

THE SABBATH DAY

Important Preliminary Remarks

A growing number of people are coming to learn why it is that in most English translations of the Bible many times we find the terms “the LORD” and “GOD” printed with all capitals, as seen here, while in other instances we find these titles printed with only the first letters capitalized, as “Lord”, “the Lord”, and “God”. In these later instances such titles are being used as translations of Hebrew (or Greek) terms which basically mean what we mean by these English terms. However, in the nearly 7,000 instances in which we find these titles printed as “the LORD” and “GOD” these are not translations of any Hebrew (or Greek) terms meaning “Lord” or “God”. They are merely substitutions for the Creator’s personal name as He made it known to His people, by which name, He said to Moses, He wants to be remembered forever. (Ex. 3:15) This name, as brought over into English by the vast majority of scholars, is “Yahweh”. When we read Isaiah 42:8 with this name restored, instead of, “I am the LORD that is my name...” (as in the King James, etc.) we read, “I am Yahweh, that is my name...”. The translators of the 1901 American Standard Version sought to restore this name in the Bible. However, they used “Jehovah”, which has since come to be known to be erroneous, as most dictionaries and encyclopedia’s now state. There are a fair number of translations that do have this name in the places it exists in the Hebrew scriptures. Two such are *Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible* and *The Jerusalem Bible*. My purpose here is to inform the reader not already familiar with His name that when I print “Yahweh” I am referring to our Creator.

I also use the Savior’s name as given to Him at His birth. As all Bible scholars know that name is the same as the one familiar to us as “Joshua”. In Hebrew there is no “J”, but a “Y” instead. Also, thorough investigation shows that the first vowel was then pronounced as “ah” (not “eh” as in Modern Hebrew). We write that name as “Yahshua”, meaning “Yahweh-Savior”. Thus, in this writing “Yahshua” is used of our Savior, who is commonly called “Jesus”.¹

INTRODUCTION

In Isaiah 58:13 Yahweh, our God, calls the Sabbath day, “My holy day.” The question we do well to ask is this: Is the Sabbath still His “holy day”, or has He now set it aside? Has He replaced it with some other day? Note that He speaks of His holy day – not merely of a principle of keeping just any day of personal, or the church’s, choice as a day of rest and special worship.

When I was twelve years old, as a believer in Yahshua the Messiah, I became introduced to the idea that the seventh day of the week, Saturday², is the Sabbath day spoken of in the Ten Commandments. When I asked my fundamentalist pastor about this matter he agreed that the seventh day of the week is indeed the Sabbath day, and that Saturday, not Sunday, is the seventh day of the week. However, when I asked him why we did not, therefore, keep it as the Sabbath day, he replied that, because we are New Testament believers and are not under the law, we do not keep any day as a Sabbath. He said we

¹ Anyone wanting to learn more on the matter of the name of Yahweh (why it became removed in the process of translation, the importance He puts upon His people knowing and using His name, etc.) is invited to contact us for free information on the *Creator’s True Name*.

² Strictly speaking, it is from Friday sunset until Saturday sunset.

merely meet on Sunday, the first day of the week, to commemorate and honor Christ's resurrection.

For many years I accepted this commonly used explanation. In my teen years, using verses from the "New Testament"³, I argued strongly against the idea that we should still keep the Sabbath Day (even in meetings of Sabbath-keeping ministers).

After studying for the ministry, while working in ministerial capacities, I continued in my stand against keeping any day holy.

It was not until I began to realize that some of the other things I had been taught were wrong, and began to pray to be led into all truth and kept from all error, that any change in this point of view took place. After having been shown many things by the leading of the Holy Spirit (over a period of years) at one point nothing new was coming. So I began to fast and pray to be shown if there was anything else that I needed to see. It was during this time of my fasting and praying about this matter that the Holy Spirit spoke to my mother (who was living in another state and had no idea what I was doing along this line). He told her to send me a tract that related to this matter of the Sabbath. "And", He said to her, "you'll see that Robert will accept this also."

Although that tract in itself did not convince me, it did get me to re-thinking and praying about the Sabbath. At that time I was also working as a mailman. While still fasting, and walking my mail route, I was thinking and praying about this when it suddenly occurred to me that when it comes to the subject of the Sabbath day it really doesn't matter whether we are still required to keep the law, or not. I began to see that the institution of Sabbath as a blessed and holy day came long before the Law of Moses was even given. It went all the way back to the time of creation, long before the law was given through Moses (and even before the fall of man and the entrance of sin into the world).

I could see that it was just like the matter of tithing. As a written law, tithing began under the Law of Moses. However, as a principle of righteousness it was known long before the written law was given. In like manner the knowledge of the Sabbath day, and its special place in the order established by Yahweh in the beginning of time, was also known before the written law. Although the writings of the apostles to the early church say nothing to the effect that New Testament believers are to tithe, most churches teach that we should give tithes and offerings.

By the same token, as I came to see, even though the apostles' writings do not repeat the actual command to "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy...", this does not mean the institution of the Sabbath day was annulled. In fact, believers, like Timothy,⁴ were told to study the scriptures (which at that time were primarily the "Old Testament")

³ Actually the "New Testament", or "New Covenant", is not that part of the Bible that men have put a title page in front of, calling it, "The New Testament". It, in fact, is not any collection of books written to replace the old rules. The "New Testament", or "New Covenant", is Yahweh's work of (1) forgiving our sins, and of (2) writing His laws in our hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit, as was promised in Jeremiah 31:33 and Ezekiel 36:26,27.

⁴ II Tim. 2:15

writings). If they did this they would clearly read of the Sabbath day and its sacredness. Timothy was told that, “All scripture is given by inspiration of Yahweh, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”⁵ The scriptures being referred to here were those of which Paul said to Timothy, “from a child you have known.” So, I repeat, he is plainly talking about the “Old Testament” which clearly teaches to keep the Sabbath Day holy.

As I entered into this new understanding and began to attempt to keep holy that which Yahweh had made holy in the beginning, He confirmed this stand by giving me a vision. I will not relate the actual vision here, but the gist of it was that I was being shown that my keeping His day Holy was to me evidence that I was one of what, in the vision, He called “Israelites indeed.”

It is very clear from a reading of what is called the “Old Testament” that when all nations of the earth had turned away from the worship of Yahweh, the true Creator, unto demonically inspired gods of their own making, Yahweh called Abraham out of the nations in order to make out of him and his seed a people who would be His special people. Later on, He made a covenant, or agreement, with Abraham’s physical descendents that if they would keep His commandments, statutes and ordinances – worshiping and serving Him only – He would be their God and they would be His people. He promised He would then bless them above all peoples of the earth and would make them “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”⁶ He specifically mentioned that He gave them His Sabbaths as a sign of their relationship together. Their keeping the Sabbath Day would show that He - Yahweh, the Creator of heaven and earth who gave that day in the beginning - was their God and they were His people.⁷ Thus the keeping of the Sabbath is integrally tied in with the worship of Yahweh, for it honors Him as the one and only true God, the Creator of heaven and earth.

Although Israel failed to keep Yahweh’s covenant, but turned away unto the worship of false gods so that He allowed their enemies to prevail against them and take them away into bondage, He promised He would one day restore them to their own land. He promised to make a new covenant - a new agreement (or “testament”) - with them. He promised that this time, instead of again writing His law upon tables of stone (where it only served to show their sinfulness, and condemn them to death), He would write His law upon their hearts by putting His Spirit (the Holy Spirit) within them. He promised that they would then indeed be His people, and He would be their God.⁸ Thus He promised that He Himself would raise them up again as a people who would be faithful unto Him by His work in them. This is the promise of the New Covenant, or New Testament. It is not a promise of eliminating His law, but of forgiving “their sins and iniquities” and writing His law “in their hearts.”

⁵ II Tim 3:16,17

⁶ Exodus 19:6

⁷ Exodus 31:13-17; Ezekiel 20:12

⁸ Jeremiah 31:31-33; Ezekiel 36:24-28

However, this promise was made only to those people. The New Covenant (or New Testament) was to be made “with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.”⁹ It was not promised to be made with the Gentiles (Heb. “goyim”, meaning the “nations”). How then do the Gentiles, those who are not the natural seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, get in on this New Covenant? A study of the writings of the apostles, especially of the apostle Paul, shows that it is by their being joined to Israel through union with Yahshua the Messiah, the King of the Jews, that the Gentiles come into the New Covenant promised to Israel. It is by being grafted, as wild olive branches, into the tame olive tree (which symbolizes Israel) that Gentile believers now become part of His people¹⁰. Thus the apostle Paul in writing to the Galatian believers, who were Gentiles by nature, uses the term “the Israel of God” as an obvious reference to all who are new creatures in Yahshua the Messiah.¹¹

If Yahweh intended that the keeping of His Sabbaths would continue to be a sign of who are His people, as I expect to show to be the case, then doing so would indeed be a sign that one is an “Israelite indeed”. In this connection it is interesting to note that the saints are described twice in the book of Revelation as being those that, “keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Yahshua the Messiah” or “the testimony of Yahshua.”¹² These are the marks of His people in the last days.

The scriptures are clear as to what is meant by “the commandments of God.” As we read in Matthew 19:17, when talking to the rich young ruler, Yahshua said, “If you would enter into life, keep the commandments.” When that young man asked “Which?”, Yahshua began quoting to him from the Ten Commandments.

We read in Matthew 7: 22,23, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” The literal Greek for “ye that work iniquity” is “you lawless ones.” So then, when we all stand before His judgement seat there will be “many” who will think they had served Him in miraculous feats in their lifetime whom He will reject because of their lawlessness – because of their setting aside of His law to do it their own way.

I don’t want to be misunderstood. I’m not saying that everyone who is not keeping the Sabbath day is, therefore, automatically lost. There is much confusion of doctrine in the Christian world due to error that was brought in early on, shortly after the death of (and some even during the lifetime of) the original apostles. (By its very existence, denominationalism clearly demonstrates there is confusion among professed believers as to what is truth.) Therefore, a person can be in error, but still have a heart of wanting to obey Yahweh. People can be in error and still be His people. If that were not so He would not say, “come out of her my people” in Revelation 18:4 when speaking of coming

⁹ Jeremiah 31:31a

¹⁰ See Romans 11:24, and request the free audio tape “Who Is A True Jew?”.

¹¹ Galatians 6:15,16

¹² Revelation 12:17; 14:12

out of what Revelation 17:5 calls “MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

“Babylon” means “confusion”, and from “Mystery Babylon The Great” much confusion has come even to those who want to follow the Lamb. However, when truth is brought to our attention we become accountable for what we do about it. Our response to it becomes an evidence of whether we are truly submitted to His Lordship or not. Only He knows what is in our hearts. Therefore, we are not to judge others as to what they really see or don’t see when a matter is presented to them. He alone knows whether a person is honestly, seriously considering a matter with a desire to obey, and follow Him at all cost, which is a mark of true discipleship.¹³ So, I repeat, we cannot judge others in such a matter. We must accept a person’s profession of faith, and of their desire to follow Him to the best of their knowledge, except as we see other, clear evidence to the contrary (such as disobedience in issues upon which there is generally no room for argument, such as adultery, drunkenness, etc.).

On the other hand, this is not to say the evidence for the Sabbath is not clear. As I expect to show, the Bible teaching about the Sabbath is very clear. It is merely that the issue has become so clouded over and hidden through many centuries of false practice and teaching in the professed Christian church as a whole, that there is more room for the possibility that those who do not accept it could be doing so with real honesty of heart. I believe this was my own case for many years. However, those ministers and parishioners who do not really want to see the truth of this (or any other) matter, but who rationalize their way out of it for personal advantage, are in danger of denying His actual Lordship in their lives while still calling Him “Lord, Lord.” I personally, firmly believe that before our Savior soon returns His people will again have the Sabbath as one of the signs that they are just that – His true people. I say “one of the signs”, because it is obvious that one can keep the Sabbath (even going overboard in the how of doing so, as did the Pharisees of Yahshua’s days on earth), and yet not be one of His own. “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: Yahweh knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Messiah depart from iniquity.” (2 Tim.2:19 wherein “iniquity” –Greek “adikia”- here means unrighteousness or “unright” ways.)

One thing is for sure: He is coming for a bride who has made herself ready, one clothed with “fine linen clean and white”, which is “the righteousness of the saints.”¹⁴ He is coming for a bride who will have “not spot or wrinkle, or any such thing”¹⁵. How can you be part of that bride who will exist as spotless at His coming if you are not walking in His commandments? We read in I John 5: 3 “For this is the love of Yahweh, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”

Those commandments have never changed, for the Holy Spirit speaking through David said in Psalm 119:152, “ Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast

¹³ Matthew 10:38-39; Luke 14:26; et al.

¹⁴ Revelation 19:7,8

¹⁵ Ephesians 5:27

founded them for ever.” Again, he said in verse 160, “Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever.” Our Lord Yahshua Himself said in Matthew 5: 18-20, “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

As I continue this writing, first, I will seek to show from the scriptures that Yahweh wants His people to keep His “holy day” – that the Sabbath is still a sign between Him and His people.

I will not deal with the writings of the so-called, early church fathers. There is absolutely no safety in depending on their writings. First of all, they do not agree on everything even among themselves. This shows that error had crept in (for if it had not they would all still have been seeing eye to eye). Not only is this true, but the writings of the original apostles (including Paul) show that apostasy was well on its way even in their own day, which was well before the writings of the so-called church fathers.¹⁶ Therefore, any writings after those of the inspired apostles must be carefully tested by the scriptures. In fact, even the writings of the apostles had to agree with the law and the prophets, for it is written in Isaiah 8:20, “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” The apostles often referred to the scriptures (the law and the prophets) in supporting their own teachings. Let’s stand by His word no matter who they are that oppose us. No man, no matter how great he appears to be, and no matter how many follow him, is above the word of Yahweh. As important as true teachers are in the body of Messiah, no man is our ultimate teacher. This is what John meant when he said in I John 2:27, “But the anointing which ye have received of him abides in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but ...the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth”

If we were dealing directly with the matter of church history, it could be shown that some were still keeping the Sabbath even as late as the time of Constantine (c. 325 A.D.). Otherwise there would have been no need to forbid the keeping of it, and to command the keeping of Sunday instead, as happened then. They who did keep the Sabbath were considered Judaizers and heretics by those in power. Yet only the word of Yahweh, not the opinions of men who wrote after the time of the apostles directly commissioned by Yahshua, can show who are the real heretics and who are the true followers of the Lamb. Let us look together at what that word plainly shows us. Then, I’ll answer objections by examining those (obscure) scriptures that have been twisted in their meaning and/or application to justify doing other than what the plain, clear scriptures show on this matter.

¹⁶ See Acts 20:28-30; II Thess.4:7; II Tim. 4:1-4; II Pet 2:1 (note “among you”, i.e., among the people to whom he was then writing); I John 2:18,19; II John 7; and Jude3,4.

THE PLAIN TEACHING OF THE SCRIPTURES

There is a great deal that could be said about the relationship of the law and grace, and related subjects. This is misunderstood by many on both sides of the issue. Some have made grace into a slippery slope of permissiveness that provides comfort for those who live in a careless, worldly manner. Others have become legalistic to the point of making salvation depend upon keeping the letter of the law. Both are preaching a gospel other than that taught by our Lord and His apostles. Both groups put their adherents in great danger. It is important to get a right understanding of what the Bible teaches about the relationship of the believer to the law of Yahweh and the righteousness taught therein.

It is certainly important to understand that salvation is not by the works of the law. Salvation is by true faith in Messiah's death for our sins, burial and resurrection, which faith (in the light of being crucified and risen together with Him) involves a total commitment of one's life. This is to be done through that method taught by the apostles: by being buried with Him (in water) for the remission of sins in His name, that you might receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (as the living Messiah coming to indwell and direct your life).¹⁷ If one truly follows this pathway, by continuing to accept what was proclaimed by immersion in His name - our own death to sin and self, and our having a totally new life in which we are to be increasing in the knowledge of Yahweh and His word - he will not miss the way. Such a person will continually be "accepted in the beloved."¹⁸

By walking in the light - the light of the gospel and "of the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh in the face of Yahshua the Messiah" - you can be certain that "the blood of Yahshua the Messiah, Yahweh's Son, is cleansing" you "from all unrighteousness."¹⁹ We are covered by His blood as we "walk in the light as He is in the light."²⁰ Walking in the light includes an earnest, honest desire to see and walk in the truth, whatever we find that to be, and whatever the cost of walking in it. This is clearly taught in the Bible as the way of the true faith.

The law serves to show man his sin, and, therefore, his need of a Savior. It shows him that his own life is not acceptable by Yahweh. The gospel tells him how to give up that life of sin and get a brand new life of righteousness in Messiah by the Holy Spirit (because of the sacrifice of Yahweh's only begotten Son to pay for our sins, and His resurrection from the dead). It tells us that by coming into Messiah we become accepted by Yahweh. But it also teaches "us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world" while looking for His coming in glory.²¹ The law is like a mirror to show us our sinfulness. Then, the gospel shows us how to get forgiveness and deliverance from it by faith in Messiah.

¹⁷ Acts 2:38,39; Rom. 6: 1-5; et al.

¹⁸ Ephesians 1:6

¹⁹ II Cor. 4:6; I John 1:7 (all verbs in I John 1:7 being present tense in the Greek manuscripts).

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Titus 2:11-13

How the Ten Commandments relate to the Law of Moses, and what place that law has in the life of the Gentile and the Jewish believer, etc., though having some bearing on the matter of the Sabbath day are really separate subjects. It is important that we understand these matters. However, knowing the truth about the Sabbath does not depend on how we understand them. As I have mentioned, and shall show from a plain and simple examination of scripture, the institution of the Sabbath preceded the giving of the law, and keeping it holy is a sign of worshipping the true Creator, Yahweh. So let's begin our examination of the scriptures.

MARK 2:27,28

We will begin with an examination of Yahshua's words as recorded in Mark 2:27,28:

“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.”

Here let us note three things pertaining to our subject: (1) the Sabbath was made, (2) it was made for, i.e., to benefit, man, and (3) Yahshua is the Lord of the Sabbath; it is His day. Let's examine this further.

First, “the Sabbath was made.” When, and how, was the Sabbath made? Scripture shows it was made by Yahweh resting for a complete day after taking six days to create the heaven and earth and all things that are therein. He did so in the presence of man, whom He had created on the sixth day, in order to set a pattern for man. He set this pattern for man to follow so that man would know to work six days, but to take a break and rest every seventh day. However, the account shows that He not only established the principle of resting one day out of every seven, but also the order of doing this on that one particular day, the seventh day. That day was made holy. That is to say, it was set apart as dedicated specifically to Yahweh. It was given to be a day devoted to His worship and to remembering Him and His creative power. It is easy to see that Satan (“ha satan” in Hebrew, meaning “the Adversary”, from which the term “Satan” comes) would seek to draw men away from keeping such a day, a day that commemorates Yahweh's creative power.

The account of the making of this day, and of the setting it apart from all other days of the week, is found in Genesis 2:1-3:

“ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. 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.”

So the plain teaching of the Bible is that the Sabbath day was made, was blessed, and was sanctified, or made holy, i.e., set apart for rest and sacred use, in the very beginning of

time, right after the creation of man, long before the law of Moses.

Adam was there. It was made for him, i.e., for his benefit. There can be no reasonable doubt whatsoever that before they fell, and no doubt even after they fell, that mankind (Adam and Eve) would have kept holy what Yahweh, their God, had blessed and made holy. To do otherwise would be the height of open rebellion. Even though man had fallen, it took a while before the human race came to such open rebellion. This knowledge of Yahweh's creation, including the matter of the Sabbath day would certainly have been passed on to other generations.

That this order of a seven-day week became a fixed matter before mankind turned completely away from the worship of Yahweh is clear from its existence in ancient society in that part of the world around which Bible events centered. We see an indication of the existence of the seven-day week pattern in the time of Noah. In Genesis 8:12 we read that when the dove came back to the ark, after Noah sent it out at the end of the great flood, he waited seven days before sending it out again. This is an indication of the seven-day week. We see from other parts of the Bible that the seven-day week was an established order in biblical times.

There are many things in the Law of Moses, which, though written there, did not have their beginning with the law. Those principles of righteousness found codified in the letter of the law actually existed before they were put into written legal form. They go back to the knowledge that man must have received in the very beginning. One example of this is tithing.²² It is clear that Abraham, and Jacob knew that to tithe was the correct order of things.

Another example of a principle of righteous conduct that is found in the law, but also found existing before the law was given, is that a man should raise up children unto his brother's name if his brother died before having children. The law put this into codified form, but the principle existed long before the law was given. We see this in the account of Onan in Genesis 38:8-10. Judah following this principle told his son Onan to marry his brother Er's widow to "raise up seed to your brother." Because the child thus born would bear his dead brother's name rather than his own, Onan "spilled" his seed "on the ground". The result was that Yahweh killed Onan.

Those who claim the keeping of the Sabbath did not begin until it was given to the children of Israel under the law show ignorance, or disregard, of the actual facts. As we have seen, (1) the Sabbath was made for man, that is, to benefit man, (2) it was made in the beginning of human history, and (3) it was at that time blessed and made holy, that is, set apart for sacred use. To say that Yahweh made the Sabbath for man – for humanity's benefit – yet did not give it to man in the beginning, but kept it hidden until giving it to a small segment of humanity, the nation of Israel, 2500 years later is totally ridiculous. Clearly, plainly, Yahweh would not have made it for man, blessed it, and made it holy in

²² Genesis 14:20 and 28:22

the beginning, but, then, have waited till some 2500 years or so to give it to man, and then only to a small segment of humanity.

The account of creation is very clear on this matter. So also is the experience of the children of Israel in the wilderness when the manna began to fall from heaven, which was about a month before the law was given at Mt. Sinai.

The manna fell only six days. The people were told to gather each day only what they could use on that day. If they gathered more and tried to keep it overnight, it bred worms and stank. However, on the sixth day they gathered twice as much so they would not have to go out and gather on the Sabbath day. In this case it did not breed worms or stink. In fact, the people appeared to know that they should gather twice as much on the sixth day even before Moses had told them what Yahweh had said to Him about it. This is seen from the fact that when the people did this the rulers of the people went to Moses to report that they had done so. Moses, who had heard from Yahweh on the matter, then told them that this was in accord with what Yahweh had said unto him (which apparently he had not yet passed on to them up to that point). Thus we see, that they kept the Sabbath before the actual giving of the law.

The point of all this is that whether you understand and accept the great value of the law, and its perpetuity as pertains to the principles of righteousness taught in it, or not, nevertheless, it should now be clear to you that the Sabbath was made, blessed, and sanctified in the very beginning, long before the law of Moses was given. Therefore, the responsibility to treat it as a holy day does not depend on the law as such. So, unless Yahweh has shown that He has removed its blessedness and sacredness, it should still be observed as a blessed and holy day.

EXODUS 20:8-11

We now come to the matter of the Sabbath commandment as given in the Ten Commandments. I have a biblical study in which I show that, although they were incorporated into the Law of Moses, the Ten Commandments are separate and distinguishable from the Law of Moses. I hope to get this put into printed form. For now we will just look at the fourth commandment as given in Exodus 20:8-11. Here we read these words spoken by Yahweh, and written by His own “finger” on tables of stone:

“ 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 Yahweh 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 Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

First, we see that the command was to remember the Sabbath day to keep it, that is that particular day of the week, holy. Next, He spells out clearly which day it is: “the seventh day”. The command is not, as some imply, a command to keep one day out of every

seven holy, any day of your choice or of the choice of “the church”, but specifically “the seventh day”. This would be a continuum from creation. Each seventh day as it arrives serves as a memorial marker of His creative acts. We have to go back no further than the time of the Savior on earth to know which day that is. He certainly knew which day that was, and would have straightened the Jewish leaders out if they were keeping the wrong day. That He didn’t do. He kept the same day as the Pharisees, even though He did not keep it in the way they expected. That day is the same one that came down from creation, and is the same one kept in modern Judaism yet today. There can be no honest question about this among informed people. It is the day that Yahweh made by Himself resting for a day after six days of creating.

This leads to the final point: the reason for keeping the Sabbath holy. The primary reason as given in this account is, “**for**” (or “because”) “in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, **wherefore** Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” In other words, once again we see that the reason for remembering to keep it holy goes all the way back to the beginning, and is founded in the fact that Yahweh blessed that particular day and made it, the seventh day of the week, holy. With all the complications that exist in our modern times, it is still our responsibility to seek to keep holy what He made holy (and to ask forgiveness wherein we fail while honestly trying).

(The account of this commandment in Deuteronomy chapter 5 appears to be either Moses’ own, inspired commentary on the matter, or some additional words spoken by Yahweh when speaking the commandment, because in verse 12 he says “Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as Yahweh thy God has commanded you.” He then emphasizes the humanitarian, sociological aspect of the Sabbath day by relating it to their own period of bondage in Egypt, during which time they most likely were not permitted to rest in the keeping of the Sabbath day. The Sabbath Day fills not only very important individual spiritual and physical needs, but an important sociological need as well.)

EXODUS 31:13,17

I have already referred to this passage of scripture. Here we see that the Sabbath becomes a sign between Yahweh and the people whom He sanctifies, or sets apart, unto Himself. When we observe Yahweh’s Sabbaths, “it”, that is, the Sabbath day, “is a sign between” us and Him that we are His people. By keeping holy that which He made holy in the beginning, as a memorial of His Creation, we make it clear whom it is that we worship and serve.

ISAIAH 56:1-8

- 1 Thus saith Yahweh, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.
- 2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.
- 3 Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to Yahweh, speak, saying, Yahweh hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.

4 For thus saith Yahweh unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to Yahweh, to serve him, and to love the name of Yahweh, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

7 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.

8 The Lord Yahweh, which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.

This passage is clearly talking about something other than the nation of Israel under the Law of Moses. It is prophetically speaking of the time when Yahweh's salvation was to come and His righteousness to be revealed. His righteousness, "the righteousness of Yahweh", is described in Romans 10:3. Also Romans 1:17 in referring to the gospel says, "For therein is the righteousness of Yahweh revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." As the entire book of Romans reveals, it is that righteousness which comes by faith in Yahshua the Messiah and the gospel. So we see very clearly, by comparing scripture with scripture, that in this prophecy (of Isaiah 56:1-8) Yahweh is speaking of a then future time, the time of the gospel age which has already begun and will continue until salvation's work is completed.

Here we find "the son of the stranger" mentioned. This term is not referring to a proselyte (one who becomes a direct member of the congregation of Israel as a national, natural people) but to one who is still a goyim, i.e., a gentile. We also read of the eunuch. According to the general understanding of Deut. 23:1 (including the Septuagint translation of that passage) the eunuch was forbidden by law to be given entrance into the congregation of Yahweh, that is, into physical Israel. Yet in this passage Yahweh is saying the time would come when both the son of the stranger, or Gentile, and the eunuch, who takes hold of His covenant to love His name, and "keeps the Sabbath from polluting it", would be highly accepted by Him. He promises them a place, and a name, even better than of "sons and daughters", i.e., better than the merely physical Israelites.

This passage is highly meaningful, and very important, when taken in the light of other scriptures. In its ultimate fulfillment it is no doubt talking about what will occur at the time of Yahshua's visible kingdom on earth, during "the millennium", just as the promises of the new covenant in Jeremiah 31:31 and Ezekiel 36:24 are. However, whether Jew or Gentile, we believe we are already recipients of the promised new covenant, as a kind of first fruits before the final fulfillment of that promise made "to the house of Israel and the house of Judah"²³. By the same token we should also accept the promises made here to "the sons of the stranger" - the Gentile.

²³ The promise of the New Covenant as found in Jer.31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36: 26-28, according to the context in each place, is clearly talking about a time when Israel would have its final re-gathering to the land.

It should certainly be clear from this passage of scripture that Yahweh never has removed the importance of the Sabbath day. Just give it a little thought. If, as we have seen is the case, the Sabbath was made not only to honor Yahweh as Creator, but for man's benefit, then, since nothing has changed in the natural, physical order of things, man still needs a day of rest and worship; he still needs the Sabbath. Furthermore, Yahweh is still to be honored as Creator of heaven and earth (a fact still found emphasized in the last book of the Bible²⁴). Also, the Messiah, our Savior, is still the Lord of the Sabbath. So, then, not only does man still need a weekly day of rest, but also to honor Yahweh as Creator he still needs to keep that particular day which was especially made and set apart by Him for the purpose of commemorating His creative activity

One last thing to note here is that Yahweh speaks in verse 4 of the keeping of the Sabbath day specifically in relationship to those who, He says, "choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant." What covenant would He be speaking of here? Certainly not the old covenant, for Israel had already broken that, and a new covenant was then coming. Also, under the old neither the non-proselyte gentile, nor the eunuch, could be part of His congregation. They would not be allowed into the temple which, as prophesied here, was to become, "an house of prayer for all people."²⁵ Thus the covenant mentioned here has to be the new covenant. This is the covenant, or testament, we are now under, the New Covenant that has been ratified by the blood of the Lamb. Under this covenant, not under the old, "the son of the stranger" and the eunuch would enter Yahweh's house and would keep His Sabbaths.

ISAIAH 58:13,14

Here we read:

13 If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of Yahweh, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: 14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in Yahweh; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of Yahweh hath spoken it.

In this beautiful passage of scripture we find a description of how the Sabbath should be kept, which is even on a higher level than anything specified under the letter of the law. It describes, without any question, how our Savior Yahshua the Messiah kept the Sabbath even while being falsely accused of the religious leaders of breaking it. It is important to realize that Yahshua never made light of the Sabbath day. He never broke the Sabbath day. It is unthinkable that He would have, for if He had done so, since as man He was

²⁴ For example see Rev. 4:11, and 10:5,6.

²⁵ Many believe there will be a future, millennial restoration of a physical temple with physical sacrifices. Whatever one believes along that line, it is certain that today we, the believers in Messiah, are now His house, and that the offerings now to be made are those mentioned in Hebrews 13:15,16. In any case it is clear from this passage that the Sabbath is continued, and the importance Yahweh places on it is not lessened at all.

“made of a woman, made under the law”, He would have been sinning, and could not, then, have become our Savior. Even though He did emphasize that mankind’s well being was the essential purpose of the Sabbath being made, and that He as “the Son of Man” is, “therefore ... Lord also of the Sabbath”, He never said it was all right to do what was unlawful on the Sabbath. He spoke in terms of what it was lawful to do on that day. He said, “It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath days.”²⁶

In this passage of scripture Yahweh describes the highest form of Sabbath observance. The summary of it is that we are to do nothing (either in word or deed) that is of self. On one level this should be true of every day. Practically speaking, however, there are many of our own things that we do have to take care of during the workweek. The Sabbath is meant to be a release from that mode of speaking and doing. It is, thereby, a training ground for this higher walk. This is the high ideal we should all aim for on the Sabbath Day.

As pointed out earlier, one thing this passage makes very clear is that it is the Sabbath Day that Yahweh calls, “My holy day.” Although all days actually belong to Him, it is only the Sabbath that He actually calls “My holy day” when speaking of a particular day of the week.

THE BOOK OF ACTS

The book of Acts is the only Holy Spirit inspired record of the practice of the apostles and the early church. In that entire book only one mention is made of any of the early believers meeting on the “first day of the week.” That mention is in Acts 20:7 in which the meaning is not entirely clear. The actual literal Greek of that passage says, “On the first of the Sabbaths”, or, “On one of the Sabbaths.” However, other than to mention this fact now, we will not deal with this passage until later when answering objections some give to the keeping of the Sabbath. At that time I expect to show that this one and only passage mentioning a meeting on “the first day of the week”, even when accepting it as it is translated in most English versions, in no way indicates it was the practice of the early “church” to have regular meetings on Sunday (as is done today).

On the other hand it is known that the early church being entirely Jewish continued to meet together on the Sabbath as “a holy convocation” (and even to keep the entire Law of Moses).

The book of Acts makes it clear that even the apostle Paul, who was the apostle to the Gentiles, continued to meet in the synagogues on the Sabbath. It also indicates that even when the Gentiles who visited the synagogues wanted to hear Paul again, they did not come to hear him in some Sunday meetings that he held. Instead of meeting with him at some Sunday service, in which he would have met with the church if indeed they had observed Sunday (as is done today), the Gentiles waited to hear him on the Sabbath.

²⁶ Matthew 12:12

Look at these verses in Acts 13: 42-44: “And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the **Gentiles** besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And **the next Sabbath day** came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

Notice that the Gentiles asked Paul to preach to them “the next Sabbath day”. I realize that some claim that the part about the Gentiles beseeching him to preach to them the next Sabbath is not part of the original, because it is not found in what they consider the major manuscripts. I personally think the textus receptus from which the King James was translated is correct here. However, the point is not lost even if those who reject it are right on the matter. Verse 44 shows that “the next Sabbath” almost the whole city came to hear Paul (which would be primarily Gentiles since this was a Gentile city). The point is this: why did they, the Gentiles, wait until “the next Sabbath day” instead of coming to the Sunday meeting if Paul also kept Sunday and went to the synagogues on the Sabbath only for the purpose of winning the Jews as some claim?

Next we read in Acts 17: 2, “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.” Here we see that Paul’s manner, or regular practice, was to go to the synagogues on the Sabbath and reason with them. Sure it can be said that he went to the synagogues primarily in order to win the Jews. It is obvious that he did so. Yet it is significant that it speaks of this in terms of being “as his manner was”, and yet never speaks of him getting together with anyone on Sunday in the same terms of “as his manner was” anywhere in the book of Acts, or the entire “New Testament”. In fact (with the one exception I have mentioned, and will yet deal with) it never even says he met with the believers on Sunday much less “as his manner was”.

Finally, we read in Acts 18: 4 “And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.”

It can be rightfully said that Paul’s purpose was to evangelize the Jews in the synagogues. He did follow the order of “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” in preaching the gospel (as is indicated in Rom.1:16). Yet it is significant, or interesting to say the least, that the Sabbath is mentioned quite prominently in the inspired historical record and is connected with the idea of custom or mannerism while Sunday is almost totally, if not totally, ignored.

Considering that, as his manner was, Paul went to the synagogues on the Sabbath, and that all the apostles and the entire church, being all Jewish, continued to keep the Sabbath faithfully, what do you think would be the example the Gentile believers would follow as they did begin to enter into the faith? Think about it.

We find in Acts 15 that a great controversy came about over the matter of whether or not the Gentiles had to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses. (The Law of Moses is

spoken of in the book of Deuteronomy as being that which Moses personally received and wrote in a book after Yahweh spoke the Ten Commandments and wrote them Himself on tables of stone.) They disputed about the Law of Moses. Yet no controversy is recorded about the Ten Commandments, or the Sabbath day in particular, in the early church. Doesn't it seem strange, since the early church were Jews who unquestionably kept the Sabbath, that no controversy arose among them about the matter of establishing regular Sunday meetings for worship in place of the Sabbath day? **If indeed** that had become the practice of some back then, surely this would have become a really major issue.

SUMMARY

Now let's summarize what we have seen the Bible clearly teaches about the Sabbath.

First we have seen the following things:

(1) The Sabbath was made. (2) It was made for man, i.e., to benefit mankind. (3) It was made in the beginning of human history. (4) It was made by Yahweh Himself resting for one complete day after six days of creation. (5) That day formed the seventh day of the week, which, along with the six days of creation, gave us the seven-day week. (6) That day was blessed and made holy by Yahweh. (7) Man who was created on the sixth day would have known about it. (8) The primary reason for Yahweh resting, was not because He was tired, but to form, or make, another day, and to establish an order, or set an example, for man to follow.²⁷ (9) Since Yahweh made the Sabbath for mankind, blessed it, and made it holy at the beginning of human history, it is absurd to think that He waited to give it to man 2500 years later (and then only to a small segment of humanity) when the law was given by Moses to the nation of Israel. (10) Noah appeared to know of the seven-day week. (11) Israel kept the Sabbath in the wilderness before the law. (12) The law merely said to remember to keep the Sabbath holy, giving the fact that Yahweh rested on that day, blessed it, and made it holy after creating everything in six days as the reason to do so.

From these things we should be able to see that, since the institution of the Sabbath as a day to be kept holy preceded the written law, its continuation as a blessed and holy day does not depend on the letter of the law. Therefore, the fact that we are "not under the law, but under grace" does not do away with the Sabbath. That fact has nothing to do with the sacredness of the Sabbath day. It is still our responsibility to keep it holy, unless it can be clearly shown that Yahweh, who Himself made it holy, has now reversed this and declared it an ordinary workday.

Next, we have also seen these things:

²⁷ When He says in Exodus 3:17 that He, "was refreshed", this should not be taken to mean He had been tired out and personally needed to rest. Isaiah 40:28 says, "...Yahweh, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary...." Therefore, for Him to say He "was refreshed" would not imply He needed rest in the same sense in which we need to rest, that is, for restoration. It possibly means that what He did by resting (i.e., by ceasing activity, and, thereby, making the Sabbath Day), "refreshed" Him in the sense of giving Him pleasure.

(1) There is a prophetic promise of special blessings even to “the son of the stranger”, i.e., the one who is born a Gentile and does not proselyte to become a member of physical Israel, as well as to the eunuch (who under the law was forbidden a place in the congregation, or nation, of Israel) if they choose the things that please Yahweh, take hold of His covenant (which would have to be the New Covenant), come to love the name of Yahweh, and keep His Sabbaths. (2) This transcends the provisions under the law and looks forward to the time when Yahweh’s salvation was “near to come” and His righteousness (“the righteousness which is of faith”) is to be revealed. (3) This clearly refers to our day, and also extends beyond it into the manifestation of His kingdom on earth. (4) Per Isaiah 58:13,14, the highest form of keeping the Sabbath is to cease all words and deeds that are directed toward self-interest, and center everything on Yahweh and the things of His kingdom. (5) This goes way beyond the letter of the law, which merely demanded ceasing from all work, and must, therefore, go beyond the time of the old covenant, which was based upon keeping the letter of the law in order to be accepted as Yahweh’s people. (6) This was the level on which Yahshua lived everyday, and the level on which He, therefore, kept the Sabbath as He did that which was lawful to do on the Sabbath by doing good on that day. (He is, of course, our example.) (7) Yahweh here specifically calls the Sabbath, “My holy day”. (8) In the only inspired church history – the book of Acts – we see that the Sabbath is mentioned prominently. However, the first day (Sunday) is mentioned only once (provided the passage is not translated literally to say, “on one of the Sabbaths”), and no mention is made of it being the custom to meet on Sunday.

CONCLUSION

The Sabbath day was instituted, or made, in the beginning of human history, before sin, and long before the written law was given. It was made for man - Adam and Eve and their descendants. It was given again specifically to the nation of Israel, which Yahweh had called to follow Him after all nations had departed from the true religion (the worship of Yahweh in obedience to His instructions). It was made part of the Law. However, its holiness long precedes the giving of the law, and it would have been kept holy by all who sought to please Yahweh from the beginning of time. By the same token, unless there is clear proof that its holiness has since been revoked, it should still be kept holy by those who follow Yahweh, regardless of what relationship believers in Messiah have to the letter of the law. Adam had to have known of it, as would all his descendants until they turned away from the truth. Since it was instituted, blessed, and made holy in the very beginning, and was established by Yahweh as the order for mankind, keeping it is a sign indicating whom one follows and worships. Thus it is a sign between Yahweh and His people.

ANSWERING OBJECTIONS

In this final section we will answer some objections given against the teaching that the Sabbath day is yet to be kept by Yahweh’s people, the followers of Yahshua the Messiah.

Objection 1. We are not under law, but under grace. Therefore, we do not need to keep the Ten Commandments.

Answer: For the most part I have already answered this objection. The matter is simply that, though keeping it holy was made part of the law, the Sabbath Day actually preceded the law as a day to be kept holy. Its holiness is not based on the law, but instead the commandment about it in the law is based on the fact that it was already a holy day from the beginning of creation. Therefore, unless it can be shown that the holiness was taken off the Sabbath, it is still to be kept holy.

Sad to say, the subject of law and grace is very much misunderstood in the Christian church as a whole. However, this is not the subject I am presently dealing with since it is clear that our not being “under the law, but under grace” changes nothing as relates to the Sabbath day.

Objection 2 According the writings of the early church fathers Sunday is “the Lord’s day” spoken of in Revelation 1:10 and now, as the early church did, we keep “the Lord’s Day” instead of the Sabbath Day.

Answer: This was answered somewhat in the introduction to this writing. The Bible, not the church fathers, as they are called, is to be our guide. The apostle Paul in referring to the scriptures in II Tim. 3:15-17 was primarily referring to that portion of the Bible now called “The Old Testament”, for most of the writings of the apostles were unknown when Timothy was “a child” (verse 15). It is, therefore, primarily that part of our Bible that Paul spoke of as being “able to make you wise unto salvation” and that he said “is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for **instruction in righteousness**, that the man of Yahweh may be perfect throughly furnished unto all good works.”

When we study the scriptures Paul was referring to, we find that the Sabbath is holy and is so to be kept - nothing else. There is no mention in any part of the Bible that Sunday would replace the Sabbath day. We find no indication that the Sabbath would ever be done away with, but actually just the opposite. There is no statement (or even clear evidence) in all the Bible that the early apostolic church considered Sunday to be a special day.

As regards the writings of the so-called church fathers, I again quote Isaiah 8:20: “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Some of those early “church fathers” displayed strong anti-Jewish sentiments in their writings. Church history indicates that there were still believers who were keeping the Sabbath even after anti-Semitism led to the rejection of it and to the substitution of Sunday in its place by church leaders.

The fact that any so-called church father referred to Sunday as “the Lord’s day” in no way gives proof that that is what John meant when he spoke of being “in the Spirit on” (or “in” - Gk. “en”) “the Lord’s day.” We are in no way bound to accept man’s interpretation of that term. John may well have been saying that in vision he was being carried forward and was “in the Spirit in the day of Yahweh”, the final day of judgment (as a good number of commentators understand him to mean - even though most of them are in churches that observe Sunday, not Sabbath). Obviously in his visions he was in (or

“by”) the Spirit in the day of Yahweh, i.e., the day of judgement. **If, on the other hand, he was referring to being in the Spirit on some specific day of the week, there is only one day that the Bible says Yahweh calls “My holy day”, and that Yahshua says He “is Lord of”. That day is the ancient Sabbath day that Yahweh made for man by resting on the seventh day - the day that He blessed and made holy in the beginning.**

This equating of John’s phrase, “the Lord’s day”, with Sunday as proof that Sunday became the day honored in the early apostolic church instead of the Sabbath is an example of using a scripture of obscure meaning to overthrow the clear, plain teaching of the Bible about the sanctity of the Sabbath day. This you will find to be true of all “New Testament” scriptures used to deny the continuance of the Sabbath. They are all obscure as to their meaning or application. None of them clearly states that the Sabbath is no longer holy. None of them clearly states that the first day was kept as a regular day of worship by the apostolic New Covenant church. You should be able to see this as we continue answering objections.

Objection 3 After rising from the dead, the Savior met with the disciples on the first day of the week, and then again eight days after. (John 20:19,26) Also the Holy Spirit fell on Pentecost Sunday. This all indicates that this was the day on which we should meet.

Answer: To say these things indicate that Sunday replaced the Sabbath day is nothing but pure conjecture. What a way to do away with the Sabbath which was so clearly established by Yahweh! It only shows the flimsiness of the case for Sunday replacing the Sabbath. The fact is, the first day of the week was the earliest time He could have met with them. Why should He wait until a later time? This in no wise indicates He was establishing that day as the regular day of meeting in place of the ancient Sabbath. Indeed verse 26 says He also met with them “after eight days again”, but the meaning here is unclear. “After eight days” could just as easily mean the second day of the week. If it had said “after seven days” it would more likely be another Sunday. Even if it were plain that this meeting was again on a Sunday, that in itself would not be clear proof that Sunday was being made a day of worship and the Sabbath was being replaced. The obscurity lies in the fact that we do not know whether to count the same day He first met with them as one of the “after eight days”, or to start counting with the next day, as normally would be the case. It could have been either way. Is this any way to build a doctrine that does away with Yahweh’s clear sanction of the Sabbath day and replaces it with another day?

As far as Pentecost is concerned, the Holy Spirit had to come on that day in fulfillment of this feast, just as Yahshua died on the day the Passover was commemorated in fulfillment of that feast regardless of what day of the week Passover fell on in that year. According to the way many understand the biblical instructions concerning this Old Testament feast (called Shavuot, or “Weeks”, in Hebrew), Pentecost always fell on the 1st day of the week (Lev.23:15,16). In any case, whether the particular day of the week in which the day of Pentecost came that year just happened to be Sunday, or whether Pentecost had always fallen on the 1st day of the week (as many understand Lev. 23:15,16 to mean) this

again says nothing whatsoever about doing away with the Sabbath and celebrating Sunday in its place.

Objection 4 Christ arose on the first day of the week. Therefore, we should meet on that day.

Answer: Who says so? Certainly not Yahshua or His apostles. I find no scripture stating that, or even clearly implying it. Furthermore, we are told in the scripture to remember His death until He comes, but no place are we told to celebrate or commemorate His resurrection on any particular day of the week, month, or year. Rather we are to live day by day in the power of His resurrection life. This is just another case of total assumption.

Objection 5 In Acts 20:7 we find the church meeting with Paul and breaking bread (as in communion) on the first day of the week. This shows that this day was the day the early church met together.

Answer: According to Jewish reckoning the day began at sunset. So Saturday sunset would begin the first day of the week. So this was most likely a Saturday night meeting. We see that Paul was ready to depart on the morrow and preached until midnight. It is highly unlikely that they met Sunday morning and Paul, then, continued preaching until midnight. It is much more likely that he preached beginning some time after sunset Saturday (the beginning of the first day of the week), continued until midnight, and, then, left on Sunday morning. The explanation for why they were meeting is given in the text as “to break bread”. It was common for the early believers to eat together often. In the beginning they even met and ate together daily. (Acts 2:46,47; 5:42; Heb. 3:13) The fact that Paul was leaving them the following day made this their last opportunity to meet with him. So it is only natural that they would get together to eat with him, and that he would then preach to them.

In any case this was just one event in many in the narrative of the missionary journey that they were on. This hardly gives reason to suppose that this comment proves the first day of the week was the regular weekly day of meeting for the early church.

Actually, the meal they ate was described in the Greek as “the breaking of a loaf”, referring to a regular meal, as verse 11 indicates, and not as “the breaking of the loaf” which term is used in Acts 2:42 as more likely referring to the communion table. More importantly, the tense of the verb used when it says, “when the disciples came together to break bread” (“break a loaf”) is the perfect tense, rather than the imperfect tense. This (perfect) tense was used to indicate completed action with no indication that it was a habitual thing. The imperfect tense, not used here, is what was commonly used to indicate habitual action. In other words, if the tense is taken into account, the indication is clear that this coming together to eat on the first day of the week was just the way it happened to be on that particular occasion, not that such coming together to eat on the first day of the week was the regular established practice.

In any case, one thing is certain. This happening, and its being recorded along with many other events on this missionary journey of Paul, in no way teaches that the early church kept Sunday in place of the Sabbath. As already stated, it was most likely a Saturday night meeting for the sake of fellowshiping over a meal and hearing Paul speak before he left the next day to continue his journey.

To use this scripture to seek to prove that the early church had special, regular meetings on the 1st day of the week is just another attempt to do away with the clear command to keep the Sabbath holy. It is an attempt to support a practice that crept in after the days of the original apostles, that of meeting on Sunday, by using a passage that in no way clearly says the early church did so. Thus it is another attempt to use an obscure passage to do away with a clear teaching of the Bible.

Objection 6 The apostle Paul says in Romans 14:5, “One man esteems one day above another: another esteems every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.”

Answer: First of all, if this is speaking of the weekly day of meeting and resting, then, why do you try to encourage people to meet on Sunday instead of the Sabbath day (which in the Bible is definitely called “a holy convocation”, i.e., a holy day of meeting together – Lev. 23:3)? Why do you esteem Sunday above other days of the week? You may claim you do not esteem Sunday above the other days, but if you meet regularly on Sundays as your primary day of meeting, “in honor of Christ’s resurrection”, you certainly are esteeming it above the other days of the week. You are making it to be a “holy convocation”, a time of sacred gathering, which is what the Bible says the Sabbath is.

An examination of the overall teaching of Romans 14 will show that Paul is speaking about things which have no moral character in themselves, things on which people have the right to differ. This is surely not true when it comes to the matter of the Ten Commandments, which tell us to keep the Sabbath day holy. The Sabbath, as has clearly been shown, is a matter of great importance. Under the law the penalty for breaking it was death. Surely, then, we cannot say there is no moral aspect attached to the matter of the Sabbath day.

Paul was certainly not setting aside Yahweh’s commandments. He was not talking about the moral commandments at all. They are not optional matters. He was most likely talking about the matter of keeping the biblical feast days given to the nation of Israel as part of the Law of Moses, which law the Gentile believers were not commanded to keep (Acts 15). However, having liberty to do so, some Gentiles apparently found it to be a blessing to celebrate those feast days as types and shadows of great salvation truths. Paul may even have been speaking of some other days that various people kept in celebration of national events, etc. But this is less likely. Whatever days he was talking about, his main point was that they should not argue about them, but let each man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

One reason I feel he was speaking of the biblical feast days found in the Law of Moses is that verse 6 in the Greek says, “He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord.” (The King James reading, “he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it” is not found in many Greek manuscripts, but is considered to be added in some by the copiers - as what is called an “interpolation”. Therefore, those words are not found in most translations.) Paul was most likely defending the right of those who, although they were Gentiles, nevertheless, had come to find blessing in keeping the biblical feast days given to the physical nation of Israel. Those feast days have great biblical, typical meaning as great object lessons of the plan of salvation. Paul was telling those who did not choose to keep those days to not judge those who did keep them, because any day such a person “regarded”, he regarded it as unto Yahweh and gave Him thanks.

Once again this is another somewhat obscure passage. Although I believe I have the correct understanding of this passage, the truth is, the passage does not clearly say what it is speaking about. It is very foolish to use it to go against the clear teaching of the Bible about the Sabbath day, which is part of the moral law. Certainly Paul was not saying man’s make up is so changed that he no longer needs the regular day of rest and worship such as Yahweh established for him in the beginning of time.

Objection 7 Paul criticized the Galatians by saying in Galatians 4:10,11 “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.” This shows it is wrong to keep any day.

Answer: Then why do you keep Sunday? To understand this passage you need to understand much more concerning the law of Moses and the relationship of the Gentile believers to it, as compared to the relationship of the Jewish believers to it. That, however, is an entire subject in itself.

We have no good, biblical reason to conclude that Paul was speaking about the Sabbath day in this list, for, as we have seen, the keeping of the Sabbath is included in the Ten Commandments as one of the basic moral teachings of the Bible.

Some believe Paul was referring to the Galatians lapsing back into observing pagan holidays. However, this is unlikely. It does not fit the context of the subject Paul was addressing. I personally believe the overall context indicates that Paul was referring to the Galatian believers beginning to keep the Law of Moses with its new moons, annual feast days, jubilee years, etc. However, it is not that Paul was speaking against the Gentile believers keeping these days, etc., as a matter in and of itself, any more than he was saying circumcision is wrong in and of itself when he told them not to be circumcised. Otherwise he would have been going against his own teaching in Romans 14:5,6 Although he appears to be against them getting circumcised, and against them celebrating special days, he was against neither as matters in and of themselves.

The reason he spoke out against doing these things is not that there was something wrong in these things which Yahweh Himself had given under the Law of Moses (also called the Law of Yahweh – Luke 2::23). He was against them doing these things because of the reason they were doing them. They were under the delusion that they had to become

circumcised and keep the law, including, therefore, the feast days, in order to be saved. They had accepted another gospel - other than the gospel of salvation by grace through faith ("which works by love" - Gal. 5:6). They were "fallen from grace" into justification by the works of the law. No one is saved by keeping the law.

So once again the subject is not the Sabbath day, but those days which were given to the nation of Israel as part of their national covenant. As has been shown, the Sabbath, though incorporated into the Law of Moses, nevertheless, also preceded it by over 2500 years. It was part of the Ten Commandments, and breaking the Sabbath carried the same penalty as murder, adultery, and witchcraft, because it is a moral commandment. To say from this passage that Paul was complaining about them keeping the Sabbath, and was himself setting it aside, is another example of using a passage in which the meaning is not really clear to set aside Yahweh's commandment which is very clear.

Objection 8 In Colossians 2:16 Paul says to, "Let no man judge you in eating, or drinking, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days." Thus he sets the Sabbath day aside as not having any importance.

Answer: Once again the question is this: was Paul speaking of the weekly Sabbath day which goes back to creation and is part of the moral code, as one of the Ten Commandments, or was he speaking of the annual Sabbaths, and those Sabbaths which occurred every 7 years, etc.? I believe he was speaking of the annual Sabbaths, such as the day of trumpets, the first and last days of unleavened bread, Shavuot (Pentecost), etc., not of the weekly Sabbath Day. Why do I say this? Because he calls them "shadows of things to come" in verse 17. It is an accepted fact that the annual feast days serve as types and shadows of great salvation truths. The body that casts that shadow is of Messiah. Although the weekly Sabbath can be used to typify our rest from our own works spiritually, it was not given for that primary reason. Its primary significance was as a memorial of creation, not as a type of a future event. It was not given as a mere "shadow of things to come", but as something needed for our well being in this life. It was given for man to meet a need in his individual life and in society as a whole. Therefore, Paul could not have been belittling the keeping of it. As a teacher of righteousness and morality he could not be lessening its importance to our well being when Yahweh Himself had given it to meet an ongoing basic need for humanity.

Furthermore, we would have to ask, what does he mean by saying let no man judge you in them? This certainly was not forbidding the keeping of them. That in itself would be judging. I believe he was saying as in Romans 14:5 regarding such days, not the weekly Sabbath, that you are free to keep them the way you understand, or even to not keep them if you so wish, for they are only shadows, and the body (which casts that shadow) is of Messiah. The handwriting of ordinances in the Law of Moses, is not to be forced upon the Gentile believers (in this case the Colossians). Nor are those ordinances to be forbidden to be kept by those who desire to keep them as they see their meaning and value, provided they do not keep them thinking to be saved by doing so.

Even if we were to grant the assumption that he was including the weekly Sabbath in his list, it would not be that he was doing away with the sacredness of the day, which sacredness goes back to the beginning of time, but that he was simply saying not to allow anyone to judge as to your manner of keeping it. The Pharisaical spirit, which judged our Savior according to their own, rigid, man made rules, still exists today. Although Paul most likely wasn't speaking of the weekly Sabbath here, we are not to let others judge us, but are to keep the Sabbath according to Yahweh's original intention as defined in the scripture and as taught by the Spirit, rather than according to man's judgment.

Objection 9 Paul said in I Corinthians 16:2, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." Doesn't this show that the church met, and took up collections, on the first day of the week?

Answer: Not at all. In fact, it shows the opposite. If they met together on that day, Paul would likely have said let each of you bring together as God hath prospered him. Instead, he told each one individually to "lay by him in store", that is by himself – at his own home – as Yahweh had prospered him the previous week. Why on the first day of the week? Because it was the most logical time to see how they had prospered the previous week, and it was the first workday after the Sabbath. It was the first business day of the week for them. The Sabbath was and is a day of rest, a "holy convocation" in honor of Yahweh's creation, not a time to go out and gather either from your fields or your business.

Objection 10 Some say, "According to Matt. 5:17 Christ fulfilled the law for us. Therefore, we do not have to keep the Sabbath."

Answer: As has already been shown, the institution of the Sabbath as a holy day did not begin with the giving of the law under Moses. Therefore, our obligation to keep it holy does not depend on our relationship to the law.

In regard to this particular objection, it is important to note what our Savior was talking about as recorded in Matt. 5:17. The full statement of our Savior there is, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Then, He said, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees" [those considered by His audience as the strictest of law keepers] "you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

How can you possibly read this statement of Yahshua that He came, "Not to destroy the law ... but to fulfil [it]" in light of all else He said here, and, then, conclude that by fulfil He meant He was setting it aside? That is like concluding He was using double talk by

saying He came to destroy it after all by fulfilling it. Such reasoning is nothing but nonsense.

Does “fulfil” mean “to do away with”? When Yahshua responded to the reluctance of John the Baptist to baptize Him He said, “Allow it to be so now, for thus it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness.” Does that mean He did away with all righteousness? Does it mean that, since He fulfilled “all righteousness”, we no longer are required to do righteousness?

When Yahshua said He did not come to destroy the law, or the prophets, but to fulfil them He clearly meant that He came to do what they said. He did this both in the sense of living out the things spoken in them concerning Him, and in the sense of keeping the moral instructions taught in them. Indeed, the context of Matt. 5:17 speaks for itself plainly showing that His fulfilling the law did not do away with our obligation to keep its moral instructions. In fact, after making the statement, “... except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” He goes on to show that our requirements as His followers go even beyond the letter of the law. They include the deep spiritual meaning behind it. He said just being angry with our brother without a cause is to be a murderer, even merely looking on a woman with lustful intent is to be an adulterer, etc., etc.

It is mere foolishness, in the light of all Yahshua said in this passage, to say that since Yahshua fulfilled the law we are no longer required to keep the moral teachings it gives [which, of course, are summarized in the Ten Commandments]. Nevertheless, I repeat, the responsibility to keep the Sabbath day holy does not rest upon our relationship to the law anyhow.

Objection 11 It is said Messiah is our rest, and, therefore, we do not have to keep any Sabbath. Resting in Him is our Sabbath keeping.

Answer: This is generally based upon the statements found in Hebrews 4:9-11, especially verse 9 which in a literal translation from the Greek says, “There remains, therefore, a sabbath rest [sabbatismos] to the people of God.”

This passage in Hebrews in no way states anything about the Sabbath day as respects our obligation to keep it holy. That is not the subject here at all. So why would anyone (except in grasping for a straw to support a predetermined position) think this is saying we are not to keep the Sabbath holy. Even if we were to conclude that anything is being said about the Sabbath day here, as respects resting physically on that day and using it for sacred purposes, we would have to conclude that it is telling us to seek to enter into that sabbath rest.

The real teaching of this chapter, and also most of the preceding chapter in Hebrews, is that unbelief keeps us from resting from our own works. It keeps us from entering into that spiritual rest or sabbath keeping which Yahweh has prepared for us. In verses 3 & 4

the writer speaks of the literal seventh day Sabbath merely as an example of the fact that He wants rest for His creation, and so He rested from all His own works. The writer (probably the apostle Paul) goes on to show that Yahweh's people had failed to learn to rest in His completed work, but must no longer do so.

We are to cease our own works [the works of the flesh which are categorized in Galatians 5:19–21 as “Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred ...and such like things.”] We are to labor to enter into that rest by ceasing from our “own works, as Yahweh did from His” (verses 10-11). In other words, as the context and other scriptures show, we are to enter into a faith walk with Him through the work of Calvary and His resurrection life. There is a keeping of a sabbath which is the ceasing from our own works by entering into the things of the Spirit, the things of His kingdom, this new creation in Messiah Yahshua, our heavenly High Priest. We are to enter into the good works He has already prepared for us (Eph. 2:10)

In Matt. 11:28 we read that Yahshua said “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” In verses 29-30 He shows that it is by becoming yoked together with Him and learning of Him (who was “meek and lowly of heart”) that we find rest unto our souls. In this passage in Hebrews the writer is telling us that Yahweh has always wanted rest for His people. He illustrates this truth by mentioning the fact that Yahweh established the Sabbath day. How anyone could draw a conclusion from this that the writer is saying the Sabbath day is no longer holy and is, therefore, no longer to be kept holy is beyond me. It appears to be just another case of trying hard to find something to support a theory not in itself taught anywhere in the actual words of the scripture.

To say Yahshua is our rest – He is our Sabbath - and, therefore, we do not need to keep the Sabbath day any longer is wresting these scriptures to say something they obviously do not say. Think about it. Yes, He is our rest. In that sense we could say He is (spiritually) our Sabbath. However, does that mean we no longer need physical rest? Does that mean we do not need to ever cease physical labor, or, for that matter, to even sleep? Does it mean we should never give our employees a day off? Does it mean we should no longer honor Yahweh (as respects His creative work of making the heavens and earth and all that is in them) by keeping holy what He made holy in the very beginning? Of course not. Let's use some common sense in this matter.

It is imperative that we learn to rest in Him from our own works – the unholy works of the flesh. It is essential that we also cease our own labors of trying to earn His acceptance by our own works. The Hebrews were being warned against going back to the system of the law under which people labored to be accepted by their own works of offering animal sacrifices for sin, going through various washing, etc. But in no way were they being told to break Yahweh's commandments. Under the New Covenant our sins are already paid for, and His commandments are now being written not on tables of stone where they only served to show us our sins and, thereby, condemn us to death. He now writes His law in our hearts by giving us a hunger and thirst for righteousness – a hunger that becomes filled as we learn of Him, and His word, by the Holy Spirit.

In this book to the Hebrews we are being told to enter into the finished work of the Messiah. That work was accomplished on Calvary. It is entered into by faith when we lay down our own lives and works by accepting His death in our place. We are to do this by faith as we call on His name by being immersed in His name for the remission of sins, so that we may receive His Holy Spirit who does this work of writing Yahweh's law on our hearts. [That is the original prescribed way as given in the scripture, and we can have full assurance of faith when we follow His planned way. How Yahweh will treat anyone ignorantly departs from His original, established method of accepting Calvary's work is up to Him to decide.] Be sure you have believed His word by doing what He said in the way He said to (Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 3:26,27 and elsewhere.) Then, as you continue in that faith in the crucified one who is now our risen High Priest in heaven, you will be able to cease from you own works, by entering into His imputed, and imparted, righteousness wherein you will find rest – a true sabbath rest – to your soul. But as long as you seek to do it your own way – doing your own works – you will never know the true rest of the soul which the beauty and pleasure of observing the creation Sabbath Day illustrates.

Conclusion You will find, as is so of those we have already examined, that all scriptures used to teach against the Sabbath, and for keeping the first day of the week, are somewhat obscure in their meanings and/or applications. The historical origin of changing from Sabbath keeping to Sunday celebration is not at all founded in those verses so used today. The change began to come about through hatred of the Jews, and things Jewish, by church leaders after the time of the apostles, during a time that the Roman Empire was persecuting the Jews²⁸. The so-called early church fathers did not use these verses commonly used today to argue against the Sabbath and for Sunday. They used other, often strange, allegorical, anti-Semitic reasoning. It was in more modern times (after some believers began to see what the Bible really teaches on the subject and began to return again to keeping, and teaching about, Yahweh's holy day) that these passages began to be used to try to justify what had become the long standing practice of keeping Sunday.

The Bible very **clearly** teaches that the seventh day of the week was blessed and made holy by Yahweh in the beginning of human history. It very **clearly** teaches that Yahweh made it **for** man by Himself resting after the six days of creation. It very **clearly** tells us in the Ten Commandments to “remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy” and gives us the reason as being, because of how it came into existence, and was blessed and made holy by Yahweh Himself in the very beginning of human history. It **clearly** shows us that the penalty for breaking it under the law was the same as for murder, blasphemy, idolatry, witchcraft, adultery, and other very serious infractions of the moral code. It very **clearly** teaches that the non-proselyte Gentile and eunuch, who had no place with Yahweh's people under the law, would be given a name and a place better than of sons and daughters if they would come to love His name, keep His Sabbaths, and take hold of His covenant, choosing those things that please Him. It very **clearly** promises great

²⁸ See Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi's book “*From Sabbath To Sunday*”, originally published by The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977, for a documented, historical perspective of the change.

blessing to those who keep it, and **clearly** tells us Yahweh calls it, “My holy day”. It **clearly** tells us that the love of Yahweh is to keep His commandments, and describes the last day believers in the book of Revelation as those who believe in Yahshua the Messiah and “keep the commandments of Yahweh.”

Yet, even with the light of all this **clear** teaching in the pages of the Bible, in order to defend a practice which came about in the darkness of that period of time that came shortly after the death of the original apostles, modern day preachers and teachers turn to passages of **uncertain** meanings, and/or applications, to seek to support their claim that Yahweh took the holiness off His day and sanctioned another day in its place. They argue from **unclear** passages in attempting to support a day that Babylon²⁹, in all its forms, ancient and modern, has always held in highest esteem in honor of the sun which has been worshipped both openly, and in cloaked form, by pagan societies everywhere.

In view of all the **clear** teaching of the Bible about the Sabbath day, and in view of the fact that keeping it was a sign of worshipping Yahweh, the one true creator, don't you think there would be some **clear** word if it were to be set aside? If indeed Yahweh changed the commandment, and changed His holy day to the day of the sun, don't you think He would have stated this **clearly**? There is not the least inkling in the entire Old Testament that He would set aside His day. Instead, we find just the opposite with promises of great blessing coming in our day, the day of salvation, on the son of the stranger and the eunuch who would keep it, and do the things that please Yahweh. Nor is there any hint from the lips of our Savior that the Ten Commandments, or even just the Sabbath commandment, would be annulled, but just the opposite. He said that one jot or tittle would “in no wise pass from the law” until all be fulfilled. He said that those who keep even the least of these commandments and teach men so will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. There is not one word from the early apostles saying that the Sabbath was being set aside, or that Sunday was to be kept. Instead, they give instructions to study the scriptures, the Old Testament writings, as that which is “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of Yahweh may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” And it is those very scriptures which, beginning with the 2nd chapter, teach about the blessedness, and sacredness of the seventh day Sabbath.

Only in the darkness of the workings of “the mystery of iniquity” (“the mystery of lawlessness”, which was already at work in the days of that great apostle Paul³⁰) was the Sabbath of Yahweh set aside, and the day of the sun given a place of special honor by apostate leaders. It was the wolves in sheep's clothing, not the Lord of the Sabbath that changed the day. This deception is now so widespread - almost universal - in Christianity

²⁹ The term “Babylon” in the Bible came to symbolize man's own systems, religious, political, social, etc., but especially that religious system which started with the mystery religion of ancient Babylon, and eventually spread throughout the world as it took many different forms while always emphasizing the sun as a chief god. Strong traces of Mithraism, a form of sun worship with roots going back to Babylon, are found yet today in various “Christian” celebrations and religious symbols, etc. This is especially seen to be true when you trace the history of the substitution of “the venerable day of the Sun” for Yahweh's own holy day. (See previous footnote.)

³⁰ II Thess. 2:7

today that it is hard for people to believe the truth even when it is plainly laid out before their eyes. Even some who see it, at one time or another, find it hard to go against the huge tide of opinion of seemingly great men and women of faith. They find it hard to embrace truth at the cost of losing friends, or positions. Others are frightened away by some who see and proclaim this precious truth, but are used of Satan to drag it into the mud by their also teaching many erroneous things, or by their bickering over certain things among themselves, or by their wrong conduct. But we are no more excused from accepting the Sabbath (or any other truth) just because such things exist among some who do accept it than the sinner is who refuses to accept the Savior, because he, or she, sees “there are hypocrites in the church.”

Yahweh our Creator, and our Savior in Yahshua the Messiah, is the One who is restoring the knowledge of His Holy day. He is still calling out a remnant who want His approval more than the honor, or gifts, of men – a remnant who will “keep the commandments of Yahweh, and have the testimony of Yahshua the Messiah.” If you are a true child of His, He is calling you to come out of the Babylon of the confusion of man’s systems of religion – back to the clear, plain teaching of His word in the things of Zion.

In the temple in heaven there is still to be seen the ark of the covenant³¹ – the ark that in its Old Testament type contained the Ten Commandments which were written on tables of stone by Yahweh’s own finger. These commandments are foundational to true righteousness. Under the New Testament, they are now being written on the hearts of His people. One of those commandments tells us to keep holy His Sabbath Day. This Sabbath Day is a sign that He still gives to His people - those “who are Israelites indeed.”

³¹ Rev. 11:19