

*"And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I Commanded That The Gates Should Be Shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day." Nehemiah 13:19 KJV*



Nehemiah was grieved, because merchants were allowed to sell their wares and people were doing labor in Jerusalem on the Sabbath. God established every seventh day as The Sabbath. There were also other Sabbaths, Holy Days, sanctified and dedicated solely to God. Since the time of Christ believers have set aside the "first day of the week," Sunday, as the Day of The risen Saviour, because He rose on the "third day, the first day of the week." It is not a commanded Sabbath, but is, in effect, a voluntarily chosen Sabbath. The two days together were celebrated for years as days off from work to meditate, rest, and worship. Now Saturday and Sunday are "party" days for all manner of leisure activities from football to fishing. Isn't it strange we tread so lightly around the worship of our Lord allowing all manner of daily cares and routine activities? If our schedule is so demanding that it runs roughshod over our worship and adoration of our Lord, it's too demanding. Satan is the engineer of anything that would deprive your contemplation of the Saviour. Sunday dinner was traditionally the biggest meal of the week, but it required heavy labor for someone and therefore prevented their rest. Under the Law, there was to be no major food preparation on the Sabbath. God sent manna in the wilderness and they were to collect a double amount the day before. Extra manna would rot after a day every day except the Sabbath. The Sabbath was a cessation of labor. Sunday is the Day our Lord ceased from His labor. Three hours on Sunday is not a "Sabbath Day." There are those that still honor the Old Covenant Sabbath. Since there is no account of Christ observing the Old Covenant Sabbath after the Resurrection, many have chosen to use Resurrection Day, Sunday, as the Sabbath of the New Covenant. Rather than strive over the issue between ourselves, let's resolve the issue the way the Apostle Paul did. "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. For it is written, 'As I Live,' Saith the Lord, 'every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.' So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." If I wish to honor either day as the Sabbath, it should be in good conscience before God, not some man's interpretation. The important thing is to honor God and our brethren!

If eye and ear bring troubled thoughts,  
That turn our Sabbath into nought,  
It's time to tarry, meditate,  
And walk with Christ, our Potentate! –CGP

What open gates defile your Sabbath? Shut the gates and honor God with cessation of labor. It's not dedicated to God if you're doing or worried about something else! If God got it all done in six days, so can you! Walk with Him daily. Give God one day and the other six will be abundant. You can't outgive God!

*"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 KJV*