

The Sabbath Day

A confusing question confronts us when we seek to do the will of God: "When and how am I to worship?" Must we worship on the seventh or Sabbath day as the people of the Old Testament did? The Bible shows that Christians today are not to observe the Sabbath day.

First, God gave the Sabbath day to the Jewish nation for their observance. Moses said, "Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us (Deut 5:3)." The context shows that Moses was speaking of the ten commandments. God did not give the children of Israel the Sabbath day to observe until after they left the land of Egypt and were in the wilderness (Ezekiel 20:10-12).

Second, the reference to the Sabbath as *perpetual covenant* does not mean that it was forever. It was a continuing covenant with Israel, but only throughout their generations: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant (Ex 31:16). God removed the Old Testament law and gave in its place a better covenant: "By so much also hath Jesus become the surety of a better covenant (Heb 7:22)." The better covenant includes better promises: "He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises (Heb 8:6-7)." The Old Testament law passed away and with it the Sabbath command: "In that he says, A new *covenant* he has made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxes aged is nigh unto vanishing away (Heb 8:13)." Upon the death of the Christ, the covenant with Israel ended, being nailed to the cross: "Having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he has taken it out that way, nailing it to the cross (Col 2:14)." With the end of the old covenant and the coming of the new, God blotted out the specifics of the old, including the Sabbath.

Third, God commands Christians to worship on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Heb. 10:25; Rev. 1:10). The Bible does not refer to the first day of the week as the Sabbath day. God did not change the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. God abolished the Sabbath, along with all the elements of the Old Testament Law (Col.2:14; Eph. 2:15; Rom. 7:4-7). Paul declared that God's people are not to be judged by the Sabbath: "Let no man therefore judge you . . . in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a Sabbath day (Col 2:16)."

Members of the Lord's church are to meet on the first day of the week to hear the gospel preached, partake of the Lord's supper, and give as they have prospered (Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2).