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**Proof That Christ the Giver of Rest,  
Is the Christian's Sabbath**

**Confusion Regarding the Sabbath**

One of the most important subjects in the Bible is that of the Sabbath Day. There is much confusion in the minds of people everywhere on this subject. Some call Sunday the Sabbath Day, while others consider Saturday the Sabbath. We would like to answer the question, "Which day is the Sabbath?"

**Sabbath Day an Old Testament Institution**

Genesis 2:2, 3 declares that on the seventh

day God ended His work which He had created, and that He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.

### **Sabbath Day Given to Israel**

The Sabbath Day was first given to Israel in connection with the manna even before the law was given on Mount Sinai. The Lord said to Moses:

How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath therefore, He giveth you on the sixth day the bread for two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day (Exodus 16:28-30).

### **Sabbath—Day of Rest**

Thus we see these people had to rest on the seventh day and could not leave their houses. In the New Testament we read of a "sabbath day's journey." Some dictionaries say it was half a mile. So if people are going to

keep the Sabbath Day, they must practically stay at home and rest.

### **Scripture Regarding Sabbath Day**

A very important passage of Scripture regarding the Sabbath Day is that which is found in Exodus 31:12-17:

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 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. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. 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: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.

### **Important Details**

Let us summarize the teachings of these verses:

Verse 13:

1. The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath. (See also v. 16.)
2. "My sabbaths shall ye keep" includes all Sabbaths.
3. "It [the Sabbath] is a sign between Me and the children of Israel" throughout their generations.

Verse 14:

1. The Sabbath Day is holy.
2. Everyone that defiles it shall surely be put to death.
3. Whosoever does any work therein shall be cut off.

Verse 15:

1. Whosoever does any work in the Sabbath shall surely be cut off.

Verse 17:

1. "It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever."

### **Penalty for Sabbath Breakers**

Three times in these verses the penalty of death is mentioned. In Numbers 15 a man was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath and was put to death.

And the Lord said unto Moses, the man shall be surely put to death. All the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones and he died, as the Lord commanded Moses (Numbers 15:32-36).

This penalty of death for not keeping the Sabbath Day has never been abrogated if people are under the law and are keeping the seventh day Sabbath.

### *Sabbath Is a Sign*

Twice in the verses quoted from Exodus 31 God said, "It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever." A sign generally points forward to something. There are at least three signs given to Israel that have been fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. First, on the night of the Passover the blood was a token or a sign (Exodus 12:13, R. V.). Next, as we have just noticed, the Sabbath Day was a sign. In the third place, the virgin birth of Christ was to be a sign to Israel (Isaiah 7:14). All of these signs pointed forward to Christ, the coming Saviour: the blood sacrifices of the Old Testament are called "shadows of good things to come" (Hebrews 10:1); the sabbaths, which definitely include the seventh day (Exodus 31:13), are "a shadow of things to come" (Colossians 2:17); and finally, Isaiah's sign of the virgin was fulfilled when Mary, the virgin, gave birth to the Saviour of the world (Luke 1:31; 2:7).

### *Christ the Day in Prophecy*

Another very interesting prophecy which foretells the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ

by Israel and also calls Him "the day that the Lord has made" might well be noticed:

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:22-24).

Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ is now the "Sabbath Rest" of His people. Who else could have said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:28, 29).

### *The First Day of the Week*

In Matthew 28:1 we read that it was the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week that the two Marys came to the sepulcher. Thus we see the first day of the week follows the Sabbath, or comes at the end of the Sabbath Day.



The twentieth chapter of John records that it was on the first day of the week that Jesus appeared to His disciples in the upper room; and again, eight days later, He appeared the second time. The first day and the eighth day are interchangeable.

The New Testament first day of the week was a day of spiritual activity. On that day the disciples came together to break bread, according to Acts 20:8; and on that day the Church at Corinth set aside their offering for the Lord (I Corinthians 16:2).

The early Christians gladly met on the first day of the week to worship and serve God. Every spiritual Christian will be glad to gather with other Christians to do the same. We are thankful the government of the United States has set aside the first day of the week for this purpose.

### ***Difference Between Days***

The main difference between the Old Testament seventh day and the New Testament first day of the week is that the seventh day Sabbath, which was given to Israel, was a com-

pulsory day of rest with the penalty of death for violaters of the law, while Christians are permitted to meet any day to carry on their worship; should circumstances make it necessary to worship on a day other than the first day of the week, it would not be contrary to Scripture. Note the following verses:

One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. 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 (Romans 14:5, 6).

So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another (Romans 14:12, 13). 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 (Colossians 2:16).

### ***One Commandment Omitted in New Testament***

Nowhere in the New Testament are Chris-

tians commanded to keep the Sabbath Day or the Lord's Day—or the first day of the week. This would not be according to the spirit of grace.

It is significant to note that nine of the Ten Commandments (especially those containing principles of righteousness) are mentioned in some form in the New Testament; but the fourth commandment, which was a sign to Israel, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy," is not mentioned. The Lord Jesus, who is the fulfillment of the Sabbath says instead, "Remember Me" (I Corinthians 11:25). He is to have the pre-eminence now and not the Sabbath Day (Colossians 1:18). He is the rest that remaineth, in the words of Hebrews 4:9. This word "rest" means "sabbath keeping." Those who trust the Lord Jesus Christ have rest from the first day they trust Him and throughout eternity.

#### **Four Rests in Hebrews 4**

The fourth chapter of Hebrews gives a sort of summary of "sabbath keeping." God rested on the seventh day (v. 4); Joshua failed to give Israel rest (v. 8); David didn't have rest in his

day (vv. 7, 8); and then verse 10 gives the key which unlocks the door to rest:

For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His (Hebrews 4:10).

#### **God Rests in His Son**

The Father hath ceased from His own works twice—the first time was after creation when He created on the seventh day, which rest was broken when sin entered (Genesis 3). There He started the work of redemption. He made coats for Adam and Eve from animals' skins. Then He gave the blood sacrifices which picture the Lamb of God who was to come into the world (John 1:29). Next He gave signs to Israel telling them a Person would be the "sabbath rest."

Finally, Christ did come and told the story of His Father's work in a few words: "My Father worketh hitherto and I work" (John 5:17). The Father's work "hitherto" is done. He now rests in His Son and wants us to rest in Him also. In view of the cross Christ said to His Father, "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have

finished the work Thou gavest Me to do" (John 17:4).

### ***We Rest in Christ***

We are to rest in Christ's finished work and thus cease from our own works as did the Father.

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "The Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" (Mark 2:28). He made man and also made the Sabbath for man; but He is Lord. Israel had the Sabbath Day; Christians have the Lord Himself. Does the reader have this rest in Christ which He stands ready to give? "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:28, 29).

—T. B. Gilbert



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