

Sabbath

שבת

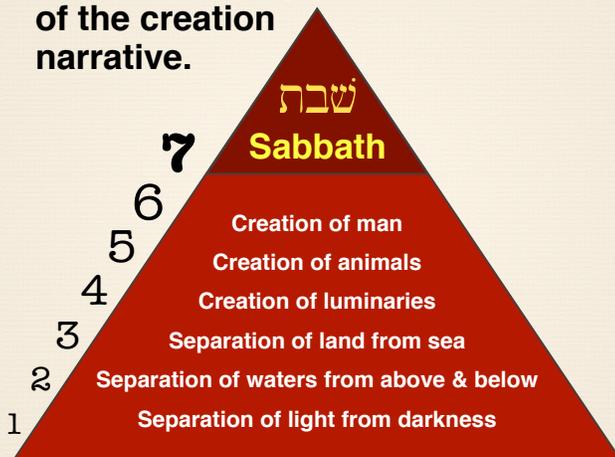
Sunday?
Jesus' violations?
Blue laws?
What is the point?

Sabbath is the crown of God's Creation Work which He deemed "very good."

Genesis 2

"² By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then **God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it**, because in it **He rested** from all His work which God had created and made."

Sabbath is the point of the creation narrative.



Sabbath was given as a sign to Israel.



Exodus 31

"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.**"



Sabbath Law started with Moses.



Nehemiah 9

"¹³ Then You came down on Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, You gave them just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments. ¹⁴ So **You made known to them Your holy Sabbath**, and laid down for them commandments, statutes and law, **through Your servant Moses.**"

Exodus 20

"⁸ **Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.** ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, . . . ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy."

Sabbath calls us to respect the finished work of God - creation & redemption.



Sabbath was a very serious issue.



Exodus 35:2

“For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a holy day, a sabbath of complete rest to the Lord; **whoever does any work on it shall be put to death**”



The early church met on the first day of the week (Sunday) out of respect for the finished work of Christ.

Acts 20:7

“On **the first day of the week**, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.”

Three popular views

1. Saturday - Sabbath as holy.

- This is the Jewish position as outlined in the Old Testament.
- It is also the position of a small number of Christian groups.

2. Sunday - Sabbath as Lord's day.

- This is the predominant official Christian view.
- This reflects the worship pattern of the early church.

3. Spiritual - Sabbath as faith / work.

- This is suggested in Hebrews, Romans, and Colossians.
- It is the most common actual practice of Christians.

Support used for the Saturday-Sabbath position

- It was defined and ordained as a celebration of the six days of creation. Gen.2:2-3, Ex.20:8-11
- It was observed before the giving of the Law. Ex.16:23
- **It is a cornerstone of the Law of Moses.** Ex.20:8-11
- It was important through Israel's history.
- It was a capital offense to break it. Ex.35:2
- Israel's exile was judgment for breaking it. Ezek.20:13
- **It was observed by Jesus.** Lk.4:16
- Jesus expected his followers to keep it until his return. Matt.24:20
- There is no indication that the apostles stopped the Saturday-Sabbath practice.
- **Rome changed the day in the 4th cent. in response to anti-semitism, Sun-cults, politics of the Catholic ch.**

Support used for the Sunday-Sabbath position

- It was defined and ordained as a celebration of creation. Gen.2:2-3, Ex.20:8-11
- It was observed before the giving of the Law. Ex.16:23
- It is a cornerstone of the Law of Moses. Ex.20:8-11
- It was important through Israel's history.
- It was a capital offense to break it. Ex.35:2
- Israel's exile was judgment for breaking it. Ezek.20:13
- **Christ arose on the first day.** Jn.20:19,26
- **Sunday is called the "Lord's day."** Rev.1:10
- **The apostles practiced the keeping of the 1st day of the week.** Acts 20:7, 1 Cor.16:2
- **The Scripture prescribes one day in seven as holy but does not insist that it be Saturday.**

The spiritual-Sabbath position

- It was defined and ordained as a celebration of the six days of creation. Gen.2:2-3, Ex.20:8-11
- Its observance is tied to the Law of Moses. Ex.20:8-11
- **As a day it was a sign to Israel only.** Ex.31:12-17
- **Jesus challenged the Sabbath law tradition, while honoring the spirit of Sabbath.**
- **The change in days of worship mirrored the change in covenants.**
- **The Mosaic Covenant Law had ceased.** 2 Cor.3:7-14
- **Paul advocated freedom with respect to Sabbath practices.** Rom.14:5-8, Col.2:16-17, Gal.4:9-10
- **The true Sabbath is a life of faith in God's work for us in Christ.** Heb.4:1-16
- **The Sabbath day is the only commandment not endorsed in the epistles.**

The Mosaic Law Covenant does not apply to the Christian's life.

Romans 7:1,4,6

“the law has jurisdiction over a person **as long as he lives?**”

“you were **made to die to the Law** through the body of Christ,”

“But now we **have been released from the Law**, having died to that by which we were bound,”

Romans 14

“5 One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. **Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind.** 6 He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God. 7 For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself;”

Sabbath day observance is a personal, spiritual, issue.

We are not to be legalistic about Sabbath issues.

Galatians 4:9-10

“You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that somehow **I have wasted my efforts on you.**”

We are not to judge one another on Sabbath issues.

Colossians 2:16-17

“Therefore **do not let anyone judge you** by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.”

Hebrews 4

“1 Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. 3 For **we who have believed enter that rest**, just as He has said, “As I swore in My wrath, *They shall not enter My rest,*” although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh day, “*And God rested on the seventh day from all His works*”; 5 and again in this passage, “*They shall not enter My rest.*”

Sabbath is a spiritual state of faith.

Sabbath is a calling to live by faith.

Hebrews 4

“8 For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. 9 There remains therefore a **Sabbath rest** for the people of God. 10 For **the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.** 11 **Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest**, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience.”

Sabbath

- These four issues are finished.

The
Creation

Our
Redemption



Our
Identity

Our
Struggle

Summary

1. The Sabbath issue is an Old Covenant - Law of Moses issue.
2. The Sunday - Sabbath link is not clear in Scripture.
3. The change in days of worship reflects a change in covenants.



So what do we conclude?

- Sabbath is important.
- Celebrating the finished work of God should characterize our Sabbath observance.
- The issue is not, "Do we work on the Sabbath?" but rather, "Do we bring the Sabbath to our work?"
- Sunday rest is a celebration of the resurrection of our Lord as the crowning work of the goodness of God.
- Exercise grace and tolerance with respect to different expressions of Sabbath observance.

Dallas Willard

"Sabbath is a way of life. It is simply "casting all your anxiety on Him," to find that in actual fact "He cares for you."

Charles Swindoll

"To enter our Sabbath rest, we must put an end to self-reliance - trusting in our own abilities to overcome difficulties, rise above challenges, escape tragedies, or achieve personal greatness."

Walter Brueggemann
(Old Testament scholar)

"Sabbath is about withdrawal from the anxiety system of Pharaoh, the refusal to let one's life be defined by production and consumption and the endless pursuit of private well-being."

Spiritual Sabbath

The issue is not our working on the Sabbath so much as our bringing Sabbath Rest to our work and life.