

The Sabbath as God Commanded

1. **Reminder that God is the Creator & a Memorial to creation:** The Bible repeatedly reminds us that the 7th day is a Sabbath of rest and holy to God. Choosing to rest on the Sabbath indicates our commitment to God. Everything we do on this day is an offering to God. Our willingness to withdraw from the world on this day to meet our God and Saviour shows in a very clear and definite way our love, loyalty and devotion to God. God set apart the seventh day of creation as a holy day of rest and remembering. It is so important that He put it in the middle of His 10 commandments. In fact, to forget the Sabbath day is to forget the Creator. It is the Lord's Day.

Exodus 20:8-11: *“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”*

Leviticus 23:3: *“Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.”*

Deuteronomy 5:12-14: *“Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.”*

Isaiah 58:13-14: *“If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the LORD has spoken.”*

2. **A Sign between God and His people:**

Exodus 31:13-15: *“Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.’”*

Ezekiel 20:12: *“Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them.”*

3. **People make these statements about the Sabbath. Are they true?**

a. **„The Sabbath was made only for the Jews”**

Mark 2:28: *“Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”* If Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath, then clearly, the Sabbath is the Lord's Day. There is not one

text in the Bible that says that it is the “Jewish Sabbath” or the “Sabbath of the Jews”. Instead, it says, ‘nation of the Jews,’ ‘the people of the Jews,’ ‘the land of the Jews,’ and ‘the synagogue of the Jews.’ ***But the Bible clearly says “Sabbath of the Lord.”*** Yes, the Bible also talks about “Sabbath *days*” and it is true there were 4 *yearly* Sabbaths on certain days of the Month as part of the ceremonial law not the *10 commandments*. They required special meat and drink offerings. These were fulfilled when Jesus Christ died on the cross at Calvary. But the Sabbath of the 10 commandments was made even before Eve sinned. This was never changed.

b. “Just keep any day of the week”

God doesn’t change. He is the same today as He was yesterday and He will be the same tomorrow. If God said, “**Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy...**,” how can we assume we can keep any day of the week? God always says what He means and He always means what He says. God is commanding us to remember something we have forgotten. He is calling us to remember that He is the Creator and to remember what He did in the first week of creation: **Genesis 2:1-3**: “*Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*”

c. “Sabbath is only a memorial for coming out of Egypt”

Some people use this one text—Deuteronomy 5:12-14 and say, this proves that the Sabbath is for a memorial for Israel coming out of Egypt. But if we look at the creation story in Genesis 2:1-3 and the 4th commandment in Exodus 20:11 and, compare it with Deuteronomy 5:12-14, we notice that the wording is different. In the Old Testament, God used the example of their lives in Egypt to remind them as to how they shouldn’t behave toward others. He reminded them that they were once servants in Egypt and therefore they should treat their own servants and strangers better. Not once did God claim that the Sabbath was a memorial for coming out of Egypt.

d. “We must keep Sunday in honor of the Resurrection”

It is true that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. But there is not one place in the Bible that says we should worship on the first day of the week. True, there is one place in the Bible where a certain outward action on our part is to be a memorial for resurrection and, we are commanded to do it – **baptism!** But it certainly does not indicate that we should worship God on the on the first day of the week. Paul says in Romans 6:4, “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Some people say that the disciples met together on the first day of the week to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. But if we read the story carefully, we will see there was no celebration. In fact, when Mary Magdalene tells them that she saw and spoke to Jesus, they did not believe her. It was only after Jesus appeared to them, that they believed (***Read Mark 16:10-14***). They were together because they were afraid of the Jews (***see also John 20:19***). People also say that ***Acts 20:7*** and ***1. Corinthians 16:1-2*** prove Saturday was changed to Sunday. If we carefully read these texts and the context in which they were written, we do not find any reference that Sabbath was changed in the Bible from Saturday to Sunday. Some also say **Revelation 1:10** refers to Sunday as the “Lord’s day”. (*See point 3a above*). There just is not even one Bible text that says that God changed His mind about the Sabbath from the 7th day to the 1st day.

However, there are many Bible texts that are evidence for keeping the 7th day Sabbath—the day the Jews were already keeping. (See Luke 4:16; Mark 2:27, Acts 13:43-44; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4)

4. “We cannot know which day is the true 7th day”

You probably heard that the 7th day we call Sabbath is not the true Sabbath. This is not correct.

- a. **The Proof according to the Bible** – The Bible says, Jesus died on the 6th day and rose on the 1st day of the week. We usually call the 6th day, Friday and the 1st day, Sunday. The 7th day we call Saturday. You will notice that all the churches accept that Christ died on Friday and rose on Sunday by celebrating Good Friday and Easter Sunday. **But here’s the Biblical proof.** These texts very clearly say which day was the preparation day or the day to get ready for the Sabbath, which day was the Sabbath and which day was the first day of the week: (i) **Luke 23:56-Luke 24:1:** “Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment. Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.” (ii) **Mark 16:1-2:** “Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.” (iii) **Mark 16:9:** “Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.” (iv) **John 20:1:** “Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.” (v) **Matthew 28:1:** “Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.”

Notice the women all rested on the Sabbath day according to the commandments. And how clear it is, Jesus died on a Friday, rested on the Sabbath and rose up on Sunday.

- b. **The calendar was not changed to confuse the days of the week.** – We can be sure that our 7th day was the same as the 7th day when Jesus lived on this Earth. The calendar year was first instituted in 46 B.C. by Julius Caesar and was called the Julian calendar. In the Julian calendar, the year was calculated as 365 ¼ days but actually 11 minutes less. Over the years, the 11 minutes accumulated and there were 10 days not synchronized to the solar system. Therefore, Pope Gregory XIII made a change in 1582. Pope Gregory simply dropped the 10 days. It was Thursday, October 4, 1582 and the next day was Friday, October 15, 1582. Note that Friday still followed Thursday and Saturday still followed Friday in the new and corrected calendar. The weekly cycle was not at all disturbed. When we keep the 7th day on Saturday, we still keep the same day Jesus kept—and he did it every week according to **Luke 4:16**.
- c. **Jews worship on the 7th day, Saturday** – If you observe the Jews, they worship on Saturday. They have worshiped on the 7th day from the time of Abraham and they still do it today. Here is a whole nation (millions of people) who have been counting off time very carefully, week after week with or without the calendar. In fact, there is no scientific or astronomical reason for measuring time in cycles of seven days. This was instituted at creation and still continues today. The Sabbath is so precious to God that His people will still observe it even in the beautiful new earth (see **Isaiah 66:22-23**).

- d. Languages - “Sabbath” for Saturday – Many languages of the world have the word “Sabbath” for Saturday, e.g., Spanish word for Saturday is “Sabado” meaning Sabbath. It proves that in languages that originated long long ago, Saturday was recognized as the Sabbath day and was incorporated into the very name of the day.

5. Seal of God

I’m sure you already heard about this one. And it is a topic that requires a lot of study. But let me try to make it as brief as possible. When Jesus comes again, there will be only two types of people on earth—the righteous and the wicked. ***We all have a decision to make and our choices will be (i) worshiping the Beast, his image or receiving the Mark of the Beast, OR (ii) worshiping God, following His truth and receiving the Seal of God.*** The Bible teaches that only those who have the Seal of God are saved (*see Revelation 7:2-3*).

- a. So how do you receive the Seal of God? – God seals us through the Holy Spirit (*see 2. Corinthians 1:21-22; Ephesians 1:13*). ***When we believe the word of truth, it allows the Holy Spirit to seal us.***

What is Truth? It is ***The Word*** (John 17:17), ***The Law*** (Psalm 119:142) and ***Jesus*** (John 14:6).

And what is the work of the Holy Spirit?

It leads us to truth (John 16:13)—***Word***;

It reproves us of sin, righteousness & judgement (John 16:8)—***Law***;

It comforts and points us to Jesus (John 16:7)—***Jesus***.

And here is the interesting thing. God takes one of these three areas of “truth” and this one area is sealed in our hearts—the Law of God. He wants the Law sealed in our hearts (see Isaiah 8:16)

- b. So, what is the seal of God? –It is the “Father’s” name on the foreheads (*see Revelation. 22:4; 14:1*).

A seal contains three things: Name, title and territory ruled. Every government has a seal, even God’s government.

His name is “The Lord God” and His Title is “Creator” (see Jeremiah 10:10-12).

The territory He rules is “Heaven and Earth” (see Exodus 2:1-4).

As I said earlier, it is interesting what God says in Isaiah 8:16. Even more interesting is that only one commandment in the 10 commandments contains all three parts of the seal – His name, title and territory (*see Exodus 20:8-11*).

Now it becomes clear. God’s side believes in the true God. They worship Him and keep His Sabbath day holy. They love Him and keep His commandments. They follow His Word and rejoice in the truth. They are filled with the Holy Spirit and have the Seal of God – The Father’s name in their foreheads. This is not a physical seal you can see. The forehead represents your mind—the place where you make all your decisions. When you choose God, His name and law are symbolically written in your mind (*see Hebrews 10:15-16*).