

THE DOCTRINES OF THE SEVENTH - DAY MEN

Aspects of doctrines as spoken of the seventh-day sabbath between c. 1650 - 1680, and problems in approaching them.

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The remaining inadequacies are entirely my own, though I hope that others may become interested in this area from the following study.

This thesis is my own work containing, to the best of my knowledge and belief, no material published or written by another person except as referred to in the text.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Leon J. Lyell", with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the signature.

Leon J. Lyell,
6 November 1981

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:
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. For in six
days the LORD made 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.

Exodus 20 : 8-11, K.J.V.

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or
in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or, of the
new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a
shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Colossions 2 : 16-17, K.J.V.

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INTRODUCTION

Although a handful of present day Christian groups observe the Saturday Sabbath,¹ they are commonly regarded as sectarians which the main body of Christendom has little time for. Their beliefs are commonly regarded as, a product of the last two hundred years, and evidence that American religion can produce all sorts of oddities.² However, the doctrine of the Saturday or Seventh-day Sabbath in its modern form has its origins in seventeenth century England.

In seventeenth century England newfound interest in the idea of the Saturday sabbath led to a rapid development of at least one dozen sabbatarian churches in and around London between 1650 and 1680. For various apologetic, didactic and polemic purposes a particular doctrinal formulation was developed to defend the practice. At the same time this caused great alarm in some quarters; an alarm which seems disproportionately large when compared to the size of the seventh-day observing population. A doctrinal assault was apparently

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1. The main ones are, in order of size, followed by the year of their formal organization; Seventh-day Adventists(1861), Worldwide Church of God(1939), Seventh Day Baptists(1801), Church of God International(1978).
 2. See for example, Martin, W.R., The Kingdom of the Cults, New York, Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1967, sections dealing with the Seventh-day Adventists and Worldwide Church of God. Also see Burrell, M.C., The Challenge of the Cults, England, Intervarsity Press, 1981, pp. 21-33. Burrell says first and second century 'isms' have been "resusitated" in such groups as seventh-day churches.

necessary, as much as any other measure. From the end of the seventeenth century interest in the idea waned so that by the 1930's there was only one such church remaining in England of those original dozen.³ At the same time the context in which surviving works dealing with the issue became both forgotten and used for new purposes. It is the aim of this thesis to uncover the way in which the seventh-day sabbath doctrine was spoken of in the third quarter of the seventeenth century.

Thus it is the purpose of this study to investigate the doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath as it was spoken of by adherants and opponents. Questions of the relationships between these sabbatarian churches will be spoken of only as they may shed light on the doctrine spoken, as will concern with the origins of the doctrine. My task is to take a first step towards a broader study of these 'seventh-day men' by uncovering an understanding of the doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath in its seventeenth century setting; to cloth the skeleton of an idea with the sinew of controversies which gave it muscle and to breath into its nostrils the attitudes which gave it life.

3. Whiting, C.E., Studies in English Puritanism, London, Frank Cass and Co, 1931, 1968, p. 84, indicates that it was the only surviving seventh-day church of his day. This small group is still active today as part of the Seventh Day Baptist Church based at Plainfield New Jersey, see A.L. Peat, 'Several Added to Mill Yard Church ', The Sabbath Recorder vol. 203, no. 8 (1981), p. 18.

But such dry bones cannot be revived without first lifting the veil of historical misunderstanding which has, until recently, covered an accurate understanding of the seventh-day men and their doctrine. This I hope to do as my first task, with which I will spell out more carefully my own approach, and more precisely define the issue itself.

After that will follow an evaluation of the uses of the doctrine of the seventh-day itself. Here, before proceeding, a few words of explanation are in order on a number of central points. Firstly, the period I have chosen, 1650 - 1680, represents the period of the rapid development of sabbatarian churches. No new seventh-day churches emerged in England after c.1680, though the existing dozen or so flourished till the early eighteenth century. Thus I am concerned with the seventh-day sabbath doctrine at what seems its formative period. Secondly, after c.1680 a new round of controversies concerning the seventh-day sabbath erupted which could rightly constitute a separate study. The volume of the written material from this period far exceeds that of the previous thirty years.

Thirdly before our period there were three known advocates of the seventh-day sabbath in England. However while they may have each inspired congregations to observe the same practice for a time, the idea did not 'take off' as it did in the period chosen. A more practical consideration is that two of them, John Traske and Phillip Tandy, do not have any accessible writings. In fact, Tandy is not known to have any surviving

writings.⁴ The third, Theophilus Brabourne, left so much that his works must be considered on their own first of all. Further, I have dealt with Brabourne and Traske in earlier studies. These latter two will make their presence felt however, as both had inspired certain ways of thinking about the seventh-day sabbath idea which shows up in a number of ways in our period.

Finally it needs to be said that in speaking of the authors of works advocating the seventh-day sabbath, I will use the term "seventh-day men". The term though originating⁵ in the seventeenth century, is used here as a convenient descriptive term for those people who held a belief in the seventh-day sabbath. It implies no more similarity among their doctrines or practices on this or other issues than that they all observed Saturday. It is used in a similar way to such a descriptive term as, say, 'Anti-trinitarian' which describes a body of opinion which might be held by a variety of individuals in not necessarily identical ways.

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4. On Traske see White, B.R., ' John Traske 1585 - 1636 and London Puritanism ', Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society, vol. 20 (1968), pp, 223 - 233. The sole reference to Tandy in the seventeenth century is Edwards, T., Gangraena, 1646, part III, pp. 54 - 59 where he is condemned mainly as a 'rebaptizer'. The heresy that "the Jewish Sabbath on Saturday is still to be kept ..." is simply catalogued as being one of his beliefs, see *ibid.* part I, p. 30.
 5. Chamberlayne, E., The Present State of England, 18th edition, 1694.

CHAPTER I

APPROACHES TO SEVENTH-DAY MEN

The lack of any serious monograph on the seventh-day men ¹ has meant that a number of serious misunderstandings of their beliefs and activities has persisted, even in some of the more recent references to them. One of the principle causes of such misunderstandings is that later writers each "used" the seventh-day men to make particular points of their own, and many have wanted to shape them in accordance with later historical developments. At the center of these uses of seventh-day men is the manner in which their doctrine is spoken of, which in turn is often used to show supposed alliances and chains of connection. Thus an evaluation of the way various writers have presented the seventh-day men of 1650 to 1680 is imperative to an accurate understanding of their doctrine.

I

The nineteenth century Anglo-Saxon world was awash with controversies about the right attitude towards Sunday, and what activities should and should not be undertaken on

1. See Payne, E.A., ' More about the Sabbatarian Baptists ', Baptist Quarterly n.s., vol. 14 (1951-2), pp. 161 - 166 who complains of this lack. Since that time nothing new has emerged on the subject.

that day.² Many general histories of the weekly festival from ancient to modern times appeared in the wake of these controversies; each of them designed to defend a particular view of the correct attitude to Sunday observance. These controversialists each approached the seventeenth century as a storehouse of ammunition for their point of view. In the process, interest in the seventh-day men was determined by the use which could be made of reference to them in support of the authors' contention.

The chief exponent of the traditional Anglican view of Sunday was James A. Hessey who expounded his views in the Bampton lectures at the University of Oxford in 1860. His main view was that a Christian government has the "duty ... to promote, so far as it can, the welfare of its subjects in accordance with Christian principles." The popular publication of the lectures, having its fifth edition in 1889, maintained that Sunday was a Christian festival established and maintained by the authority of the Church. In no sense at all was it a sabbath, as the sabbath law was ended with the start of the Christian era.³

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2. The Melbourne Sabbath lectures of 1860 provoked extended controversy in Victoria over many aspects of Sunday observance, and especially reflect concerns in Great Britain at the time. See the catalogue card 'Sabbath' in the State Library of Victoria.
 3. Hessey, J.A., Sunday : Its Origin, History and Present Obligation, London, 1860, p. 328.

Hessey's mention of seventh-day men is brief, naming only two. The first, Theophilus Brabourne, had advocated the seventh-day in two books, of which the first was published in 1628, and the second in 1632. Hessey uses Brabourne to illustrate the folly of not only seventh-day men, but, more importantly for his argument which was the inconsistency of the Sunday Sabbatarians' view that the fourth commandment still obligated Christians. Hessey's response to this was : "If the fourth commandment be in force, then the Saturday is to be kept ...". Far from advocating such a move Hessey sees it as a renunciation of Christianity and a return to Judaism. To be logically consistent, those who adopt the 'Judaic Sabbath' are 'bound to accept Judaism as a whole'. He seems to regard the revival of Sabbatarianism - as applied to Sunday - as a return to a old heresy which should have ended when Bishop White gave a detailed answer to Theophilus Brabourne in 1635.⁴ Because of this view, disagreements between seventh-day men and Sunday Sabbatarians are ignored.⁵

The other seventh-day man whom Hessey mentions is James Ockford, whom he uses to set up an argument that seventh-day men and 'Anabaptists' are equally attractive to "simple people". Both being at opposite poles, the former representing legalism and the latter antinomianism, the rejection of one

4. See White, F., Treatise of the Sabbath Day, London, 1635 and Hessey, p. 287ff

5. Hessey, pp. 347, 428, 346.

can somehow lead to the adoption of the other. No mention is made of any of the other seventh-day men of the third quarter of the seventeenth century. Had this been done quite different conclusions would have been followed. ⁶

James A. Gilfillan, a Scottish clergyman, was a strong defender of Sunday as the Christian Sabbath. His work on the subject ⁷ was the result of research over twenty years and earned him an honorary Doctrate of Divinity from Glasgow University in 1866. In rehearsing the history of Sunday and Sabbath controversies he consistently applaudes or disparages disputants according to their agreement or dissagreement with his Sabbatarian views of Sunday. Thus King James is condemned for allowing recreational activities on Sunday in the Book of Sports in 1618, while Dr. Twisse is given a whole page of lavish compliments for a work advocating the sabbatic notion of Sunday in 1641. ⁸

The only seventh-day man whom Gilfillan speaks about is John Traske. Again, Traske's career had ended before the period with which we are interested. However he mentions that the lack of government support for the Sabbatic observance of Sunday in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries,

6. *ibid.* p. 347

7. Gilfillan, J.A., The Sabbath Viewed in the Light of Reason, Revelation and History, Edinburgh, 1861, New York, American Tract Society, 1862.

8. *ibid.* pp. 94, 138 - 9.

had led to speculation by the 'vulgar people and simple sort' about the place of the fourth commandment in the Christian life. Some of them, without proper guidance, had toyed with the idea of a Saturday Sabbath.⁹ Gilfillan's subsequent account of Traske's life proves to be significant in assessing Gilfillan's attitude to the idea. After recounting the essentials of Traske's arrest and imprisonment in 1618, he notes that Traske's recantation was "not the product of a weak or ignorant person". It is quite significant that this is the only note of praise Gilfillan gives to Traske, preferring to label Traske's opinions as "humerous rather than hurtful". Gilfillan disowns the doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath as the oddity of an untrained mind deserving only of ridicule, but taking its place as a witness to the heresy of the Ecclesiastical view of Sunday. Traske's views had come to light as another phase of the controversy which appeared, "in that year of trespass", by King James, "against Sabbatic rights and sanctities".¹⁰

Again the facts of the matter are that interest in the seventh-day sabbath was most popular at the time when both the English Parliament and people were more convinced of the

9. *ibid.* p. 60

10. See *ibid.* pp. 88 - 89, and also, Fuller, T., The Church History of Britain, London, 1655, with notes by J.S. Brewer, London, 1845, vol. 5, pp. 400 - 401, whom he makes approving references to. Traske's recantation was published as, A Treatise of Liberty from Judaism, London, 1621.

need for a Sabbatic approach to Sunday observance. Gilfillan obviously wishes to disown any association of seventh-day men and Sunday Sabbatarians.

Robert Cox approached the problem from somewhat of a different point of view. His interest in the "Sabbath question" as he called it, was first stirred by the action of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Company in withdrawing the limited passenger service of their Sunday trains because of their sabbatarian view of Sunday. The fact that he was a shareholder led him to a very active involvement in the issue. The final result of his studies and speeches on the subject was published in 1853.¹¹ His later work, The Literature of the Sabbath Question¹² is a detailed bibliographical list with concise summaries of many works. Through both of these works Cox is building a case against the Sunday Sabbatarians of his day, without forcefully promoting the Ecclesiastical view of Sunday.

Cox's treatment of the seventh-day men is the most extensive outside of those contemporaries of his, who advocate the seventh-day sabbath. Indeed such advocates made few additions to Cox information about the period which concerns

11. Cox, R., Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties, Edinburgh, 1853.

See Introduction.

12. Edinburgh, 1865.

us. In his preface he writes that his aim in recording copious detail is either because they relate to "topics of peculiar interest at the present time" or "as curious relics of by-gone theological days".

Though he seems to be making the point that Saturday-Sabbatarians in observing Saturday are the only true observers of the fourth commandment and that Sunday Sabbatarians would be more consistent with their pamphlets if they did the same, his main interest seems to be antiquarian. Nonetheless, he does present a certain picture of the seventh-day men.

Cox gives much prominence to the many seventh-day men and their writings, in spite of the fact that they had become obscure in his own day. His main purpose for being so complete in his coverage of them seems to be to give full force to the point made by both those who adopted the seventh-day Sabbath and those who believed in the Ecclesiastical Lords Day - that is - belief in the continued morality of the fourth commandment demands the observation of Saturday not Sunday.¹³ Cox main opponents in his 1854 work are those who required the sabbatical obsevation of Sunday. The way in which he emphasises the seventh-day men in his 1861 work is a continued weakening of the Sunday Sabbatarians' arguments

13. See Cox, Literature, vol. II, p. 200

for Sunday as a Sabbath.

Also apparent however, is the opinion that all seventh-day men held similar views on the sabbath, and constituted a single "sect" called "Sabbatarians" which "Brabourne founded" and which later became known as "Seventh Day Baptists".¹⁴ He consistently refers to Bampfield, Brabourne, Ockford, Saller, Spittlehouse and Stennet as 'Seventh Day Baptists' throughout his work.

As Christopher Hill points out, not even Baptists formed a single "denomination" at that time.¹⁵ Attempts to make them appear so, reflect the nineteenth century view of denominational divisions and not seventeenth century reality. It is surprising that Cox wants to make them a single denomination, at one point suggesting direct descent from seventh-day men of Erasmus day.¹⁶

It is of obvious importance on this point that Cox obtained most of his information about "Seventh Day Baptists" from W.H.Black whom he calls "my talented antiquarian friend".¹⁷ Black was not simply an antiquarian, he was also pastor of the

14. *ibid.* vol. I, pp. 157f, 162.

15. Hill, C., 'History and Denominational History', Baptist Quarterly, n.s. vol. 22, no. 2 (1967), pp. 68 - 69.

16. Cox, Literature, vol. II, p. 202.

17. *ibid.* vol. II, p. 80.

Mill Yard Church and seems to have been most influential in formulating the attitude of the Seventh Day Baptist denomination towards seventeenth century seventh-day men. The view which Cox portrays of seventeenth century seventh-day men agrees with this. The extent of his influence can be gauged perhaps by the fact that his career included membership of the Society of Antiquaries and the Camden Society, and honorary membership of the Ashmolean Society. ¹⁸

The importance of the above mentioned works is that their reputation and availability made them a part of every subsequent work on the sabbath or Sunday issues. In a variety of ways they make selective use of seventh-day men and/or their beliefs as standards for defining the village idiot in Sunday-town, as it were. Gilfillan disowns them as oddballs in his dealing of Traske; Hessey and Cox use them to highlight the lunacy of the Sunday Sabbatarians' logic.

18. See Gamble, J.L., and Greene, C.H., (eds) History of the Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America, New Jersey, American Sabbath Tract Society, 1910, vol. II, pp. 1365f, for a brief biography of him.

II

The influence of denominational histories is also a very important factor which has determined existing understandings of seventh-day men. In a variety of ways these hagiographies colour our vision of the seventeenth century and create a false image of the seventh-day men between 1650 and 1680.

The Mill Yard Church which W.H.Black pastored was, and still is, part of the General Conference of the Seventh Day Baptists. Through the nineteenth century Seventh Day Baptists produced a number of publications dealing with the history of seventh-day sabbath keepers. The prime work in this regard seems to be by A.H.Lewis.¹⁹ Again this responds nineteenth century controversies concerning Sunday observance and the place of the fourth commandment. He begins by claiming that God's time has come for making the sabbath issue "ripe". Mankind, says Lewis, is now ready to learn the real truth about the sabbath: that Christians are bound to observe Saturday.²⁰

The basis for all real history, for Lewis, is the "ongoing of the ideas and purposes of God." Not that history alone will show God's truth by itself. The first key to

19. Lewis, A.H., A Critical History of the Sabbath and the Sunday in the Christian Church, New Jersey, American Sabbath Tract Society, 1886.

20. *ibid.* p. 1.

unlock the "lessons" of history for Lewis is the "authority of God's word, the Bible". When, the events of history were viewed from this standpoint they form an "ultimate" test of truth by showing the "fruits" of various attitudes and beliefs.²¹ History's lessons are that "men must have a sabbath", and that "a sabbath cannot be maintained without Divine Authority". Only the seventh-day sabbath can meet this criterion, and attempts to make Sunday a holy day will fail because they involve a compromise of God's truth.²²

Lewis published the fruits of his study of Sunday legislation two years later. The main argument of this work is that the "general results of civil legislation have been evil".²³ The chief cause of this evil is that human legislators do not conform to the laws of God. As well Lewis takes the opportunity to undertake an apologetic on behalf of religious freedom: "In the matter of duties towards God ... civil law has no place."²⁴ Thus Lewis' use of the seventh-day men is geared to proving these points. However, Lewis in his 1886 work, which is the one concerned with seventh-day men, is doing more than showing that history indicates the seventh-day sabbath.

21. *ibid.* p. 519, and Preface.

22. *ibid.* pp. 520, 522.

23. See Lewis, A.H., A Critical History of Sunday Legislation, New York, American Sabbath Tract Society, 1888, introduction and *passim*. See also Lewis, The Sabbath, p. 526.

24. Lewis, The Sabbath, pp. 526 - 527, 537, 540.

The bottom line is that this aim serves a purpose in writing a denominational history. His general conclusion on the pedigree of the Seventh Day Baptist Church is illustrated thus:

'These European sabbath-keepers, connecting with Waldensian brethren, keep the links unbroken between the Seventh Day Baptists of the United States, and the Apostolic Church, as it was before the Sunday usurpations ...' ²⁵

That is, the Seventh Day Baptist denomination represents the truest form of Christianity, with sabbath keeping as the chief visible means of identifying it through history. Lewis is happy to follow the same view of seventh-day men of seventeenth century England as is presented by Cox; seeing them all as "Seventh Day Baptists".

This general approach to the seventh-day men we are interested in, also governs the denominational histories of the Seventh-day Adventist, J.N.Andrews; ²⁶ Dugger and Dodd, who published the view of the Church of God (Seventh Day), ²⁷ and the publications of the Worldwide Church of God dealing with their church history. ²⁸

25. *ibid.* p. 340.

26. See Andrews, J.N., History of the Sabbath and the First Day of the Week.

27. Dugger, A.N., and Dodd, C.O., A History of the True Church, 1932, republished as A History of the True Religion, Jerusalem, Mount Zion Reporter, third edition, 1972.

28. See especially, Hoeh, H.L., 'A True History of the True Church', California, Ambassador College, 1959.

Andrew characterizes sabbatarians as the "true Israel" who stand as links in "the chain of Gods' witnesses" through history. Further he claims that "Sabbatarians were ... a distinct body" by 1654.²⁹ Dugger and Dodd's original work was organised on the principle that,

"the 'Church of God' functioning in the year 1677 was the same church organized by Moses ... there had never been a time when the 'Church of God' was not in existence, and that the Sabbath with other kindred truths ... were also believed and defeated by the church in every period."³⁰

Though each is trying to show his denomination to be the final link in the chain, the principles are the same; that the seventh-day sabbath is the prime mark of the "true Church", and that this true church was a single organized group existing all through history. The image that these authors create is not reflected in seventeenth century reality, for in the first place they did not all form a single "Church", and formed no distinct body as such.

Here we see clear evidence of the confusion caused by denominational historians in writing the history of their own sect and seeking evidence in the past for their present

29. Andrews, pp. 717, 726.

30. Dugger and Dodd, p. 241.

doctrinal positions.³¹ E.G. Rupp in writing of denominational history takes a more optimistic view of it than Hill. He admonishes Baptist historians, in this ~~one~~^{way}; "it is your task as Christians in this age to try and disentangle what was vital from what was transient in the past."³² But what is transient in this debate is dependant on ones view point. The "transient" things may not be important to a later age, but surely the historian must be seeking an understanding of what was vital in the past. In using denominational histories to uncover an historical understanding of an issue vital to some in the seventeenth century - the seventh-day sabbath - we have found ourselves misled by the very nature of these works. There is no reason why this should be necessarily so, but while the competing seventh-day observing churches each claim exclusivity to the truth, it seems they will 'use' history to support their claims that only "one true church" has existed through the centuries. This combined with the claims that the sabbath is the sole province of that one true church,

31. An interesting case in point here is that after the original work of Dugger and Dodd's, Dugger came to believe that Christians ought to refer to God with the Hebrew words Eloheim and Yahshua. In republishing the work himself Dugger claims that these "Holy names" had been used by the "true church" through history - including the seventeenth century. Thus a change in present belief is followed by a change in history.

32. Rupp, E.G., The Importance of Denominational History, Baptist Quarterly, n.s. vol. 17 (1958), p. 318.

meant that such people as the seventh-day men of 1650 - 1680 must be made to fit in with this predetermined pattern.

In fact seventh-day men shared other beliefs with their contemporaries and these formed the main lines of their fellowship and thinking. Thus most seventh-day men also held to believers' baptism and they were often classed by themselves and their contemporaries in this way. Again, it should be emphasized that not even "Baptists" of that period could be classed as one denomination. Doctrinal differences over the issue of predestination meant that "Baptists" were divided into 'General' - those who believed salvation was open to all, and, 'Particular' - those who believed that salvation was offered only to a chosen few.³³ William Erbery, in attempting to unite all those who held to believers' baptism complained in 1653 that:

"The baptized churches are subdivided into three parts, one church is for free will, a second for universal redemption, a third count themselves mere Orthodox in Doctrine, as the Church of England. Neither of these three baptized Churches do communicate one with the other. "³⁴

Thus Calvinistic - 'Particular' - seventh-day men would not hold services with Arminian - 'General' - seventh-day men, even though they held in common their beliefs on baptism and

33. See Underwood, A.C., A History of the English Baptists, London, Kingsgate Press, 1947, pp. 28 - 62.

34. Erbery, William, The Sword Doubled to Cut Off Both the Righteous and the Wicked, London, 1653.

the Sabbath.

If we turn to the historical writings of the Baptists, however, we do not come any nearer to an accurate image of the seventh-day men. The earliest Baptist historians, Thomas Crosby³⁵ and Joseph Ivimey³⁶ were primarily concerned with the development of the idea of antipaedobaptism than of a Baptist denomination as such. The impression given, however is of one group of "Baptists" all working together towards a common goal. Thus General and Particular Baptists, Baptists and Anabaptists are all grouped under one umbrella. Under this umbrella came two seventh-day men - John James, and Francis Bampfield,³⁷ who are noted as Sabbatarian Baptists but included for their part in promoting believers baptism not the seventh-day sabbath. Thus their belief in the seventh-day sabbath is apparently not related to any other belief.

Later Baptist historians made this point more conciously. Underwood describes the "Seventh Day Baptists", of the seventeenth century, as one of the "extravagances" of that time.³⁸ On the question of how this extravagance

35. Crosby, T., The History of the English Baptists, London, 1738 - 1740.

36. Ivimey, J., A History of the English Baptists, London, 1811.

37. See Crosby, vol. II, pp. 165 - 172, 355 - 361, and Ivimey, pp. 320 - 327, 405 - 407.

38. Underwood, A.C., A History of the English Baptists, London, Kingsgate Press, 1947 p. 271.

came about, Baptist historians have followed a particular emphasis. Briefly stated, the opinion is that after "Venner's rising failed, there was a rapid evolution of the passive Fifth-Monarchists into Seventh Day Baptists.³⁹ The main link was a continuing "literalist temper" which, when the political hopes of the Fifth-Monarchists were dashed, somehow transferred itself to the fourth commandment.

Though this point is often repeated by Baptists, and taken up by at least one recent non-Baptist historian,⁴⁰ it is never proved. In fact there is ample evidence that seventh-day men worked out a firm theory of the seventh day well before Venner's failure in 1661, and, that Fifth-Monarchist beliefs were held with seventh-day beliefs well after it. Venner had attempted to hurry up Biblical prophecy by leading the "saints" to bring down the existing government by armed risings in 1657 and again in 1661.⁴¹ Further, though the exact relationship between Fifth Monarchists and Baptists remain unresolved, it is clear that many Baptists were not active Fifth Monarchists and that many Fifth Monarchists

39. Whitley, W.T., History of the British Baptists, London, Kingsgate Press, 1923, second edition, 1932, p. 86, and see also Payne, E.A., 'More About the Sabbatarian Baptists', Baptist Quarterly, n.s. vol. 14 (1951 - 2), pp. 161 - 6.

40. See Solberg, W.U., Redeem the Time: The Puritan Sabbath in Early America, Harvard University Press, 1977, p. 227, who repeats this opinion as true.

41. See Capp, B.S., The Fifth Monarchy Men, London, Faber and Faber, 1972, pp. 81 - 2, 117 - 20, 119 - 200, Capp repeats the 'transformation' theory but notes seventh-day beliefs are an addition to, not a replacement of Fifth Monarchists beliefs.

were not Baptists. ⁴²

A related and important issue here is that Baptist historians have been at pains to reduce any connection between political radicals - such as the Fifth Monarchists - and the main-stream of Baptist thought. In his discussion of Denominational History, Rupp refers to a "current Muntzerophobia" which led many Baptist and Mennonite historians to tone down the "eccentricities and abberations" of denominational fore-fathers. ⁴³ Thus the seventh-day men who received attention in Baptist historians are presented as non radicals. This has meant that in the case of Peter Chamberlen, for example, he is white-washed to fit this preference, ⁴⁴ and the less politically active Francis Bampfield, is praised for his learning and respectability. ⁴⁵ John James, on the other hand is virtually disowned for his "seditious" views, and Underwood here emphasizes the connection between seventh-day men and Fifth Monarchists. ⁴⁶

42. Venner himself was not a "Baptist".

43. Rupp, pp. 315 - 6.

44. See Underwood, pp 112f., who emphasizes Chamberlen's 'progressive ideas', but plays down the fact that Chamberlens' baptist congregation was the only baptist group to give full support to the Fifth Monarchy Movement.

45. *ibid.* p. 114.

46. *ibid.* pp. 94f.. In fact the charge against James for sedition seems to have been a false one, see Capp, p. 201

Seventh Day Baptists, in becoming part of the Baptist World Alliance, have similarly played down the association of seventeenth century seventh-day men with the Fifth Monarchy Movement.⁴⁷ James McGeachy, pastor of the Mill Yard Church in the 1960's apologizes for the Fifth Monarchist origins of his church to his Seventh Day Baptist brethren.⁴⁸ This rearrangement of history hampers an historical understanding of seventh-day men, as well as such other groups as Anabaptists.

Most writers covered so far in writing for a largely denominational audience present a form to the seventh-day men which does not conform to historical reality. The implied doctrinal pre-eminence of the seventh-day sabbath, and unity of seventh-day men serves later denominational purposes. Further the impression resulting from Baptist histories is that the doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath was an aberration, unrelated to other beliefs and temporary in nature, is also without foundation.

47. See Gamble and Greene, where no mention of Fifth Monarchist beliefs in relation to seventeenth century biographies of seventh-day men are made.

48. McGeachy, J., 'The Times of Stephen Mumford', New Jersey, Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society, 1964, p. 3.

III

Modern historians have treated the seventh-day men in a variety of ways, but on the whole the mistakes of denominational histories have been avoided. The major problem is simply that no one has considered the seventh-day men as a whole. Consequently, we tend to get glimpses of seventh-day men as they relate to other groups or movements, without any perspective on other beliefs, or activities as a whole. The most recent historians of the period are restoring the seventh-day men to the place in seventeenth century history, though a small number of important works dealing with the period ignore them altogether.

Few writers are as skilfull and cover as much ground concisely on the English Sunday institution as W.B. Whitaker. His volume covering the seventeenth century is geared to show that religious as well as moral and social forces all worked together to produce the "English Sunday". Though he mentions many who advocated the Sabbatic observance of Sunday, he ignores the seventh-day men completely. At one point he mistakes Brabourne for a Sunday Sabbatarian, which serves to show his complete lack of knowledge of the place of seventh-day men in Sunday debates.⁴⁹ Louise Browns' important work on the Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men, fails to make any mention of the seventh-day beliefs in her treatment of the beliefs

49. Whitaker, W.B., Sunday in Tudor and Stuart Times, London, Houghton, 1933, pp. 208, 132f.

and activities of Tillam, Chamberlen and Spittlehouse as well. This is especially surprising considering that she is interested in Fifth Monarchist pamphlets addressed to the government and that Spittlehouse had presented an 'Appeal' to the government on this very issue.⁵⁰ It seems that these two authors are either unaware of the seventh-day men, or rate them as of no consequence.

A series of more recent works has sought to place the seventh-day men and their doctrines against a wider context, but as a way of illustrating certain points. Boyd M. Berry is interested in seventh-day men as they illustrate his point that the main body of Puritans rejected legalism in favour of Christian liberty, and that Milton played a part in bringing this change about. He is concerned with the doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath only in so far as an understanding of it will illuminate his discussion of Miltons' intent.⁵¹ Berry says that the seventh-day Sabbath doctrine "logically extended" the Puritans' intellectual rigidity and concern for order on the Sabbath issue. However Berry does not touch on the significance of the seventh-day Sabbath

50. Brown, Louise, The Political Activities of the Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men, 1911, New York, Burt Franklin, 1965. See references in the index to Tillam, Chamberlen and Spittlehouse.

51. Berry, B.M., The Process of Speech: Puritan Religious Writing and Paradise Lost, Baltimore and London, John Hopkins University Press, 1976, especially pp. 84 - 6, 89 - 95, 101.

doctrine for the seventh-day men, nor is his conclusion about Milton's response to it indicative of other "Puritans" responses. These are the gaps I shall be trying to fill.

I have mentioned Solberg above. Although his book is primarily about the Puritan Sabbath in early American history, he begins with a summary of the main themes in English Sabbatarian thinking which affected early American Sabbatarianism. His main purpose in giving brief mention of the seventh-day men of 1650 - 1680 period is because "the idea crossed the ocean and sank tenacious roots in American soil".⁵² As such he is not at all concerned with investigating the doctrinal significance of the seventh-day sabbath in England.

B.S. Capp mentions many of the seventh-day men who will concern us here. Some were fully part of the Fifth Monarchy Movement and others could be described as being on its fringe. His concern with the seventh-day men goes only so far as to identify the seventh-day sabbath as a point of contention among the Fifth Monarchy Movement. Capp makes no attempt to evaluate how much the seventh-day Sabbath doctrine was propounded within the Fifth Monarchy Movement, nor to discover its use in the writings of seventh-day men. Though he questions some Baptist historians view on the origin of seventh-day men, he nonetheless can speak of an "orthodox

52. Solberg, p. 228, see also pp. 78 - 79, for Traske and Brabourne and pp. 226 - 228 for the seventh-day men of the 1650's.

Seventh Day Baptist fold by 1677".⁵³ As with Louise Brown a fairly comprehensive coverage of the political ideas of such seventh-day men who were Fifth Monarchists is provided, together with many of their other doctrinal beliefs.

Christopher Hill approaches the period from a different view, an apparently uniquely extensive understanding of radical thought of seventeenth century England. In his 1964 work⁵⁴ he attempts to show how the rising classes made moral and material uses of the Puritan ethos. A vital part of this ethos was Sabbatarianism. His special interest is in the relationship between this ethos and economic change. This emphasis, and general conclusion that Sunday Sabbatarianism, in calling for the abolition of the many church holy days, is essentially an economically motivated move for a more ordered working week seems not to accord with historical reality. In a sense he argues from an economic effect of Sunday Sabbatarianism to imply that this was a motivating factor. However the fact that calls for Sunday Sabbatarianism came with moral and religious justifications. Further, the fact is that Sunday Sabbatarianism often went hand in hand with an advocacy of lecture days, meant that it was not a question of more work time, the issue was the will of God. Hill's Marxist emphasis sheds no light on the seventh-day men at all, either. The only mention of seventh-day men by Hill is

53. Capp, p. 202.

54. Hill, C., Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England, London, Secker and Warbury, 1964.

again of Traske and Brabourne. In this context, he makes a useful observation, which is not related to Marxist economics. His general point here is that anti-sabbatarianism went hand in hand with anti-Judaic feeling, and that seventh-day men in looking even more Jewish in their doctrine than Sunday Sabbatarians were apt to attract a greater anti-Judaic feeling. This important observation seems true and will be dealt with as it relates to the doctrinal response to seventh-day men, as well as the seventh-day mens' apologetic for their position. ⁵⁵

Hills point on Judaism takes the other side of an issue which has been raised by most non-seventh day writers on this question - that is, the adoption of the Saturday Sabbath has been seen as part of a tendency toward "Judaism" ⁵⁶ inherent in Puritan thought. In fact this supposed tendency to "Judaism" is essentially an accusation as it were of those Christian authors who disapprove of the tendency. A less polemic line to follow is that of "Hebraism". Hebraism in this context refers to those seventeenth century writers who take an interest in Hebrew learning and idiom, especially with regard to the Old Testament. The Hebraic factor of Sabbatarianism has it seems not been studied in any depth, though this could prove potentially fruitful. The existing studies on Hebraism in seventeenth century England do not concern themselves with the sabbath issue in England, let alone the doctrine of the

55. *ibid.*, see section "Uses of Sabbatarianism", and pp. 202 - 204 on anti-Judaism.

56. as its opponents would have it.

the seventh-day sabbath. Yet it becomes obvious that at least one seventh-day man, Francis Bampfield, was an accomplished Hebraist. 57

These secular historians provide some valid conclusions about seventh-day men in their seventeenth century context. However, though the substance of what is said is valid, because seventh-day men are simply side lights to other issues in these works their significance is not really investigated. How did they present their doctrine of the seventh-day? How important was it to them? What was the general response to it, and how is this manifested in doctrinal responses? These questions are not asked, and they form the province of this study; the doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath as spoken.

57. See Fisch, H., Jerusalem and Albion: The Hebraic Factor in Seventeenth Century Literature, New York, Scholar Books, 1964, and Roth, L., 'Hebraists and Non-Hebraists of the Seventeenth Century', Journal of Semetic Studies, vol. 6 (1961), pp. 204 - 221.

CHAPTER II

THE SPOKEN DOCTRINE

The Dispute about what day Christians should observe as the sabbath is chiefly a doctrinal dispute over interpretations of the Bible. However, more is involved than this. This controversy set particular groups of men at odds because of the words used; and made opponents of men who may have been allies in other disputes. To gain support each party made use of a battery of catch-cries which added the weight of other ideas to their cause. My discussion is the province of the doctrine as spoken.

I

In evaluating the use of related ideas in the seventh-day sabbath dispute, one must first ascertain whether the available 'words' of a dispute are in some sense representative of the dispute as a whole. A significant problem with regard to this dispute is that a number of relevant works are not readily available. This is due in part to the fact that it has not concerned many people, surprisingly not even present seventh-day observing groups. The lack of interest in the seventh-day men of 1650 - 1680 has also meant that many surviving works are rare. The result of these problems is that efforts to locate some works are fruitless. Further

difficulties are encountered with the information provided in such denominational works as Dugger and Dodd, and Gamble and Greene. Bibliographical information is often incomplete and much of what is provided is incorrect. Even Cox is not immune from such errors, which are then transferred to later works. Finally, some few works appear to be lost altogether. The following discussion is included to show the problem of locating basic materials and the effect that such omissions have, in evaluating the significance of the doctrinal dispute.

It seemed logical to consider that the earliest known work advocating the seventh-day sabbath in the period that concerns us would be of importance. The work is James Ockford The Doctrine of the Fourth Commandment. Cox gives its date of publication as 1642.¹ There is however, no other evidence that this date is correct. The library of Christ Church Oxford, state emphatically that "we do not have the first edition of 1642 or any knowledge of it".² More to the point there is no evidence that such an edition ever existed, the sole basis for it being Cox's statement. The strongest argument that the date is wrong is the evidence provided by D. Cawdrey and G. Palmer in their Sabbatum Redivivum. This work was published with part one appearing in 1645.³ Their

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1. Cox, vol. I, p. 266, which Gamble and Greene respect without acknowledgement, vol. I, p. 36.
 2. Letter to L. Lyell dated 17 June 1981.
 3. See Thomason Tract E 280 (3).

aim is for the "vindication of the Christian Sabbath".⁴ In doing so they are at pains to answer everything that had been written against Sunday Sabbath doctrine, yet they make no mention of Ockford. They published the remaining parts of their work in 1652.⁵ In the introductory epistle they note that no-one had set out to answer their earlier publication, and further that nothing new had been written about the sabbath at all "but only one, of a Sabbatarian Anabaptist"⁶ - James Ockford.

Another problem in locating the work is that being rare, it is not mentioned in any catalogues or Bibliographical works. W.G. Hiscock in The Christ Church Supplement to Wing's Short-Title Catalogue 1641 - 1700 gives the author's name as Jarvis, though this nowhere appears in the work itself, nor elsewhere. The only other bibliographical work to mention Ockford is W.T. Whitley A Baptist Bibliography.⁷

4. *ibid.* p. 1.

5. Thomason Tract, E 648.

6. *ibid.*, p. A2.

7. London, Kingsgate Press, 1916 - 1922. He is also the only source for two other works which - in Whitley's opinion - are from the same author. They are John Ockford 'Scriptural, Historical, Testamomial, General and Practical Observations on the Baptism of Believers; Being the only Baptism of the New Testament'; London, 1657/8 and J. Oockford 'The Trial of the Truth', no date. The first of these is obviously in support of believers baptism. The second has apparently been missing since 1883 and nothing is known of its contents.

The problem does not end there, however. No location for the work is given - except in Hiscock which I did not discover till late. The only other clue to a location was again in Cox who notes that the only known copy to him was owned by James Gilfillan.⁸ A letter from the Church of Scotland Bookshops stated that: "The book James Odeford 'The Doctrine of the Fourth Commandment' is held in the library of the Glasgow University."⁹ A much later reply from Glasgow University however, stated "I have been unable to find this work."¹⁰ An earlier letter from the University of Glasgow led to a contact at the New College Library, Edinburgh University. He advised me of Hiscock's "Jarvis Ockford" entry. The problem with this was not only the name but the date - 1650.¹¹ A subsequent letter to Christ Church, Oxford, where the "Jarvis" work was kept confirmed that the Hiscock entry of "Jarvis" was a misprint,¹² and should have been "James".

The final obtaining of this work helped to suggest a solution to another problem. An anonymous work was published in 1652 advocating The Morality of the Fourth Commandment in regard to the seventh-day. A copy was discovered, at the Dr. Williams Library. The work being fragile and tightly

8. Cox I, p. 479

9. Letter from N. McCullough to L. Lyell, 1st. May, 1981.

10. Letter from Dr. N.R. Thorp to L. Lyell, 17 August, 1981.

11. Letter from J. Howard to L. Lyell, 22 May, 1981.

12. Letter from H.J.R. Wing to L. Lyell, 17 June, 1981.

bound is unable to be copied. ¹³

It is of benefit, in this regard, that William Aspinwall answered this work ¹⁴ with a chapter by chapter answer, for we can reconstruct part of the original argument from it. From this it is clear that the author was a baptist as well as an observer of the seventh-day sabbath. This fact would make Ockford a real possibility as the author of the work. Further the similarity of the title and the general construction of the arguments all point to Ockford as the author. This opinion seems further supported when one considers what reason the author of the work may have had for wanting anonymity - an anonymity which Aspinwall preserves for the author's purposes and not his own. ¹⁵ The fact that Ockford's 1650 work had been 'commanded to be burnt' ¹⁶ would make a very strong reason for his desiring anonymity in any further work on the same subject. This link-up is significant primarily because it indicates that Ockford being the earliest seventh-day man of the 1650 - 1680 period shows none of the interests in Fifth Monarchist issues which characterized the majority of the seventh-day men who took up the issue.

The other apparently significant work for this debate,

13. Letter from Dr. Williams Library to L. Lyell, 10 June, 1981.

This was done as a piece of guesswork as no catalogue mentions this work either.

14. Aspinwall, W., The Abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath, 1657.

15. *ibid.* p. 29

16. Cawdrey and Palmer, Part III, p. 446

previously unavailable was Jeremiah Ives, Saturday No Sabbath Day, 1659. Similar sorts of problems were encountered with this work, and a copy of it arrived too late to be made full use of.¹⁷ Brief perusal of the contents reveals nothing which is not mentioned in other contemporary works on the seventh-day sabbath. Its importance lies in the fact that it is an account of a public debate on the issue which Ives sponsored. Though Ives seems to have considered himself the victor, the debate led to John James and Edward Stennet adopting the seventh-day sabbath, and their subsequent defenses of it reflect the issues raised in this debate. Ives seems to regard Thomas Tillam as the chief protagonist of the seventh-day sabbath doctrine, and this tends to confirm my opinion that Tillam brought the doctrine to the congregation, not vice versa as some have suggested.¹⁸

John Cowell is the only known seventh-day man to have left the seventh-day sabbath doctrine and given his reasons for doing so. While this work is equally hard to obtain, Cox finds it useful to his purpose to make extensive quotations from his The Snare Broken, 1677.¹⁹ Thus it seems that most main parties are represented in the available literature, with opponents' works abounding. We can proceed to evaluate the meaning of the seventh-day sabbath doctrine

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17. The work is 238 pages long. I have however, made limited use of the introductory letter to the reader.

18. See Ives, p. i, cf. Payne, E.A., 'Thomas Tillam', Baptist Quarterly n.s., vol. 17 (1957 - 8), p. 63.

19. See Cox, vol. II, pp. 57 - 62.

with some sense of complete coverage.²⁰

II

This controversy managed to crystalize some basic differences in thinking between those promoting and those opposing the seventh-day sabbath. Attempting to live by every word of God, the seventh-day men show a basic dissatisfaction with the religious thinking of their own day. Thus in speaking of the seventh-day sabbath doctrine they are in fact advocating a new way of looking at the world.

The doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath had life and meaning because it opposed certain deeply held values and principles and sought to replace them with new ones. In examining the presentation of the seventh-day sabbath doctrine I shall be seeking to understand the fields of meaning to which the authors are reforming, and to discover the potency of the doctrine in that field. The various 'uses' which could be made of the seventh-day sabbath doctrine by both proponents and opponents is evidence enough of the importance of the doctrine. I will thus seek to discover how the seventh-day sabbath doctrine was attached to other beliefs. The way such links are made will help to uncover the wider debates in which the issue had influence. These links are made often by the use

20. A totally comprehensive investigation would first require a comprehensive bibliography to work from. Such a task remains to be completed. Such a list seems to grow exponentially with each new work read.

of key terms or formulations of other debates. The seventh-day sabbath doctrine is important within a particular web of meanings, and it is my aim to reveal that web by identifying the various key terms and other doctrinal formulations in their various contexts.

Thus I am not concerned with looking for a doctrinal formula which I impose on the seventh-day men. Rather in examining their words, uncovering their formulations and emphasis, I hope to discover how the doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath was used by them, and by their opponents. In uncovering these uses however, I am not aiming to understand the authors' intention in writing, especially where this is often not stated.²¹ Such a goal relies primarily, it seems, on 'historical imagination' and is totally unverifiable. On the other hand it seems clear that we can establish certain vocabularies of ideas which will help to inform us as to what is going on in a given piece of writing. An authors' words have a meaning which can sometimes only be understood with reference to events and attitudes not necessarily referred to in a given text. This means that the important phrases in a given text often need to be defined by other events - be they literary, legal or social. The kind of events and discussions which the participants see as important will show us in what ways

21. This seems the aim of one historian Skinner, Q., Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas, History and Theory, vol. 8, (1969), see p. 48. His many other pointers on historical mythologies have, however, proven most helpful to me, see *passim*.

the doctrine was significant and to whom. The language of the text will help reveal this to us.

CHAPTER III

THE SEVENTH-DAY RESTORED

The doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath forms a vital part in mid-seventeenth century thinking about "the Sabbath" and "the Sunday". Until recently unrecognized,¹ discussions of it modified "Puritan" thinking on the sabbath by acting as a catalyst to antinomianism at one extreme, and legalism on the other. Raising the issue helped some Puritans to redefine the nature and purpose of the ten commandments. It had a direct hand in the surprising development of a new version of an old "Anglican" view of Sunday in the works of Milton and Baxter. Thus the place to begin an examination of the doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath is in the theological ground in which it grew.

I

What was to become the traditional Puritan view of Sunday - "the Lord's Day" - emerged towards the end of the sixteenth century. According to this view the sabbath command was instituted in Eden, not at Sinai, and was therefore binding

1. Capp and Berry, above, take the first step in restoring it to life in discussions about the period.

on all Adam's descendants. The essence of the command was the moral obligation of mankind to observe a seventh part of time as holy to God. The "Christian Sabbath" had been changed to a different day from the Jewish by Divine authority expressed in the miraculous resurrection of Christ on a Sunday morning. Some disputants claimed that Sunday was the original day of the week of the sabbath in Eden, but the majority saw no need to be concerned with the issue.

In stating these views "Puritans" came into conflict with the episcopal government of the Church of England. The historically older view of Sunday, as held by the Laudian party for example, was that its celebration was established by the government of the Church in commemoration of the resurrection. Further it had no basis at all in the fourth² commandment. The sabbath command was seen as a piece of pure Jewish ceremonial, containing nothing of moral significance. The Sabbatarianism of the Puritans was seen, or at least portrayed, as an attempt to subvert the established order. The blame for this subversion was put at the feet of the Presbyterians.³

With the empowering of the Presbyterians in 1640 the "Ecclesiastical Lords Day" came to an end with such Church

2. or "third" by the Catholic usage

3. See Heylyn, p., History of the Sabbath, 1636, II, pp. 249 - 56. Also see Fuller vol. V, pp. 216 - 7.

instituted festivals as Christmas, Easter and Whitsun. In their place was the "Christian Sabbath" - still on Sunday - established by Divine command and backed by the law of the land. It is against the backdrop of the "Christian Sabbath" that the doctrine of the seventh-day, or Saturday, sabbath makes its entrance. Seventh-day men did not have to argue for the idea that the fourth commandment is still in force. Rather the issue was about what day the sabbath is. In claiming that the sabbath command obliged the observance of Saturday, the seventh-day men were raising the only new idea in relation to the sabbath debates since the doctrine of the obligation of the fourth commandment was first stated. ⁴

II

When James Ockford announced in 1652 that the doctrine of the fourth commandment was now "restored to its primitive purity" ⁵ he both acknowledged the idea of a Saturday Sabbath as new, and claimed an ancient heritage for it. At a time when novel meant evil, this is an important point to make; the seventh-day was restored. Nothing, of course was more ancient for Puritans than the word of God and nothing so well established as their Sunday Sabbath. It is on these two pillars that

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4. The differences in the Ecclesiastical and Sabbatarian views of Sunday are well established in both the titles and contents of Pocklington, John, Sunday no Sabbath, 1636, for the first view, and Ley, John, Sunday a Sabbath, 1641, for the latter.
5. Ockford, preface.

Ockford and indeed most of the seventh-day men advocate the Saturday Sabbath.

Thomas Tillam in calling on Christians to observe the Saturday Sabbath ⁶ quotes continually from Thomas Shepard's Theses Sabbaticae which is advocating a Sunday Sabbath. His purpose in doing so is to "prevent a sudden censure of singularity". Tillam's seventh-day sabbath doctrine contains "not a tittle different from the professed doctrine of the esteemed Orthodox of this age". ⁷ John Spittlehouse and William Saller, in their call for legislative backing for the seventh-day sabbath begin with the same premise. They begin by quoting in full the section of the 'Articles of Religion' approved by Parliament on advise from the Westminster Assembly, dealing with the sabbath. Fully approving the sections not only advocating "a sabbath" together with the advise that labour cease on that day, their sole criticism concerns "the gross absurdities that will follow, if the said texts make such a change of the sabbath as pretended for ..."⁸

Spittlehouse in an earlier work, now lost, asserted the Unchangeable Morality of the Seventh Day Sabbath.⁹ This

6. The Seventh Day Sabbath Sought out and Celebrated, 1657.

7. Tillam, Sabbath, p. 5 - 6, Shepard was published 1649. Almost every page of Tillams' work has one alliteration.

8. Spittlehouse, John, and Saller, William, An Appeal to the Conciences of the Chief Magistrates, 1657, p. 6.

9. See Aspinwall, The Abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath, 1657 where it is answered specifically pp. 12 - 28.

line of argument is based firmly on the belief that the ten commandments are all moral. Ockford ties them up this way: "we and all men are as absolutely bound, in love, to the literal expression of the fourth commandment, as we are to the literal expression of ... any other ..." ¹⁰

A number of seventh-day men, notably Tillam, Spittlehouse and Stennet, speak of the ten commandments as the "Royal Law" when speaking of the sabbath command. This most common title amongst them is used once only in the Bible however. ¹¹ Its importance lies in the fact that it had become a symbol of the laws which govern the earth when the saints come to power. Tillam urges that it be obeyed by the saints because it is "His will who will shortly send forth his Royal Majesty in the clouds of heaven." ¹²

III

The seventh-day sabbath doctrine fell on fertile ground amongst those who subscribed to what I have dubbed "ordinance theology". This theology seems to be a baptist phenomena; or perhaps more truthfully believers baptism is one obvious expression of ordinance theology. ¹³

10. Ockford, p. ii

11. James 2:8, see Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, p. 856, and Tillam, Sabbath, pp. 45, 9.

12. Tillam, Sabbath, p. 166

13. Here I use baptist with a lower case 'b' because as I have shown above, it is misleading to speak of a Baptist Church

A prime exponent of ordinance theology is Thomas Tillam. Tillam was sent as a "messenger" from Hanserd Knolleys congregation in 1652 to take up the Mercers Company lectureship at Hexham. Knolleys congregation was a "General-baptist" one which was in the process of bringing into being a kind of general assembly of those baptist churches which also believed in free-will. The "messengers" were itinerant evangelists sent by most of these General-baptist churches into neighbouring regions.

Within seven months Tillam had baptized eleven men and five women and a church was formed.¹⁴ Jealousy apparently developed between Tillam and his baptist fellows in nearby Newcastle. Thomas Gower of the Newcastle Baptist Church complained to Knolleys Church of Tillam's unfitness as a pastor.¹⁵ An important issue was Tillam's baptizing of a man posing as a converted Jew. The revelation of the imposter greatly discredited Tillam in the eyes of Gower as did Tillam's claim that a minister should expect the full financial support of his congregation.¹⁶ The final discrediting of Tillam's

13. in the seventeenth century. There were numerous separatist congregations who met largely because of their uniform belief in believers baptism however, and I use the word 'baptist' to refer to one of that belief.

14. Underhill, E.B., (ed.) Records of the Churches of Christ gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys and Hexham 1644 - 1720, London, Haddon Brothers, 1854, p. 292.

15. *ibid.* pp. 313 - 7.

16. *ibid.* pp. 318 - 321.

ministry came over the 'laying on of hands' issue, however.

Tillams congregation was itself divided over the hands issue, and as a result Tillam went to Knolleys congregation in London to sort the matter out. The hands issue was about whether all believers should, after baptism, be given the 'ordination' of the laying on of hands. At that time the rite was reserved for ordination only. Knolleys Coleman Street church decided to disown all who were of the practice and thus Tillams ministry in Hexham came to an end before the spring of 1655.

In the meantime Tillam had sought out other baptists who also believed in the laying on of hands on all believers. Prior to Tillams arrival in London, two members of the baptist congregation meeting with Dr. Peter Chamberlen had published tracts for the laying on of hands. Chamberlen himself had held a public debate on the subject with one Captain Kiffin, also a baptist, in the home of John More in Lothbury Square where the church met. ¹⁷

This common interest led Tillam to meet Chamberlen. Tillams' account of the meeting, in a letter to his Hexham congregation runs thus;

17. See More, John, A Lost Ordinance Restored, 1654; Spittlehouse, John, A Confutation of the Assertions of Mr Samuel Oates, 1653, and A Discourse Between Captain Kiffin and Dr. Chamberlain, 1654.

"... And having found many congregations in the practise of the ordinances I wanted, I was by a blessed hand guided to my most heavenly brother, Doctor Chamberlen, one of the most humble, mortified souls - for a man of parts - that I ever yet met with. In whose sweet society I enjoyed the blessing of my God, by the laying on of their hands. And after a love feast, having washed one another's feet, we did joyfully break bread, concluding with a hymn... Oh! that you could embrace it as the mind of Christ, to greet one another with a holy kiss..."¹⁸

Tillam was later very critical of 'men of parts'. He described as effeminate, men who wore long hair and shaved their beards.¹⁹ Noteworthy here is that Tillam is not just concerned with one ordinance, but a number of "ordinances". In his tract for the laying on of hands he undertakes a defence of his position on ordinances. The Christian minister, he says, "has full authority to carry on all ordinances whatsoever Christ commanded his Apostles."²⁰ There is one significant addition to Tillam's list of ordinances in 1655 however - the Sabbath.²¹

In criticizing his opponents, especially Paul Hobson of the Newcastle baptist congregation, Tillam criticizes their "legalistic" approach to scripture which requires that a thing be specifically commanded before it is observed. Tillam, on

18. Underhill, pp 322 - 324.

19. See Tillam, The Temple of Lively Stones, 1660, pp. 292 - 3, in Capp, p. 141.

20. Tillam, Thomas, The Fourth Principle of Christian Religion, 1655, p. 22.

21. *ibid.* p. ii

the other hand is claiming that only ordinance which Christ either practiced, or commanded, is equally binding on Christians. The merest mention of it in the word of God, is to be taken as a command. In the instance at hand Tillam is propounding the laying on of hands as one of the foundational principles of Christianity mentioned in Hebrews 6:1-2. Another of those principles is baptism. Tillam, in an accusation aimed at Hobson, says if a Christian would observe baptism, and not the laying on of hands, he has become a "transgressor of the law".²² Chamberlen likewise believed that apostolic "examples, doctrines and practices were binding commands."²³

Francis Bampfield likewise saw the seventh-day sabbath as a moral obligation for Christians; "Elohim has put this weekly - seventh-day - sabbath into Created Nature ... in the Ten words²⁴ which Ten words I take to be the only certain universal, perfect summary, and comprehensive of that which is the Law of Nature in mankind."²⁵ Further he saw that "the serious Inquirer doth look for Christs Instituting and Commanding. "²⁶

A particular significant expression preferred by most seventh-day men in speaking of God, is "Jehovah Christ".

22. *ibid.* p. 11.

23. Discourse, p. 1.

24. the literal Hebrew translation for 'ten commandments'

25. Bampfield, Francis, The Seventh-Day-Sabbath The Desirable Day, 1677, p. 19.

26. *ibid.* p. 39.

Used by Stennet and Spittlehouse in the 1650's Bampfield defines its use most succinctly:

"The LORD ²⁷ Jesus Christ, who is Redeemer, was Creator too... Jehovah Christ as Mediator did himself at Mount Sinai proclaim this Law of Ten words" ²⁸

In other words there is no contradiction between obeying the ten commandments of the Old Testament and seeking to live by faith. For the God who commanded the one is the same who will empower the other.

III

A particularly important aspect of the seventh-day doctrine is that it is presented as yet another signpost that the end of the age is near. Tillam puts this point of view most strongly in the opening sentence of his work:

"The first Royal Law that ever Jehovah instituted, and for our example celebrated (namely his blessed seventh-day sabbath), is in these very last days become the last great controversie between the saints and the Man of Sin, The Changer of Times and Laws." ²⁹

Tillam is well known to have had close associations with the Fifth Monarchy Movement. This movement was built on the widespread conviction that the "Fifth Monarchy", or universal rule of God's people, was imminent. They based their belief

27. This capitalization stands for the Hebrew tetragrammaton

YHVH which was commonly translated 'Jehovah' in the seventeenth century.

28. Bampfield, The Seventh-Day, p. 39.

29. Tillam, Sabbath, p. 1.

primarily upon Daniel 2; 7; and 12 which describes four successive earthly Kingdoms which would be consumed by a fifth - the Kingdom of God. Most of them saw the death of Charles I as the beginning of the end for the fourth power and carefully looked for the next sign of Christ's return.³⁰

However even after such hopes had been dashed, after a series of prophetic disappointments, and the return of Charles II to take up his throne, millennialist hopes remained. Twenty years after Tillam wrote, Bampfield wrote that "Jehovah has prophecyed and promised that he will raise up such as shall be Restorers of Paths to Sabbatize in." Such prophecies related especially to "the latter-day-glory of this dispensation of grace."³¹

God, in restoring the seventh-day sabbath, has first presented it to those most able to be example of its value. Tillam describes such Christians as a "Royal People"; particularly meaning that they are observing God's Royal Law which he has spent so much time talking about. However, neither Tillam nor the other seventh-day men of our period show any of the 'sect mentality' which would deny access to the truth of any other body. In condemning his persecutors, he makes it clear that he is not reflecting upon those of "Presbyterian or any other opinion" who are of a "Gospel

30. See Capp, *passim*.

31. Bampfield, The Seventh-Day, pp. 15 - 16.

frame of spirit". Those who dare not "murmur at our Fathers love" will, he expects, carefully consider the matter of the seventh-day sabbath.³² This attitude is present also in both Ockford, who expects that all true Christendom will take up the seventh-day sabbath and Bampfield.

This doctrine of the church is also expressed in the phrases 'Church of Christ' or 'Church of God'. It is not, as some modern sectarian writers claim, an indication of exclusivity. Rather it is the opposite indicating the widest possible association with others who so conceive themselves.

IV

Certain well known Puritans when confronted with the doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath, took the apparently un-Puritan step of rejecting the view that the fourth commandment had any obligation for Christians. Milton, in his De Doctrina Christiana, which he wrote over several years up to 1677, had this to say:

"... if we under the Gospel are to regulate the time of our public worship by the prescriptions of the decalogue, it will surely be far safer to observe the seventh-day according to the express commandment of God, than on the authority of mere human conjecture to adopt the first."³³

32. Tillam, Sabbath, p. v

33. The Works of John Milton, Columbia University Press, 1934, vol. 17, p. 193.

Far from advocating the seventh-day sabbath Milton is merely making fun of the whole idea that a sabbath is in force for Christians. It was only a ceremonial command for ancient Israel, abolished specifically in Colossians 2:16 as a shadow of "eternal peace in heaven, of which all believers are commanded to strive to be partakers,..."³⁴

Richard Baxter, though strict in his "Lord's Day" observance, never regarded it as a sabbath. On the subject, Baxter wrote one tract after a "worthy lady was prevented from a Lord's Day to the Saturday Sabbath". His aim was to prove the "divine appointment of the Lord's Day, and the cessation of the Jewish Sabbath".³⁵ He complained that one reason he needed to write the tract was because many people were falling victim to this "error".

Another move, by Thomas Granthem, the General Baptist, was to see the fourth commandment as being partly moral, in commanding the observation of some time as holy. However, the "seventh day" requirement was a ceremonial one given to ancient Israel. The command had no force for Christians. In so saying he is the first to announce this distinction so clearly.³⁶

34. *ibid* p. 175.

35. Sylvester, Matthew, Reliquiae Baxterianae, 1696, III p. 74.

See also Baxter, Richard, The Divine Appointment of the Lord's Day, preface.

36. Granthem, Thomas, The Seventh Day Sabbath Ceased, 1667.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHANGER OF TIME AND LAWS

"Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth ... he shall speak words against the most High and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws."¹

James Ockford blames "Popery" for forcing the Christian Church to replace the seventh-day sabbath with the first day of the week, laying specific blame with Constantine.² Bampfield the "Romanish Synagogue" where the "mystery of Iniquity" began to work, claiming the "great change of the sabbath-day", as the "Catholic Church".³

Tillam is much closer to home in his accusations however. He is very concerned to awaken his audience to the need to "shake off the dust and the trash of the beastly Babylon" with its "system of invented service" which is destined to be replaced with "Gospel ordinances". Calling the saints to victory over the Beast of anti-Christ, he labels the Sunday Sabbath doctrine the "mark of the Beast".⁴ The

1. Daniel 7:23-25

2. Ockford, pp. 40 - 42.

3. Bampfield, The Seventh-Day, p. 61.

4. Tillam, Sabbath, pp. 2 - 4c.f., Revelation 15:2; 20:4.

change of the sabbath from Saturday to Sunday is the "detestable design of the little horn".⁵ It should first be noted that Tillam is condemning Papal religion in much stronger terms than Ockford. However his main target is the Beast who changed the sabbath. The Pope had not changed the time of the sabbath, he had rather abolished it.⁶ It was English Puritans who had moved the sabbath day.

5. *ibid.* p. 154.

6. *ibid.* p. 185.

CHAPTER V

THE JEWISH SABBATH

If a Jew, by observing the sabbath, deny the Lord's day, how doth a Christian observe the sabbath? Either let us be Christians, and observe the Lord's day, or let us be Jews and observe the sabbath: for no man can serve two Masters.

Augustine

This is how Cawdery and Palmer conclude their discussion of the errors of the Saturday - sabbath. The seventh-day sabbath became a central issue in the demarkation dispute over relations between Christians and Jews. The almost paranoic fear which Sunday Sabbatarians held for the seventh-day doctrine is symptomatic of a deeper fear of Jews which has social as well as religious roots.

A persistent stigma which the seventh-day men had to endure was that of "Traskite". John Traske had died in 1638, and had ceased observing the Saturday Sabbath in 1621. Nonetheless 'A Catalogue of the Several Sect and Opinions in England and other Nations' (January 19, 1646) includes a voice on "Traskites":

'The Jewish Sabbath these would have remain,
As warrantable by command most plain:
But since the Priest and Sacrifice are ceased,
The Lord's days ravishment divinely is
Confirmed by Practice which unerring is.'

In fact it is quite doubtful that any such congregation existed in 1646.¹ The intention of the authors of the 'Catalogue' was to show that "the many strange sects and opinions ... amongst us 'necessitated' an ordinance for the preventing and growing and spreading of heresie". In fact Traske became famous after his death not so much for his "Jewish Sabbath", but for his belief that obedience to God obligated God to bestow His blessings. Worse than this his introduction of the "Judaicall Sabbath ... was an occasion of stumbling to five or six of his followers to deny the Lord Jesus Christ".²

Thus Traske embodied an Englishman's worst fears about Judaism: contact with it would lead to a rejection of Christ. But Traske alone was not to blame for this fear. The fear of Judaism was part of the unconscious thought of many Englishmen of the period. Many arguments against the seventh-day sabbath have no more logic to them than the following examples;

"The days of Pentecost, Passover and the hours of prayer in the Yemple are to be observed ... if the apostles preaching on their sabbath argues the continuance of them ..."³

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1. It is certain that the seventh-day men post 1650 did not originate out of any surviving Traskite congregation; all originated out of first day, mainly baptist, groups. Trakse's 'biographer' Norice, below, makes no mention of any Traskite congegation in 1638.
 2. Norice, Edward, The New Gospel Not the True Gospel, 1638, p. 7 - 11.
 3. Shepard. Part II, p. 10.

The Seventh Day Men themselves were quick to point out that they were not Judaizing, and objected strongly to the jibe that they were observing the "Jewish Sabbath". Bampfield says opponents of the seventh-day sabbath, in rejecting it, sought to encourage others to "abhor it" by "giving it an ill name miscalling it the Jewish Sabbath".⁴

John Cowell is the only known seventh-day man of the period to leave observance of the Saturday Sabbath and give his reasons for doing so. The first part of his work The Snare Broken is concerned with what seems to be various stories about divisions between seventh-day men over how to observe the sabbath, and when it began. His own objections to it came not from this however. It came as the result of his meeting with a "Sabbath-keeper so strict in her Sabbath-keeping...who is gone so far in her owning of the Sabbath, and the Law whence the rule of it is taken, that she shames not openly to disown the Gospel, and the Lord Jesus Christ."⁵

As a result Cowell said: "I now began to fear I had done too, too much before..." The second event which caused Cowell to change his mind was Edward Stennet's advocacy of "the penalty of death...for the prophaning of the Sabbath". As a result he came to the conclusion that the Sabbath was only temporary being "given to Israel...as a sign to them" only.⁶

4. Bampfield, The Seventh Day, p; 11.

5. Cowell, John, The Snare Broken, 1667, in Cox vol. II, pp. 57 - 62.

6. *ibid.*

CONCLUSION

The doctrine of the seventh-day sabbath had a vital part amongst both radical and sabbatarian thinking of mid-seventeenth century England. As a 'recovered ordinance' it was yet another sign - some thought the penultimate sign - that truth was being restored at the end of the age, and that it brought one step nearer the Fifth Monarchy.

Puritans responded to this 'new' doctrine in two ways. Firstly, some began to deny that a sabbath ought to be kept and began to revive the older Ecclesiastical theory of the Lord's Day (Sunday). Others wishing to maintain the eternity of the ten commandments "ammended" the fourth as it were by claiming that it was partly moral, partly ceremonial. The ceremonial part being the requirement of the seventh day.

The issue itself was opposed to a degree which is unusually large when compared to the actual numbers of people who advocated it. The reasons for this seem best explained with reference to the fact that it rased the ever present fear of Judaism. This fear lead some seventh day men to abandon the seventh day, and the logic of this fear lead some men to adopt Judaism itself.

The next step in the study of seventh-day men after having understaood how their doctrine fits into seventeenth century thinking, is to make a study of the origin and organization of the

seventh day churches, and to examine the lives of the men and women who were members of them. This task I hope has I hope been brought a step nearer to happening.

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