

LESSON 7 - February 18, 1888.

THE PATRIARCHS

1. How long was it from the creation of Adam till the birth of Seth ? Gen. 5: 3.
2. How long from the birth of Seth till the birth of Enos ? Verse 6.
3. How long from the birth of Enos till the birth of Cainan ? Verse 9.
4. How long from then till the birth of Mahalaleel ? Verse 12.
5. How long after the birth of Mahalaleel was Jared born ? Verse 15.
6. How old was Jared when Enoch was born ? Verse 18.
7. How long did Enoch live before the birth of Methuselah ? Verse 21.

8. How long did Methuselah live before Lamech was born ? Verse 25.

9. Then how long was it from the creation of Adam till the birth of Lamech ?
Ans.- 874 years.

10. How long did Adam live? Verse 5.

11. Then how long did 'he live after Lamech was born ?
Ans.-56 years.

12. How long did Adam live contemporary with Methuselah ?
Ans.-243 years.

13. Was there not, then, ample opportunity for Methuselah to learn of Adam all about the institution of the 'Sabbath, the fall, etc.?

14. How long did Lamech live before Noah was born ? Gen. 5 : 28, 29.

15. How old was Methuselah when Noah was born ?

Ans.-369 years. Compare verses 25 and 28.

16. How old was Methuselah when he died? Verse 27.

17. Then how long did Methuselah live contemporary with Noah ?

Ans.-600 years.

18. How long did he live contemporary with Shem ?

Ans.-98 years. See Gen. 11 : 10.

19. How long did Shem live after the flood? Gen. 11 :10, 11.

20. How long after the flood was Abraham born?

Ans.-352 years.

21. Then what opportunity had Abraham to learn all the events of the antediluvian world ?

Ans.-He lived for 150 years contemporary with Shem, who had lived 98 years with one who had lived 233 years with Adam.

22. Before the flood, had there been more than one language? Gen. II : 1.

23. Soon after the flood what did the people begin to do? Verses 2-4.

24. What was their object in doing this ? Verse 4.

25. What evil motives prompted them to do this ?

Ans.-Pride and presumption. They thought that by their own efforts they could frustrate any possible attempt on the part of God to punish them for their wickedness.

26. What did the Lord do ? Verses 7, 8.

27. What was the tower called, and why ? Verse 9.

28. Is it possible for men by combining together to avert the judgments of God ? Prov. 11 : 21.

NOTE.-It is not to be expected that all shall commit to memory the figures given in this lesson, although many of the younger scholars may not find it difficult to do so. Even though all could commit these figures. to memory, it would be somewhat difficult for them to grasp fully the

idea they are designed to convey, without something to aid them.. Accordingly the teacher should prepare some sort of a diagram, showing by different lines. how long the patriarchs lived contemporaneously, and how few lives it took to span the period of time from the creation till the call of Abraham. This lesson is designed to show how easy it was to preserve and transmit the knowledge of the truth of God,, A diagram, will be found on page 11.

"History of the Sabbath," last part of Chap. 2

But we ask that the facts be brought forward which prove that the Sabbath was sanctified in the wilderness of Sin, and not at creation. And what are the facts that show this? It is confessed that such facts are not upon record. Their existence is assumed in order to sustain the theory that the Sabbath originated at the fall of the manna, and not in paradise.

Did God sanctify the Sabbath in the wilderness of Sin? There is no intimation of such fact. On the contrary, it is mentioned at that time as something already set apart of God. On the sixth day Moses said, "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord."²⁰ Surely this is not the act of instituting the Sabbath, but the familiar mention of an existing fact. We pass on to Mount Sinai. Did God sanctify the Sabbath when he spoke the ten commandments? No one²¹ claims that he did. It is admitted by all that Moses spoke of it familiarly the previous month. Does the Lord at Sinai speak of the sanctification of the Sabbath? He does; but in the very language of Genesis he goes back for the sanctification of the Sabbath, not to the wilderness of Sin, but to the creation of the world.²² We ask those who hold the theory under examination, this question: If the Sabbath was not sanctified at creation, but was sanctified in the wilderness²³ of Sin, why does the narrative in each instance record the sanctification of the Sabbath at creation and omit all mention of such fact in the wilderness of Sin? Nay, why does the record of events in the wilderness of Sin, show that the holy Sabbath was at that time already in existence? In a word, How can a theory subversive of all the facts in the record, be maintained as the truth of God?

We have seen the Sabbath ordained of God at the close of the creation week. The object of its Author is worthy of especial attention. Why did the Creator set up this memorial in paradise? Why did he set apart from the other days of the week that day which he had employed in rest? "Because that in it," says the record, "he had rested from all his work which God created and made." A rest necessarily implies a work performed. And hence the Sabbath was ordained of God as a memorial of the work of creation. And therefore that precept of the moral law which relates to this memorial, unlike every other precept of that law, begins with the word, "Remember." The importance of this memorial will be appreciated when we learn from the Scriptures that it is the work of creation which is claimed by its Author as the great evidence of his eternal power and Godhead, and as that great fact which distinguishes him from all false gods. Thus it is written:

"He that built all things is God." "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens."
"But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King." "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion." "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Thus "the worlds were framed

by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."²⁴

Such is the estimate which the Scriptures place upon the work of creation as evincing the eternal power and Godhead of the creator. The Sabbath stands as the memorial of this great work. Its observance is an act of grateful acknowledgment on the part of his intelligent creatures that he is their Creator, and that they owe all to him; and that for his pleasure they are and were created. How appropriate this observance for Adam! And when man had fallen, how important for his well being that he should "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." He would thus have been preserved from atheism and from idolatry; for he could never forget that there was a God from whom all things derived their being; nor could he worship as God any other being than the Creator.

The seventh day, as hallowed by God in Eden, was not Jewish, but divine; it was not the memorial of the flight of Israel from Egypt, but of the Creator's rest. Nor is it true that the most distinguished Jewish writers deny the primeval origin of the Sabbath, or claim it as a Jewish memorial. We cite the historian Josephus and his learned contemporary, Philo Judaeus. Josephus, whose "Antiquities of the Jews" run parallel with the Bible from the beginning, when treating of the wilderness of Sin, makes no allusion whatever to the Sabbath, a clear proof that he had no idea that it originated in that wilderness. But when giving the account of creation, he bears the following testimony:

"Moses says that in just six days the world and all that is therein was made. And that the seventh day was a rest and a release from the labor of such operations; WHENCE it is that we celebrate a rest from our labor on that day, and call it the Sabbath; which word denotes rest in the Hebrew tongue."²⁵

And Philo bears an emphatic testimony relative to the character of the Sabbath as a memorial. Thus he says:

"But after the whole world had been completed according to the perfect nature of the number six, the Father hallowed the day following, the seventh, praising it and calling it holy. For that day is the festival, not of one city or one country, but of all the earth; a day which alone it is right to call the day of festival for all people, and the birth-day of the world."²⁶

Nor was the rest-day of the Lord a shadow of man's rest after his recovery from the fall. God will ever be worshiped in an understanding manner by his intelligent creatures. When therefore he set apart his rest-day to a holy use, if it was not as a memorial of his work, but as a shadow of man's redemption from the fall, the real design of the institution must have been stated, and, as a consequence, man in his unfallen state could never observe the Sabbath as a delight, but ever with deep distress, as reminding him that he was soon to apostatize from God. Nor was the holy of the Lord and honorable, one of the "carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation;"²⁷ for there could be no reformation with unfallen beings.

But man did not continue in his uprightness. Paradise was lost, and Adam was excluded from the tree of life. The curse of God fell upon the earth, and death entered by sin, and passed upon

all men.²⁸ After this sad apostasy, no further mention of the Sabbath occurs until Moses on the sixth day said, "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord."

It is objected that there is no precept in the book of Genesis for the observance of the Sabbath, and consequently no obligation on the part of the patriarchs to observe it. There is a defect in this argument not noticed by those who use it. The book of Genesis was not a rule given to the patriarchs to walk by. On the contrary, it was written by Moses 2500 years after creation, and long after the patriarchs were dead. Consequently the fact that certain precepts were not found in Genesis is no evidence that they were not obligatory upon the patriarchs. Thus the book does not command men to love God with all their hearts, and their neighbours as themselves; nor does it prohibit idolatry, blasphemy, disobedience to parents, adultery, theft, false witness or covetousness. Who will affirm from this that the patriarchs were under no restraint in these things? As a mere record of events, written long after their occurrence, it was not necessary that the book should contain a moral code. But had the book been given to the patriarchs as a rule of life, it must of necessity have contained such a code. It is a fact worthy of especial notice that as soon as Moses reaches his own time in the book of Exodus, the whole moral law is given. The record and the people were then contemporary, and ever afterward the written law is in the hands of God's people, as a rule of life, and a complete code of moral precepts.

The argument under consideration is unsound, 1. Because based upon the supposition that the book of Genesis was the rule of life for the patriarchs; 2. Because if carried out it would release the patriarchs from every precept of the moral law except the sixth.²⁹ 3. Because the act of God in setting apart his rest-day to a holy use, as we have seen, necessarily involves the fact that he gave a precept concerning it to Adam, in whose time it was thus set apart. And hence, though the book of Genesis contains no precept concerning the Sabbath, it does contain direct evidence that such precept was given to the head and representative of the human family.

After giving the institution of the Sabbath, the book of Genesis, in its brief record of 2370 years, does not again mention it. This has been urged as ample proof that those holy men, who, during this period, were perfect, and walked with God in observance of his commandments, statutes and laws,³⁰ all lived in open profanation of that day which God had blessed and set apart to a holy use. But the book of Genesis also omits any distinct reference to the doctrine of future punishment, the resurrection of the body, the revelation of the Lord in flaming fire, and the Judgment of the great day. Does this silence prove that the patriarchs did not believe these great doctrines? Does it make them any the less sacred?

But the Sabbath is not mentioned from Moses to David, a period of five hundred years, during which it was enforced by the penalty of death. Does this prove that it was not observed during this period?³¹ The jubilee occupied a very prominent place in the typical system, yet in the whole Bible a single instance of its observance is not recorded. What is still more remarkable, there is not on record a single instance of the observance of the great day of atonement, notwithstanding the work in the holiest on that day was the most important service connected with the worldly sanctuary. And yet the observance of the other and less important festivals of the seventh month, which are so intimately connected with the day of atonement, the one

preceding it by ten days, the other following it in five, is repeatedly and particularly recorded.³² It would be sophistry to argue from this silence respecting the day of atonement, when there were so many instances in which its mention was almost demanded, that that day was never observed; and yet it is actually a better argument than the similar one urged against the Sabbath from the book of Genesis.

The reckoning of time by weeks is derived from nothing in nature, but owes its existence to the divine appointment of the seventh day to a holy use in memory of the Lord's rest from the six days' work of creation.³³ This period of time is marked only by the recurrence of the sanctified rest-day of the Creator. That the patriarchs reckoned time by weeks and by sevens of days, is evident from several texts.³⁴ That they should retain the week and forget the Sabbath by which alone the week is marked, is not a probable conclusion. That the reckoning of the week was rightly kept is evident from the fact that in the wilderness of Sin on the sixth day the people, of their own accord, gathered a double portion of manna. And Moses said to them, "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord."³⁵

The brevity of the record in Genesis causes us to overlook many facts of the deepest interest. Adam lived 930 years. How deep and absorbing the interest that must have existed in the human family to see the first man! To converse with one who had himself talked with God! To hear from his lips a description of that paradise in which he had lived! To learn from one created on the sixth day the wondrous events of the creation week! To hear from his lips the very words of the creator when he set apart his rest-day to a holy use! And to learn, alas! the sad story of the loss of paradise and the tree of life!³⁶

It was therefore not difficult for the facts respecting the six days of creation and the sanctification of the rest-day to be diffused among mankind in the patriarchal age. Nay, it was impossible that it should be otherwise, especially among the godly. From Adam to Abraham a succession of men - probably inspired of God--preserved the knowledge of God upon earth. Thus Adam lived till Lamech, the father of Noah, was 56 years of age; Lamech lived till Shem, the son of Noah, was 93; Shem lived till Abraham was 150 years of age. Thus are we brought down to Abraham, the father of the faithful. Of him it is recorded that he obeyed God's voice and kept his charge, his commandments, his statutes, and his laws. And of him the Most High bears the following testimony: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment."³⁷ The knowledge of God was preserved in the family of Abraham; and we shall next find the Sabbath familiarly mentioned among his posterity, as an existing institution.