



**Study guide for
A SOUTHERN BOYS GUIDE TO
SABBATH OBSERVANCE**

Four views on Sabbath

Seventh-day Sabbath view, which argues the seventh-day Sabbath is a universal and permanent gift (established at Creation as part of the created order) The view argues that the fourth commandment is a moral law of God . Christians are morally obligated to keep the seventh day, Saturday holy. It remains the true day of rest and worship for Christians. The biblical Sabbath is relational, linking us to our Creator and Redeemer, inviting worship and faith. The Sabbath is a sign command, which represents the Creator's new covenant Lordship over the world, as well as his commitment to redemptive re-creation both in human hearts and in a new heavens and earth—Eden restored.

The Replacement Sabbath view, reasons that since the resurrection of Christ, the sabbath (Saturday) was replaced with Sunday as the Christian's day of worship. Sunday is to be kept holy for worship. While the command to rest can be fulfilled on any day within a seven day cycle. The view has three key shifts in understanding: (1) while the Sabbath is a "creation ordinance" in which God himself established the "principle and practice" of Sabbath observance, no particular day is intended; (2) while in the fourth commandment God reinforces man's moral responsibility for keeping the Sabbath, it is not the day of the week that is God's intent, but only one day in seven that is required; (3) since the resurrection of Christ, the one-day-in-seven to be kept is Sunday, the first day of the week. "principle and practice" of Sabbath observance with no particular day intended, adherence to this view favor Sunday observance given the evidence in the New Testament suggest Sunday has the day of worship for the church.

The Lutheran view, The view asserts that the Sabbath commandment was given to Jews alone and does not concern Christians. Luther's "natural law" theology is key to this view. Rest and worship are still required on the bases of natural law logic and evidence from Scripture and the creation order but are not tied to a particular day.

The Fulfillment filter view: All OT laws are filtered through Jesus work of fulfilling the Law and His clarification of particular laws in his teachings (sermon on mount, etc.), and His summery of the law in the two love commandments, i.e., "the grid of fulfillment in Christ." Since Christ has brought the true Sabbath rest into the present, the Sabbath commands of the Old Testament are no longer binding on believers. The NT teaching is decisive and the new covenant revelation determinative. Because the inaugurated new age potentially changes everything, producing a mix of continuity and discontinuity between the OT and NT. 9 of the 10 commandments are restated in New Testament as moral norms thus remain universal moral laws while the sabbath is abrogated.

Getting Started: Things to Consider

Central questions

Should we worship on Saturday?

Is the fourth command a universal moral law?

Has Sabbath laws been abrogated by Jesus' finished work?

Why did the day of worship change from Saturday to Sunday?

Is it wrong to work on Sundays?

The crucial need for theological frameworks for dialogue on Sabbath:

(1) Sabbath; creation ordinance vs law to Israel

(2) Jesus and the Sabbath;

(3) the relationship between old and new covenants in God's redemptive plan;

(4) the priority/integrity of the Ten Commandments as enduring moral law;

(5) the interpretation of Hebrews 4 and Col 2.

(6) the historical developments of Sunday observance in favor of the seventh-day Sabbath.

Key Text

Gen 2:2-3 - God's rest on seventh day

Ex 16:22-23, 25-26 - first use of word Sabbath

Ex 20:8-11 - 10 commandments given

Duet 5:12-15 - Moses restatement of the 10

Ex 31:13,16 - Sabbath as a sign of the covenant

Isa 66:22-23 - Sabbath and the eschaton

Matt 5:7 - Jesus fulfilled the law

Mark 2:27-28 - a theological principle or Messianic Statement

Col 2:16-17 - Sabbath abrogation or festival days canceled

Rom 14:5 - Paul's dismissal

Key Text: Heb 4:9, Sabbath rest in Jesus or Sabbath observance

Context: Heb 3:17-4:13

Lord's day equals Sunday passages

- Acts 20:7
- 1 Cor 16:1-2
- Rev 1:10

Entries from Various Dictionaries of Ethics and Theology

Sabbath

The Sabbath was instituted shortly after Israel gained freedom from Egyptian slavery (Exod. 16:23–30). In Gen. 2:2–3, however, God already established the Sabbath on the seventh day of creation. Commands to observe the Sabbath appeal to God's hallowing that day at creation, Israel's deliverance from bondage, and freedom for all, including slaves and animals, to rest from labor and celebrate joyfully (Exod. 20:8–12; Deut. 5:12–15). The seventh-year sabbatical and the fiftieth-year Jubilee express God's Sabbath grace (Lev. 25; Deut. 15).

Jesus and his disciples observed the Sabbath (Mark 1:21; Luke 4:16; 23:56b), although Jesus tangled with the Pharisees over Sabbath laws. Willy Rordorf holds that Jesus attacked the Sabbath it-self, not just the Pharisaic laws “fencing” the Sabbath (Rordorf 15). Jesus healed on the Sabbath, allowing physical exertion on that day: taking up one's mat and walking (John 5:2–12), plucking grain (Mark 2:23–28), and washing in a pool (John 9:1–12). Jesus' Sabbath actions spiraled into mortal conflict with the religious leaders.

Jesus explains his Sabbath practices as life-affirming: “The sabbath was made for humankind; and not humankind for the sabbath,” and there-fore “the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath” (Mark 2:27–28). In speech and action Jesus fulfills the Sabbath, bringing rest to the weary (Matt. 11:28–29) with human liberation.

Sabbath practices among early Christians differed. Paul counsels that no one should judge another over observance of Jewish festivals and Sabbaths, for these “are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ” (Col. 2:16–17). Luke highlights Jesus fulfilling what the Sabbath signifies (quoting Isa. 58:6; 61:1–4 in Luke 4:18–19). In the book of Acts, however, Paul's custom is Sabbath observance (Acts 17:2); he regularly goes to the synagogue (Acts 13:14, 44; 16:13; 18:4). The believers' custom of gathering on the first day, the “Lord's Day,” is attested in Rev. 1:10 (see also Did. 14.1), and began early (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2), likely pre-Pauline (Rordorf 218).

Differences in Sabbath observance among Christians continued. Some sources relegate Sabbath observance to Judaism and urge celebration of the Lord's Day only, the spiritual fulfillment of Sabbath (Ign. Magn. 9.1–3; Clement of Alexandria; Origen; Justin; Irenaeus); other sources urge both Sabbath observance and Sunday Lord's Day gatherings (Ebionite and Nazorean Christians; Syriac sources) (Ekenberg 651–53).

The Sabbath is God's temple in time (see Heschel 79–83). Seventh-day Adventists and several Christian minorities continue Sabbath observance, worshipping on the seventh day, Saturday. They appeal to second-century apostate influences causing the switch to Sunday: anti-Judaism, the influence of sun cults in pagan Roman religion, and grow-ing authority in the church of Rome to change the day (Bacchiocchi). Constantine legalized Sunday rest (March 3, 321 CE). The case for three different positions on observance has been argued by various writers: Sabbath/Seventh Day observance; Sunday Lord's Day worship; and All-Days-Holy (Swartley 65–95).

Increasing numbers of Christians recognize the importance of keeping the Sabbath in today's pressured societies. Marva Dawn identifies four dimensions of Sabbath-keeping crucial to faithful Christian living, each with ethical import: "ceasing," to deepen our repentance from self-planning our future; "resting," to strengthen faith, breathing God's grace; "embracing," to apply faith practically to our values and friendships; and "feasting," to celebrate the joy of God's love and the Sabbath's foretaste of the age to come (Dawn 203). Similarly, the Sabbath enables us to discover "the rhythms of rest and delight" (Wirzba). In Sunday worship we participate in God's re-creation, marked by joy, peace, hospitality, and love, renewing allegiance to Christ (Wirzba 48–49). Sabbath renews work, home, economics, education, environment, and worship (Wirzba 91–165). Sabbath-keeping is essential for shalom wholeness. The Sabbath and the Lord's Day point us toward God's "eighth day" of eternal bliss.

Willard M. Swartley "Sabbath", Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics ed. Joel B. Green (Grand Rapids, Baker. 2011) Pg 695-696

SABBATH.

The word 'sabbath' derives from a Heb. root (sabat) meaning 'cease' or 'rest'. The sabbath day was instituted in OT times to mark the end of the six-day working week. On it no work was to be done, and special religious rites were to be observed. The Ten Commandments (see Decalogue*), as they appear in Exodus and Deuteronomy, give two reasons for observing the sabbath, reflecting the biblical doctrines of redemption (see Sin and Salvation†) and creation* respectively.

In Dt. 5:12, God's people are told to keep the sabbath day holy as a reminder of their redemption from slavery in Egypt. It provided an opportunity for joyful corporate worship (Lv. 23:3; Is. 58:13), marked ceremonially by the replacing of the show-bread in the tabernacle and by an offering of lambs, drink and grain (Lv. 24:5-8; Nu. 28:9-10). The sabbath was a 'sign' of the everlasting covenant* made by the redeemer with his people (Ex. 31:12-17; Ezk. 20:12).

In Ex. 20:8-11, God's role as creator is highlighted. People should keep the sabbath day holy, demands the fourth commandment, because the Lord rested on the seventh day after his work of creation (Gn. 2:2-3).

This instruction to follow the Lord's example brings into play the most powerful motivating factor in biblical ethics – the appeal to imitate God. It is reinforced by an even more daring anthropomorphism in Ex. 31:17, where sabbath observance is backed by the astonishing statement that the Lord paused to 'get his breath back' (Heb. wayyinnapas) on the seventh day. In this 'creation' sense, the OT's development of the sabbath principle is the obverse of its teaching about work.* Just as work does not always involve energetic activity, so sabbath rest does not necessarily imply enforced inactivity. And as work (in its biblical sense) means more than wage-earning, so the sabbath principle embraces children, the unemployed and the retired, as well as those in paid employment.

Change is the keynote. If work describes a person's major occupation, sabbath is the counter-balancing minor element in life. So when they were travelling through the

desert, the Israelites were told to stay in their tents on the sabbath day and collect no manna, because that was the only change possible in their nomadic lifestyle (Ex. 16:22-30). In more settled times, the applications of the sabbath principle naturally developed in step with changes in occupation. The farmer must stop his ploughing or harvesting, even if conditions are ideal (Ex. 34:21); and the salesman must put his samples away on the sabbath day (Je. 17:27). The specific applications vary, but the general principle (that people need appropriate minors to balance their majors) remains constantly valid.

The law's provision for a sabbatical (seventh) year, when the land was to lie fallow (Lv. 25:1-7), is an extension of the same creation principle. So is the year of jubilee* (after 'seven times seven years'), which was marked by an amnesty for slaves, debtors and the dispossessed (Lv. 25:8ff.). The humanitarian emphasis which has such a high profile in this legislation was a feature of all sabbath law (cf. Dt. 5:14; Lv. 25:6-7).

In contrast to the rest of the Decalogue, the sabbath commandment is not restated in the NT. Jesus attended synagogue worship on the sabbath day (Lk. 4:16), but clashed with the Pharisees' use of the Mishnah to submerge the sabbatical principle in a deluge of by-laws. He was especially critical of their legalistic insistence on the observance of specific minutiae which robbed the principle of its humanitarian character (e.g. Mt. 12:9-14). As Lord of the sabbath, he insisted that observance of the seventh day was meant for human refreshment and mutual care (Mk. 2:27-28). Paul echoed Jesus (as well as the OT prophets; cf. Is. 1:13; Am. 8:5) in condemning the kind of ceremonial sabbath observances which turned people away from God's intention and from the freedom of the gospel (Col. 2:13-17). According to Hebrews, the Christian fulfilment of the sabbath principle is not to be found in rules and regulations, but in God's rest which consists of eternal life in Christ (Heb. 4:1-11).

The twin themes of creation and redemption, which thread their way through the Bible's teaching on the sabbath, reappear (often interwoven) in its application to contemporary Christian and secular social life-styles. Some, highlighting the redemption motif, see the sabbath – transferred (except in the case of Seventh Day Adventists) from Saturday to Sunday* – as primarily a day of worship for God's people. Others, stressing its status as a creation ordinance, use the sabbath principle as a God-given indicator of humankind's need for regular change, as a corrective to any tendency to deify work, and as a platform from which to construct a Christian understanding of leisure.*

David H. Field "Sabbath" *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology*, Eds David J. Atkinson, David F. Field, Arthur Holmes, Oliver O'Donovan, (Downers Grove, IVP academic, 1995) pg. 853-854

SUNDAY.

Direct biblical evidence for Sunday observance is scanty. The earliest NT reference to any regular Christian activity on the first day of the week is in 1 Corinthians, where Paul asks church members to set aside money for the poor every Sunday (16:1-4). The implication is that special church meetings took place on that day which would facilitate collections.

Luke gives a more detailed account of a church Sunday meeting in Acts, where he describes the all-night service at Troas (20:7-12). Paul preached, and the focal point of worship was the breaking of bread – a semi-technical term for eating the Lord's Supper and (probably) sharing in the fellowship of the 'love feast' (cf. 1 Cor. 11:17-34).

The only other reference to Sunday in the NT is also the only one which refers to it as 'the Lord's Day'. In Rev. 1:10, John explains how he was told to write letters to seven Asian churches while at worship on a Sunday. Some commentators believe he is referring to a special occasion (Easter, perhaps, or the Day of Judgment), but it is more likely that 'the Lord's Day' refers to the day of the week when Christians met regularly to express their commitment to Jesus as Lord. There may even be a verbal allusion to the centrality of the Lord's Supper in early Sunday worship, because the adjective (Gk. *kyriakos*) recurs only in that context in the rest of the NT (1 Cor. 11:20).

Do these scattered references support the conclusion that, even in the church's earliest days, Sunday was well on the way towards becoming a Christian replacement for the Jewish sabbath?*

No direct verbal link is made between sabbath and Sunday in the NT, but the allusions to worship, teaching and giving on the first day of the week are clear reflections of major sabbath activities. The transfer of Jewish Christians' attention from Saturday to Sunday as a special day of worship would have been eased by the fact that Christ's resurrection and the giving of the Holy Spirit both took place on the first day of the week. It is, however, extremely unlikely that Sunday and sabbath were ever identified in the minds of early Christians. Apart from Jesus' criticisms of contemporary sabbath observance, and Paul's ambivalence towards the keeping of any special days (cf. Rom. 14:5-9; Gal. 4:8-11), it would have been socially impossible for the first Christians to have kept Sunday as a day of rest.

Most early patristic writers testify to a distinction between sabbath and Sunday. Sunday soon became established as a day of worship, but not as a day of rest. The sabbath principle was spiritualized. The injunction to abstain from work on the seventh day was transformed into a command to abstain from all sinful acts on any day of the week.

In 321, the Roman Emperor Constantine* forbade most kinds of work on Sundays. That gave historical impetus to a much closer linkage between Sunday and sabbath observance, an identification which was expressed with particular force and clarity by Thomas Aquinas,* the Westminster Confession (1648), and the Lord's Day Observance Society (founded 1831). Sabbatarianism was backed by legal sanctions both in Britain (where an Act of Parliament passed in the time of Charles II [1660-85; b. 1630] required church attendance and banned 'worldly labour') and in the USA (where the 'blue laws' restricted Sunday trading). The command to rest was usually interpreted as a veto on all forms of recreational activity as well as paid work.

Both Martin Luther* and John Calvin* registered strong protests against strict sabbatarianism. Distinguishing between the Bible's ceremonial and moral laws, they rejected 'superstitious observance of days' (Calvin), while supporting the provision of a weekly day of rest on humanitarian grounds.

The contemporary debate about Sunday trading in Britain throws the relationship between sabbath and Sunday into particularly sharp focus. While denying the total identification of the two, those who want to see a conservative revision of the Shops Act (1950) advocate the retention of sabbatical restrictions on Sundays. The sabbath, they argue, is a creation ordinance which may properly be the object of legislation because its provisions apply to all people. Restrictions on Sunday trade protect workers' rights to a day off and families' freedom to enjoy quality leisure time together. Their opponents fight for a total repeal of the law on the grounds that sabbatical restrictions in a secular, pluralistic society are undemocratic and legalistic. Neither side wishes to restrict opportunities for Christians to worship together on Sundays, but there is dis-agreement about the churches' right to expect freedom from competition at service times.

David H. Field, "Sunday" *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology*, Eds David J. Atkinson, David F. Field, Arthur Holmes, Oliver O'Donovan, (Downers Grove, IVP academic, 1995) pg. 935-936

Sunday Observance

The word "Sunday" first occurs in Christian writing in Justin Martyr. In the NT the day is known by the Jewish term "the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2), and once as "the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10; cf. Didache 14). This, the day of resurrection (Mark 16:2; etc.), was chosen for Christian gatherings, which were held either in the evening or very early in the morning, since the day was a normal working day.

There is nothing in the NT to associate this day with the Sabbath. Jewish Christians continued to observe the Sabbath, and problems arose between Jewish and Gentile groups. Although this issue is not mentioned in Acts 15, for Paul any insistence on holy days, like the insistence on circumcision, contradicts the freedom and sufficiency of faith (Gal. 4:9ff.; cf. Col. 2); but otherwise he commends mutual respect and tolerance (Rom. 14).

The Gospels recount the free attitude of Jesus to the Sabbath, and the conflict that this aroused. The saying "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; so the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath" (Mark 2:27-28) seems to be not a general principle, but a messianic claim. The Sabbath finds its fulfillment in the liberating activity of Jesus, just as does the year of jubilee (Luke 4:21).

In 321, a law of Constantine proclaimed Sunday as a day of rest, but the church was slow to interpret Sunday in a Sabbatarian way. Augustine can write, "Well, now, I should like to be told, what there is in these ten commandments, except that on the observance of the Sabbath, which ought not to be kept by a Christian?" (On the Spirit and the Letter 23).

The view that the Sabbath command was transferred to the Lord's Day is first found in the late 8th to the 9th century, in Rabanus Maurus and Alcuin. It received definitive form from Thomas Aquinas (see Thomistic Ethics). On his view, the moral precepts of the Decalogue* correspond to natural law* and are binding on all men; the ceremonial precepts are abrogated. The moral precept in the Sabbath commandment is "to give some time to the things of God"; with respect to "the fixing of the time" (i.e., the seventh day) it is a ceremonial precept (ST MI. 100.3). To Aquinas we owe the distinction between works of necessity and mercy (which are permissible) and servile work (which is not).

Luther stays close to Aquinas, but stresses the humanitarian reasons for a day of rest and repudiates a holy day or Sabbath imposed on religious grounds, which would be bondage. Calvin also distinguishes moral and ceremonial law, but identifies only the second table of the Decalogue with natural law (as did some early Christian writers). The Sabbath commandment is interpreted spiritually by Calvin as a "type of the spiritual rest by which believers were to cease from their own works and allow God to work in them" (Institutes 2.8.28). This accords with his view of the Christian life as self-denial* (see Calvinist Ethics), and is not confined to one day in the week. Like Luther he sees the provision of a day for rest and worship as human and convenient, and abhors a "superstition observance of days." He even says, "I do not cling so to the number seven as to bring the church under bondage to it."

Yet in Reformed churches and countries Sabbatarianism* revived. The Westminster Confession of Faith states it with utter clarity. "As it is of the law of nature that, in general, a due proportion of time be apart for the worship of God; so, in his Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him: which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week; and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath" (XXI.7). Here the Sabbath is simply transferred to the first day of the week. This owes more to Thomas than to Calvin or the NT. Yet for centuries this view held almost unquestioned influence in Protestantism. In Scotland and England, from the 17th century, the Sabbatarian assumption was accepted. The only difference was over the strictness of the observance. In the Evangelical revival strict Sabbath observance, and action for its enforcement, became a mark of evangelical seriousness. In 1831 the Lord's Day Observance Society was formed.

Though the foundation of Christian Sabbatarianism was the belief that Sabbath rest was a divine command, the arguments that found widest support were those of Luther and Calvin—the convenience of a day free for worship and the humane requirement to ensure rest for servants and laborers. Changing technology and social conditions have been more powerful to alter attitudes than theological reflection. By the 1830s, proposals to run railway trains on Sundays occasioned much controversy. Improved travel, increased leisure (the five-day week, the "weekend"), television, and the pluralism* of modern society have contributed to the erosion of Sabbath legislation and have made what remains seem like a relic from the past. The blessings of a quiet Sunday are less appreciated than its restrictions.

The churches have been reconsidering their position. Reports, such as "The Christian Use of Sunday" (Church of Scotland, 1962) and others, distinguish the Lord's Day from the Sabbath, stress the duty of Christians to worship, and point to opportunities of rest, family life, and healthful recreation.

The convenience of a day on which people are free for worship is obvious, but it is questionable how far the church can insist on Sabbath legislation on this ground. More important, perhaps, is the need to interpret rest and leisure. Much of the "recreation" of the modern world only continues the anxious competitiveness that mars the rest of the week. Men and women need more than ever to learn how "to cease from their own works and allow God to work in them." But such a rest cannot be made binding on all people, however much they need it. It is the fruit of faith.

JAMES A. WHYTE "Sunday observance" New Dictionary of Christian Ethics (SCM Press London, 1986) Pages 610 -611

The Historical development of Sabbath Observance

SABBATH (שַׁבָּת, H8701, cessation, rest; LXX σάββατον, G4879, sabbath, week).

The Hebrew weekly day of rest and worship, which was observed on the seventh day of the week, beginning at sundown on Friday and ending at sundown on Saturday.

History of the Sabbath

The sabbath of the Mosaic legislation

The regulations for the observance of the sabbath in the Mosaic legislation are relatively simple. The sabbath was to be observed on every seventh day; it was to be observed by all: the servants, the humble beasts of burden, the members of the Hebrew household, and the guests who were staying within their gates were all commanded to cease from labor on that day (Exod 20:8-11; Deut 5:12-15).

The humanitarian aspect of this freedom from toil on the sabbath is especially emphasized in Deuteronomy, where the deliverance of Israel from the oppressive bondage of Egypt is given as the reason for the keeping of the sabbath (Deut 5:14, 15).

The gathering of manna on the seventh day had been expressly forbidden (Exod 16:27-29). Likewise, the kindling of a fire on the sabbath was forbidden (35:3). The penalty for profaning the sabbath by doing any work on it was death (31:14). A man who was found gathering sticks on the sabbath day was stoned to death (Num 15:32-36).

The sabbath, however, was not a day of total inactivity. The priests carried on their duties about the Tabernacle. The bread of the Presence was to be set on the table in the holy place on the sabbath day (Lev 24:8). A special sacrifice, in addition to the ordinary daily sacrifice, was to be offered on the sabbath day (Num 28:9, 10). The rite of circumcision was performed on the sabbath if that was the eighth day after the child's birth (Lev 12:3; cf. John 7:22). The sabbath is listed among the sacred festivals, "the appointed feasts of the Lord" (23:1-3). It, like them, was proclaimed to be "a holy convocation" (23:3). This can only mean that it was regarded as a day for the calling together of the congregation of Israel to worship. In the early history of the Israelites, the sabbath was a day of welcome rest from labor and of solemn worship at the sanctuary of God.

Sabbath in the Historical and Prophetic books of the Old Testament

The first mention of the sabbath in the historical books is in 2 Kings 4:23, which contains a question uttered by the husband of the Shunammite woman at whose home Elisha had been entertained. She had asked for one of the servants and one of the asses that she might go to see the prophet (4:22). Her husband expressed surprise at her request and said, "Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor

sabbath” (4:23). His mention of the sabbath was incidental, but his remark plainly infers that it was customary to suspend work and to visit the prophet on the sabbath. Visiting a prophet on the sabbath would necessarily be limited to the few. There is evidence that visiting the Temple on the sabbath was a more widespread custom. There are a number of references in Chronicles to the ritual performed in the Temple on that day (1 Chron 9:32; 23:31; 2 Chron 2:4; 8:13; 23:4; 31:3). The prophet Isaiah, in his condemnation of the hypocrisy of the worshipers, seems to indicate that assemblies took place in the Temple on that day (Isa 1:13).

During the period of the Exile, the sabbath rose in prominence as compared to the other religious festivals of the Jews, since it was independent of the Temple in Jerusalem, whereas the other festivals were in part dependent on that religious center. In the period of the return from exile, sabbath observance was revived in Palestine, in large measure through the reforms of Nehemiah. On his return to Palestine, he was shocked to see the widespread desecration of the holy day. People labored in the fields, gathered the harvests, and bought and sold publicly on the sabbath day. Nehemiah rebuked the nobles of Judah and ordered the gates of Jerusalem closed during the sabbath (Neh 13:15-22). His vigorous efforts were largely responsible for the establishment of the sabbath as a day of universal rest among the Jews of Palestine.

The sabbath in the inter-testamental period

In the years following the reforms of Nehemiah and Ezra, their successors, the scribes, developed an elaborate code of regulations and restrictions governing sabbath observance. These were intended to safeguard and preserve the spirit of the sabbath, just as the shell protects the kernel. They were an attempt to “hedge in” the law so that its proper observance would be guaranteed.

Two whole treatises in the Talmud are devoted to the details of Sabbath observance. One of these, the Shabbath, enumerates the following thirty-nine principal classes of prohibited actions: sowing, plowing, reaping, gathering into sheaves, threshing, winnowing, cleansing, grinding, sifting, kneading, baking; shearing wool, washing it, beating it, dyeing it, spinning it, making a warp of it; making two cords, weaving two threads, separating two threads, making a knot, untying a knot, sewing two stitches, tearing to sew two stitches; catching a deer, killing, skinning, salting it, preparing its hide, scraping off its hair, cutting it up; writing two letters, blotting out for the purpose of writing two letters, building, pulling down, extinguishing, lighting a fire, beating with a hammer, and carrying from one property to another. Each of these chief enactments was further discussed and elaborated, so that actually there were several hundred things a conscientious, law-abiding Jew could not do on the Sabbath.

For example, the prohibition about tying a knot was much too general, and so it became necessary to state what kinds of knots were prohibited and what kind not. It was accordingly laid down that allowable knots were those that could be untied with one hand. A woman could tie up her undergarment, and the strings of her cap, those of her girdle, the straps of her shoes and sandals, of skins of wine and oil, of a pot with meat. She could tie a pail over the well with a girdle, but not with a rope.

The prohibition regarding writing on the Sabbath was further defined as follows: "He who writes two letters with his right or his left hand, whether of one kind or of two kinds, as also if they are written with different ink or are of different languages, is guilty. He even who should from forgetfulness write two letters is guilty, whether he has written them with ink or with paint, red chalk, India rubber, vitriol, or anything which makes permanent marks. Also he who writes on two walls which form an angle, or on the two tablets of his account book, so that they can be read together, is guilty. He who writes upon his body is guilty. If any one writes with dark fluid, with fruit juice, or in the dust on the road, in sand, or in anything in which writing does not remain, he is free. If any one writes with the wrong hand, with the foot, with the mouth, with the elbow; also if any one writes upon a letter of another piece of writing, or covers other writing" (Shabbath, xii. 3-5). Jesus had things like this in mind when he said, "And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them" (Luke.11.46).

The efforts of the scribes to promote a regard for the Hebrew sabbath were successful. The sabbath became so deeply rooted in Jewish consciousness and so treasured by individual Jews, that at the beginning of the Maccabean war, Jewish soldiers allowed themselves to be massacred rather than profane the Sabbath by fighting, even in self-defense. After one thousand Jews were slaughtered in this way, they decided that in the future it would be permissible to defend themselves if attacked on the sacred day, but not to engage in offensive operations (1Macc.2.31-1Macc.2.41). This change was spearheaded by Mattathias, the leader of the revolt against the tyranny of Antiochus IV. However, it was not considered allowable to destroy siege-works on the Sabbath; and so Pompey was permitted to raise his mound and mount his battering rams against Jerusalem without interference from the Jews Josephus, Antiq. 14.4.2 and 3.

The ruling of Mattathias is significant because it was the first of many such rulings designed to liberalize the restrictions of sabbath observance. Many ways were found to get around the letter of the law. The motive for the extended casuistry on the sabbath was undoubtedly to make the law more practicable, but it led to many fanciful and far-fetched interpretations. For example, from the rabbinical interpretation of the command in Exodus 16:29 to "remain every man of you in his place" on the sabbath day, it was determined that a sabbath day's journey might not exceed two thousand cubits beyond one's dwelling. However, if a man had deposited at that distance on the day preceding the sabbath enough food for two meals, he thereby constituted it his dwelling, and hence might go on for another two thousand cubits. Similarly, if families living in private houses which opened into a common court deposited food in the court before the sabbath, thereby establishing a "connection" between the houses and making them one dwelling, they were permitted to carry things from one house to another without breaking the law (Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Vol. II, p. 777.)

One of the outstanding features of this period was the rise of the synagogue. The synagogue became the center of the religious life of Judaism, not only in those places

which were far removed from Jerusalem, but also alongside the Temple in Jerusalem. Attendance at the synagogue became customary on the sabbath day (cf. Luke 4:16). The Hebrew sabbath became distinctively a day of worship, a worship connected largely with the synagogue.

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Is the Sabbath Still Required for Christians?

Question 37

from

40 Questions About Christians and Biblical Law

by Thomas R. Schreiner

Believers today continue to dispute whether the Sabbath is required. The Sabbath was given to Israel as a covenant sign, and Israel was commanded to rest on the seventh day. We see elsewhere in the Old Testament that covenants have signs, so that the sign of the Noahic covenant is the rainbow (Gen. 9:8–17) and the sign of the Abrahamic covenant is circumcision (Gen. 17). The paradigm for the Sabbath was God’s rest on the seventh day of creation (Gen. 2:1–3). So, too, Israel was called upon to rest from work on the seventh day (Exod. 20:8–11; 31:12–17). What did it mean for Israel not to work on the Sabbath? Figure 5 lists the kinds of activities that were prohibited and permitted.

The Sabbath was certainly a day for social concern, for rest was mandated for all Israelites, including their children, slaves, and even animals (Deut. 5:14). It was also a day to honor and worship the Lord. Special burnt offerings were offered to the Lord on the Sabbath (Num. 28:9–10). Psalm 92 is a Sabbath song that voices praise to God for his steadfast love and faithfulness. Israel was called upon to observe the Sabbath in remembrance of the Lord’s work in delivering them as slaves from Egyptian bondage (Deut. 5:15). Thus, the Sabbath is tied to Israel’s covenant with the Lord, for it celebrates her liberation from slavery. The Sabbath, then, is the sign of the covenant between the Lord and Israel (Exod. 31:12–17; Ezek. 20:12–17). The Lord promised great blessing to those who observed the Sabbath (Isa. 56:2, 6; 58:13–14). Breaking the Sabbath command was no trivial matter, for the death penalty was inflicted upon those who intentionally violated it (Exod. 31:14–15; 35:2; Num. 15:32–36), though collecting manna on the Sabbath before the Mosaic law was codified did not warrant such a punishment (Exod. 16:22–30). Israel regularly violated the Sabbath—the sign of the covenant—and this is one of the reasons the people were sent into exile (Jer. 17:21–27; Ezek. 20:12–24).

FIGURE 5A: WORK PROHIBITED ON THE SABBATH

Kindling a fire	Exod. 35:3
Gathering manna	Exod. 16:23-29
Selling goods	Neh. 10:31; 13:15-22
Bearing burdens	Jer. 17:19-27

FIGURE 5B: ACTIVITIES PERMITTED ON THE SABBATH

Military campaigns	Josh. 6:15; 1 Kings 20:29; 2 Kings 3:9
Marriage feasts	Judg. 14:12-18
Dedication feasts	1 Kings 8:65; 2 Chron. 7:8-9
Visiting a man of God	2 Kings 4:23
Changing temple guards	2 Kings 11:5-9
Preparing showbread and putting it out	1 Chron. 9:32
Offering sacrifices	1 Chron. 23:31; Ezek. 46:4-5
Duties of priests and Levites	2 Kings 11:5-9; 2 Chron. 23:4, 8
Opening the east gate	Ezek. 46:1-3

During the Second Temple period, views of the Sabbath continued to develop. It is not my purpose here to conduct a complete study. Rather, a number of illustrations will be provided to illustrate how seriously Jews took the Sabbath. The Sabbath was a day of feasting and therefore a day when fasting was not appropriate (Jdt. 8:6; 1 Macc. 1:39, 45). Initially, the Hasmoneans refused to fight on the Sabbath, but after they were defeated in battle they changed their minds and began to fight on the Sabbath (1Macc. 2:32–41; cf. Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 12.274, 276–277). The author of Jubilees propounds a rigorous view of the Sabbath (*Jubilees* 50:6–13). He emphasizes that no work should be done, specifying a number of tasks that are prohibited (50:12–13). Fasting is prohibited since the Sabbath is a day for feasting (50:10, 12). Sexual relations with one's wife also are prohibited (50:8), though offering the sacrifices ordained in the law are permitted (50:10). Those who violate the Sabbath prescriptions should die (50:7, 13). The Sabbath is eternal, and even the angels keep it (2:17–24). Indeed, the angels kept the Sabbath in heaven before it was established on earth (2:30). All Jewish authors concur that God commanded Israel to literally rest, though it is not surprising that Philo thinks of it as well in terms of resting in God (*Sobriety*, 1:174) and in terms of having thoughts of God that are fitting (*Special Laws*, 2:260). Philo also explains the number seven symbolically (*Moses*, 2:210).

The Qumran community was quite strict regarding Sabbath observance, maintaining that the right interpretation must be followed (CD 6:18; 10:14–23). Even if an animal falls into a pit it should not be helped on the Sabbath (CD 11:13–14), something Jesus assumes is permissible when talking to the Pharisees (Matt. 12:11). In the Mishnah thirty-nine different types of work are prohibited on the Sabbath (m. *Shabbat* 7:2).

I do not believe the Sabbath is required for believers now that the new covenant has arrived in the person of Jesus Christ. I should say, first of all, that it is not my purpose to reiterate what I wrote about the Sabbath in the Gospels since the Sabbath

texts were investigated there. Here it is my purpose to pull the threads together in terms of the validity of the Sabbath for today. Strictly speaking, Jesus does not clearly abolish the Sabbath, nor does he violate its stipulations. Yet the focus on regulations that is evident in Jubilees, Qumran, and in the Mishnah is absent in Jesus' teaching. He reminded his hearers that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). Some sectors of Judaism clearly had lost this perspective, so that the Sabbath had lost its humane dimension. They were so consumed with rules that they had forgotten mercy (Matt. 12:7). Jesus was grieved at the hardness of the Pharisees' hearts, for they lacked love for those suffering (Mark 3:5).

Jesus' observance of the Sabbath does not constitute strong evidence for its continuation in the new covenant. His observance of the Sabbath makes excellent sense, for he lived under the Old Testament law. He was "born under the law" as Paul says (Gal. 4:4). On the other hand, a careful reading of the Gospel accounts intimates that the Sabbath will not continue to play a significant role. Jesus proclaims as the Son of Man that he is the "lord even of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28). The Sabbath does not rule over him, but he rules over the Sabbath. He is the new David, the Messiah, to whom the Sabbath and all the Old Testament Scriptures point (Matt. 12:3–4). Indeed, Jesus even claimed in John 5:17 that he, like his Father, works on the Sabbath. Working on the Sabbath, of course, is what the Old Testament prohibits, but Jesus claimed that he must work on the Sabbath since he is equal with God (John 5:18).

It is interesting to consider here the standpoint of the ruler of the synagogue in Luke 13:10–17. He argued that Jesus should heal on the other six days of the week and not on the Sabbath. On one level this advice seems quite reasonable, especially if the strict views of the Sabbath that were common in Judaism were correct. What is striking is that Jesus deliberately healed on the Sabbath. Healing is what he "ought" (*dei*) to do on the Sabbath day (Luke 13:16). It seems that he did so to demonstrate his superiority to the Sabbath and to hint that it is not in force forever. There may be a suggestion in Luke 4:16–21 that Jesus fulfills the Jubilee of the Old Testament (Lev. 25). The rest and joy anticipated in Jubilee is fulfilled in him, and hence the rest and feasting of the Sabbath find their climax in Jesus.

We would expect the Sabbath to no longer be in force since it was the covenant sign of the Mosaic covenant, and, as I have argued elsewhere in this book, it is clear that believers are no longer under the Sinai covenant. Therefore, they are no longer bound by the sign of the covenant either. The Sabbath, as a covenant sign, celebrated Israel's deliverance from Egypt, but the Exodus points forward, according to New Testament writers, to redemption in Christ. Believers in Christ were not freed from Egypt, and hence the covenant sign of Israel does not apply to them.

It is clear in Paul's letters that the Sabbath is not binding upon believers. In Colossians Paul identifies the Sabbath as a shadow along with requirements regarding foods, festivals, and the new moon (Col. 2:16–17). The Sabbath, in other words, points to Christ and is fulfilled in him. The word for "shadow" (*skia*) that Paul uses to describe the Sabbath is the same term the author of Hebrews used to describe Old Testament sacrifices. The law is only a "shadow (*skia*) of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities" (Heb. 10:1). The argument is remarkably similar to what we see in Colossians: both contrast elements of the law as a shadow with the "substance" (*sōma*, Col. 2:17) or the "form" (*eikona*, Heb. 10:1) found in Christ. Paul does not

denigrate the Sabbath. He salutes its place in salvation history, for, like the Old Testament sacrifices, though not in precisely the same way, it prepared the way for Christ. I know of no one who thinks Old Testament sacrifices should be instituted today; and when we compare what Paul says about the Sabbath with such sacrifices, it seems right to conclude that he thinks the Sabbath is no longer binding.

Some argue, however, that “Sabbath” in Colossians 2:16 does not refer to the weekly Sabbaths but only to sabbatical years. But this is a rather desperate expedient, for the most prominent day in the Jewish calendar was the weekly Sabbath. We know from secular sources that it was the observance of the weekly Sabbath that attracted the attention of Gentiles (Juvenal, *Satires* 14.96–106; Tacitus, *Histories* 5.4). Perhaps sabbatical years are included here, but the weekly Sabbath should not be excluded, for it would naturally come to the mind of both Jewish and Gentile readers. What Paul says here is remarkable, for he lumps the Sabbath together with food laws, festivals like Passover, and new moons. All of these constitute shadows that anticipate the coming of Christ. Very few Christians think we must observe food laws, Passover, and new moons. But if this is the case, then it is difficult to see why the Sabbath should be observed since it is placed together with these other matters.

Another crucial text on the Sabbath is Romans 14:5: “One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.” In Romans 14:1–15:6 Paul mainly discusses food that some—almost certainly those influenced by Old Testament food laws—think is defiled. Paul clearly teaches, in contrast to Leviticus 11:1–44 and Deuteronomy 14:3–21, that all foods are clean (Rom. 14:14, 20) since a new era of redemptive history has dawned. In other words, Paul sides theologically with the strong in the argument, believing that all foods are clean. He is concerned, however, that the strong avoid injuring and damaging the weak. The strong must respect the opinions of the weak (Rom. 14:1) and avoid arguments with them. Apparently the weak were not insisting that food laws and the observance of days were necessary for salvation, for if that were the case they would be proclaiming another gospel (cf. Gal. 1:8–9; 2:3–5; 4:10; 5:2–6), and Paul would not tolerate their viewpoint. Probably the weak believed that one would be a stronger Christian if one kept food laws and observed days. The danger for the weak was that they would judge the strong (Rom. 14:3–4), and the danger for the strong was that they would despise the weak (Rom. 14:3, 10). In any case, the strong seem to have had the upper hand in the Roman congregations, for Paul was particularly concerned that they not damage the weak.

Nevertheless, a crucial point must not be overlooked. Even though Paul watches out for the consciences of the weak, he holds the viewpoint of the strong on both food laws and days. John Barclay rightly argues that Paul subtly (or not so discreetly!) undermines the theological standpoint of the weak since he argues that what one eats and what days one observes are a matter of no concern.¹ The Old Testament, on the other hand, is clear on the matter. The foods one eats and the days one observes are ordained by God. He has given clear commands on both of these issues. Hence, Paul’s argument is that such laws are no longer valid since believers are not under the

¹ John M. G. Barclay, “‘Do We Undermine the Law?’ A Study of Romans 14.1–15.6,” in *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, WUNT 89 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 287–308.

Mosaic covenant. Indeed, the freedom to believe that all days are alike surely includes the Sabbath, for the Sabbath naturally would spring to the mind of Jewish readers since they kept the Sabbath weekly.

Paul has no quarrel with those who desire to set aside the Sabbath as a special day, as long as they do not require it for salvation or insist that other believers agree with them. Those who esteem the Sabbath as a special day are to be honored for their point of view and should not be despised or ridiculed. Others, however, consider every day to be the same. They do not think that any day is more special than another. Those who think this way are not to be judged as unspiritual. Indeed, there is no doubt that Paul held this opinion, since he was strong in faith instead of being weak. It is crucial to notice what is being said here. If the notion that every day of the week is the same is acceptable, and if it is Paul's opinion as well, then it follows that Sabbath regulations are no longer binding. The strong must not impose their convictions on the weak and should be charitable to those who hold a different opinion, but Paul clearly has undermined the authority of the Sabbath in principle, for he does not care whether someone observes one day as special. He leaves it entirely up to one's personal opinion. But if the Sabbath of the Old Testament were still in force, Paul could never say this, for the Old Testament makes incredibly strong statements about those who violate the Sabbath, and the death penalty is even required in some instances. Paul is living under a different dispensation, that is, a different covenant, for now he says it does not matter whether one observes one day out of seven as a Sabbath.

Some argue against what is defended here by appealing to the creation order. As noted above, the Sabbath for Israel is patterned after God's creation of the world in seven days. What is instructive, however, is that the New Testament never appeals to Creation to defend the Sabbath. Jesus appealed to the creation order to support his view that marriage is between one man and one woman for life (Mark 10:2–12). Paul grounded his opposition to women teaching or exercising authority over men in the creation order (1 Tim. 2:12–13), and homosexuality is prohibited because it is contrary to nature (Rom. 1:26–27), in essence, to God's intention when he created men and women. Similarly, those who ban believers from eating certain foods and from marriage are wrong because both food and marriage are rooted in God's good creation (1 Tim. 4:3–5). We see nothing similar with the Sabbath. Never does the New Testament ground it in the created order. Instead, we have very clear verses that say it is a "shadow" and that it does not matter whether believers observe it. So, how do we explain the appeal to creation with reference to the Sabbath? It is probably best to see creation as an *analogy* instead of as a ground. The Sabbath was the sign of the Mosaic covenant, and since the covenant has passed away, so has the covenant sign.

Now it does not follow from this that the Sabbath has no significance for believers. It is a shadow, as Paul said, of the substance that is now ours in Christ. The Sabbath's role as a shadow is best explicated by Hebrews, even if Hebrews does not use the word for "shadow" in terms of the Sabbath. The author of Hebrews sees the Sabbath as foreshadowing the eschatological rest of the people of God (Heb. 4:1–10). A "Sabbath rest" still awaits God's people (v. 9), and it will be fulfilled on the final day when believers rest from earthly labors. The Sabbath, then, points to the final rest of the people of God. But since there is an already-but-not-yet character to what Hebrews says about rest, should believers continue to practice the Sabbath as long as

they are in the not-yet?² I would answer in the negative, for the evidence we have in the New Testament points in the contrary direction. We remember that the Sabbath is placed together with food laws and new moons and Passover in Colossians 2:16, but there is no reason to think that we should observe food laws, Passover, and new moons before the consummation. Paul's argument is that believers now belong to the age to come and the requirements of the old covenant are no longer binding.

Does the Lord's Day, that is, Christians worshiping on the first day of the week, constitute a fulfillment of the Sabbath? The references to the Lord's Day in the New Testament are sparse. In Troas believers gathered "on the first day of the week . . . to break bread" and they heard a long message from Paul (Acts 20:7). Paul commands the Corinthians to set aside money for the poor "on the first day of every week" (1 Cor. 16:2). John heard a loud voice speaking to him "on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10). These scattered hints suggest that the early Christians at some point began to worship on the first day of the week. The practice probably has its roots in the resurrection of Jesus, for he appeared to his disciples "the first day of the week" (John 20:19). All the Synoptics emphasize that Jesus rose on the first day of the week, i.e., Sunday: "very early on the first day of the week" (Mark 16:2; cf. Matt. 28:1; Luke 24:1). The fact that each of the Gospels stresses that Jesus was raised on the first day of the week is striking. But we have no indication that the Lord's Day functions as a fulfillment of the Sabbath. It is likely that gathering together on the Lord's Day stems from the earliest church, for we see no debate on the issue in church history, which is quite unlikely if the practice originated in Gentile churches outside Israel. By way of contrast, we think of the intense debate in the first few centuries on the date of Easter. No such debate exists regarding the Lord's Day.

The early roots of the Lord's Day are verified by the universal practice of the Lord's Day in Gentile churches in the second century.³ It is not surprising that many Jewish Christians continued to observe the Sabbath as well. One segment of the Ebionites practiced the Lord's Day and the Sabbath. Their observance of both is instructive, for it shows that the Lord's Day was not viewed as the fulfillment of the Sabbath but as a separate day.

Most of the early church fathers did not practice or defend literal Sabbath observance (cf. *Diognetus* 4:1) but interpreted the Sabbath eschatologically and spiritually. They did not see the Lord's Day as a replacement of the Sabbath but as a

² So Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., "A Sabbath Rest Still Awaits the People of God," in *Pressing Toward the Mark: Essays Commemorating Fifty Years of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*, ed. Charles G. Dennison and Richard C. Gamble (Philadelphia: The Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1986), 33–51. Gaffin argues that the rest is only eschatological. I support Andrew Lincoln's view that it is of an already-but-not-yet character (Andrew T. Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology in the New Testament," in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Investigation*, ed. D. A. Carson [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982], 197–220).

³ For a detailed discussion of some of the issues raised here, see R. J. Bauckham, "The Lord's Day," in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Investigation*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 221–50; idem, "Sabbath and Sunday in the Post-Apostolic Church," in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, 257–69

unique day. For instance, in the Epistle of Barnabas, the Sabbaths of Israel are contrasted with “the eighth day” (15:8), and the latter is described as “a beginning of another world.” Barnabas says that “we keep the eighth day” (which is Sunday), for it is “the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead” (15:9). The Lord’s Day was not viewed as a day in which believers abstained from work, as was the case with the Sabbath. Instead, it was a day in which most believers were required to work, but they took time in the day to meet together in order to worship the Lord.⁴ The contrast between the Sabbath and the Lord’s Day is clear in Ignatius, when he says, “If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord’s Day, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death” (*To the Magnesians* 9:1). Ignatius, writing about A.D. 110, specifically contrasts the Sabbath with the Lord’s Day, showing that he did not believe the latter replaced the former.⁵ Bauckham argues that the idea that the Lord’s day replaced the Sabbath is post-Constantinian. Luther saw rest as necessary but did not tie it to Sunday.⁶ A stricter interpretation of the Sabbath became more common with the Puritans, along with the Seventh-Day Baptists and later the Seventh-day Adventists.⁷

SUMMARY

Believers are not obligated to observe the Sabbath. The Sabbath was the sign of the Mosaic covenant. The Mosaic covenant and the Sabbath as the covenant sign are no longer applicable now that the new covenant of Jesus Christ has come. Believers are called upon to honor and respect those who think the Sabbath is still mandatory for believers. But if one argues that the Sabbath is required for salvation, such a teaching is contrary to the gospel and should be resisted forcefully. In any case, Paul makes it clear in both Romans 14:5 and Colossians 2:16–17 that the Sabbath has passed away now that Christ has come. It is wise naturally for believers to rest, and hence one principle that could be derived from the Sabbath is that believers should regularly rest. But the New Testament does not specify when that rest should take place, nor does it set forth a period of time when that rest should occur. We must remember that the early Christians were required to work on Sundays. They worshiped the Lord on the Lord’s Day, the day of Jesus’ resurrection, but the early Christians did not believe the Lord’s Day fulfilled or replaced the Sabbath. The Sabbath pointed toward eschatological rest in Christ, which believers enjoy in part now and will enjoy fully on the Last Day.

⁴ Bauckham, “Sabbath and Sunday in the Post-Apostolic Church,” 274.

⁵ Cf. the concluding comments of Bauckham, “The Lord’s Day,” 240.

⁶ Martin Luther, “How Christians Should Regard Moses,” in *Luther’s Works*, vol. 35, *Word and Sacrament*, ed. Helmut T. Lehmann (general editor) and E. Theodore Bachman (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960), 165

⁷ Bauckham’s survey of history is immensely valuable. See Bauckham, “Sabbath and Sunday in the Post-Apostolic Church,” 251–98; idem, “Sabbath and Sunday in the Medieval Church in the West,” in *From Sabbath to Lord’s Day*, 299–309; idem, “Sabbath and Sunday in the Protestant Tradition,” in *From Sabbath to Lord’s Day*, 311–41.

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