



Our Firm Platform

The Truth for Our Times

To proclaim the Third Angel's Message to the World

January 2017

The Sabbath

by Elder M. L. Andreasen

The Sabbath is one of God's choicest gifts to man. It was brought to earth by God Himself, as the crown and glory of the finished creation. Wondrous in beauty must that first Sabbath have been as God, at the end of the six days, rested from all His works which He had made. The heavens were studded with jewels, and the earth was filled with a thousand delights. Earth, sea, and sky proclaimed the glory, and power, and love of God. It would seem that love could do no more than God had done for His own.

And yet God was not satisfied. He had given the earth to the children of men; now He added a bit of heaven. Once a week the Sabbath was to come to earth; once a week God would in a special manner meet with His children; once a week heaven's peace would rest on the whole creation. Coming down from God out of heaven, the Sabbath would descend with healing in its wings, bringing to man rest, peace, and

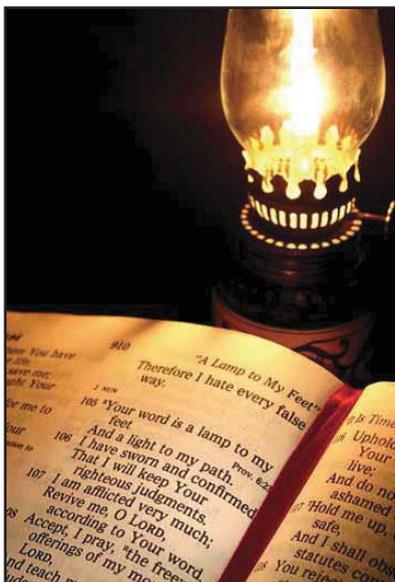
blessing, yea, God Himself. Thrice blessed, it was the golden clasp that bound earth and heaven together, the golden chain that bound the soul of God. As God and man communed together that first Sabbath on earth, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

But sin and sorrow came in and marred

God's perfect creation. Long has evil prevailed, and at times it has seemed that God has forsaken man and left him to his own folly and destruction. From the anguished hearts of millions has ascended the cry to God, How long, O Lord, how long! Yet God has not left the earth, nor man. He still meets with His own; He still sends them the holy Sabbath with balm for the weary, quiet for frayed nerves, comfort for distressed hearts, peace for anxious and troubled souls. For a war-weary world; for hearts that are failing for fear and for looking after those things that are coming to the earth; for bereaved families who mourn the loss of loved ones; for sin-sick souls who long for assurance and peace, God still has a message. Earth may resound with the roar of cannon and the shriek of falling bombs, the droning of messengers of destruction may fill the air; but the sun still rules the heavens; the stars, calm and serene, follow their appointed path; and God is still on the throne. At the determined time He will speak, and will not keep silence. Men shall still hear His voice.

If ever the Sabbath was needed, it is now. Amid the tumult of nations, amid the clash of arms, God's voice is heard calling men to worship, to communion, to the Sabbath rest that remains for the people of God. The time has come, and is long overdue, for a Sabbath restoration and reformation. The evil one has almost succeeded in depriving men of God's Sabbath gift, and the church is apathetic. It is time for the Christian, for the church, to awake, and go out to battle for the faith once delivered to the saints. It is time for all to "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

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Two Institutions

Two institutions have come to us from the Garden of Eden; marriage and the Sabbath. Only one of these, the Sabbath, carries over into the earth made new. Of marriage it is written: "When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven." Mark 12:25. On the contrary, this is said of the Sabbath: "As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, says the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 66:22, 23.

This makes the Sabbath unique. Throughout changing customs and varying dispensations, amid the passing of empires and the crash of nations surviving floods, famines, and even "the end of all things," the Sabbath stands unmoved and supreme. It, of all institutions, alone abides. Made by God and given to man for an everlasting possession, it endures as eternity itself.

We are not informed about Sabbath observance among the angels; we have no knowledge of what inhabitants of other worlds are doing in regard to Sabbath rest; but we do know that the Sabbath was made for and given to man and that Christ claims lordship over it. Mark 2:27,28. This makes it a divine-human institution, fitted to beings made of clay, but in the image of God, partakers of the divine nature.

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The Sabbath commandment, by its very nature, underlies all the other commandments; in fact, it is fundamental to religion itself. It is the one commandment which provides time for worship,

for contemplation, for communion with nature and with God.

Were there no Sabbath, every day would be a day of labor, and life a continuous round of secular pursuits. Nature, as such, knows no Sabbath. The corn grows every day; so do weeds. The storms, rains, hail, observe no Sabbath. Disasters occur, fires rage, accidents happen, regardless of the day of the week. Multitudinous secular duties call for constant attention, and even seven days a week at times seem not enough to do all the

work that needs to be done. Were it not for the Sabbath, men would labor every day and yet not get their work done.

But God recognizes the need of rest, spiritual and physical. In the midst of life's pressing demands He calls a halt and bids men cease their activity and give attention to the things of the spirit. To their own astonishment, men find that taking time out

for spiritual duties does not hinder but rather helps in temporal affairs; that the physical rest on the Sabbath does not delay their work, but gives them added zest and strength for their common pursuits on the other days of the week. They have found by experience that resting on the Sabbath enables them to do as much work in six days as they formerly did in seven. But over and above any physical gain is the invigoration that comes to the soul through time spent in contemplation, as man in worship comes face to face with himself and with his Maker, and considers the vital themes of life—death, heaven, eternity, duty, and privilege—and probes the depth of his own existence as related to the plan of God.

Spiritual Service

The Sabbath raises man from the level of earthly existence to the plane of the spirit. Six days man toils to provide the needed food, clothing, shelter, and protection against possible contingencies. On the Sabbath he is lifted above all earthly considerations, and communes with his God. On that day he takes his rightful place in creation, lifts his mind to things above, lays aside all that binds him to earth, and enters into the heavenly rest. He meets with those of like precious faith, partakes of the bread which comes down from heaven, sits at table with his Lord, and receives His parting blessing as he turns again to his earthly pursuits for another week.

The Sabbath provides the occasion for spiritual service and contemplation. On that day he may consider the marvelous things out of God's law; he may view the glory of God in the heavens above and the earth beneath; he may commune with God and his own soul. Were it not for the time thus provided, man would sustain an irreparable spiritual loss. The Sabbath gives the needed time for contemplation of life and its duties,

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God recognizes the need of rest, spiritual and physical. In the midst of life's pressing demands He calls a halt and bids men cease their activity and give attention to the things of the spirit.

for God, heaven, and religion. Take the Sabbath away, and the foundation of the other commandments is removed; there would be no stated time for worship, no time dedicated to the consideration of our responsibilities to God and man. Without the Sabbath, life would be an endless round of duties and labor, spiritual things would be neglected, and man's highest end would not be attained. If there is to be religion at all, God must provide time for it. This God has done.

Attack Upon the Sabbath

From this it can easily be understood that any attack upon the Sabbath is an attack upon religion itself, a thrust aimed at man's spiritual nature. We need not wonder, therefore, that Satan is specially interested in the destruction or the perversion of the Sabbath. If he can destroy it, he has cut the link of communication with heaven. He has sapped the lifeblood of religion, without which Christianity will soon sicken and die. An attack upon the Sabbath is a stab at the heart of worship, at the heart of both man and God.

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The nature of the Sabbath makes it peculiarly susceptible to attack from the evil one. It is inconceivable that Satan could ever

persuade Christendom that stealing or committing adultery is harmless or permissible. Yet the Sabbath commandment is as surely a part of the moral law as are the others. It is doubtful that Satan could ever persuade Christians that any of the other commandments can be violated with impunity. Yet he has done this with the fourth. How has this been possible? What are the reasons for his success? This will be discussed fully later.

Attacks upon the Sabbath throughout the ages have been numerous and persistent, and they have all been grounded upon human reasoning as against the command of God. Men can see no reason why any other day than one commanded by God is not just as good. Men cannot see why one day in seven is not just as good as the seventh day. The answer, of course, is that the difference lies in God's command. It is at this point that man's reason sets aside a positive command of God. It is not merely a question of this or that day, but the greater question of obedience to God's command.

The attacks made on the Sabbath have not come merely or even generally from unbelievers or opponents of God. Satan's

ingenuity and master mind show themselves in his capacity for enlisting Christians—laymen, preachers, and bishops—in his attack on the Sabbath. Men of learning, men of science, have joined the fray, and the array of talent mustered against the Sabbath is quite formidable. But truth will triumph at last.

One of the most effective and far-reaching attacks upon the Sabbath has come as a by-product of the theory of organic evolution, almost universally accepted by scientists. We consider this attack from the scientific angle the most insidious of all, for more than anything else it destroys faith in the Bible and the record of creation. While a full consideration of this subject does not come under the purview of this volume, it is essential that we give it at least passing attention. This we shall do (in the next chapter).

Study on the Sabbath

excerpted from Mike Nicholson's study of the "7th day Sabbath"

Let us examine the Decalogue (Ten Commandments)

1. It was written by God's own finger, on two tables of stone and placed inside the Ark of Covenant in the Sanctuary, Exodus 20 : 3-17; 31:18; Deuteronomy 9:10; Hebrews 4:3-4.
2. God's Seal is found in the fourth commandment. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it Holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:" this only, of all the ten, brings to view both the name and the title of the lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the Decalogue to show by whose authority the law is thus given.

The Sabbath is not introduced as a new institution but as having been founded at creation, it is not a Jewish day. It is to be remembered and observed as a memorial of the Creator's work. Pointing to God as the maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all the false god's. All those who keep the seventh day, signify by this act, that they are true worshipers of Jehovah God.

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Thus, the Sabbath is a sign of man's allegiance to God. The fourth commandment is the only one of all ten in which is found both the name and the title of the lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose authority this law is given, because it contains the Seal of God, affixed to His law as evidence of His authenticity and binding force.

The reason for God's authority in presenting the Ten Commandment Decalogue to man, is that He is their Creator, as well as the Creator of all things. Therefore Sabbath observance becomes an official sign between God and His people, between Creator and the created.

His name: "The Lord thy God"

"But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."

His title: "Creator"

"For in six days the LORD made, ..."

His Dominion: Heaven, earth, and sea

"...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."

This is why the Seventh-day Adventist church in 1844 was given the First Angels Message, to give to the whole world, as found in Revelation 14:6-7.

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

THE SABBATH IS CALLED...

- The Sabbath of the Lord (Ex. 20:10, Lev. 23:3, Deut. 5:14)
- The Sabbath of rest (Ex. 31:15)
- The rest of the Holy Sabbath (Ex. 16:23)
- God's Holy Day (Isa. 58:13)
- The Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10)

SAINTS & THE SABBATH

- Observe (Neh. 13:22)
- Honor God in observing (Isa. 58:13)
- Rejoice in (Ps. 118:24, Isa. 58:13)
- Testify against those who desecrate (Neh. 13:15, 20-21)

OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH

- Moses (Num. 15:32-34)
- Nehemiah (Neh. 13:19, 21)
- Women who embalm the body of Jesus (Luke 23:56)
- Paul (Acts 13:14)
- The Disciples (Acts 16:13)

HONORING THE SABBATH EXEMPLIFIED

- Moses (Num. 15:32-34)
- Nehemiah (Neh. 13:19, 21)
- Paul (Acts 13:14)
- The Disciples (Acts 16:13)

Note by Bill Eichner

Keep in mind that when you read Revelation 1:10 ("I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet"), John was in vision given by the Lord and was referring to Saturday, the 7th day of the week. Much discussion has been made that Revelation 1:10 refers to Sunday but no such reference is within this text. In fact when John wrote Revelation, Saturday the 7th day of the week was referred to as the Lord's day (i.e. the Sabbath of the 4th commandment). It would not be until the 2nd century before the concept of Sunday was first introduced into the thinking of the people. [Ref. "Although this term occurs frequently in the Church Fathers with the meaning of Sunday, the first conclusive evidence of such use does not appear until the latter part of the 2nd century". — *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*; Vol. 7, p. 735*].

Jesus himself was speaking of the seventh day of the week, the same is in the 4th commandment of Exodus 20: 8-11 given in His own words below:

Mark 2:28 "Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

Luke 6:5 "And He said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

Too Busy to Show Compassion?

by Bill Eichner

Adopted from an article written in 2004 while still working in nursing at the Adventist Hospital in Portland.

Now that the holidays are past let us keep those same attitudes we had, that being of showing kindness and caring compassion all year long. It is so easy to slip into the mundane routines of everyday life. People often feel a letdown after the holidays. May we lift them up. Our compassion toward others is very much connected to our trust in Jesus.

Proverbs 16:20, He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he.

I might add, no matter what the conditions are if we truly have our trust centered in Jesus, we indeed will be happy.

I was really busy. All I could do was the bare essentials and then hardly that. Every corner that could be cut was smoothly rounded. It was one of those days when you just tried to keep the complaints at bay. I felt terrible about the service I was giving and worse about myself. I was at the point of unraveling when some dear soul complimented me on how caring I was. I sure didn't feel like I had done anything to deserve such kind words. Such were not my feelings but feelings can be so deceiving. Have you ever been in a situation like that?

What a difference it made in my hectic day. We can all make a difficult day better for someone else if we are only observant. A kind word, a thank you, even a nod of approval can make someone notice Christ in us. I know how it feels to be on the receiving end. Now I want to be the one to give. In this way we can say little but witness a sermon in few, or no words at all.

Do conditions matter or should we witness in spite of conditions? Let us see a couple of examples. When we are having a day seemingly at variance with what life is throwing at us, it is still possible to be a good witness. That is why our willingness to allow Jesus to lead will overpower the ills of the conditions that seem to be beyond our control.



Acts 15:7-9, And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

When we feel we are at odds with our circumstances and others, we can still witness. Remember feelings can, and often times are deceiving. Let others be out of sorts with us but we don't have to react in kind. In fact such a response is not from above. We may be tempted to "respond" negatively but so much can be accomplished by a positive reply on our part. Temptation is not the sin and we can, through the Holy Spirit's influence, turn around the tone of the encounter.

Acts 23:11-12, And the night following the Lord stood by him [Paul], and said, **Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.** And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

Even when Paul was threatened by evil "The Lord [still] stood by him. This Being was apparently Christ Himself (cf. chapters. 9:5-6; 22:17-21). The outlook was dark indeed." ... Divine assurance at this juncture would mean much to Paul

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and give him courage for the trials of the next few years." But Jesus told him to, "Be of good cheer. ... His thoughts must also have turned to the future. Was his work for Christ ended? Was his desire to witness to the gospel in Rome to be thwarted (Acts 19:21; Rom. 1:13)? As he poured out his heart in prayer the Lord appeared personally, with comfort and assurance." [Excerpts from the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 416].

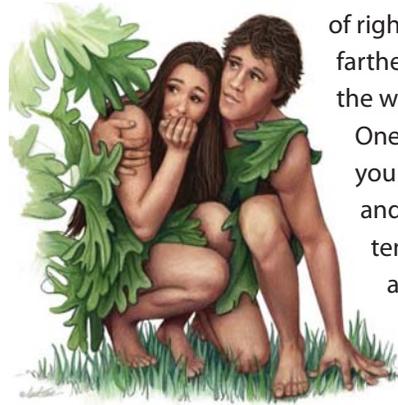
If Paul can continue under such circumstances cannot we endure the everyday trials we find confronting us? We can abide under the watch of the Spirit's influence no matter what is thrown at us. May we keep in mind that we know how it all ends.

Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

It is my prayer this year that each of us maintain our relationship with Jesus. When tempted, it is helpful to know each time we fall into sin it is by our own choice and that we hurt Jesus each and every time we fall for the tempter's wiles. Perhaps this can be a deterrent for us. Also, to know what lies in store for Jesus' own is more than encouraging. There is no better incentive than following in such an honorable position he has given us both in the present and future.

Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit as well as the Holy Angels are on our side. Our part is one of cooperation, saying no to evil and yes to righteousness. May 2017, find us showing compassion to those around us. I believe we will find when we are amiable toward others they will respond pleasantly in return. If not, then it is between them and God. We needn't concern ourselves with outcomes we don't and shouldn't control.



"A little diversion from the path of right at the beginning, will lead farther and farther away from the way of truth and happiness. One careless step will place you upon the enemy's ground, and through yielding to temptation, your intellectual and moral energies will be benumbed and paralyzed." *Bible Echo*, September 1, 1892 par. 4

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Proverbs 1:7. One sentence of Scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man's ideas or arguments. Those who refuse to follow God's way will finally receive the sentence, "Depart from Me." But when we submit to God's way, the Lord Jesus guides our minds and fills our lips with assurance. We may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Receiving Christ, we are clothed with power. An indwelling Saviour makes His power our property. The truth becomes our stock in trade. No unrighteousness is seen in the life. We are able to speak words in season to those who know not the truth. Christ's presence in the heart is a vitalizing power, strengthening the entire being. *Testimonies*, Volume 7, page 71.



The Disciples on the Road to Emmaus by James Tissot

Spread the Good News



What is the Good News that we are supposed to spread? It is that Jesus, by His substitutionary death for us, has made it possible for man to be reconciled [brought into harmony] to God. How are we brought into harmony [reconciled] to God? Listen to these statements.

“Since He made all things, He made the Sabbath. By Him it was set apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him as both the Creator and the Sanctifier. It declares that He who created all things in heaven and in earth, and by whom all things hold together, is the head of the church, and that by His power we are reconciled to God.” ...*Desire of Ages*, p. 288.2.

How can Christ’s power help us to be reconciled to God?

“We have reason for ceaseless gratitude to God that Christ, by His perfect obedience, has won back the heaven that Adam lost through disobedience. Adam sinned, and the children of Adam share his guilt and its consequences; but Jesus bore the guilt of Adam, and all the children of Adam that will flee to Christ, the second Adam, may escape the penalty of transgression. Jesus regained heaven for man by bearing the test that Adam failed to endure; for He obeyed the law perfectly, and all who have a right conception of the plan of redemption will see that they cannot be saved while in transgression of God’s holy precepts. They must cease to transgress the law and lay hold on the promises of God that are available for us through the merits of Christ.” *Faith and Works*, p. 88.3.

Now that is something worth sharing! But, there is much more encouragement.

“But Christ came in the form of humanity, and by His perfect obedience He proved that humanity and divinity combined can obey every one of God’s precepts.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 314.4.

“By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 311.4.

“Christ does not lessen the claims of the law. In unmistakable language He presents obedience to it as the condition of eternal life—the same condition that was required of Adam before his fall. The Lord expects no less of the soul now than He expected of man in Paradise, perfect obedience, unblemished righteousness. The requirement under the covenant of grace is just as broad as the requirement made in Eden—harmony with God’s law, which is holy, just, and good.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 391.2.

“No one can believe with the heart unto righteousness, and obtain justification by faith, while continuing the practice of those things which the Word of God forbids, or while neglecting any known duty.” *A New Life*, p. 26.3.

“Christ by His perfect obedience demonstrated to the universe that human beings could keep the commandments of God.” *Christ Triumphant*, p. 192.2.

God’s power is sufficient to reconcile us to God, but, we have to claim that power. Every time we are tempted to dwell on wrong thoughts or are tempted to perform a wrong action we should immediately flee to Jesus Christ, and in submission to Him, claim the power that He offers to resist that temptation. He has promised to give us strength to resist falling, and God’s promises never fail. What a blessed hope we possess!



God's Way; My Way

"With an eye single to the glory of God, we should give careful, thoughtful attention to the matter of our eating and drinking. We need divine guidance, even in our commonest habits of everyday life, that there may be no little leaks which will consume means unnecessarily, simply for the gratification of perverted appetites. In the New Testament not one of God's requirements loses its binding force, or relaxes in the least its obligation to be fulfilled. . . . Instead of the requirements of God being relaxed in the New Testament, the lines are drawn closer, and duty is more distinctly defined. The apostle says, 'Whatsoever ye do, even in the matter of eating and drinking, do all to the glory of God.' The question may be asked, 'May I not do what I like with myself? Am I never to have my own way? Is not my body my own?' You may have your own way, but it will be at the loss of your soul, or you may have God's way and live to a purpose in this world, and in the world to come have life everlasting." *Our High Calling*, page 268.

The Cain Principle

"In the case of Cain and Abel we have a type of two classes that will exist in the world till the close of time; and this type is worthy of close study. There is a marked difference in the characters of these two brothers, and the same difference is seen in the human family today. Cain represents those who carry out the principles and works of Satan, by worshiping God in a way of their own choosing. Like the leader whom they follow, they are willing to render partial obedience, but not entire submission to God. Man, in the pride of his heart, would like to believe that he can confer some favor upon God; that our heavenly Father may be the receiver, and not always the giver. But God will not be bribed. He says: 'Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.' 'If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof.' Man has nothing to give that he has not first received from God.

"The Cain class of worshipers includes by far the largest number; for every false religion that has been invented has been based on the Cain principle, that man can depend upon his own merits and righteousness for salvation." "Signs of the Times", December 23, 1886, par. 7 & 8.

