

James White on the Ceremonial and Moral Laws

James White and **Ellen White** agree

The **mistaken view that the Sabbath was typical**, had long been held by the churches; hence this class could more easily receive the idea that when Paul says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or

"There is no shadow in the precepts of the decalogue. **The ten commandments are not a type.**" RH July 15, 1890, par. 5

in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come," Colossians 2:16, 17, he includes the Sabbath of the Lord. **The apostle here speaks of sabbath days, or sabbaths. Leviticus 23, shows seven Jewish sabbaths, to be celebrated at their appointed times, "besides the Sabbaths of the Lord." See verses 37 and 38. Here the distinction between the two kinds of sabbaths is seen.** Paul refers to those which are classed with meat, drink, new moon, etc., and not to the Sabbath which the Lawgiver has wisely associated with nine moral precepts. The "Sabbath Manual," by Justin Edwards, speaks with clearness and ability upon this point, and also in reference to the days spoken of in Romans 14: LIFIN 280.2

"Under the Jewish dispensation were incorporated two kinds of laws. One was founded on obligations growing out of the nature of men, and their relations to God and one another; obligations binding before they were written, and which will continue to be binding upon all who shall know them, to the end of time. Such are the laws which were written by the finger of God on the tables of stone, and are called moral laws. LIFIN 281.1

"The other kind, called **ceremonial laws**, related to various **outward observances, which were not obligatory till they were commanded, and then were binding only on the Jews till the death of Christ.** LIFIN 281.2

"There were also **two kinds of Sabbaths**, or days of rest. **One was a day of weekly rest**; and the command to keep it holy was placed by the Lawgiver in the midst of the moral laws. It was called, by way of eminence, 'The Sabbath.' **The command to keep the other sabbaths was placed by the Lawgiver among the ceremonial laws**, because it was like them, as the command to keep the weekly Sabbath was like the laws with which it was associated. **One class were fundamental, permanent, universal, moral laws; the other class were local, temporary, ceremonial laws.** One had their origin in the nature and relations of man; the other in the peculiar circumstances in which, for a time, a peculiar people were placed. **One would be binding in all ages, upon all who should know them; and the other would be binding only upon the Jews till the death of the Messiah.** LIFIN 281.3

"And he gave to Moses when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai **two tables of stone, written with the finger of God.**" [Verse 18.] **Never could this be blotted out; for it was written, engraved in stone, with the finger of God. It was never against us, because God declared that we were to obey His commandments as a perpetual covenant. At His death Christ blotted out the handwriting that was against us, "and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." [Colossians 2:14.] In every ceremony, in every sacrifice, His death had been prefigured. He was the foundation of the sacrificial system, which was to last till in His death type should meet antitype.** 16LtMs, Lt 51, 1901, par. 8

"The **Jews**, at the coming of Christ, being **in a state of great spiritual darkness** and grievous apostasy from God, did not well understand the nature and objects of their laws. Often **they overlooked the spirit**,

Christ presented to the multitude of Jews and Gentiles of all nations the real original truths connected with his kingdom, **which had been buried out of sight.** He sought to clear away the mist and fog of their false, long-cherished ideas in regard to his mission and his kingdom. They supposed it was a temporal, earthly kingdom; but **he showed them its spiritual and eternal nature.** He unfolded before them the far-reaching principles of the law of God; **commandment after commandment he opened before them in its true spiritual bearing**, and showed the extent of the requirements of God's precepts. RH March 21, 1893, par. 3

The system of Jewish economy was the gospel in figure, a presentation of Christianity which was to be developed as fast as the minds of the people could comprehend spiritual light. RH
November 28, 1893, par. 5

and were superstitiously devoted to the forms. Some, after they embraced the gospel, **thought that the ceremonial as well as the moral laws were binding**; others, more enlightened, thought that they were not. This led to contentions among them. Paul, in the fourteenth chapter of Romans, presented such considerations as were adapted to lead them, in this matter, to a right decision. LIFIN 282.1

“One man,’ he says, **‘esteemeth one day above another.** Another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.’ Both mean to honor God, and he will accept them. But **what day does he speak of?** ‘The Sabbath’ of the fourth commandment, associated by God inseparably with the moral laws? Read the connection. What is it? Is it, one man believeth he must worship Jehovah; another, who is weak, worshipeth idols? One believeth that he must not commit murder, adultery or theft, and another thinks he may? Were those the laws about which they were contending, and with which were connected the days that he speaks of? No; about those laws there was no dispute. LIFIN 282.2
“But ‘One believeth that he may eat all things,’ (which are nourishing, whether allowed in the ceremonial law, which regulateth such things, or not); ‘another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him.’ Those were not the laws about which they were contending, and with regard to which the apostle was giving them instruction. **It was not the moral, but the ceremonial laws; and the days spoken of were those which were connected, not with the former, but with the latter.** LIFIN 282.3

“So, in the second chapter of Colossians, **“Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths.”** The sabbaths spoken of are not the Sabbath associated with, Thou shalt not commit murder, or adultery, or theft; but the sabbaths associated with meats and drinks, and new moons, which were indeed shadows of things to come. But to take what he said about **those sabbaths which were associated by God with the ceremonial laws,** and which the apostle himself, in this very discourse, associates with them, and apply it, as some have done, to ‘The Sabbath’ which God associated with moral laws, **is wrong.**” pp. 133,136. LIFIN 283.1

All types point forward to something connected with the work of redemption. They have no other

“All the ceremonies of the feast were types of the work of Christ... The slain lamb, the unleavened bread, the sheaf of first fruits, represented the Saviour. DA 77.1

design than this. Hence no type would ever have been introduced had not man fallen and needed a redemption. They all originate, therefore, this side of the fall. But the Sabbath was instituted before the fall, before man needed redemption, and before anything was, or could have been, reasonably given to foreshadow that work. **All the types that were ever instituted had no meaning except as they recognized the work of Christ in redemption;** but the seventh-day Sabbath was from creation a holy day, and all the facts to which the fourth commandment points would have been just as true as they are now if Christ had never died. **While the types, among which were the typical sabbaths of the Jews, recognized man’s guilt, and signified God’s willingness to save,** the seventh-day Sabbath would have occupied the same place it now occupies, and ever has occupied, even if man had never sinned. **The typical sabbaths were shadows of things to come;** the seventh-day Sabbath was and is a memorial of things past. **The two classes of sabbaths point in opposite directions, and hence cannot be classed**

Remember the law of Moses:

John, as a prophet, stood forth as God’s representative, to show the connection between the law and the prophets and the Christian dispensation. Like Malachi, he pleaded with the Jews: **“Remember ye the law of Moses, ... with all the statutes and judgments.”** His work and ministry **pointed back to the law and the prophets, while he, at the same time, pointed the people forward to Christ as the Saviour of the world.** He called upon them to “behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” SW March 21, 1905, par. 7

together. The one pointed forward to redemption; the other points back to creation. “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” The seventh-day Sabbath therefore is not a type, if reason and revelation may decide this question. LIFIN 283.2

William Miller's views respecting the perpetuity of the Sabbath, and its distinction from the sabbaths of the Jews, is also worthy of notice. LIFIN 284.1

"I say, and I believe I am supported by the Bible, that the moral law was never given to the Jews as a people exclusively, but they were for a season the keepers of it in charge. And through them the law, oracles and testimony have been handed down to us. See Paul's clear reasoning in Romans 2:3, 4, on that point. **Then, says the objector, we are under the same obligation to keep the sabbaths of weeks, months and years that the Jews were. No, sir; you will observe that these were not included in the decalogue.... Only one kind of Sabbaths was given to Adam, and only one remains for us. See Hosea 2:11. 'I will cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.' All the Jewish sabbaths did cease, when Christ nailed them to his cross. Colossians 2:14-17. 'Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the**

"In three days I will raise it up." In the Saviour's death the powers of darkness seemed to prevail, and they exulted in their victory. But from the rent sepulcher of Joseph, Jesus came forth a conqueror. **"Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them."** Colossians 2:15. By virtue of His death and resurrection He became the minister of the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Hebrews 8:2. DA 165.5

body is of Christ.' **These were properly called Jewish sabbaths.** Hosea says, 'her sabbaths.' But the Sabbath of which we are speaking, God calls 'my Sabbath.' **Here is clear distinction between the creation Sabbath and the ceremonial. The one is perpetual; the others were merely shadows of good things to come, and are limited in Christ.** - Miller's Life and Views, pp. 161, 162. LIFIN 284.2]

"To accuse and criticize those whom God is using, is to accuse and criticize the Lord, who has sent them. All need to cultivate their religious faculties, that they may have a right discernment of religious things. **Some have failed to distinguish between pure gold and mere glitter, between the substance and the shadow.** LS 325.2

Here let it be distinctly understood that those who hold that no change has taken place in the law of God, excepting in the fourth precept, have no right whatever to appeal to those texts usually quoted **to prove the abolition of the entire code.** LIFIN 285.1
(end from 'Life Incidents' by James White)

There is no way to reach the city of God but by the cross of Calvary. As we lift this cross, which is covered with shame and reproach in the eyes of men, we may know that Christ will help us; and we need divine aid. The sinner has lived in sin; he must die to sin, and live a new life of holiness to God. **Paul wrote to the Colossians: "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." The apostle here refers to the death to sin, the death of the carnal mind, and not to the death of the body.** BEcho January 15, 1889, par. 5

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; ¹⁵And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. ¹⁶Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday (Gr. "feast days"), or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: ¹⁷**Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body** ^{is} of Christ. Col 2:14-17

Because we broke God's laws, we **owed a debt—a debt** that listed all the rules we failed to follow. **But God forgave us of that debt.** He took **it** away and **nailed it to the cross.** Col 2:14 EHV

The Son of God is the centre of the great plan of redemption, which covers all dispensations. He is the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." He is the Redeemer of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam in all ages of human probation. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." **Christ is the substance, or body, which casts its shadow back into former dispensations. When Christ**

died, the shadow ceased. At the death of Christ, the typical system was done away; but the law of God, whose violation had made the plan of salvation necessary, was magnified and made honourable. The gospel was good tidings of great joy to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses; for it presented to them a coming Saviour. A more clear and glorious light now shines upon the Christian. We look forward to an entrance into Eden, which Adam lost. Those who lived before the coming of Christ, looked forward by faith to his coming; but what had to be grasped by faith by them, is assurance to us; for we know that Christ has come, as foretold by the prophets. It is just as essential for us to have faith in our Redeemer who came to earth and died our sacrifice, as it was for the ancients to believe in a Redeemer to come, represented by their offerings and sacrifices. BEcho July 15, 1893, par. 8

In Colossians we read: "The body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."

Colossians 2:17-19. Our work in all its lines is to demonstrate the influence of the cross. The work of God in the plan of salvation is not to be done in any disjointed way. It is not to operate at random. The plan that provided the influence of the cross **provided also the methods** of its diffusion. **This method is simple in its principles and comprehensive in its plain, distinct lines.** Part is connected with part in perfect order and relation. 6T 235.2

Do you see Christ as the anti-type of all the types, the precious, glorious substance of all the shadows, the full signification of all the symbols? The **types and shadows** were instituted by Christ himself, to transmit to man an idea of the plan devised for his redemption. ST August 24, 1891, par. 3

That holy law, God's righteousness, that amid thunder and flame was proclaimed from Sinai as the guide of life, is now revealed to men as **the rule of judgment.** The hand opens the tables, and there are seen the precepts of the decalogue, traced as with a pen of fire. The words are so plain that all can read them. Memory is aroused, the darkness of superstition and heresy is swept from every mind, and **God's ten words, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, are presented to the view of all the inhabitants of the earth.** GC88 639.1

The comprehensive requirement of the law of God makes no reservation. The command is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." "This do, and thou shalt live." [Luke 10:27, 28.] 12LtMs, Lt 3, 1897, par. 15

In his sermon on the mount, Christ made known the comprehensive and far-reaching character of the law of God. He applied its great principles to the thoughts and the desires. He taught that all wrong thoughts and feelings, though unknown to any human being, are a transgression of the law of God, and that those who cherish them must suffer the penalty. **Thus the law was shown to reach the inner life.** RH May 3, 1898, par. 4