



# **REASONS TO OBSERVE THE SABBATH**

Why the seventh day of the week (Sabbath) remains holy?  
Why it is observed by God's people under the New Covenant?  
Discover it reading this commentary.

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## Five Reasons to Observe the Sabbath

Why observe the Sabbath, seventh day of the week as day of rest? Why is it that the few people who keep it do not cease from observing it? Why is it that a small minority of people do the opposite of what two billion Christians around the world do? Why is it that this minority will not accept that Christians have to observe Sunday holy rather than the Sabbath? It seems as if keeping the Sabbath instead of Sunday is obstinate.

Yes, this and much more is said when the Sabbath is mentioned. People say the Sabbath was a day of rest for the Jewish people and the day of rest for Christians is now Sunday. Others go as far as saying that Sabbath keepers are condemned.

A lot of paper and ink is used for printing literature justifying why Christians keep Sunday holy. Even historical records, from the post-apostolic church, clearly indicate that Sunday has been the day to observe. The Church's fathers agree that Sunday is the day of the Lord.

Now, if it is true that the Sabbath is not for Christians as constantly declared, it seems unnecessary to keep reminding people that Sunday is the day of rest, specially since two billion people already observe it. It makes no sense.

Behind the emphasis given to validate the first day of the week, and behind all those declarations that confirm it, it is possible that a great truth is hidden, one that cannot be denied or avoided because our common sense indicates that the Sabbath, under the New Covenant, is still applicable, and any argument to make it null is futile. God, through His Word constantly speaks to our conscience declaring the relevance of the day of rest He established since the beginning.

If Sunday is the day of rest, then, why is there a constant need to prove that this is so? If millions of people observe it, why is it necessary to speak against the Sabbath? Because if Sunday is clearly revealed in the New Testament as the day of rest for Christians, there would not be a need for propaganda; common sense would lead us to believe that there is no other day to keep holy; and even if there are people who do not share this idea, they are minority, and no attention should be paid to them.

It seems like all attacks against the Sabbath and Sabbath keepers are never satisfactory or complete. Furthermore, it seems that these attacks are not elaborated and directed to Sabbath and Sabbath keepers but to support the position which Christians clearly proclaim they have decided to believe.

So, not being a secret that Sunday is observed by a vast majority, the following reasons give a glimpse why keeping the Sabbath is something that cannot be ignored. The reader is invited to read and meditate with respect to the discussion of the following considerations. Please, read and examine what is written; only by doing so the reader can know whether or not the Sabbath was abolished by Jesus Christ's Crucifixion, or if it is still applicable to the children of God in the New Covenant.

### First Reason

*"But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither*

*on the Sabbath day..." (Matthew 24:20).*

On a certain occasion the disciples were staring at the city of Jerusalem, marveling about its beauty. For them, as for all Jews, this city was special because God had given it to them: a very good reason to be proud.

The disciples were expecting our Lord Jesus, who was standing beside them, to agree or acknowledge what they were saying, to their surprise, the Lord's answer was not what they expected. He said:

*"See ye not all this things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown out" (Matthew 24:2).*

Without any doubt His answer surprised them and immediately they started asking each other the meaning of His words and of their fulfillment. Seeing their wondering, Jesus declared to them what would happen to the city in a near future. Thus, the disciples were aware of the coming destruction that just few decades ahead would come into effect.

Many people have read Matthew chapter 24 in more than one occasion. All of them agree that the destruction of Jerusalem happened in 70 A. D. However, there is one particular verse in this chapter that many people have not paid enough attention to or simply have ignored, we are talking about verse 20. We will spend a few minutes studying it:

People who live in countries where winter is very cold, would know the meaning of Jesus' words when He told His disciples: *"But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter..."*

As some of us may know, when temperatures in tropical countries drop it still does not get as cold as it does in countries where instead of rain it snows. Nowadays, even though the houses we live in have furnace systems to keep us warm in winter, in fact, the cold temperature remains outside. Try to imagine the people in biblical times that did not have today's commodities: What would winter time have been like almost two thousand years ago? Verily, only by experiencing the coldness of winter one can understand why Jesus recommended His disciples to pray so that their flight would not have to be during that time of the year.

In this same verse, Jesus says: *"But pray that your flight be not...on the Sabbath day"*. He was recommending His disciples also to pray so that God may have mercy upon them so their flight from the coming destruction of Jerusalem would not be on the Sabbath day. You may ask: why such a recommendation? If we go back to the Ten Commandments in Exodus chapter 20, the fourth commandment is regarded to keep the Sabbath holy.

Now, pay attention to the following: When Jesus told this to His disciples, it was the year 30 A. D., just prior to His death. The fulfillment of His words came in the year 70 A. D., that is 40 years later. This clearly shows and states that according to our Lord, forty years later after His death, the Sabbath continued to be in observance by His people. Think about this: If (as is declared by most Christians) with His resurrection He was going to abrogate the observance of the Sabbath day, then, why recommend His disciples to pray that their flight would not be on Sabbath? If the popular argument was right when saying that with the Lord's resurrection the Sabbath was abolished, then the following question is: Why did Jesus recommend His disciples to pray

that their flight would not be on a Sabbath day? The situation is crystal-clear: Jesus did not annul the Sabbath. For Him, even after His resurrection the Sabbath would still be the Lord's day. The popular belief is that Sunday is the Lord's day because Jesus resurrected on that day, but, doesn't this popular belief clearly contradict the recommendations He gave to His disciples? Because the fact that billions of Christians keep Sunday instead of the Sabbath, does not mean God agrees with them. To say that after the Lord's resurrection the disciples kept Sunday instead of the Sabbath does not have any biblical foundation, because as Matthew chapter 24 shows, according our Lord they continued observing the Sabbath.

We would be contradicting, or even challenging the words spoken by the Lord if we argue that "His resurrection on Sunday" (as unfortunately is believed) terminated the observance of the Sabbath, simply because that great event did not change anything about the observance of the Fourth Commandment.

### Second Reason

*"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..."* (Matthew 28:20).

After reading the above verse, we can easily see that the disciples were told to teach what the Master taught them. Could there be any possibility that they preached something different than what the Lord taught them? The immediately answer is NO. Every Bible reader agrees that the disciples' mission was to teach to all nations exactly what they learned from the Son of God. Surely no one would even think the disciples taught something strange or different than what the Lord taught them. If we all agree about this, we would ask the following questions: Did Jesus teach them the annulment of the Sabbath? Did Jesus teach them that after His resurrection the Sabbath would no longer be the Lord's day? Did He teach them that His resurrection would mark the beginning of the keeping of a new day? Of course NOT! Where does it say in the New Testament that the disciples taught the annulment of the Sabbath? Or, Where in the New Testament do we find the disciples establishing the first day of the week (Sunday) as the Lord's Day? Because if (as it is said) the disciples kept the first day of the week instead of the Sabbath in obedience to their Lord, then there has to be at least one verse in the New Testament to corroborate where the disciples established Sunday as the new day to observe. The truly fact is that there is none. There is not even one verse. The author of a book called: *"Why do we keep Sunday"* (Baptist Publishing House), says the change of the Sabbath for Sunday was "automatically" done (?). The Scriptures never talk about any "automatisms".

If we firmly recognize that the disciples preached and taught what the Lord Jesus taught them, we understand that He did not teach the annulment of the Sabbath. Consequently, try to find a clue is useless, because there is none. The annulment of the Sabbath should not be searched in the New Testament. That search should be done in the complex history of the Church. Whoever reads the New Testament can easily find the Lord talking about the Sabbath as being valid before and after His death as proven by Matthew 24:20 already discussed.

To validate the observance of Sunday as the Lord's day, usually are mentioned some verses found in the New Testament. Notoriously, those verses do not even suggest any substitution of the Sabbath at all by the apostles. Surely, the Sabbath was the day they observed although nowadays without any biblical support, Sunday is observed. It is very important to note that the Christian Religion keep Sunday as the day of rest not in imitation to the disciples, but just by interpreting their activities on Sunday as a support to validate the change. It is vague to think the apostolic activities on the first day of the week were oriented to suggest any change of the resting day. The church of the first century never knew a different day of rest than the Sabbath.

If because the apostle Paul developed some activities during the first day of the week (some of them collecting offerings for the poor in Jerusalem), those activities are taken as a support to conclude that the apostles keep it holy, then it is also necessary to accept the Feast of Pentecost as a celebration day for Christians. Paul mentions the festivity and clearly emphasize his urgency to arrive in Jerusalem on time for the celebration.

Acts 2 clearly show the whole church gathered (disciples included) involved in preaching the message in Pentecost.

Acts 18:21. Paul hastened, if possible for him to be at Jerusalem for Pentecost.

Acts 28:21. The apostle Paul considered necessary to be at Jerusalem Pentecost.

Now, if this feast is mentioned in the New Testament, does it mean that Paul celebrated it? Surely the answer is NO. The same happens with the first day of the week, because it is mentioned several times, it does not mean the disciples kept it holy instead of the Sabbath.

### Third Reason

*"And He said unto them: the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath"* (Mark 2:27-28).

These two verses show some aspects that have to be taken into account: Firstly: Jesus said that the Sabbath was made because of man. Carefully observe: Jesus did not say the Sabbath (Saturday) was made because of the Jewish people, but because of man.

This means that the keeping of the Sabbath is not exclusively for Jews but for all humanity. The Sabbath will continue being valid for as long as there are men on Earth. Curiously, one can also see that women were also made for men (1 Corinthians 11:9), but surely, no one thinks that women were made because of Jews.

Secondly: Jesus declares himself to be Lord of the Sabbath, not Lord of the first day of the week. Consequently, to attribute sanctity to a day the Lord never declared to be holy, is only a human decision.

If Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever as Hebrews 13:8 declares, then, He was, He is, and He will continue to be Lord of the Sabbath. He never changes the mind as popularly thought. Remarkably, according to the Holy

Scripture, Jesus Christ continues as Lord of the Sabbath, and according to the Christian Religion He is now Lord of the first day of the week.

#### Fourth Reason

“The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Catholic Church” (Father Segur. *“Plain Talk About Protestantism”*. P. 213).

It is curious that within the Roman Catholic theologians, the observance of the Sabbath is still in force, but popular Theology does the opposite and defends something inexistent in the Bible, enforcing the observance of a day kept holy only for ancient heathen who honored their god sun, and attributing our Lord to be the author of such sanctification.

No Christian historian ignores that keeping Sunday as holy was the result of disputes between the Church of the Second Century and Jewish authorities. The intolerance between both sides created deep doctrinal controversy whose final result, among others, was to have different holy days.

“The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day [of worship] from Saturday to Sunday... The Christian Sabbath is therefore to this day the acknowledge offspring of the Catholic Church, as Spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world” (Editorial, *The Catholic Mirror* [Baltimore], September 23, 1893).

“You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The scriptures enforces the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify”. (Cardinal Gibbons [for many years head of the Catholic Church in America], *“The Faith of our Fathers”*, p. 89. 92nd ed., rev., Baltimore. John Murphy Company)

“We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea, transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday”. (*Convert’s Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*).

It does not matter how much is said, or how many people try to find biblical arguments to validate Sunday as the Lord’s day. The fact of the matter is that the Bible only points out to the Sabbath as the day which God sanctified. The Catholic Church declares the change was made by its “authority” more than one thousand years before the existence of the Protestantism, which is true. Remarkably, also declares its authority weights over Protestantism, which is true since most believings sustained by protestant churches were established by the Church. Although Protestant churches reject that authority, evidently the Church is right.

Nowadays Protestant churches constantly argue that Sunday is the Lord’s day, which is an honor they pay not to Christ but to the Church’s decision.

#### Fifth Reason

“Also the sons of strangers, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people” (Isaiah 56:6-7).

With good reason a great number of theologians, if not all of them, call Isaiah the “evangelical prophet”. The reasons are well known since Isaiah is the only prophet in the Old Testament that talks about our Lord Jesus Christ using more description. He speaks of His suffering while on Earth. Also describes lively how His coming Kingdom will be like.

Besides Isaiah there is no other prophet that would exactly mention how pleased God is when His people keep the Sabbath (Isaiah 58:13-14A). Like Isaiah there is no other prophet that clearly mentions how men of all races, of all times and of all places on Earth are included in this prophecy for keeping the Sabbath.

It is well known that when Israel was the exclusive people of God the entrance to the Temple was totally prohibited to anyone except to them. However, things would not remain that way forever, time would come when the scheme would entirely change to embrace the whole mankind. That started to become a reality when our Saviour came to Earth to die for the humans of all times.

Isaiah 56:6-7 is part of that new scheme, and it is to come. Clearly the Sabbath will be enjoyed by all, not for Jews only.

No holy text suggests or points out to Sunday as to be observed in Christ’s Kingdom, Sabbath is the day.

By paying close attention to verse 6, it can be seen that the divine approval on those who will take pleasure on His holy mountain and be joyful in His house of prayer, will be those that keep the Sabbath and obey God’s covenant, not on those who observe Sunday.

Bible students know that according to the Scripture, God speaks about the Sabbath as His special day, separated from the other days of the week, you can verify it reading Isaiah 58:13-14.

The covenant which Isaiah talks about, is the same found in Jeremiah 31:31-32, which was sealed by Jesus Christ, whose law would not ever again be written on two stones but in the hearts of the redeemed. AMEN.

In conclusion: According to Mark 2:27-28 Sabbath is the Lord’s day. Neither Jesus nor His disciples ever suggested change. They obeyed God’s will. For them, the first day of the week was simply that: the first day of the week, with no sanctification and without any reason to keep it holy instead of the Sabbath.

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