

THE SEAL

[This tract and the tract on the Two-Horned Beast are taken from a work by the late Elder Andrew Ferguson Dugger entitled "Points of Difference Between the Church of God and the Seventh-Day Adventists."]

The Church of God believes the seal to be the Holy Spirit with which those who hear, believe and trust the word of salvation are sealed unto the day of redemption. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30). "In whom you also trusted after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom after that you believed you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13). "Who has also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1:22).

In the absence of any text that anyone was ever sealed with the Sabbath, the above texts need no comment. In looking through the Greek Concordance I discover the words "seal" and "sign" are very different words and are never rendered the one for the other. It is true that the Sabbath is said to be a sign, and it is equally true that it is never in Scripture said to be a seal. Rom. 4:11, "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." This text is referred to as proof that a "sign" is a "seal." Suppose we grant it...it would only prove that it is so used in this text, and that, too, in relation to a different subject from the Sabbath. The Sabbath is called a sign. The word "seal" as a noun and verb occur over sixty times in the Bible, but is never in any text whatsoever explained to refer to the Sabbath. So, if "sign" and "seal" are identical in this text above quoted it is a complete refutation of the position that seal and Sabbath are, for if they are, we would find it so explained in some of the scriptures wherein the terms occur. The words "sign" and "seal" are from their respective Greek words in the text quoted, and are used with different shades of meaning. The Diaglott renders the text thus, "And he received the symbol of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of that faith which he had while in uncircumcision in order that he might be the father of all uncircumcised believers." The sign was the literal mark made in the flesh. But the symbol which he received as a seal was the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart thereby producing pure motives, pure thoughts and holy desires. Thus, Abraham was sealed with the Holy Spirit, and thereby became the father of the faithful. All who would walk in his steps and share in his estate must keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus and be sealed with the same Holy Spirit.

Webster gives us our meaning of the word “sign.” “A memorial or monument; something to preserve the memory of a thing.” In this sense the Sabbath is a sign – the memorial of creation. In six days, God created heaven and earth and rested on the seventh day. And for this reason God blessed and sanctified the day and placed it as a monument in human history for all time to come. To pervert this monument into a seal is, to say the least, a most glaring perversion of the word of God. It is dishonoring the Holy Spirit inasmuch as it robs it of its position and work in the plan of redemption.

I have read in a modern revelation of the sin of “striking against the Holy Spirit” which sin is construed to mean opposition to the visions. What shall we say of the position which displaces the Holy Spirit from its scriptural assigned position and work? Does not this look very much like “striking against the Holy Spirit”? We leave the reader to judge. The Sabbath is not the seal to the decalogue. It is part of the law of the decalogue. The seal of a law is not the law or any part of it. The law is one thing and the seal another. Who ever heard of a part of a law being taken to seal the law itself or any part of it? All this apparently clever talk about the fourth commandment being the only commandment that tells who gave the law is purely gratuitous. In the very opening of the chapter it is stated that “God spake all of these words.” These words include the Ten Commandments. In the first, second, fifth and seventh verses we have given the name of the law-giver which clearly expresses the source and authority of the law, and all this before we reach the Sabbath precept.