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4

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7

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25

“What Jews Believe about Sabbath and Sunday,”
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WHAT JEWS BELIEVE ABOUT SABBATH AND SUNDAY.

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The world does not understand the Jew and Judaism. The world is ever curious concerning Jewish Holy Days and Jewish customs. Its curiosity is not justified. It is a confession of the world's ignorance. For the Holy Days are biblical, and our ^{kind} customs have been practiced many ages.

Thus the world is curious about the Jewish Sabbath. Why do Jews not observe Sunday? The Sabbath, too, is biblical, ~~as~~ it has existed some thousands of years; the world is justified in its wonder concerning the modern Jewish Sabbath observance, or rather non-observance. Jews have been firm in their denial for 1900 years. Nineteen centuries - forty centuries - they have been firm and steadfast to Jewish truth and Jewish principle. And now Jews are not faithful to ancient truth and principle, either in letter or in spirit. Is it any wonder that the world wonders?

What does the Jew believe about Sabbath and Sunday? The Jewish Sabbath is based upon the commandment in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, "Remember-and keep the Sabbath Day Holy". ~~The origin of a seventh day observance may have been in Assyria.~~ Jews kept a seventh day Sabbath and the early Christians observed the seventh day Sabbath, assembling also on Sunday, the first day of the week. The Christian Sunday did not take the place of the Jewish Sabbath until the fourth century under the Emperor Constantine.

The traditional belief of Jews and Christians is that the Bible is the word of God, that the commandments are the divine law, that these are the authority for the Sabbath. Historically, the Jews believe that the Sabbath is appointed of God, and the sign of the covenant between God and Israel. I do not so believe regarding the Bible, or the commandments, or the Sabbath. Christians believe that Sunday is the Lord's Day, setting aside the old day of God. We, who do not believe that the Sabbath is a day established by God, surely can find no basis in history for Sunday as the Lord's Day.

The Sabbath which the world celebrates is original with Judaism. In Jewish history, the Sabbath was a day in honor of God. It was a day of rest, ~~labor~~ was punishable by death. It was a day for instruction, the study of the Law, and for spiritual thought. The Sabbath was a delight, bringing joy and peace.

The modern world has compelled a change in the conception of Sabbath observance. Neither Jewish Sabbath nor Christian Sunday are honored as of old. Today there is desecration everywhere. Jews may remember - they do not keep the commandment. The Sabbath commandment is not obeyed. There is not Sabbath rest, but labor. There is no Sabbath holiness in honor of God. There is no true Sabbath spirit. The Sabbath was appointed to bring rest and freedom to man and woman, man-servant and maid-servant, stranger and cattle. Now it brings rest and freedom to few or none.

No institution of Israel exercised more power in Jewish history than the Sabbath of old. I fear that never again, as in old Palestine, will the world have absolute rest on Sabbath or Sunday. Sabbath has become the work-day of the world. What remedy is there? The historic day of rest has become a day of labor; the historic day of holiness, the day unholy. Man is held in the shackles of toil and bondage. The Sabbath does not proclaim freedom. There is not honor to God. If you love the old, historical Sabbath and would preserve it, obey the commandment; keep it holy; let it be an honor to God. If you do not keep it holy, declaring that you cannot, let Sunday bring to you and your families - rest and peace and joy.

I believe in a Sunday Sabbath. Let us put forth an effort to make our day of rest, our day of worship, a real Sabbath for ourselves and our children. It is not now a true Sabbath. It brings only partial rest. One-half the day is holy; the other half too often is devoted to pleasures and pursuits not uplifting.

Jews have temporized too long. They have surrendered and lost their Sabbath, the Sabbath rest and the Sabbath spirit, and the sense of Sabbath holiness. We must regain it. We would recreate it, if need be. The Jew needs a rational Sabbath. He should be more than money-maker and more than pleasure-seeker. He needs the Sabbath to lead toward the higher life. Not alone the Jew, but mankind of today needs a true Sabbath, a rational Sabbath.

A true Sabbath, a rational Sabbath, not in the Puritan spirit, not according to ancient Jewish law, but a day for man and woman and child to rest from labor, and to seek communion with God. Let the Sabbath again proclaim freedom to man, even the bondman. Let the Sabbath be restored in the home, to bring peace and joy and blessing to the home.

The house of prayer must again become the house of instruction. If Jews shall perpetuate their religion, they must understand their Judaism. Judaism shall interpret anew the problems of life and teach and point the way in which man should walk. If Jews have a mission to mankind which is ever to find fulfillment, Jews must know and understand Jewish truth.

I believe the Jew should have a Sabbath. Remember and keep a Sabbath, if not the Sabbath. We have no day of rest and no day of holiness, neither Saturday nor Sunday. If all the world did as some do - always to business and then to pleasure - and never to rest, and never to worship - how much of a Sabbath would there be either for rest or holiness? I believe that the Sabbath is good for man and society. We need the Sabbath message. The world needs the power of the Sabbath spirit. What is the Sabbath message? It is the proclamation of freedom. Sabbath of the week and Sabbath of the years and the Jubilee, all proclaim freedom. It brings emancipation from the slavery of week-day toil and week-day thought. Sabbath leads toilers to the higher interests of life. It gives opportunity for needed family associations. It teaches equality and the dignity of man. It emphasizes humaneness to servant and stranger and cattle. The Sabbath is for good works and deeds of kindness.

The Sabbath spirit has exercised wonderful power. It preserved Israel's faith in God under degrading persecution. It held scattered Israel as one. It kept burning the lamp of knowledge in the Jewish home, in the age of the world's ignorance and darkness. It sanctified the family joys of Israel; it was the guardian of our Jewish homes. It taught the Jew, even when he was scorned as the scum of the earth, that he was a man in the sight of God.

We need a real Sabbath, with a true Sabbath observance - not only physical

rest and physical refreshment, but a day spiritual, not physical; a day of spiritual power and for spiritual upliftment. Let us keep a Sabbath according to the spirit of old, a day of rest and for peace, a day of holiness and honorable, consecrated to the higher pleasures and not to the lower pleasures that debase; consecrated to the higher thoughts, not to the lower and the meaner,-- a day of God, to be with God, a day for man, to be with family, bringer of joy to the home, bringer of blessing to mankind. Let there be a real Sabbath once again for the Jew who gave the Sabbath to mankind.

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