a man to divorce his wife for just about any reason. What was Jesus' take on divorce as found in the law?

The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. — Matthew 19:3-9

The law allowed for an easy divorce. It was a concession in the law because the people were carnal; devoid of God's Spirit. So the law allowed for something that was wrong from the beginning. So much for the claim that the law existed from creation and was kept by the Patriarchs of old.

Bill: The above paragraph should not be indented. This is also where my material ends.

- Has Jesus altered the law beyond jots and tittles? Only a blind one would say no.
- James does not identify the "royal law" as the Ten Commandments. The "royal law" is the law of the Christ/law of the Spirit. The Torah <sup>^</sup> commands Israel "to love your neighbor" is found in, <sup>^</sup> Lev 19:18 (NIV) 18“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.
- Christ commanded the law of love to extend love to your enemies. Matt 5:43 - 45 (NIV) 43“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.
- Those that break the Sabbath will be judged as breaking all the Torah not just the Ten Commandments. The New Covenant does not tell the church they will be judged by the law.

#### **8. Argument: The Lord's Day is the 7th day Sabbath, because Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath.**

- This is one of many examples of Sabbatarians twisting the meaning of words in the Bible. The term "Lord's Day" is used one time in the Bible and it does not say it is the sabbath. It is another assumption.
- Rev 1:9 - Rev 1:10 (NIV) 10On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet.

The Sabbath is always called in the Greek Sabbaton or in the Hebrew Shabbath. Strong's: G4521 σάββατον sabbaton sab'-bat-on Of Hebrew origin [H7676]; the Sabbath (that is, Shabbath), or day of weekly repose from secular avocations (also the observance or institution itself);

The Church fathers in the first centuries called Sunday, "the Lord's Day" because Christ rose from the grave on Sunday. They choose this day as a celebration for their deliverance from sin and salvation by Christ. This tradition does not make Sunday a holy day or a Sunday Sabbath.

#### **9. Argument: Worshiping on Sunday is honoring the sun god and the Papal sabbath.**

- Jesus rose from the grave early on the first day of the week, Sunday. Jesus met with his disciples on the first day of the week after the resurrection. Was Jesus honoring the sun god or the Papal sabbath? The pagans of the Roman empire never celebrated a weekly day to the sun god. It is despicable for Sabbatarians to insinuate those that go to church on Sunday are worshiping or honoring a pagan god or the Pope of Rome. Do SDAs that go to prayer meeting on Wednesday evening <sup>^</sup> for example are they worshiping the pagan god, Woden, chief god in Norse mythology? As you can see this is a ridiculous allegation to make against Christians that worship the Creator.

Bill: I suggest you use what you wrote earlier about a different number of days in a week and that Christians were meeting on Sundays long before there was a pope or RCC.

#### **10. Argument: The Ten Commandments are the eternal gospel from the beginning of the World.**

- If so did Adam honor his mother?

#### **11. Argument: Hebrews 4 proves Christians are to keep the Sabbath.**

- Heb 4:9 - Heb 4:11 (NIV) 9There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; 10for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. 11Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

Israel had the 7th day sabbath ritual, but they did not have the sabbath rest in God which is of faith. "God's rest" is rest for their souls not from chopping wood, working in a factory, etc. Now God wants Christians to have the rest in him that Israel failed to enter. If we are led by the Spirit, we will enter that rest. Christ is the Christians sabbath rest of faith and trust which we enjoy daily.

## 12. Argument: Commandments in the NT means the Ten Commandments.

- SDA's use these two texts to show that "God's commandments" are the Ten Commandments. There is nothing in the texts that tell us this.

Rev 14:12 (NIV) 12This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus.

1 John 2:3 - 4 (NIV) 3We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. 4The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

- Christians indeed keep God's commandments that God addressed to Christians. But if we are going to assume that this means old covenant commandments, then why not commandments God gave to other individuals in the Bible? God commanded one prophet to bake his bread over cow manure. It is a commandment of God. Shall we keep this commandment also?

- Baking Bread Over Cow Manure

Ezek 4:14 - 15 (NIV) 14Then I said, "Not so, Sovereign LORD! I have never defiled myself. From my youth until now I have never eaten anything found dead or torn by wild animals. No unclean meat has ever entered my mouth." 15"Very well," he said, "I will let you bake your bread over cow manure instead of human excrement."

- Jesus commanded his disciples to preach to people. Do you do this?

Mark 6:8 - 10 (NIV) 8These were his instructions: "Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. 9Wear sandals but not an extra tunic. 10Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town.

- Jesus commanded the disciples to pay their taxes by getting a coin out of the fishes [fish's] mouth. Do you do this?

Matt 17:27 - (NIV) 27"But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

## 13. Argument: The Ten Commandments points out sin.

- The Ten Commandments points out sin for those the Ten were given. God would never hold anyone accountable to a covenant he did not give to them.

## 14. Argument: Rich young man was told to have eternal life he must keep the commandments.

**Matt 19:16 - 19 (NIV)** 16Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" 17"Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments." 18"Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied, "'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, ^19honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"

**Matt 19:20 - 26 (NIV)** 20"All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?" 21Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 22When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. 23Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 25When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?" 26Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

**15. Argument: Aren't all Christians (even SDA's) in agreement with God today that, with the help of God's Spirit, we WILL keep His Law because we LOVE Him and we WANT to keep His Law of love?**

- This is an assumption. The Bible never tells us that God's spirit enables anyone to keep the old ^ covenant law! *If this was what the Holy Spirit does, then wouldn't everyone be keeping the law perfectly, as required? [Bill]*

## **SABBATH KEEPING IS AN ALASKA PROBLEM!**

This shows that the Sabbath was a regional, temporary command ^ for Israel and not for the world:

From: TOAMREALTY@aol.com [mailto:TOAMREALTY@aol.com]

Sent: Thursday, June 12, 2003 7:01 PM

Subject: Sabbath

Interesting problem in Alaska ....according to the officious SDA sunset calculator, on Friday eve, May 30th, in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, the sun set below the horizon, bringing with it the Jewish Shabbat, at 11:38 PM, almost midnight. Note: AK is so far west, it is on Hawaiian time!!! Here is the quote:

Calculations for:

Longitude: -148.34000

Latitude: 70.27000 Prudhoe Bay, Alaska

Time Zone: Hawaiian Standard Time, HST

Date: 5/30/03 Friday

Sunrise: 0:07am HST (sunrise Friday morning)

Sunset: 11:38pm HST (sunset, Friday night, becoming sabbath)

Next, we find sunrise on Sabbath, May 31st, actually starts before midnight Friday night!!! and el sol invictus stays up all day Sabbath, and into Sabbath night, and into Sunday morning, and into Sunday night, for the next two months!!!!!!

Date: 5/31/03

Sunrise: Sun above horizon HST

Sunset: Sun above horizon HST (meaning the sun never sets!!!! ) meaning: if you live and work in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, extracting dino remains buried and liquified by Noah's flood less than 4500 years ago, you have a problem!!!!!! (no!! dummy!! not the recent age of the earth!!!!)... you have to quit working!!!

Because on Friday night, May 30th, when the sun went down at 11:38, bringing in the holy Lord's day, you had to stop working, thou, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and all the strangers within thy igloo. But the sun came up again on Sabbath just a few minutes later, but never went down after that!!!

As I scribble this nonsense it is still Sabbath in Prudhoe Bay...cause the sun never went down....no Saturday sunset. So if you believe literally that you must keep sabbath from sunset on Friday night to Sabbath sunset.....the next day, Sabbath, did NOT have a sunset this summer!!! Won't be a sunset for another two months!!!! So you are faced with keeping Sabbath for two months straight, and giving up your job with Exxon!!!! Unless of course, you are the camp padre, trying to spread the word that black gold comes from dead dinos who missed the ark, or in the medical profession raking in piles of dough and salving your conscience by paying

## UNTIL ALL THINGS BE FULFILLED? (WORK SHEET)

A discussion of the following passage is unavoidable since both Sabbatarians and their anti-Sabbatarian antagonists use the same passage to support their positions. Here is what Jesus said:

When Jesus accomplished His sacrifice on Calvary, the LAW was fulfilled. It appears that Jesus Himself taught that the LAW {(Torah) would} end on the Cross. Matt 5:17 - Matt 5:19 (NIV):

**17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished." (Matt. 5:17-19, NIV)**

### SABBATARIAN VIEW

**Jesus says the TORAH will last until the end of Earth's history, except the "ceremonial" portions of the TORAH were nailed to the cross and do not apply to Christians today.**

STRENGTHS:

Jesus' words can easily be interpreted to mean that these laws are in effect until the end of the world. Heaven and Earth must disappear before the law and the Prophets are "abolished."

#### WEAKNESSES:

If this is what Jesus meant, Christians must keep all 613 of the TORAH laws. The Jews viewed the TORAH as one integrated unit that could not be separated into ceremonial and moral parts. This interpretation Judaizes Christianity to a powerful degree and certainly is not in accordance with Paul's teachings.

#### ANTI-SABBATARIAN VIEW

**Jesus was referring to His death on the cross when He said "until everything is accomplished." When Jesus died, He said, "It is finished." He accomplished everything for our salvation at that point. The TORAH, which has pointed toward Jesus for its fulfillment, ended at the cross—all 613 laws, including circumcision and the Sabbath.**

#### STRENGTHS:

This interpretation seems to fit what we know about the TORAH. It is a temporary set of laws given to the Jews only at the Exodus to set them apart from all other nations, and it ended at the cross. On the surface, this interpretation seems to make a lot of sense.

#### WEAKNESSES:

We are still faced with the idea that Jesus seems to be saying that these laws will exist until Heaven and Earth pass away, which extends

When Jesus accomplished His sacrifice on Calvary, the LAW was fulfilled. It appears that Jesus Himself taught that the LAW {(Torah) would} end on the Cross. Matt 5:17 - Matt 5:19 (NIV):

**17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished." (Matt 5:17-19 NIV)**

Bill: Some sabbatarians are going to make hay out of this, as they can easily show the text talking about the passing of heaven and earth, and not His death on the cross. This whole section needs to be reworked and thought out carefully.

Let us apply a little logic to this passage, since Sabbatarians use this text to show that the Sabbath is still binding on Christians and anti-Sabbatarians use it to show that the LAW, which contained the Sabbath commandment for Israel, was nailed to the cross.

- Jesus could not have meant that His death on the cross nailed the basic laws given to all Mankind at the beginning of our world-- the ones loosely codified by Noah. The Jews call these the "Noachian laws". Natural moral law can not be suspended or abrogated any more than natural physical laws can be suspended-- like gravity, for example.

Bill: Jesus abrogated physical laws on a number of occasions. He walked on water. This line of reason is way too flawed. The rationale used by Paul in Romans 7 would be better suited here in regards to covenants.

- Jesus could not have meant that natural moral laws (Noachian) could or would be suspended at the end of the world. Truly natural law is virtually self-existent.

Bill: Big mistake using natural law as an allegory for moral law

- Logic eliminates both the idea that the TORAH would remain in force until the end of the world as well as the idea that either natural moral law or TORAH law would be suspended at the end of the world.

Bill: Natural laws will end with the destruction of the old earth and the rolling up of the universe. Natural laws indeed will end.

- The only possible meaning left is that Jesus' death on the cross fulfilled the TORAH.

Bill: You could cite Jesus' own words regarding his fulfilling of everything in the law concerning himself.

Paul Kroll of the Worldwide Church of God has written in an article posted by the church, the following remarks in regard to what was fulfilled at the cross (See The "Law" of Matthew 5:17-19." A Google search for Matthew 5:17 Commentary should produce the entire article for your study.):

**The meaning of "until everything is accomplished" has several possibilities. It is suggested by the *Tyndale New Testament Commentary* that the translation: "Until what it [the Law] looks forward to arrives" gives the best sense of this phrase. This links the thought with the idea of "fulfillment" in verse 17. This also seems to be the thrust of Paul's comments regarding the relationship of the Law and Jesus' earthly ministry (Galatians 3:19, 23-25).**

**The *Tyndale New Testament Commentary* expresses the interpretation of "accomplished" in these words:**

**"The law remains valid until it reaches its intended culmination; this it is now doing in the ministry and teaching of Jesus. This verse does not state, therefore, as it is sometimes interpreted, that every regulation in the Old Testament law remains binding after the coming of Jesus. The law is unalterable, but that does not justify its application beyond the purpose for which it was intended" (page 115).**

**The *Tyndale* commentary also makes the same point in these words:**

**"This passage does not therefore state that every Old Testament regulation is eternally valid. This view is not found anywhere in the New Testament, which consistently sees Jesus as introducing a new situation, for which the law prepared (Galatians 3:24), but which now transcends it. The focus is now on Jesus and his teaching, and in this light the validity of Old Testament rules must now be examined. Some will be found to have fulfilled their role, and be no longer applicable...others will be reinterpreted" (page 117).**

**This explanation must be the correct one, or else the early Christian church and the apostles violated Matthew 5:17-19 by telling gentile Christians that circumcision and keeping the Law of Moses was not necessary. The book of Galatians would also have been in error on this point. And the book of Hebrews would have been in extraordinary violation of Jesus' words, too, since it states that the entire sacrificial system, the temple worship and Levitical priesthood had been annulled.**

Paul emphasizes exactly what Jesus said in this passage, that Christ is the end of TORAH law: **Rom.10:4 (NIV): "Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes."** Again, understanding that the Jews made a difference between TORAH and NOACHIAN law helps us to see why both Jesus and Paul can say that the LAW ended at the cross without saying that natural moral law ended. Under the New Covenant, the "law" is written on the hearts of the people. Moral principles are simply statements of cause and effect and cannot be stopped any more than gravity can be suspended without creating utter havoc for the entire universe. Paul lists 23 sins which will keep a person out of Heaven, and this list is far more comprehensive than even the 10 Commandments, which do not even forbid homosexual behavior or a hasty temper.

Bill: What is overlooked by sabbatarians in Mt. 5:17-19 is that Jesus refers to the law and prophets, and not just "the law". In this context, it is what is found in the law (first 5 books) and prophets (that which is written by them) that has the potential to be fulfilled or destroyed, and there are no laws; the legalities of the law, codified in the prophets. The only thing written in the law and prophets with the potential to be fulfilled or destroyed are prophecies, and Jesus declared he came to fulfill that which was written of him in the law. The statement regarding "till heaven and earth pass" is in relation to those prophecies found in the law and prophets that are eschatological in nature that have their fulfillment later. To conclude this is about the legalities of the law ignores the later context of the same chapter where Jesus proceeds to alter points of that law way beyond jots and tittles.

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It is clear that the written code that was against us is the Mosaic Law. It was the ordinance of death. This had nothing to do with mere man-made traditions. The Law, and in particular the Ten Commandments, condemned people to death because it could not be kept. It was a law of works: **Corinthians 3:7-8 (NIV) “Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?”**

Bill: Paul defines the o.c. law as spiritual. The why is about where the law came from; God. But in this context, manna was spiritual also as it too came from God. Best though to clip that part out.