

THE REVIEW AND HERALD

“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.”
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HOW CAN THE SABBATH BE KEPT AT THE NORTH POLE?

Let not the reader think, that, having asked this question, we are going to answer it: this we shall not now attempt, for reasons which we will hereafter offer. It is very natural that the question should arise, how persons can keep the Sabbath in those high northern latitudes where the days and nights are months in duration. But the first point to be settled in regard to such questions is, How much weight and bearing should they be permitted to have on the Sabbath question? A few suggestions on this point is all we design at this time. We are led to these remarks by Bro. E. Fish, who writes from La Grange Co., Ind., as follows: “I want an explanation on the Sabbath: how we can keep the same time that they do in Asia, and at the poles?”

We can inform our brother how he can keep the Sabbath in La Grange County, Indiana, though we presume he knows this already, and acts accordingly. But we have a class of opposers who seize with avidity upon the seeming objection which can be raised against the Sabbath, by the long days of the arctic regions, and presumptuously think with this alone to demolish the whole Sabbath fabric; and they stubbornly refuse to acknowledge any reasoning on the question, until it can be definitely settled how the Sabbath can be kept in the frigid zone. The unreasonableness of such a course can be readily shown.

No objection can be raised from the fact that time differs in proportion to the difference of longitude east and west. One man in Palestine and another in North America may each keep the Sabbath-day according to the Commandment, though one begins it six hours later than the other. But how is this? says the objector; are we not required to keep the same absolute time here that they do in Asia? No; and this is the solution of the whole matter. God has provided natural means which bring, on all degrees of longitude, succession of day and night. By that we are to be governed in America as well as in Asia. We are to keep the seventh day as it is brought to us, in whatever longitude we are, by the great time-piece of nature; and in doing this, we keep the Sabbath according to the Commandment. Whoever therefore, in this western hemisphere wishes to obey the Sabbath law, he need not go to Palestine to fulfill its requirements.

If any still doubt on this point, we have a scriptural precedent, which must for ever settle the question. Paul kept the Sabbath at Corinth a year and six months; [[Acts 18](#);] but Corinth is some twelve degrees west of Jerusalem, involving a difference of time of about forty-eight minutes. If therefore the Sabbath can be lawfully kept at Corinth, the time differing nearly an hour from the time at Jerusalem, it can be kept farther west still - it can be kept here.

Concerning Sabbath-keeping at the north, there are certain facts which must have their bearing.

1. According to Moses it is a fact that God blessed and sanctified the Sabbath-day in the beginning for the first parents of our race. [Genesis 2:2](#); [Exodus 20:11](#).
2. Christ declared that the Sabbath was made for man. [Mark 2:27](#).
3. It follows therefore that the Sabbath institution was designed to be a universal institution, by all men every where observed.

Now to say that there are certain habitable portions of the globe, where the Sabbath cannot be kept, is to say that God has given a law to his creatures, requiring its observance under fearful penalties, which they are unable to keep! This is to make the Omniscient Creator either short-sighted or unjust! Such is the unavoidable conclusion of the

premises taken; and in view of this no conscientious person will ever be heard urging the above as an objection to the Sabbath institution. It is the boldest charge of Atheism and Infidelity.

Again for a person to refuse to keep the Sabbath, notwithstanding its binding obligations can be plainly shown, because he knows not how it could be kept near the north pole, is as dishonest as it is unjust. No such long-day-and-night objection can be raised against it here; and no such objection should therefore be allowed to interfere with present duty. It is saying, I will not do my present duty notwithstanding that duty can be made never so plain, because I know not how I could perform it in some distant part of the earth! A poor excuse to shirk essential requirements.

It is a little amusing to observe how much easier it is to keep the first day of the week than the seventh. No one has any difficulty in observing the first day, east, west, north or south; but the moment we urge upon them the seventh day, it becomes extremely difficult, nay, impossible, to keep it!!

From the above it will be readily gathered why we do not feel called upon to give the modus operandi of Sabbath keeping in the arctic regions; for

1. To say that the Sabbath cannot there be kept is an impeachment of the wisdom of the Creator.
2. This objection is never urged against the observance of Sunday, which Sunday-keepers urge against the seventh day, though it bears as much against the former as the latter.

3. Those who, when brought face to face with a divine requirement, seek to avoid it by flying to the north pole, show that they care not to regulate their lives by reason or religion.

We have not as yet heard of any Sabbath-keepers north of the arctic circle; and, doubtless, when it becomes duty, in the providence of God, for any to reside there, there will be some way devised so that they will not be obliged by so doing to break one of Jehovah's plain commandments.