

SABBATH OR SUNDAY?

"This is the day which Jehovah hath made; We will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalms 118:24). To the diligent student of God's word, this verse is recognized as a prophecy pertaining to the first day of the week, Sunday. The context bears this out, as we see Christ portrayed within this Psalm (verse 22). Note also that as surely as Christ is the "head of the corner" by God's doing, so also is this "day" God's doing, both of which are "marvelous in our eyes." Just what does the Bible teach regarding the Sabbath Day? Is it to be "kept holy" (observed) today? Where does Sunday enter into the observance by God's people for worship? Is Sunday the "Christian Sabbath"? These are all answered in Scripture and we shall attempt to answer them in this article.

Those who would contend that we are still bound to the Sabbath Day law fail to observe a number of factors regarding this question. First, the Sabbath was never given to all people, nor was it ever given to Christians. It was first introduced to Israel under Moses while God's people were in the wilderness. Having left Egypt two and a half months previously (Exodus 16), Israel did not even receive this as a law for nearly a month subsequent to this introduction (Exodus 20:8ff). Thus, the Sabbath observance was for Israel and for them alone (see Exodus 31:13-17; Deuteronomy 5:2-3,15). Three times "the children of Israel" are the ones to whom the Lord applied this law.

Having ignored this distinction between Israel and all others, some are still determined to bind the Sabbath on themselves and others today. They allege that there were two laws given at Sinai: one was ceremonial (the Law of Moses) and the other was perpetual (the Law of God). Although there are certain aspects or principles of the Law which are eternal, the law regarding the Sabbath is certainly **not** one of them. Now the question is: "What is the

difference between the Law of Moses and the Law of God?" This is the distinction Sabbatarians make. The Bible makes no such distinction. With Paul we ask, "What saith the Scripture" (Romans 4:3).

Ezra, the ready scribe of God, was skilled in the Law of Moses (Ezra 7:6). This same one was appointed by the people to read from this book of the Law of Moses (Nehemiah 8:1). This he did (Nehemiah 8:8) day by day from the book of the Law of God (Nehemiah 8:18) for seven days. The Bible makes no distinction between the Law of Moses and the Law of God.

When Jesus was born of the virgin, he was circumcised and brought before the Lord according to the Law of Moses (Luke 2:22). Sacrifices were made for him and Mary's purification according to the Law of the Lord (Luke 2:23-24). Now, which law was it? Was it the Law of Moses or the Law of the Lord? **Answer:** there is no distinction.

When Paul wrote to the Gentile Christians of Ephesus, he told them "But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in the flesh the enmity, *even the law of commandments contained in ordinances*; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Ephesians 2:13-16). Friends, Paul included everything in the Old Testament when he spoke of "law of commandments" and "ordinances." That includes the Sabbath Law (which was for the Jews only anyway) also.

Why do we call the Old Testament "Old"? Hear the word of the Lord: "But now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better

promises. For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, That I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (Hebrews 8:6-8). Again, "In that he saith, A new *covenant* he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away" (Hebrews 8:13). The first covenant (testament) is gone and we now live and walk by "a new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20).

Upon what day do God's people today worship? The first day of the week. Is this called "Sunday" in the Bible? No, but it is identified as "the Lord's day" in Revelation 1:10. This is in answer to the prophecy found in the Psalm at the beginning of this article. Remember, Jeremiah said something new was coming (Jeremiah 31:31-34). The writer of Hebrews quoted from this text twice. Jesus was resurrected upon the first day of the week. The church began on the first day of the week. Paul refers to the Lord's table, supper, death and body (1 Corinthians chapters 11,12). All these things are attended, remembered, observed, eaten and proclaimed upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1-2). Why then is it difficult to accept the fact that John spoke of the first day (Sunday) when he wrote the words "the Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10)?

Since "the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17), and if I attempt to justify my religion by the Law of Moses, Paul would tell me: "Ye are severed from Christ, ye would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace" (Galatians 5:4). So is everyone who would seek to go back to the rudimentary things, rather than cling to Christ and His law regarding the first day of the week.

RAGER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

SUNDAY MORNING	BIBLE STUDY	9:30 A.M.
	WORSHIP	10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY EVENING	WORSHIP	6:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY	BIBLE STUDY	7:30 P.M.
Preachers:	Robin W. Haley	614-751-1082
	James Grayson	614-409-0941

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Weekly Budget: \$1360.00

Wednesday's Wisdom:

"Jesus lived and died to fulfill the law and bring us to salvation!" Austin Truss

All the ladies are kindly invited to come to Cheryl Haley's home on Tuesday, June 23 at 7:00 pm for a Bible study presentation, and to enjoy one another's company.

Cheryl has been invited by the ladies of the Kiev church of Christ to come to them and speak on this year's Ladies Seminar, hosted by the Kiev church and is open for ladies from all over Ukraine. She will be presenting a lesson on "How women can help their husbands to be strong leaders in the Lord's church."

Please come and have some fellowship, some good conversation, and to encourage one another in this vital, Biblical topic.