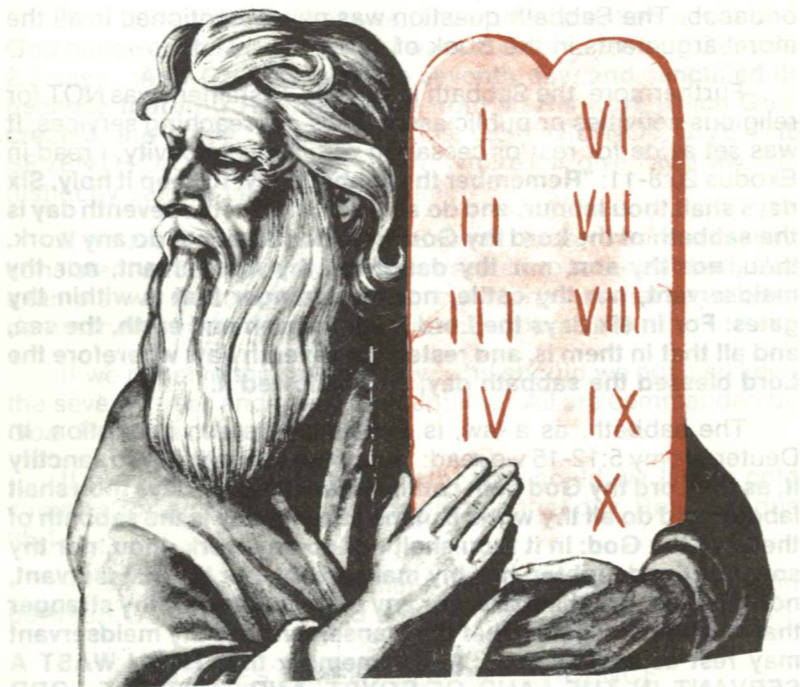


Should We Worship on the Jewish Sabbath Day or on the Lord's Day?



by
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1. THE JEWISH SABBATH

A listener wrote last week saying, "I am surprised that you worship on the first day of the week and not on God's Sabbath Day. Do you not know it was the Roman Catholic Church which changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday? We believe Sunday keeping is the "mark of the beast" of Revelation 13 where God's wrath is poured out."

I am glad for this letter because it brings before us the whole issue of Sabbath keeping and the Lord's Day.

The word Sabbath in the Hebrew means "rest or cessation of activity." There was a period of time, namely 2500 years, during which the Sabbath was NOT mentioned in the Bible. Abraham was never said to have kept the Sabbath, nor was it said of Isaac or Jacob. The Sabbath question was never mentioned in all the moral arguments in the Book of Job.

Furthermore, the Sabbath in the Old Testament was NOT for religious activities or public assemblies or preaching services. It was set aside for rest or cessation of physical activity. I read in Exodus 20:8-11: **"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."**

The sabbath, as a law, is a distinctly Jewish institution. In Deuteronomy 5:12-15 we read: **"Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt 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, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that THOU WAST A SERVANT IN THE LAND OF EGYPT, AND THAT THE LORD THY GOD BROUGHT THEE OUT THENCE through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded THEE to keep the sabbath day."**

If you look to the other place where the ten commandments are given, Exodus 20, they are prefaced with these words: **"And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of**

bondage" (Exodus 20:1,2).

Thus we see that the ten commandments IN THE FORM GIVEN are distinctly said to be for the Israelites. The moral principles underlying them are eternal and every one of them except the sabbath commandment, as we shall see later, is reaffirmed in the New Testament.

Let me read Exodus 31:13-17: **"Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths YE shall keep: for it is a SIGN BETWEEN ME AND YOU throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. . . . Wherefore THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL SHALL KEEP THE SABBATH, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. IT IS A SIGN BETWEEN ME AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL FOR EVER: . . ."**

Now it is a true fact that when the work of creation was ended God hallowed the seventh day. I want to emphasize that. Genesis 2:3 says: **"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."** But notice this, GOD DID NOT GIVE THE SEVENTH DAY THERE AS A LAW. Where it is given as a law, it is distinctly said to be a law for Israel.

If we are to keep the Jewish Sabbath today then we must be consistent and follow the Jewish laws relating to the Sabbath. For example, we must not depart from our homes on that day as was commanded in the beginning. Read Exodus 16:29.

If we observe the seventh day, why should we not also keep the seventh year and the year of Jubilee? All are commanded by God. Read Leviticus 25:1-22.

If we are to keep the Sabbath, how could we live in cold climates for no fire was to be kindled on that day. Read Exodus 35:1-3.

So we reaffirm the statement that the Sabbath was a sign between God and Israel and not between God and His Church.

OLD TESTAMENT SUNDAY EVIDENCE

In Leviticus 23:9-12 we read: **"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: ON THE MORROW AFTER THE SABBATH the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer**

THAT DAY when ye wave the sheaf AN HE LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH of the first year FOR A BURNT OFFERING UNTO THE LORD." This pictures the firstfruits of the resurrection of Christ which took place on Sunday, the first day of the week.

"**The morrow after the Sabbath**" referred to Sunday and it was on this day that the offering of the firstfruits was to be made.

In Leviticus 23:15,16,17 and 21 we read: "**And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the MORROW AFTER THE SEVENTH SABBATH shall ye number FIFTY DAYS; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves . . . they are the firstfruits unto the Lord. . . . And ye shall proclaim ON THE SELFSAME DAY, THAT IT MAY BE AN HOLY CONVOCATION UNTO YOU: YE SHALL DO NO SERVILE WORK THEREIN: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.**"

Notice that this offering was to be observed on "**the morrow after the seventh sabbath.**" This Levitical Sunday offering on the fiftieth day after the firstfruits offering, typifies the Day of Pentecost which also occurred on Sunday, the fiftieth day after Christ's resurrection. So the "**morrow after the sabbath**" pictures the Sunday of the New Testament.

The fallacy of the Sabbath Day exegesis of Leviticus 23 is clear. It says here: "**Even unto THE MORROW after the SEVENTH sabbath shall ye number fifty days.**" Now then, were these seven Sabbaths "feast-sabbaths" or "fourth-commandment" Sabbaths? The answer is, they were fourth-commandment Sabbaths. "**The morrow after the SEVENTH SABBATH**" could only be SUNDAY. The fiftieth day after the seventh fourth-commandment Sabbath was also SUNDAY. These two "first-day-of-the-week" feasts were to be observed EACH YEAR (not every seven years) on these two FEAST-SABBATH SUNDAYS AFTER THE FOURTH-COMMANDMENT SABBATHS. These feasts were to be kept (each year) on SUNDAY. "**On the morrow**" following the fourth-commandment Sabbath "**ye shall reap the harvest thereof,**" and again "**ON THE MORROW**" after the seventh fourth-commandment Sabbath "**fifty days**" later.

It should also be noticed that these feasts were not to be kept by the Israelites until they arrived in Canaan. "**WHEN YE BE COME INTO THE LAND WHICH I GIVE UNTO YOU**" (Lev. 23:10). Canaan is a type of the spiritual life and rest we have in Christ under the New Covenant of grace. The feasts scripturally

typify the "**firstfruits**" of Christ's resurrection, which is the beginning of the Christian Church.

What Moses is teaching here in Leviticus 23 is very clear. He is saying, prophetically, that when you enter into this dispensation of grace (as fulfilled in the New Testament) **YOU WILL NOT KEEP THIS FEAST ON SATURDAY, BUT ON SUNDAY, THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.**

Let us be clear on this matter. The Lord's Day is the first day of the week, the day Moses prophesied and commanded the NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANS would keep, which is Sunday. The two feasts, the feast of the firstfruits and the feast of Pentecost, that speak of grace and the New Testament Christian, were commanded to be kept by Israel on Sunday and not on Saturday. The other feasts, which were feasts of the law, were kept on the Sabbath Day. We worship on the Lord's Day which is the day of grace rather than the Sabbath Day which is the day of the law. We are saved by grace and not by law.

2. A NEW REST AND COVENANT

We have already seen that the seventh-day Sabbath was a sign between God and Israel (Ex. 31:13). It is true that it was a memorial of God's finished work of creation although it was not instituted by God until 2513 years later at Sinai when God made known unto them His holy Sabbath (Neh. 9:13,14).

God certainly chose the exact day of rest for "Israel" but He did not compute it from the creation, but from the beginning of His giving the Manna. For all who still want to follow the Jewish law and covenant, we would say in the words of Galatians 4:21: "**Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?**" The law says in Exodus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 5:14: "**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 man-servant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.**"

The law states, "**Thou shalt not do any work.**" Who tries to measure up to that standard today? There is no place here for "works of necessity." Some may have thought it necessary to kindle a fire, but God's penalty for doing so—or for breaking the Sabbath law in any way—was death (Ex. 35:2,3; Num. 15:32-36).

We are certainly not under this law today, nor do we follow

the memorial of God's original creation in six days by observing rest on the seventh. The original creation was wrecked and ruined by sin and was only restored by God's plan of re-creation through redemption. Christ came into this world to redeem this earth, and especially sinners, from the curse brought upon God's creation through sin.

There were two "rests" frequently mentioned in the Old Testament as special pledges of God's favor: The sabbath and the land of Canaan. The former was called "**a sabbath of rest to the Lord**" (Ex. 35:2) and "**the sabbath of the Lord**" (Ex. 20:10). The latter was called "**the rest . . . which the Lord your God giveth you**" (Deut. 12:9, Josh. 1:15).

In Hebrews 4:1-11 we read of the Old Testament rest and of the new rest which is ours because of the perfect work of redemption provided for us in Christ:

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as He said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

In view of the fact that Paul was writing to Hebrew believers they might well have asked: "Paul, we have always enjoyed the Lord's sabbath, and our fathers have long occupied Canaan, why then do you speak about entering into God's rest?" But this chapter is written to show that neither of these rests were meant by David in Psalm 95 nor by Paul in Hebrews 4. (Read verse 8). We can conclude then that verse 9 teaches that there is ANOTHER REST for God's own people.

The answer is given clearly in verse 10: "**For he that is entered**

into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." This is God's rest for us because it is God's work for us in Christ. Christ finished the work and became our righteousness before a holy God.

What God is showing us is that we are to view Christ's rest from His work of Redemption as being parallel with God's rest after Creation. Each "work" has with it "the keeping of a sabbath." Since our whole relationship to God today is in Christ, our sabbath day has far more meaning to it than the seventh-day Old Testament sabbath. It is now primarily a remembrance of the rest into which Christ entered as an eternal memorial of His finished work. Inasmuch as Christ ended His work and entered upon His "rest" by rising again on the FIRST DAY of the week, we are therefore to see that the Christian's six workdays must run from Monday to Saturday, and that his new sabbath day must be observed on Sunday. This is fully confirmed (as we shall see later) by the additional fact that the New Testament shows that after the crucifixion of Christ and His resurrection, the first day of the week was the one set apart for Divine worship.

A NEW COVENANT

When God made His first covenant with Israel, He foretold that they would break it through disobedience and sin: "**For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swore unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and BREAK MY COVENANT**" (Deut. 31:20).

This covenant, upon which the seventh-day Sabbath is based, has been broken and replaced by a new covenant as we read in Hebrews 8:7-13: "**For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to**

their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

The Apostle Paul is here contrasting the Christian dispensation and the Mosaic, the church age and the law era. In the previous verses he showed that the old covenant was done away with because of its inadequacy through the weakness of the flesh. Here he shows the new covenant which God revealed even through His prophets in the Old Testament.

When did this new covenant take place? First, it was introduced by the ministry of John the Baptist (Luke 16:16). Until the appearing of John the Jews were bound absolutely unto the covenant of Sinai. But John's ministry was the **"beginning of the Gospel"** (Mark 1:1,2). He pointed away from Moses to the Lamb of God. This was the beginning of God's fulfillment of His promise through Jeremiah (Hebrews 8:10ff).

Second, this new covenant began to take place with the incarnation and ministry of the Lord Jesus. His appearing in the flesh laid an axe to the root of the whole Mosaic dispensation (Matt. 3:10) though the tree was not immediately cut down. By His miracles and teachings and claims Christ proved that He was the Mediator of the new covenant.

Third, this new covenant was further confirmed in Christ's death so that the "promise" now became a "testament" (Heb. 9:14-16).

Fourth, the new covenant was further established in the resurrection of Christ. The curse of the old covenant was borne by Christ and was absolutely discharged when Christ was loosed from the chains of death and delivered from the grave.

Fifth, the new covenant was confirmed on the day of Pentecost. From now on the church was absolved from any duty with respect to the old covenant, including the keeping of the seventh day sabbath.

Sixth, the apostles in a great church council (Acts 15:1-19) affirmed that the old or first covenant does not apply to believers today. In verse 10 Peter asked: **"Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"**

3. THE NEW TESTAMENT SUNDAY

We have already considered that the Sabbath Day was given by God as a special sign to the Jewish people. The Old Testament also presented, in type, the keeping of Sunday as the day of worship for His people and church. We have seen that God's people have been given a new rest in the Lord Jesus Christ because of His finished Cross-work. It was further proved that the Lord has given to us a new covenant relationship with Himself so that we are not under law but under grace.

Today I want you to see that we are not to keep the seventh day Sabbath because it is nowhere stated in the New Testament that we are to do so. All of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament except the fourth commandment relating to the Sabbath Day. Let us consider the Ten Commandments as taught in both the Old and New Testaments.

The Old Testament First Commandment: **"Thou shalt have no other gods before me"** (Ex. 20:3).

The New Testament First Commandment: **"We . . . preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein"** (Acts 14:15). **"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve"** (Matt. 4:10).

The Old Testament Second Commandment: **"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments"** (Ex. 20:4-6).

The New Testament Second Commandment: **"Little children, keep yourselves from idols"** (1 John 5:21). **"Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device"** (Acts 17:29).

The Old Testament Third Commandment: **"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain"** (Ex. 20:7).

The New Testament Third Commandment: **"But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the**

earth, neither by any other oath" (James 5:12). **"That the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed"** (1 Tim. 6:1).

The Old Testament Fourth Commandment: **"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, 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"** (Ex. 20:8,9).

The New Testament Fourth Commandment: **THERE IS NO COMMAND IN THE ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT INSTRUCTING US TO KEEP THE SEVENTH DAY.**

Of course those who try to bring the Sabbath Day into New Testament teaching use various Scriptures to try to prove that we are taught to keep the Sabbath Day. They refer us to Matthew 24:20: **"But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day."** This refers only to the Tribulation period which primarily has to do with the Jews. Therefore it is not a command for believers and the church.

The Old Testament Fifth Commandment: **"Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee"** (Ex. 20:12).

The New Testament Fifth Commandment: **"Honour thy father and thy mother"** (Matt. 19:19). **"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right"** (Eph. 6:1).

The Old Testament Sixth Commandment: **"Thou shalt not kill"** (Ex. 20:13).

The New Testament Sixth Commandment: **"Thou shalt not kill"** (Rom. 13:9).

The Old Testament Seventh Commandment: **"Thou shalt not commit adultery"** (Ex. 20:14).

The New Testament Seventh Commandment: **"Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God"** (1 Cor. 6:9,10).

The Old Testament Eighth Commandment: **"Thou shalt not steal"** (Ex. 20:15).

The New Testament Eighth Commandment: **"Thou shalt not steal"** (Rom. 13:9). **"Steal no more"** (Eph. 4:28).

The Old Testament Ninth Commandment: **"Thou shalt not bear false witness"** (Ex. 20:16).

The New Testament Ninth Commandment: **"Lie not"** (Col. 3:9).

The Old Testament Tenth Commandment: **"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's"** (Ex. 20:17).

The New Testament Tenth Commandment: **"Covetousness, let it not be once named among you"** (Eph. 5:3).

God's Word teaches that the old Sabbath was done away with by Christ on the Cross. Colossians 2:13-16: **"And you, . . . hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing to to His cross; . . . 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 . . ."**

Here we are taught the dangers confronting all believers lest they lose the liberty which they have in Christ. He has cancelled the bondage of the law. We must not therefore become entangled in anything that would lead us away from Christ and our privileges in Him.

PAUL AND SABBATH

It is most interesting to notice that in Paul's fourteen letters to the churches, he mentions the Sabbath but once in Colossians 2:14-16. Here, as we have seen, he proved that the Sabbath was abolished. If the Sabbath was binding on Christians why would not Paul say so?

Paul himself observed the Sabbath until such a time as he turned unto the Gentiles completely. Before Acts 18 the Sabbath is mentioned eight times because Paul visited the Jews first on their Sabbath Day. But in Acts 18:4-6 Paul's ministry was settled in relation to the Gentiles: **"And (Paul) reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will**

go unto the Gentiles."

From this time forward Paul only mentioned the Sabbath once (Col. 2:14-16) to show that it was abolished. After that period the other apostles likewise met with the Christians on THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

THE FIRST DAY

The first day of the week is the important day for New Testament Christians. Let us notice several things that happened on this day:

1. On Sunday Jesus arose from the grave (Mark 16:9).
2. On Sunday Jesus met to worship with His disciples again and again (Mark 16:9-11; Matt. 28:8-10; Luke 24:34; John 20:19-23).
3. On Sunday Jesus first imparted the Holy Spirit to the disciples (John 20:22).
4. On Sunday He first commissioned them to preach the gospel to all the world (John 20:21; Mark 16:9-15).
5. On Sunday Jesus ascended to His Father **"and by His own blood"** which He presented to God as our Great High Priest, He obtained eternal redemption for us" (John 20:1-17 cf. Heb. 9:12).
6. On Sunday the prophecy concerning Pentecost was fulfilled when the Holy Spirit came to be the Comforter, Guide, Teacher and Divine Power of the Church" (Acts Chapter 2).
7. It was upon the first day of the week that the Bible was completed with the Book of Revelation (Rev. 1:10-11).

SUNDAY — WORSHIP DAY

In the early church Sunday was the day of worship for believers. In Acts 20:6,7 we are given an account of one of the early church services: **"And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."**

Another passage is 1 Corinthians 16:1,2: **"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches**

of Galatia, even so do ye. UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him . . ." Here is another picture of the early church services: they had an offering.

As far as the New Testament is concerned there is just one day to come together to worship the Lord and that is Sunday, the first day of the week. This is truly the day to honor our risen Lord.

4. WHO CHANGED THE DAY?

The Lord's Day is an important day. I confess that I incline definitely toward esteeming it a special day or a special privilege day. I do not believe it is right to do anything and everything on the Lord's Day. **"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient"** (1 Cor. 6:12).

So-called "Sabbath-keeping" however, is not of God. We do not try to "keep" the Sabbath because that is legalism—it is law-works which never have and never will save any one or keep them saved.

God's Word says: **"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law** (keeping the Sabbath), **but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law** (keeping the Sabbath): **for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified"** (Gal. 2:16). **"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law** (keeping the Sabbath), **then Christ is dead in vain"** (Gal. 2:21).

In Hebrews 4:8-11 we read: **"For if Jesus had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest** (or a Sabbath keeping) **to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, . . ."**

When God finished creating the world He rested on the seventh day from all His works. To commemorate His finished work of creation God established the seventh-day sabbath. When Christ came and finished the greater work of redemption by His resurrection from the dead, He too entered into rest from His works as God did from His. Therefore ANOTHER DAY is spoken of—the first day of the week—the day Christ entered into His rest. **"There remaineth therefore a rest** (Sabbath keeping) **for the**

people of God."

We worship God on the first day of the week because of a dark day when by faith we saw a form, even the Son of God, on a cruel Cross. We heard Him cry, "It is finished." We lingered there three days and three nights, and then heard the triumphant word of the angels, "He is risen." All this with childlike faith we believed and our hearts leaped as we felt the curse, the shackles, the bondage of the law (that we could never keep), roll from our burdened souls. Then, from grateful hearts, we felt that this day, the first day of the week, must be above all others. It was the day that Christ arose—a day, not of impossible legalism and bondage but of rest and gladness, a day to seek His courts, to worship and serve Him.

We are told from many sources of those who "keep" the Sabbath that it was Emperor Constantine (and the Roman Catholic Church) who changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. They say, this change occurred in A.D. 321. The implication is that, until that date the Sabbath had been observed by Christians on Saturday, the Jewish day of rest. This is entirely contrary to fact. Many writers prove that the early Christians always remembered the Lord on the Lord's Day and not on the Saturday Sabbath day.

First of all, we quote Eusebius, the greatest historian of the apostolic Church, who wrote in A.D. 315: "The churches throughout the world observe the practice that has prevailed from Apostolic tradition until the present time, so that it would not be proper to terminate our fast on any other day but the Resurrection Day of our Saviour. Hence there were synods and convocations of our bishops upon this question, and all unanimously drew up an ecclesiastical decree which they communicated to all churches in all places—that the mystery of the Lord's resurrection should be celebrated on no other than the Lord's Day" —*Ecclesiastical History, Book 1, Chap. 4.*

By these remarks of Eusebius we are shown (1) what the historian of the first three centuries of Christianity knew as to the day observed, and the practice of its observance; and (2) the spiritual significance of the Lord's Day in contrast with the Jewish Sabbath.

Going back a little further, the Council of Laodicea in A.D. 314 declared: "Christians ought to prefer the Lord's Day before the Jewish Sabbath, and rest therein from labour." —*Canon 7.*

Still receding in the annals of history, we read the remark of Cyprian, A.D. 253: "The Lord's Day is both the first and the eighth day of the week." —*Epistle 58: sec. 4.*

Perhaps the greatest controversialist of the Christian Church before the issue of Constantine's Edict was Tertullian. There is no possibility of evading the fact that the Lord's Day was the Christian Sabbath of the Church in Tertullian's time, for in A.D. 200 he wrote: "The Lord's Day is the Holy Day of the Christian Church. Though we share with the sun-worshippers the observance of Sunday, we are not apprehensive lest we seem to be heathen. We celebrate the day after Sabbath in distinction of those who call that day their Sabbath." *Answer to the Jews, Chap. 4.*

A little before Tertullian, we have the explicit statement of Clement of Alexandria, A.D. 168, who declared: "The old seventh day has become nothing more than a working day. The enlightened Christian, when he has fully observed that which is the Lord's Day according to the Gospel, keeps that day the commandment, when he casts away low worldly thought and lays hold of that which is spiritual and enlightened, glorifying in this the Resurrection of the Lord." —*Clement, Book VII, Chap. 12.*

Finally, a writer who signs himself "J.A.B." has this to say: "Man under the law was man under trial by God and this trial ended, not by his proving that he could obey God and keep His commandments, but by murdering His Son. The very ones who boasted in their law-keeping were those who said of Christ: 'This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him.' And they did. They were seventh-day Sabbath keepers, too, and very strict ones, yet without one twinge of conscience they could make bold to keep it with their Messiah, whom they had just murdered, lying in the tomb. Would any celebrate the seventh-day Sabbath? Let them remember, then, that they do so in company with those who were Christ's betrayers and murderers (Acts 7:52). Let them remember also that they do so with Christ in the grave, for He never rose on the Sabbath day. If we have only the seventh-day and no other, there is no salvation for us. This is a very serious matter, surely. On the seventh day we have only a dead Christ, and God's Word tells us that "if Christ be not raised . . . ye are yet in your sins."

Nothing is more imperative than that we should, and must, have another day. The great resurrection morn must break. The glorious first day of the week must dawn with its sun that shall never set. Without this day, the first day of the week, sin, death, and Satan have won the victory; God's throne has tottered and fallen to the earth, and Heaven is no more. Thank God, this could never be.

The Seventh-Day Adventists want to know of us: "Who changed the day?" They might have proposed a more difficult

question. The day itself remains where it is. God Himself has brought in another day. It is now no longer the seventh day, but the day after, the eighth day, or first day of the week, the Lord's Day, the day in which God manifested His omnipotence and wrought salvation.

Which day shall we celebrate? In the nature of things, we cannot have both. Shall we keep the seventh-day Sabbath on which Christ lay in the grave, humanly speaking vanquished, our salvation hovering in the balance? Or shall we keep the eighth day, the first day of the week, the glorious day of resurrection when Christ, who died for us, arose triumphant o'er the grave, and won for us the pardon, the peace, and everlasting life which no other day ever could have done? It is idle to ask such a question as this of those who know or love their Saviour. The Jew may still make a show of keeping Saturday, the seventh-day Sabbath, if he will; and the Judaizing teachers of Christendom, with their deceived followers, may join them. The true believing Christian of this dispensation is not a Jew, nor is he subject to any form of Jewish regime. The day he celebrates, therefore, is not the seventh-day Sabbath, but the Lord's Day, the first day of the week. This is the day that the apostles kept and observed, together with the early Christians. The seventh-day Sabbath belongs to the old order of things under the past Jewish economy. For the Christian, "old things have passed away; behold all things have become new."

Reader, if you want the shadows, the gloom, and the darkness, with the thunder, the lightning, and the storm crashing around you, go back to Sinai and the law, and live there. On the other hand, if you would have the love, the joy, the peace, the pardon, and the blessed sunshine of the sovereign mercy and saving grace of God, come to the place called "Calvary", where Christ died to save you, and live, henceforth, forever there. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

With all this we concur, and conclude with a hearty "Amen."

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