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Series D: Sermons and Addresses, 1893-1917, undated.

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“Remember and Keep a Sabbath,” 1904 January 3.

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Jan. 3, '04.

## REMEMBER AND KEEP A SABBATH.

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The Jewish teachers of all the centuries have believed that the ten words - the ten commandments - were fundamental to all moral law. The Ten Commandments were universal, not to Israel alone nor for Palestine only.

Are the Commandments divine or human law? I shall consider them from the standpoint of human necessity.

Traditionally the Sabbath begins with the days of creation; historically its origin is with the Assyrians perhaps. We Sunday Sabbath Jews do not believe that the seventh day is the Sabbath appointed of God. Most emphatically do we declare that the first day as the Lord's Day rests upon no divine authority. The early Christians kept the Sabbath. Jesus knew nothing of a Christian Sunday. No new Sabbath was necessary to take the place of the old. Jesus' teaching and practice as concerns the Sabbath was no breach with Jewish teaching and Jewish practice.

The Puritan Sunday and what some call the American Sabbath are not Biblical. They are found neither in the Old nor in the New Testament. Some believe in a Sabbath of absolute rest and that nothing should be open except the church. I believe in open libraries and galleries and museums and parks and play-grounds that afford opportunity for recreation for thousands at work through the week.

A Sabbath of rest, bringing change of occupation and change of thought, is necessary for all, for the workers with brawn and with brain. The experience of mankind proves that it is good. Disraeli said - it is the cornerstone of civilization. I see practices undermining our religious life. A transformation of Sunday is going on like unto the neglect of our old Sabbath. Sunday is becoming a holiday rather than a holyday; a day of rest without the holiness. The Jew, the giver of the Sabbath, has no Sabbath.

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, 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 - the 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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