

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by
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The Sabbath

The title and definition, “Christian Sabbath,” is not a scriptural term, nor can it be scripturally supported; it is a mere speculation and assumption of man.

God established the Sabbath for Israel and determined it to be on the seventh day; a day that God’s people were to set aside for divine worship and devotion to the Lord God Jehovah. The children of Israel were not even allowed to gather “heavenly manna” provisions on the seventh day, the Sabbath day, but to gather enough on the sixth day to accommodate their dietary needs on the seventh day. Neither were the people of Israel to do any laborious work or travel on the seventh day Sabbath (except a short distance).

We find in the law and commandments of God that the Sabbath was to be honored, “Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.” (Deut. 5:12). This was the duty and obligation of the children of Israel throughout the totality of the Old Testament and Old Covenant.

As we look at the New Testament, New Covenant writings by the disciples and apostles, we find that Christ was often teaching in the synagogues around about on the Sabbath (Matt. 9:35), and a man’s hand was even healed on the Sabbath in a synagogue, as recorded in Matt. 12:9-10. He was accused of wrong-doing because of His divine healing of the infirmed man.

So, we find that our Lord Jesus used the Sabbath day to minister the gospel of His kingdom in and among the Jews who were gathered together in their synagogues, in keeping with the Old Covenant law and the commandments.

Christ and His disciples were also criticized by the Jews for plucking ears of corn to eat on the Sabbath, and Christ 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

(Mk. 2:23-28); and, as usual, the Jews attempted to kill him for so-called “unlawful” deeds done on the Sabbath, and upon numerous occasions, for His teachings, as He expressed His deity and pre-existence.

We find throughout the New Testament writings where our Lord met in the synagogues and temples on the Sabbath, to teach and minister the gospel of the kingdom. Now, after the crucifixion, death, entombment, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus, we find that the Disciple/Apostle Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, spoke with boldness of the fulfillment of prophesy by the prophet Joel, and that Christ is He who was prophesized to come.

We find throughout the book of The Acts of the Apostles that the disciples/apostles preached and taught the gospel of Jesus Christ on the Jew’s Sabbath day in their synagogues (Acts 13:14; Acts 13:27; Acts 13:42, 44; Acts 15:21; Acts 18:4). Therefore, the Jews were still keeping the Sabbath after Christ’s resurrection and ascension, as the disciples met with the Jews in their synagogues to preach the glorious message of Christ’s gospel.

It was apparent that the believing Christian converts were meeting on the first day of the week (and even many days during the week) to worship, pray and be under the preaching of the gospel by all the disciples/apostles from house to house and synagogue to synagogue.

*It has yet to be confirmed when the first day of the week was designated as the “Lord’s Day;” speculation is that it was because the new converts began to meet on the first day in lieu of the seventh Sabbath day. Now, here is where the Reformers (to the best of my knowledge) began to call the first day of the week the “Christian Sabbath.” The term “Christian Sabbath” is **extra-scriptural, non-Biblical**, is common among those influenced by many of the Puritan and Reformation authors, but has no Biblical support nor authenticity.*

Here is where most all Reformed and/or Free Grace believers have adopted this “Christian Sabbath” term. The Sabbath Day (from Friday evening sundown until Saturday evening sundown) then, supposedly, changed to the FIRST day; Sunday, as the “Lord’s Christian Sabbath.” It was incorporated into the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith, in section 22, article 7, stating, “The Lord’s Day, the first day of the week, Sunday, is established as the Christian Sabbath.” This Sabbath Day change was brought about by man’s assumption and speculation and NOT by scriptural support or authority.

The Sabbath which the Lord God Almighty gave the children of Israel to honor and keep is STILL THE SEVENTH DAY. If one wants to worship on the Sabbath Day, it would have to be on Saturday. For the Seventh Day Adventists have it right, attempting to keep the Sabbath day. Those chosen in Christ, called into that everlasting hope of sins forgiven and life everlasting, meet for divine worship on the “Lord’s Day,” Sunday, the

first day of the week, as indicated in Acts 20:7, when the disciples met to break bread and listen to Paul preach unto them until midnight. The beloved John said, "I was in the Spirit on the "LORD'S DAY" (Rev. 1:10).

Beloved of God, we are not under any "SABBATH LAW," as were the children of Israel. We can travel, fellowship, pray, preach, sing, and all that be in the interest and desire of glorifying and honoring our loving Saviour, Lord and Master. May the Spirit of Christ grant us the liberty to worship Him on any and every day of the week, yet cause us to gather and assemble ourselves together on that scripturally-designated day called "The Lord's Day," not under "SABBATH" legal means and methods, but in the freedom and liberty of the Spirit of Christ: "For where the Spirit of Christ is, there is liberty," not a legalistic binding of the heart and mind as was under the Old Covenant.

Our Lord Jesus expressed a REST about which the Jews knew nothing when He said, "Come unto ME, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find REST unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30). What were the Jews in the Old Covenant laboring under? Was it not the labor and burdens of the law and commandments? Yes, I am persuaded it was that "ball & chain" of the Law that weighed them down with duties, obligations, which they could not accomplish nor obey to satisfaction of God the Almighty, even the SABBATH.

The ultimate Sabbath which is revealed in the New Covenant is a "REST" that is revealed in the writings to the Hebrew believers; the Christian "REST" from the laborious works of the Sabbath Law of duty and obligation. "For we which have believed do enter into REST, as He said, as I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my REST; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." For He spoke of a certain place of the "seventh day," and God did rest the seventh day from all His works.

For if Jesus gave them REST, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day? There remaineth, therefore, a REST to the people of God. For he that entereth into His REST, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Let us labor therefore to enter in to that REST, lest any man fall from the same example of unbelief." (Hebrews 4:3-11).

Look ye upon "The Lord of the SABBATH" and find REST for your soul.

The REST for the people of God from the law, and the SABBATH given to Israel, is established in CHRIST, for HE is our SABBATH! We REST in His fulfillment of the law in the elect's behalf, and we have HIM as our advocate, as we cannot not be justified by any works of the law and commandments. Knowing that the law and the prophets ended with John the Baptist (Matt. 11:11-13), as the New Covenant was established "in Christ's all sufficient righteousness."

May Christ be ever glorified and adored in the liberty of divine worship among His church bride, whom He alone has called to worship in Spirit and in Truth, free from the bondage of the law and commandments.

*Respectfully Submitted,
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