

# Sabbath Sacredness Changed to Sunday

## Protestantism Speaks

ANGLICAN -- "Rev. Philip Carrington, Archbishop of Quebec . . . told a church meeting in [Toronto] . . . that tradition, not the Bible, had made Sunday the day of worship.

"He quoted the biblical commandment which said the seventh day should be one of rest, and then stated: 'That is Saturday. Nowhere in the Bible is it laid down that worship should be done on Sunday,' the Archbishop told a hushed, still audience."

-- Calgary Albertan, October 28, 1949

ANGLICAN -- "And where are we told in the Scriptures that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day."

-- Isaac Williams, Plain Sermons on the Catechism, page 334

PRESBYTERIAN -- "There is no word, no hint in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday. The observance of Ash Wednesday, or Lent, stands exactly on the same footing as the observance of Sunday. Into the rest of Sunday no Divine Law enters."

-- Canon Eyton, in The Ten Commandments

BAPTIST -- "There was and is a command to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will however be readily said, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, with all its duties, privileges and sanctions. Earnestly desiring information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask, where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament -- absolutely not. There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh day of the week to the first."

-- Dr. E. T. Hiscock, author of the Baptist Manual

LUTHERAN FREE CHURCH -- "For when there could not be produced one solitary place in the Holy Scriptures which testified that either the Lord Himself or the apostles had ordered such a transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday, then it was not easy to answer the question: Who has transferred the Sabbath, and who has the right to do it."

-- George Sverdrup, A New Day

CONGREGATIONALIST -- "It is quite clear that however rigidly or devotedly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath. . . The Sabbath was founded on specific, divine command. We can plead no such command for the observance of Sunday. . .

-- Dr. R. W. Dale, The Ten Commandments, pages 106-107.

METHODIST -- "It is true that there is no positive command for infant baptism. Nor is there any for keeping holy the first day of the week. Many believe that Christ changed the Sabbath. But, from His own words, we see that he came for no such purpose. Those who believe that Jesus changed the Sabbath base it only on supposition. "

-- Amos Binney, Theological Compendium, pages 180-181.

EPISCOPALIAN -- "We have made the change from the seventh day to the first day, from Saturday to Sunday, on the authority of the one, holy, catholic, apostolic church of Christ."

-- Bishop Symour, Why We Keep Sunday

BAPTIST -- "To me it seems unaccountable that Jesus, during the years of discussion with His disciples, often conversing with them upon the Sabbath question, discussing it in some of its various aspects, freeing it from false glosses (Jewish tradition), never alluded to any transference of the day; also, that during the forty days of His resurrection life, no such thing was intimated. Nor, so far as we know, did the Spirit, which was given to bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever that he has said unto them, deal with this question. Nor yet did the inspired apostles, in preaching the gospel, founding churches, counseling and instructing those founded, discuss or approach the subject.

"Of course I quite well know the Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun-god, then . . . bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism."

-- Dr. E. T. Hiscock, report of his sermon at the Baptist Minister's Convention, in New York Examiner, November 16, 1893.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST -- "The sacred name of the seventh day is Sabbath. This fact is too clear to require argument (Exodus 20:10 quoted) . . . On this point the plain teaching of the Word has been admitted in all ages. . . Not once did the disciples apply the Sabbath law to the first day of the week -- that folly was left for a later age, nor did they pretend that the first day supplanted the seventh."

-- Joseph Judson Taylor, The Sabbath Question, pages 14-17, 41

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL -- "The day is now changed from the seventh to the first day . . . but as we meet with no scriptural direction for the change, we may conclude it was done by the authority of the church."

-- Explanation of Catechism

## Catholicism Speaks

"Sunday is a Catholic institution, and its claims to observance can be defended only on Catholic principles. . . From the beginning to end of Scripture there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first."

-- The Catholic Press, Sydney, Australia, August, 1900.

"We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday."

--Peter Geiermann., CSSR, A Doctrinal Catechism, 1957 edition, p. 50.

"God simply gave His [Catholic] Church the power to set aside whatever day or days, she would deem suitable as Holy Days. The Church chose Sunday, the first day of the week, and in the course of time added other days, as holy days."

-- Vincent J. Kelly, Forbidden Sunday and Feast-day Occupations, page 2

"Protestants . . . accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change. . . But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that . . . in observing the Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman to the church, the Pope."

-- Our Sunday Visitor, February 5, 1950.

"It is well to remind the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and all other Christians, that the Bible does not support them anywhere in their observance of Sunday. Sunday is an institution of the Roman Catholic Church, and those who observe the day observe a commandment of the Catholic Church."

-- Priest Brady, in an address, reported in the Elizabeth, N.J. "News," March 18, 1903.

"The Church changed the observance of the Sabbath to Sunday by right of the divine, infallible authority given to her by her founder, Jesus Christ. The Protestant claiming the Bible to be the only guide of faith, has no warrant for observing Sunday. In this matter the Seventh-day Adventist is the only consistent Protestant."

-- The Catholic Universe Bulletin, August 14, 1942, page 4.

"Ques. -- Have you any other way of proving that the [Catholic] Church has power to institute festivals of precept (to command holy days)?"

"Ans -- Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her; she could not have substituted the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority."

-- Stephen Keenan, A Doctrinal Catechism, page 176.

"Perhaps the boldest thing, the most revolutionary change the Church ever did, happened in the first century [actually the 4th.]. The holy day, the Sabbath, was changed from Saturday to Sunday. 'The Day of the Lord' (dies Dominica) was chosen, not from any direction noted in the Scriptures, but from the Church's sense of its own power. . . . People who think that the

Scriptures should be the sole authority, should logically become 7th Day Adventists, and keep Saturday holy."

-- Saint Catherine Catholic Church Sentinel, Algonac, MI, May 21, 1945.

Not the Creator of the universe, in Genesis 2:1-3, but the Catholic Church "can claim the honor of having granted man a pause to his work every seven days."

-- D. Mosna, Srtoria della Domenica, 1969, pages 366-367.

"It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest (from the Bible Sabbath) to the Sunday . . . Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is a homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the (Catholic) Church."

-- Monsignor Louis Segur, Plain Talk About the Protestants of Today, page 213.

"We Catholics, then, have precisely the same authority for keeping Sunday holy instead of Saturday as we have for every other article of our creed, namely, the authority of the Church. . . whereas you who are Protestants have really no authority for it whatever; for there is no authority for it (Sunday sacredness) in the Bible, and you will not allow that there can be authority for it anywhere else. Both you and we do, in fact, follow tradition in this matter; but we follow it, believing it to be a part of God's word, and the (Catholic) Church to be its divinely appointed guardian and interpreter . . ."

-- The Brotherhood of St. Paul, The Clifton Tracts, tract 4, page 15.

## The Bible Speaks

### NEW AMERICAN BIBLE

(1) You shall not have other gods besides me.

(2) You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything in the sky above or on the earth or in the waters beneath the earth; you shall not bow down before them or worship them. for I, the LORD , your God, am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for the fathers' wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation; but bestowing mercy down to the thousandth generation on the children of those who love me and keep my commandments.

(3) You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain. For the LORD will not leave unpunished him who takes his name in vain.

(4) Remember to keep holy the sabbath day. Six days you may labor and do all your work, but **the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD, your God.** No work may be done then either by you, or your son or daughter, or your male or female slave, or your beast, or by the alien who lives with you. In six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD has blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

(5) Honor your father and your mother, that you may have long life in the land which the LORD, your God, is giving you.

(6) You shall not kill.

(7) You shall not commit adultery.

(8) You shall no steal.

(9) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

(10) You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male or female slave, nor his ox or ass, nor anything that belongs to him.

Exodus 20: 3-17

### **KING JAMES VERSION**

(1) Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

(2) Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them, for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

(3) Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

(4) 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 the LORD 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 the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

(5) Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

(6) Thou shalt not kill.

(7) Thou shalt not commit adultery.

(8) Thou shalt not steal.

(9) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

(10) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

Exodus 20: 3 - 17

### **NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION**

(1) You shall have no other gods before me.

(2) You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to thousands who love me and keep my commandments.

(3) You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

(4) Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor any manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

(5) Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

(6) You shall not murder.

(7) You shall not commit adultery.

(8) You shall not steal.

(9) You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

(10) You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Exodus 20: 3 – 17

## Jesus Speaks

Jesus said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled" (Matthew 5: 17,18).

Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3).

"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 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 places of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the LORD has spoken" (Isaiah 58: 13,14).

"This is the covenant that I will make with them [those who accept Jesus Christ as Saviour] after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" (Hebrews 10:16).

"The sons of the foreigner [gentiles] who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants --- everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and holds fast My covenant --- even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer . . . For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Isaiah 56: 6,7).

"Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).

THE NEW AMERICAN BIBLE is a Roman Catholic translation of which one scholar wrote that "in general, Protestants can profit from [it]."

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION has been characterized as a Bible with a conservative orientation that "is generally accurate, clear, and straightforward."

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## Why and When the Weekly Sabbath was Moved

During the period 30 AD to 313 AD, Christians lived in a predominately Pagan world. There was a mosaic of Pagan religions in the Roman Empire:

The long established, official religion of the Roman Empire was Pagan. It involved worship of -- or at least nominal sacrifices to -- a pantheon of Roman deities, both Gods and Goddesses.

A strong competitor to Christianity in those days was a third religion: Mithraism. This faith involved the worship of a Persian God Mithra, and was popular among the Roman civil service and military.

There were many other smaller religions, including the Pagan religions of Greece and Egypt, and the mystery religions.

The Roman religion and Mithraism reserved Sunday as their day of religious observance. Many Christians were probably tempted to follow suit.

The Christians were also motivated to change the Sabbath day as a method of distancing themselves from the Jews. Two reasons were:

The Government intermittently persecuted the Jews at this time; it was safer for Christianity to be considered as a separate religion rather than as a sect of Judaism.

Relations between the Jews and Christians was hostile at this time. The early Christian church had suffered much persecution from the Jews.

In 321 AD, while a Pagan sun-worshiper, the Emperor Constantine declared that Sunday was to be a day of rest throughout the Roman Empire: "On the venerable day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country however persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits because it often happens that another day is not suitable for gain-sowing or vine planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost." The Church Council of Laodicea circa 364 AD ordered that religious observances were to be conducted on Sunday, not Saturday. Sunday became the new Sabbath. They ruled: "Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday, but shall work on that day." There are many indicators in the historical record that some Christians ignored the Church's ruling. Sabbath observance was noted in Wales as late as 1115 AD. Francis Xavier was concerned about Sabbath worship in Goa, India in 1560 AD; he called for the Inquisition to set up an office there to stamp out what he called "Jewish wickedness". A Catholic Provincial Council suppressed the practice in Norway in 1435 AD.

One reason Sabbath was changed to Sunday was to make Christianity more acceptable to the Pagan population since their day of worship was the venerable day of the Sun - Sunday, the first day of the week.



## **Texts used to support a Sunday Sabbath**

There are 8 references in the Christian Scriptures to the "first day of the week", as Sunday was referred to in those days.

Five of them refer to events during Resurrection Morning -- the day when the tomb where Jesus was laid was found to be empty. The other three are:

John 20:19 describes events on what we would call Sunday evening. The disciples were gathered together. Some have speculated that this might have been the first Sunday worship service. Others suggest that the text implies that they were gathered together for their own protection, out of fear of attack by the Jews, and not worshipping at all.

Acts 20:7: Paul is described as preaching on a Sunday evening. It was evening, because the passage refers to lamps being lit. Some Christians promote this text as demonstrating that Paul held a religious service on a Sunday. Others say that he gave the teaching on what he would call Sunday evening but we would call Saturday evening; the first day of the week started at sundown on Saturday in 1st century AD Palestine. If Paul considered Sunday to be the Sabbath then he would not have set out on foot to Assos on Sunday morning.

1 Corinthians 16:2: Paul instructs the Christians at Corinth that each of them is to lay aside some money every Sunday that would later be collected for the Christians at Jerusalem. Some interpreters believe that this might refer to a collection of money at a Sunday religious service. Others suggest that the text implies that the money was to be laid aside by each believer separately and privately, and to be saved up by each person independently. In other words he didn't want them to be collected on the Sabbath.

Two texts have been cited as support for moving the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday:

Colossians 2:16-17: Paul writes: "...do not let anyone judge you...with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ" (NIV). Some people interpret the reference to "Sabbath" in this passage as authorizing Christians to celebrate (or not celebrate) the weekly Sabbath in any way that they wish. Others believe that the "Sabbath" in this passage apparently refers to the Ceremonial Sabbaths, not the Weekly Sabbaths. The verse in Colossians duplicates the text of Ezekiel 45:17 which reads: "...at the festivals, the New Moons and the Sabbaths - at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel."

Romans 14:5: Paul writes: "One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind." Some people interpret this passage as allowing Christians to either recognize or ignore the Sabbath, - or perhaps to select any day as the Sabbath. But others believe from a reading of the subsequent verses that Paul is discussing fasting here, not religious observance. They would suggest that verse 1 of this chapter indicates that the passage relates to "disputable" matters (such as when or if to fast); the day of the Sabbath was not a disputable matter; it was a commandment from God. The phrase "considering every day alike" might mean that every day from Sunday to

Friday were treated the same, as in the passage describing the collection of manna in Exodus 16:4

There appears to be no consensus on whether Jesus, his disciples, or apostles celebrated the Lord's Day on Sunday. There seems to be no internal evidence that would justify the Christian church changing the day from that commanded in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). However, in later centuries, moving from Saturday to Sunday certainly was beneficial if for no other reason than to improve the security of Christians by distancing Christianity from Judaism in the eyes of the government, but this wouldn't be a valid reason to disregard or change God's Commandments

## **Has the Calendar been Changed?**

The Jewish people have observed this date for many millennia without interruption. They have kept accurate track of the weekly cycle ever since God gave them His Ten Commandments at Sinai. When the Julian calendar was replaced by the Gregorian calendar in 1582 AD, ten days were deleted in order to bring the calendar in synchronism with the seasons. But the sequence of the days remained the same. Thus, 1582-OCT-4 (a Thursday) was followed by 1582-OCT-15 (a Friday), and the Sabbath of 1582-OCT-16 happened exactly 7 days after the previous Sabbath of OCT-9.

Most conservative theologians believe that God created the world in 6 days and rested on the seventh. But there is no evidence that Adam and Eve actually celebrated the Sabbath, but, this is no indication that they didn't. The first documented instruction from God to the Jewish people to observe the Sabbath appears in Exodus 16:27, when the Jewish people were wandering in the desert after having escaped from Egyptian captivity. God provided manna as a food source every day, except for the seventh day. A double portion was supplied on the 6th day, Friday, so that the people would not have to work, collecting manna on the Sabbath. The second command from God is seen in Exodus 23:12. Both passages were written by Moses circa 1491 BC. Presumably, the Sabbath has been observed without interruption ever since that date.

## **Who are the Sabbath-keepers?**

The main Sabbatarian faith groups (religious groups that currently worship on Saturday) are:

Seventh-Day Adventists, including a number of breakaway sects

Branch Davidians (Students of the Seven Seals)

Church of God (7th Day)

House of Yahweh

Judaism

The Process - Church of the Final Judgment

Seventh-Day Baptists

World Wide Church of God