

GOD'S SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

Introduction The most beautiful memorial shrine in the world is the Taj Mahal, at Agra, India, which was built by the great Mogul Emperor, the Shah Jahan, between 1631 and 1645, in memory of his favourite wife. Described by one visitor as "a dream in white marble", this stately tomb is still a shrine of remembrance for thousands of tourists who flock to it each year from all over the world.

God, also, has a "Shrine of Remembrance", built not of marble, but of **time**. It is the **Sabbath**, the weekly day of rest, which was appointed by God in Eden, before man sinned, and will be kept in Eden restored, when sin is forever past.

Since the days of Eden, man's thoughts concerning the Sabbath have often changed. The tide of human opinion has ebbed and flowed, but **God's thoughts have never changed concerning His Holy Day.**

Isa. 55 : 8, 9: "My thoughts are higher than your thoughts."

The purpose of this lesson is to ask: "What are God's thoughts concerning the Sabbath?"

(See Chart No. 26—*God's Shrine of Remembrance*)

Discussion The entrance to the Sabbath Shrine is composed of ten pillars, and every pillar is a text.

THE FIRST PILLAR — Gen. 2:1-3

(See Chart No. 25—*Creation Week*)

Three steps were involved in making the Sabbath:

- (1) "Rested" — Not the rest of exhaustion, but of achievement and satisfaction (see Isa. 40 : 28). Thus God set an example for man, and invited man to share His rest.
- (2) "Blessed" — To "bless" means to "speak well of", "to pronounce a blessing upon". Adam and Eve were the only members of the human family present in Eden, so God must have "spoken well" of the Sabbath to them!
- (3) "Sanctified" — To "sanctify" means to "separate" or "to set apart for a holy use".

These three Divine actions are equivalent to a command that man should keep the Sabbath holy. They put the Sabbath in a class by itself, for no other day was thus separated or set apart by God. Nor can anyone but the Creator Himself remove His blessing from the Sabbath, or transfer it to another day.

Some have asked: "Was the Sabbath appointed at Creation, or at some later time?"

The answer is found by comparing Gen. 1 : 28 with Gen. 2 : 3, where the word "blessed" is applied both to marriage and to the Sabbath. No doubt seems to exist in any mind that marriage was appointed at Creation, and was intended for the entire human species. The fact that the same word "blessed" is applied to the Sabbath, in the same context, proves that the Sabbath, also, was appointed at Creation and was intended by God for the whole human race.

THE SECOND PILLAR — Ex. 20 : 8-11

"Remember" shows that the Sabbath was not a new institution at Mount Sinai, but was already well known.

"Of the Lord thy God" shows that the Sabbath does not belong to any race, or sect, or church. **It belongs to God.** This is the foundation plank of the entire Bible doctrine of the Sabbath. This is what makes the Sabbath different. This is what makes it important. This is what makes it sacred. **The Sabbath is God's property, not man's.** This means that if we wittingly take the Sabbath and put it to our own use, we are guilty of robbing God!