

S A B B A T H

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

“But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you.

‘Therefore you are to observe the sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.

‘For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the Lord; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death.’ ”

(Exodus 31:12–15)

The Sabbath was a sign between God and Israel.

In the Old Testament, Sabbath was a day of complete rest. Notice that the punishment for breaking the Sabbath was death. If we see Christianity only as a continuation of Judaism, we are greatly mistaken. The New Testament replaced the Old Testament, after the death of Jesus, and under the New Testament, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for we are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). The transition is explained in the book of Hebrews. “Testament” or “covenant” is a will. Just like our will doesn’t take effect until we die, so the New Testament (covenant), which Jesus ushered in, didn’t take effect until His death.

For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it.

For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.

(Hebrews 9:16, 17)

Beloved, keep in mind that Jesus was born and spent His entire life under the Old Testament—under the Law (Galatians 4:4). All the “things” in the Old Testament are only a shadow of what is to come. Sabbath is one of those “things.”

Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—

things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; *but the substance belongs to Christ.*

(Colossians 2:16, 17)

Actually, the observance of days, according to the apostle Paul, is a sign of weakness (Galatians 4:9–11). Before we became Christians—new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17), we were either Jews or Gentiles. Gentiles were never under the Law of Moses. (Read chapter “Law.”) Brothers and sisters, why would we need a Law of Moses now, when God Himself took up residence in us, and the Holy Spirit leads us? We are under a different kind of law. It is called the law of the Spirit (Romans 8:2), and the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2). In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus says:

Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.
(Matthew 5:17)

And He did. He lived a life of perfect love. He fulfilled the Law. God’s commandments to us under the New Testament are to believe in His Son Jesus Christ and to love one another (1 John 3:23). Jesus said,

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
(John 13:34, 35)

If I love others as Jesus loves me, of course, I am not going to murder anyone or steal from him or covet his “stuff.” I am not going to cheat on anyone with his or her spouse or lie to him, etc.

Think about the words of Jesus, “Love as I have loved you.” His law is a higher law than any other law we can come up with. *Love fulfills the law.*

Now let us go back to the Sabbath Day. The Jewish Sabbath Day was celebrated from Friday evening till Saturday evening. As a new believer in Christ Jesus, I was told in the congregation I started to attend that the Sabbath Day was moved to Sunday. I have not found the shifting of the Sabbath Day anywhere in the Bible, so I see this teaching as a teaching of men and not God. Beloved, everything we need to know is in the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit, our teacher, is guiding us into all truth (John 16:13).

The Word “Sabbath” Means Rest

We, the New Testament believers, find our rest in a person—Jesus Christ. *Every day is the Lord’s Day for the child of God.* We find rest in our spirit seven days a week. It is a state of mind. Jesus is calling,

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”
(Matthew 11:28)

At the time we received Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we were done working.

For the one who has entered His rest has himself also
rested from his works, as God did from His.

(Hebrews 4:10)

There is nothing more we could do to make God love us more, and there is nothing we could do to make Him love us less.

- We are children of the living God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth.
- God loves us unconditionally.
- We are His treasured ones.
- He has accepted us.
- He has forgiven us.
- We were made holy, blameless, and complete in His sight.
- We are citizens of heaven, seated in heaven in Christ Jesus right now.
- We are new creatures, united to the Lord, and we are one spirit with Him.
- We are saints.
- Our body is a temple, a dwelling place of God. His Spirit and His life dwell in us.

All of this applies to us who are born again—born of the Spirit, born of God, born from above. (Read chapter “Christians” and “Born again” for Scripture verses supporting these statements.)

In Jesus we have eternal life, and *nothing* can separate us from the love of God. If we keep asking for things we have already received, we are not walking by faith. We are double-minded, and there is no rest for a double-minded person. Once we realize that we have entered the rest and what it really means—what a difference this truth makes in our everyday lives!

Yes, we rest in Jesus. We rest in His finished work on the cross and His resurrection.

JESUS IS OUR REST. JESUS IS OUR SABBATH.

Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of
God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”

(John 6:29)

The following verse is often misunderstood:

But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a
Sabbath.

(Matthew 24:20)

If we would read the whole chapter, we would see that the disciples asked Jesus to tell them what will be the signs of His coming, and of the end of the age. Jesus told them first

about the events near at hand—the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of the Jewish church and state, and about the Gospel of salvation being preached even to the Gentiles. Verse 20 doesn't mean that the Sabbath Day observance is required under the New Testament. Jesus is referring to the flight that His disciples will make at the time of Jerusalem's destruction by the Romans. The Sabbath Day restriction would be a hindrance to them. City gates will be closed, and there will be problems with provisioning, lodging, etc. Not that the disciples themselves will keep the Sabbath Day, but the Jews will still keep it. In some watered down form, they observe it to this very day. Do you think that everybody grasped the fullness of the Gospel right away? Can you imagine living under the Law for a thousand years, with all the religious regulations and men's traditions on top of it? Now something "new" is here. They didn't let go of the "old" right away, and we see it especially in the book of Acts. It took time for the New Testament to penetrate. Some rejected it all together.

I read somewhere, "A highly developed and well-organized belief system can often be the most dangerous blinder to truth." How true! Brothers and sisters, do not be deceived!