

A dramatic sunset over the ocean. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, with a bright sun breaking through on the left side, casting a golden glow. The ocean is turbulent, with white foam from waves crashing against dark, jagged rocks in the foreground. The overall mood is powerful and serene.

24/6

The  
Rest  
Story

3

# God's Day

As his custom was, Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day to worship and fellowship (Luke 4:15). It was especially on this day that he healed the sick (Mark 6:1,5). He healed the man with a withered hand (Matt 12:

10), the man with an unclean spirit (Mark 1:21-16), the woman bent over (Luke 13: 10-13), the man with dropsy (Luke 14: 1-4), the paralytic at Bethesda (John 5:9), and the man born blind (John 9:14) all on the Sabbath. Why did he choose this day of all days to heal?

Jesus said, "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day" (Matt 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5) because, as the Word, the Son of God, he made all things (John 1:2) and created all things (Col. 1:16). God created all things by Jesus (Eph. 3:9), by whom He created the worlds (Heb 1:2). Jesus said, "Until now my Father works, and I work" (John 5:17). And when they finished their work of creation, he and his Father rested on the seventh day (Gen 2:2).

"Who has gathered the winds in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name? And what is His Son's name?" Prov. 30:4. It is "the LORD and His anointed," His "Son" (Ps 2:2,12) who created all things even the ends of the earth.

"When He appointed the foundations of the earth then was [the Wisdom of God] by Him, as one brought up with Him" Prov 8: 29, 30. "Jesus Christ, the Wisdom and Power of God" (1Cor 1:24) was "with God" "in the beginning" as "the Word" John 1:1. "For by the Word of the Lord were the heavens made" Psalm 33:6.

The seventh day is a day of rest because God and His Son celebrated their work of creation on that day. Honoring the seventh day is honoring the Creator of all things. He is Lord of that day because He made that day as a special time for all creation to remember Him. It is his day, and He calls them, "My Sabbaths" (Eze. 31:13; 44:24; Lev. 19:3, 30). He gave "My Sabbaths" as a sign between Himself and all people forever (Ezekiel 20:12; Isaiah 56:2-6).



Together they created all things and together they rested from all their work. All the hosts of heaven praise the Father saying, “You are worthy, O LORD, to receive honor and glory and power, for You have created all things” Rev 4:11. “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth” said, “Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, *be* unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever” Rev. 5:13.

After he returned to his Father in heaven, the disciples and apostles continued to follow their master’s example. Paul spoke in the synagogues on the Sabbath day in Antioch (Acts 13:14) and in Philippi (Acts 16:12,13) and in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1,2) and in Corinth (Acts 18:1,4).

The Creation-Sabbath connection surfaces again just before Jesus returns in the clouds of heaven. Revelation 14:14 tells of our Savior coming on a cloud with a sickle to reap the earth. But just a few verses earlier the message goes forth to “worship Him who made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountain of waters” Rev. 14:7. This message is an echo of the fourth commandment spoken from Mount Sinai and written in stone by God’s own finger.

“Remember the seventh 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...For in six days the LORD

Hundreds of language groups have preserved the word Sabbath for the seventh day.

**Sabt** Arabic, Swahili  
**Sanbat** Ethiopian  
**Sabbaton** Egyptian Coptic  
**Shamba** Hindustani, Afghanistani  
**Shambid** ancient Persian  
**Shapat** Armenian  
**Shabbat** Hebrew  
**Shabati** Gregorian  
**Sabtu** Malayan, Borneo  
**Saptu** Javanese  
**Sabotsy** Malagasy  
**Sab, Sebatsu, Sibde** West Africa  
**Sibiti** Central Africa  
**Sibda** Bornu Central Africa  
**Sabata** East Africa  
**Sibbedi** Bargrimma Africa  
**Subbota** Russian, Bulgarian  
**Subota** Serbian  
**Sabado** Spanish  
**Sabbado** Portuguese  
**Sabato** Italian  
**Sabbatum** Latin  
**Samedi, Dissata** French  
**Sambata** Romanian  
**Samstag** German  
**Szombat** Hungarian  
**Sobota** Polish  
**Sabatico** Prussian  
 and 160 more!

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” Exodus 20:8-11.

At the very end of time, attention will be drawn toward the

Creator of all things and the day that commemorates His mighty work. “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker” Psalm 95:6.

This day is no ordinary day. It is blessed and hallowed, sanctified or made holy, set apart. The first holy thing in all history was not a holy mountain, a holy altar, a holy shrine or a holy place. It was a holy day, a palace in time, an appointment with our holy, loving Creator. And over two thousand years later when Jesus freed his people from Egyptian bondage he “made known unto them His holy Sabbath” (Nehemiah 9:14) the one he made in the beginning.

His Sabbaths became a sign between Him and His people “that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them” (Eze. 20:12)—make them holy. It was only then that God established a holy place.

Many think that the Sabbath was first given to Israel at Mount Sinai as part of the Law of Moses. But the seventh day was a special time and the number seven held deep significance for the worshippers of God many centuries earlier.

Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph all were aware of seven days, seven years and seven times as an important sign of commitment.

Long before there was a Jew the Sabbath was given to mankind. Long before the Hebrew people came on the scene, God gave man the blessing of marriage. Both are

gifts from God to the very first couple in the garden of Eden.

Jesus said, You “put away your wives, but in the beginning it was not so” Matt. 19:8. Today, men not only put away their wives but they have put away the Sabbath that was so in the beginning!

This is not surprising because it was prophesied to happen. A little power would arise after the fall of the fourth world empire that would “think to change times and laws” Daniel 7:25. The first empire seen by Daniel was Babylon the world superpower 600 years before the birth of Jesus. The next three to follow were Persia, Greece and Rome. Just before Rome fell (in 476 AD) and just as a new world power was rising (in 321 AD) a church-state union passed the first law enforcing a new worship day.

The first “Christian” Roman Emperor, Constantine the Great, a worshiper of Mithra decreed:

**“On the venerable day of the sun [Sunday] let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed.”**

Codex Justinianus, lib.3, tit.12:3; translated in *History of the Christian Church*, by Schaff, Vol.III, p.380

When Constantine later moved his capitol to Constantinople in what is today Istanbul, Turkey, he left the city of Rome under the rule of Bishop Sylvester I in 330 AD. It wasn’t long before the Church was making her own decrees.

The Council of Laodicea in 364 AD prohibited Christians from resting on the Sabbath but allowed the commemoration of martyrs on both the seventh and first day of the week. This mix of restriction and freedom surrounding the seventh-day Sabbath indicates that it was honored by many well into the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

The Catholic Church is proud of this history and has for many centuries taken credit for shifting the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday.

ance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.” *A Doctrinal Catechism* by Stephen Keenan, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 1876 p. 174.

“It was the Catholic Church that decided Sunday should be the day of worship for Christians, in honor of the Resurrection.” *Catholicism and Fundamentalism*, by Karl Keating, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1988 p. 38.

“Perhaps the boldest thing, the most revolutionary change the Church ever did, happened in the first century. The holy day, the Sabbath, was changed from Saturday to Sunday. ‘The Day of the Lord’ was chosen, not from any directions noted in the Scriptures, but from the Church’s sense of its own power.” Saint Catherine Catholic Church *Sentinel*, Algonac, Michigan, Vol. 50, No. 22, May 21, 1995.

“In the New Law the observance of the Lord’s day took the place of the observance of the Sabbath, not by virtue of the precept, but by the institution of the Church.” Thomas Aquinas c. 1270

“Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept? 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 Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observ-

The same thing happened after the death of Solomon. Israel split into the northern and southern kingdoms. Jeroboam, who took ten tribes north, set up a new capitol in Damascus with a new time for the people to worship “which he devised of his own heart” (1Kings 12:32,33).

Finally the prophet Ezekiel was shown a group of 25 men sitting with their backs to the temple facing eastward. “And they worshipped the sun toward the east” (Eze. 8:16).



But just as prophecy foretold the change of “times and laws”, it also predicted the restoration of the true Sabbath at the end of time.

“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in...and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD” Isaiah 58:12,13.



Charles Darwin published his famous *Origin of Species* in 1859. At the same time the Biblical seventh-day Sabbath was being rediscovered. Just as Paul urged the people of Lystra to turn to “the living God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that are therein” (Acts 14:15), so a flood of papers, books, and periodicals pointed to the Creator and His day.

*An Argument for the Perpetuity of the Sabbath* 1841, *History of the Institution of the Sabbath day* 1845, *The Sabbath Herald* 1850, *The Sabbath Made for Man* 1857, *Literature of the Sabbath Question* 1865, *A Discussion of the Sabbath*

*Question* 1872, *History of the Sabbath* 1873, and hundreds more found in the study of the Bible the fact that not only did Christ keep the seventh-day Sabbath, but so did his disciples throughout the New Testament church era as recorded in the book of Acts, and numerous groups in early church history for many centuries during the Dark Ages, like the Paulicians, the Cathars, Bogomils, Albigenses, and Waldenses.

The knowledge of the Sabbath as the seventh day memorial of the first week of time was kept alive among a remnant who fled from persecution into the wilderness of the Alps and ultimately to the New World (see Revelation 12). There, the seed of the woman could keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus, His Son.

But tradition, solidified through centuries of Sunday-keeping, tried to justify itself. Colossians 2:15 was urged and Romans 6:14 was offered as evidence that the Law of God had been abolished, nailed to the cross, and thus we are no longer under obligation to keep the Law but under Grace.

But read the next verse. Does this mean we can sin because we are not under the law? God forbid! The law was added because of sin (Gal. 3:19). As soon as Adam sinned there was a sacrifice, a substitute, the promise of a Savior. Skins were provided to cover the pair and remind them of the Lamb that was to come and die for the world.

The Messiah’s death would cause “sacrifice and oblation to cease” (Dan. 9:27). The law that was added because of sin would be needed only “until the Seed should come.” This law that specified all the details for which animals to offer and how they should be slain and how their blood was to be used—all these rituals and ceremonies—would then end at the cross. They were nailed along with the Lamb of God, “who bore our sins in his own body upon the tree” (1Peter 2:24), sins that were against us (Col 2:15), bringing upon us death, the wages of sin (Rom 6:23).

“Let no man therefore judge you...but the body of Christ” Col. 2:16. This phrase, “the body of Christ” occurs many times in the writings of Paul and refers to the Church, the body of believers, who are members of His body. Notice that the word “is” is italicized in the KJV. It is a supplied word and not in the original text.

Paul is saying that only the community of believers, the body of Christ, has any authority over His members. No one else has any authority over you.

Critical opposition to matters of faith and practice, judgment of religious days and worship service in Paul’s day, were but a taste of what was yet to come, a foreshadow of the future when men would dictate the conscience of believers, telling them when to worship, when to fast, how to pray, whom to pray to, what kind of

penance to perform, how many steps to climb, what pilgrimages to make, what you could read and what you couldn’t and countless other superstitious and unbiblical requirements on the threat of excommunication.

No one else has any authority over you in the matters of holy days, new moons, or the Sabbath.

Holy Days	Annual
New Moons	Monthly
Sabbaths	Weekly

This sequence of annual holy days, monthly New Moons, and weekly seventh-day Sabbaths, is a frequent formula occurring in the Scriptures. Ezekiel 45:17; Nehemiah 10:33; 1Chron. 23:31; and 2Chron. 2:4; 8:13; 31:3 demonstrate this. These three terms are a logical and progressive sequence.

Today, the annual holy days have been replaced with Easter (Ishtar, rabbits and eggs), Lent (weeping for Tammuz), Cupid and hearts (afflicting our hearts in Atonement), Santa and his elves (who comes in the sky to bring his reward with him. Rev. 22:12).

The seventh day, the seventh week (Pentecost), the seventh month (Atonement), the seventh year (Land Rest), the seventh land rest (Jubilee), and even the seventh millennium (Planet Rest) teach us important aspects of God’s plan to *restore* our physical labor, our

spiritual life, the heavenly temple, agriculture, and the world itself.

The sacrifices were abolished in the final sacrifice of Christ who “once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” Heb. 9:28. But the Law of God is eternal.

The 10 Commandments consist of four that honor God and six that respect our families and neighbors. The last six are reasonable and natural—even primitive peoples know it is wrong to dishonor your parents, to kill, to steal, to lie; these are “a law unto themselves” (Romans 2:14).

And the first three make sense. The need to give God exclusive worship, honor, and respect. But the fourth commandment seems arbitrary. Why the seventh day? Why not any day, or every day?

Adam and Eve could eat of any tree in the garden except one. How arbitrary of God to make a specific restricted food such a big deal—with a death penalty attached, no less! This doesn’t seem reasonable or intuitive at all.

Abraham was specifically told to circumcise the foreskin of his flesh. This was absolutely not reasonable! It wasn’t obvious or easy to understand. Why foreskin? If God wanted a permanent physical alteration, why not a tattoo? Or a pierced ear? At least those would be an open, visible witness to divine allegiance and applicable to all members of the human race.

For some unclear reason it was important to God and He asked Abraham to do it as a demonstration of his loyalty. And it had permanent implications: either cut it off or you get cut off!

Why the seventh day? It may seem arbitrary to us. The sun rises the same on that day as on any other. This is exactly why it stands as exceptional evidence of loyalty to the Creator who made all things and then rested on that day.

GOD	MAN
1. Only God	5. Parents
2. No Images	6. Life
3. Holy Name	7. Family
4. Holy Day	8. Property
	9. Truth
	10. Satisfaction

Isaiah 56 pronounces a blessing on “the man” (not just the Jew) “that keeps the Sabbath.” And “the stranger... also the sons of the stranger,” in fact, “**every one** that keeps the Sabbath” (verses 2-6). Why? “For my house shall be called a house of prayer for **all** people” (verse 7).

The solemn set feasts, the new moons, the seventh-day Sabbath **are** shadows of good things to come. Even in the earth made new “from one Sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before me, says the LORD” Isa. 66:23