

Second Response on the Sabbath and the "Daily"

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Introduction

Please understand that I value your friendship and want to preserve it, but I can't support your thesis now any more than I could before. It's not that you haven't done a good job of stating your case. You have. But *tāmîd* ("daily") is a sanctuary term and there are certain facts that will continue to resist you so long as our knowledge of the sanctuary remains what it is.

As in my earlier communication, I accept everything you quote, and agree that the Sabbath is a continual sign between God and His people. It is important today. Rome has tried to remove it. With all of this I agree. The Sabbath is the great test for God's people at the present time. But in regard to bringing the *tāmîd* and the Sabbath together as one, doing so would have to involve bringing the first apartment and the second apartment together as one. This can never be.

If your model is wrong, even on what you might view as a technicality, the technicality is a warning sign. You can benefit from it or go on, but it is there. In one place Ellen White states that, "Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous" (CW 46). She says this in a context, and I'm not saying that every part of the context fits here. But she says it and I believe her.

Starting Point

On p. 17 you quote Ellen White as follows: "The daily service consisted of the morning and evening burnt offering, the offering of sweet incense on the golden altar, and the special offerings for individual sins. And there were also offerings for sabbaths, new moons, and special feasts" (PP 352). This is spot on. She has it exactly right. The *tāmîd* was all of the things she mentions here, and more. But in terms of your argument this fact is a two-edged sword. Because the *tāmîd* is all of the above things, we are not talking about the *tāmîd* until we too – like Ellen White in the above statement – have all of them in mind. I'm not saying we need to list them all each time a valid reference occurs, but if the writer does not have a full range of the above factors in mind, s/he is not referring to the *tāmîd*.

To correctly identify the *tāmîd* we must include what it includes and leave aside what it omits. Prophetic statements about the little horn might leave room for differences of interpretation, so the place to get our distinctions right is elsewhere. We need to nail these distinctions down tightly enough, where they are clear, that they won't give way when we come to difficult passages, such as Dan 8.

One passage we might take as a useful starting point is in the Sabbath commandment. If the *tāmîd* is the same as the Sabbath, we could reasonably expect to find some indication of this

in the way the commandment is worded. Does it make any mention of burnt offerings, sweet incense, special offerings, and such? If not, then the *tāmîd* is not part of the Sabbath. At least the commandment (as stated in Exod 20:8-11) does not say anything that would lead us to think so. Nor is the Sabbath any part of the *tāmîd* (as the *tāmîd* is summarized in PP 352). (There Ellen White does mention "sabbaths," but Seventh-day Adventists have always been careful to distinguish between the weekly "Sabbath" and yearly "sabbaths.") There is an oblique reference to the seventh-day Sabbath in one *tāmîd* passage (Lev 24:8), as discussed in my earlier response, but no direct instruction. None of the various *tāmîd* passages sets about to instruct us concerning the Sabbath. So if the Sabbath commandment does not tell us about the *tāmîd*, and if the *tāmîd* passages do not tell us about the Sabbath, we have not yet established any direct point of contact between the two.

The Context of the Sanctuary

Background

The set of relationships you wish to establish between the *tāmîd* and the Sabbath run something like this. (See fig. 1.)

	Cross to 1844	1844 to End
Tāmîd	-	+
Sabbath	-	+

Fig. 1. *Tāmîd* and Sabbath following parallel courses of historical development, such that taking away the *tāmîd* means taking away the Sabbath, and restoring the Sabbath means restoring the *tāmîd*.

What I see in this same period of history is more like fig. 2.

	Cross to 1844	1844 to End
Tāmîd	+	-
Sabbath	-	+

Fig. 2. *Tāmîd* and Sabbath following contrasting courses of historical development, where the two can rise or fall independently of each other.

Satan, working through the little horn, could only succeed in obscuring the heavenly *tāmîd* from earthly view while Jesus was in the first apartment. He could not actually take it away or stop it, because it was being done in a place he can no longer go and by a Being he has no power to resist. From the perspective of earthly appearances we can put a minus by *tāmîd* during the middle ages, but from the perspective of heavenly realities we must put a plus. The Sabbath, on the other hand is not something Jesus does for us in heaven. "The Sabbath was

made for man" (Mark 2:27). It takes place here and, when kept at all, is kept by weak, fallible human beings. That being the case, Satan did have the power to stop people from keeping it, and largely succeeded in doing so. He could not stop the *tāmîd* from being performed in heaven, but could stop the Sabbath from being kept here on earth – at least for a majority of Christians. This much corresponds to the time of Christ's ministry in the first apartment.

After 1844 we have a different set of issues. Now the daily ministry of Christ in the first apartment truly ceases – not because Satan finally succeeds in stopping it, but because Jesus has something else to do. When Jesus enters the second apartment of the sanctuary in heaven His ministry in the first apartment stops. Thus the antitypical *tāmîd* stops. "No one is to be in the Tent of Meeting from the time Aaron goes in to make atonement in the Most Holy Place until he comes out, . . ." (Lev 16:17). Jesus is still in the second apartment now. When He comes out, it will be for the purpose of coming here (see Rev 19:11-21). The *tāmîd* is over.

Ironically, it is when the *tāmîd* ends that the Sabbath starts coming back to prominence, as witnessed by the fact that almost 16,000,000 Seventh-day Adventists, and many others, keep it today. Thus the *tāmîd* and the Sabbath are capable of being in what linguists call complementary distribution. (When you have the one, you don't have the other, and vice versa.) This difference would not have to be, since it is always appropriate to keep the Sabbath, but in this case it's how events unfolded. These facts will not change when we move from Leviticus to Daniel.

Discussion

In the context of the sanctuary it was not by accident that God's people discovered the Sabbath in the years shortly after 1844. When they followed Christ by faith into the second apartment, where the tablets of the law are preserved inside the ark, they began once more to see the beautiful light of the Sabbath. Historically these facts might seem random or accidental, but in the context of the sanctuary they make perfect sense.

What does not make sense is trying to extend the *tāmîd* into the second apartment. Nothing associated with the *tāmîd* ever went there in the past and I see no light in your effort to take it there now. If Jesus is still in the second apartment (as we know He is), and if our faith follows Him there (as it must), we won't see anything that pertains to the *tāmîd* so long as He remains where He is and our faith remains with Him.

Our Witness to Opponents

If you succeed in collapsing the distinction between *tāmîd* and Sabbath, your model could have unexpected consequences. People could use what you say in one of two ways: (1) They could argue, as you do, that the *tāmîd* persists because the Sabbath persists. Or (2) they could argue, as much of the Protestant world has held for centuries, that the Sabbath ceases because the *tāmîd* does. What I mean here by ceasing is the veil of the temple being torn from top to bottom at the moment of Christ's death (see Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38). Alternatively, we could bypass the matter of the veil altogether and speak of Christ's body itself being torn and broken on the cross. You've heard the arguments. The idea behind them is that the Sabbath and the ceremonies of the *tāmîd* are on the same level, have the same credentials, and are

therefore indistinguishable, rising or falling together. This is a point you yourself are trying hard to establish. Don't go there.

Break the connection. You really don't want these things being tied to each other. The argument you point in one direction could just as easily be run in reverse, and has been. You're going down a well-trodden path. You're not following those who argue against the Sabbath. Their direction is different, but the path itself is the same. Although the idea that the Sabbath was done away at the cross is not a position you support, those who hold to it do so on the basis of a premise that you and they hold in common. You strongly reject their conclusion, but accept the premise from which it follows. Let it go. If it's wrong for them, it's wrong for you. You want your model to be constructive and helpful, but at this point its potential value has not yet been realized. Correctly understood, the Sabbath neither rises nor falls with the *tāmîd*. The two are on entirely separate tracks. As things stand now, the Sabbath is not helped, and could be harmed, by your efforts.

Adventist Prophetic Interpretation

If your argument brings no benefit to the Sabbath, to what then does the benefit accrue? Where does the argument take us? I would say the beneficiary is the *tāmîd*. How so? Because a currently ongoing *tāmîd* is the gateway to a future reinterpretation of Dan 12:11 and other related time prophecies. Your model offers a basis for claiming that the *tāmîd* still has continuing validity – a validity on the same level with that of the Sabbath, and therefore that it did not come to an end in 1844.

There is much more in your study than this. It is really quite comprehensive. But this is one reason why I feel so uncomfortable with your argument concerning the *tāmîd*. It has implications for many aspects of Adventist prophetic interpretation. I've been suggesting that your model is not exegetically or historically correct, but there is also the question whether it is useful. Is this what the church needs? In the letter to Sardis Jesus says,

Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you. (Rev 3:3)

When people set about to shift the ground under the church's feet by reinterpreting its accepted beliefs, I personally draw back from that. Moving major time periods from the past to the future constitutes reinterpreting, which is not the same as remembering or obeying. People reinterpret the Sabbath and we can readily see that this is not the same as remembering it (see Exod 20:8). (I'm not saying that you reinterpret the Sabbath, but am using this as an illustration.) What you say about the *tāmîd* provides a basis for changing the interpretation of a number of time prophecies which have played an important role in Seventh-day Adventist history. Here Ellen White's use of the above verse from Sardis becomes significant. You might want to check some of the ways she uses Rev 3:3– especially in letters and articles written between 1903 and 1905. For my part, I want to remember what God's church has received and heard, and obey it.

Ending Point

Do continual things end? They can. When Christ lays off His priestly robes and makes the solemn pronouncement of Rev 22:11, there will never again be a Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, or temple. After the earth is made new again the temple itself will be no more (see Rev 21:22). With no priest and no temple, there is no *tāmîd*. I emphasize that, in the present context, *tāmîd* is a sanctuary term, pertaining especially to the first apartment. It only exists while there is a sanctuary and a priesthood. Once the sin problem is resolved, the corresponding mechanism for solving it will no longer be needed.

We have said, and in a number of places Ellen White has said,¹ that the Sabbath is a "continual sign." This is true. It is. And yet "continual" is not a complete description. More than being continual, the Sabbath is eternal. Is there a difference? There can be. The antitypical *tāmîd* begins when Christ enters the first apartment and ends when He enters the second apartment. The Sabbath, on the other hand, comes down to us from the time of creation and remains through eternity (see Isa 66:23). This is what I mean by a point of difference. Stopping and lasting forever are not the same.

As regards the antitypical *tāmîd*, Ellen White states clearly that it ends. She describes its close in such words as "the ministration in the first apartment ceased" (GC88, p. 428), "he ceased his ministration in the first apartment" (p. 429), "when the ministration in the first apartment ended" (p. 429). These statements do not contradict what she says in other places, but clarify what the word "continual" does and does not mean. While Christ's ministry in the first apartment lasted, His antitypical *tāmîd* was "continual," i.e., it was not fitful or sporadic. This refers to the manner in which it was performed (see Heb 7:25). But in the fullest sense of the word, "continual" does not mean endless. It simply means uninterrupted.

In Exod 31:16 ("The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant [*b'êrit ôlām*]") the words are chosen carefully, which one would expect since God is the one speaking. In this passage the Sabbath is not called a "continual covenant" (*b'êrit tāmîd*). NIV says "lasting covenant," but literally the Hebrew means "eternal covenant" (*b'êrit ôlām*). Things that are continual can and do end, but things that are eternal do not. A million years from now there will be no *tāmîd*, because there will be no temple and no Priest to minister in it. But the Sabbath will still be – and will always be – in full force and effect. What is temporal bears no comparison with what is eternal.

Conclusion

I urge you to be content in your study with showing that the Sabbath is important in the last days, that it is a continuing obligation for God's people – not because the *tāmîd* was what it was, but because the Sabbath is what it is – and that we must be on guard against any attempt by Rome or anyone else to change what God has established. You have gone a long way toward accomplishing this goal. What you have not done is demonstrate that the *tāmîd* is the same as the Sabbath.

¹ See RH, October 28, 1902 par. 3; ST, February 1, 1910 par. 11; ST, February 1, 1910 par. 11; 5MR 123.2.