

7 Facts About the Seventh Day

Adapted from Why God Said Remember by Joe Crews.

Part of Satan's strategy to destroy humanity's trust in God has been to attack His claim as the Creator. Obviously, the theory of evolution is part of this deceptive and soul-destroying effort. With its amoral humanistic emphasis, Darwin's doctrine has turned millions into religious skeptics and enshrouded in darkness their need for the Savior.

Yet while many Christians rightly denounce this unscientific belief, ironically, many are still falling into the devil's trap of denying God's sovereignty over the earth. That trap is the ages-long effort to twist and destroy the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath.

Through Satan's false information and man's trust in traditions over the sure word of Scripture, millions of Christians have been led to discount or even reject the importance of observing the Sabbath. "The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord: ... in it thou shalt not do any work" (Exodus 20:10). No one disagrees with the clear meaning of this text, yet millions are finding ways not to follow it.

Why? The general Bible ignorance of the church and the clever arguments of Satan have created a climate of prejudice against the holiness of the seventh day in favor of the observance of Sunday. So in the interest of promoting God's law over the theories of men, let's take a moment to rediscover some amazing facts about the seventh-day Sabbath.

Fact #1:

The Seventh-day Sabbath Establishes God's Sovereignty

Why does Satan hate the Sabbath so much? Because the Sabbath identifies the true God and His claim of ultimate sovereignty.

God certainly anticipated the controversy over the Genesis account of Creation. He knew that after the fall of man, there would be doubts about His claims of manufacturing all the staggering mass of matter by merely commanding it to exist.

To safeguard His sovereignty, He established a mark that denoted His absolute right to rule as Lord. He chose to memorialize His display of creative power by setting aside the seventh day of the Creation week as a holy day of rest and remembering.

God wrote these words: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, 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. ...

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is: ... wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:8–11).

Once a week, as the earth rotates on its axis through space, the Sabbath reminder travels around the earth reaching every man, woman, and child with the message of an instant creation and the one who did the creating.

Why did God say remember? Because to forget the true Sabbath is to forget the true Creator.

Does it really matter that much? See "The One Unimportant Commandment?" below.

Fact #2:

The Seventh-day Sabbath Was Made for Everyone

A multitude of Christians call God's fourth commandment the "Jewish Sabbath." But nowhere is this expression found in the Bible. The seventh day is called "the sabbath of the Lord," and it is never called "the sabbath of the Jew" (Exodus 20:10).

Luke, a Gentile writer of the New Testament, often refers to things that were particularly Jewish. He writes of the "nation of the Jews," "the people of the Jews," "the land of the Jews," and the "synagogue of the Jews" (Acts 10:22; 12:11; 10:39; 14:1). But he never refers to the "sabbath of the Jews," although he mentions the Sabbath repeatedly.

Christ also taught that "the sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2:27). Adam and Eve were the only two people who existed when God actually established the Sabbath. There were no Jews in the world until 2,000 years later, so it was never meant just for the Jews. Jesus uses the term "man" in the generic sense, referring to all mankind. The same word is used in connection with the institution of marriage that was also introduced at creation. Certainly no Christian can believe that marriage was made only for the Jews.

Fact #3:

It's Not About Just Keeping Any Day

Every word of God's Ten Commandments was written by His own hand in stone. Every word is serious and meaningful. No line in them is ambiguous or mysterious. Sinners and Christians, educated and uneducated, are not confused about the words "seventh day." So why do they discount those words if every other word in the commandments is considered to be ironclad?

Satan wants the world to accept Sunday as the day he has chosen for worship, but any day will do for

him so long as it means we're breaking God's command.

Genesis describes the origin of the Sabbath like this: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made. ... And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made" (Genesis 2:1–3).

Which day did God bless and sanctify? The seventh day. How was it to be kept holy? By resting. Could any of the other six be kept holy? No. Why? Because God commanded not to rest those days but to work. Does God's blessing make a difference? Of course. Parents pray for God to bless their children because they believe it makes a difference. The seventh day is different from all the other days because it has God's blessing.

Has God ever given man the privilege of choosing his own day of rest? No. In fact, God confirms in the Bible that the Sabbath is a matter settled and sealed by His own divine power. Read Exodus 16. For 40 years, God worked three miracles every week to show Israel which day was holy: (1) No manna fell on the seventh day; (2) they could not keep manna overnight without spoilage; (3) but when they kept manna over the Sabbath, it remained sweet and fresh!

But some Israelites had the same idea as many Christians have today. They felt that any day in seven would be okay to keep holy: "It came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none." What happened? "And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" (Exodus 16:27, 28).

God met them and accused them of breaking His law by going forth to work on the seventh day. Would God say the same thing to those who break the Sabbath today? Yes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

But why the seventh day, exactly? See "Why the Seventh Day?" below.

Fact #4:

We Know the True Seventh Day

Some reject the seventh-day Sabbath over the belief that we cannot know which day it falls on today, so picking any day should be okay. But this is fallacy. Here are four proofs that identify the true Sabbath.

1: According to Scripture, Christ died on Friday and rose on Sunday, the first day of the week. Practically all churches acknowledge this by observing Easter Sunday and Good Friday. "This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the

sabbath drew on. The women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment" (Luke 23:52–56).

This is clear evidence that Jesus died the day before the Sabbath! The day of His death was a "preparation day" because it was the time to get ready for the Sabbath. Notice, then, that the women rested over the Sabbath "according to the commandment." The commandment says, "The seventh day is the Sabbath," so we know they were resting on Saturday. The very next verse says, "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared. ... And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre" (Luke 24:1, 2).

2: The calendar has not been changed so as to confuse the days of the week. Just as we know that Jesus and His followers observed the same day as Moses, we can be positive that our seventh day is the same day Jesus observed. Pope Gregory XIII did make a calendar change in 1582, but it did not interfere with the weekly cycle. What did Gregory do to the calendar? He changed Friday, October 5, 1582, to be Friday, October 15, 1582. He did not affect the weekly cycle of days.

3: The Jews have observed the seventh day from the time of Abraham, and they still keep it today. An entire nation of people, all around the world, continue to observe a Sabbath they have known for more than 4,000 years.

4: Over 100 languages on earth use the word "Sabbath" for Saturday. For example, the Spanish word for Saturday is "Sabado," meaning Sabbath. What does this prove? It proves that when those languages originated long ago, Saturday was recognized as the Sabbath day and was incorporated into the very name of the day.

Fact #5:

The Sabbath Is Not a Memorial of Deliverance Out of Egypt

This is a belief taken and twisted out of the Old Testament: "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, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (Deuteronomy 5:14, 15).

Some people suggest this means that God gave the Sabbath as a memorial of the Exodus from Egypt. But the Genesis story of the making of the Sabbath (Genesis 2:1–3) and the wording of the fourth commandment by God (Exodus 20:11) reveals the seventh-day Sabbath as a memorial of creation.

The key to understanding these two verses rests in the word “servant.” God said, “Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt.” And in the sentence before, He reminds them “that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.” In other words, their experience in Egypt as servants would remind them to deal justly with their servants by giving them Sabbath rest.

It was not unusual for God to harken back to the Egyptian deliverance as an incentive to obey other commandments. In Deuteronomy 24:17, 18, the Bible says, “Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow’s raiment to pledge. ... Thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.”

Neither the command to be just nor to keep the Sabbath was given to memorialize the Exodus, but God told them that His goodness in bringing them out of captivity constituted a strong reason for them to deal kindly with their servants on the Sabbath and treating justly the strangers and widows.

In the same way, God spoke to them in Leviticus 11:45, “I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt ... ye shall therefore be holy.” No one would insist that holiness did not exist before the Exodus or that it would be ever afterwards limited only to the Jews!

Fact #6:

The Sabbath Is Not Meant to Memorialize the Resurrection

It is true that Jesus rose on a Sunday. It is one of the pivotal moments in the history of the world.

But nowhere does the Bible hint that we should keep Sunday holy. Many other wonderful events occurred on certain days of the week, but we have no command to keep them holy either.

There is, of course, a memorial of the resurrection commanded in the Bible, but it is not to determine a new day of worship. Paul wrote: “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). Baptism is the memorial of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. However, the Sabbath is a memorial of creation.

Still have a question about this? See “The Upper Room” below.

Fact #7:

The Sabbath Will Be Celebrated for Eternity

The Sabbath is an arbitrary arrangement of God that serves a powerful purpose. It is His claim — His seal

— over the world and all human life. It is also a sign of the redemption He offers to every single one of us.

Surely this is why God will preserve Sabbathkeeping throughout eternity. That's right! "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

The Sabbath is so precious to God that He will have His people observe it throughout all time in the beautiful new earth to come. If it is so precious to Him, should it not be precious to us? If we are going to keep it through all eternity, why not keep it now as our pledge of obedience to Him?

Trust and Obey: There Is No Other Way

It is easy to understand why the devil has waged a continuing, desperate battle against the seventh-day Sabbath. He has worked through the pride of tradition, misinformation, and religious bigotry to destroy the sanctity of God's special sign of authority — the Sabbath.

But with these Sabbath facts in hand, may God grant every Christian the courage to honor the Sabbath commandment as His special test of our love and loyalty.

It might be a duty to keep the seventh-day holy. But it should not be a burden. In an age of false gods and spirituality, of atheistic evolution, and the stubborn traditions of men, the world needs the Sabbath more than ever. It is more than just a test of our loyalty to the Creator. It is more than just a sign of our sanctification through His power. It is His promise of a lasting, eternal gift of restoration.

More Interesting Facts!

The One Unimportant Commandment?

God made it very clear that, regardless of feelings, those who abuse the Sabbath are guilty of breaking His law. James explains that it is a sin to break even one of the Ten Commandments: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law" (James 2:10, 11).

Most of the commandments begin with the same words: "Thou shalt not." But the fourth commandment is introduced with the word "Remember." Why? Because God was commanding them to call something to memory that already existed but had been forgotten.

Why the Seventh Day?

Why did God bless the seventh day as a day of worship? Because He had just created the world in six days. It was a memorial to the birth of the world, a reason to remember that mighty act.

So could the Sabbath memorial be changed? No. Because it points backward to an accomplished fact. For instance, July 4 is Independence Day in the United States. Can it be changed? No. Because the Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776. Your birthday cannot be changed either. It is a memorial of your birth, which happened on a set day. History would have to run through again to change your birthday, to change Independence Day, or to change the Sabbath day. We can call another day Independence Day, and we can call another day the Sabbath, but that does not make it so.

The Upper Room

Those who believe that Sunday worship honors the resurrection of Jesus often cite the upper room meeting of the disciples on the same day that He rose from the grave. They argue that this gathering was meant to celebrate His resurrection. But the Bible record of the event reveals another set of circumstances.

Mark writes that even though the disciples were confronted with the eyewitness story of Mary, they “believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen” (Mark 16:11–14).

Obviously, none of those upper room disciples believed that He was raised from the dead, so they could not have been joyously celebrating the resurrection. John explains their reason for being together with these words: “The doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews” (John 20:19).

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