

THE WORD OF

TRUTH

Bible Study Course

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 8:32

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THE CHANGE OF THE SABBATH

As a special day of worship, most Christians observe Sunday, the first day of the week, rather than the seventh day of the week, the day the Bible names as the Sabbath. The seventh day, of course, being the day we call Saturday.

There are various reasons given for this so-called change in the instructions of God concerning the day of worship. Generally, it is said to be in memory of the resurrection of Jesus and that the altered worship day was observed by the apostles.

If such a change has the authority of God, there will surely be clear indication in the Word of God to that affect. In this lesson we shall see what the Bible actually does say on the matter.

From our previous lesson, it was noticed that Jesus made no alteration to the Sabbath and gave every indication that He required His people to be keeping the Sabbath even after his resurrection. He also gave no memorial of His resurrection, but rather gave His disciples a memorial of His death. Jesus made it very clear that not one minute part of the law, written by His own hand, will be removed, changed or replaced.

1. What did Jesus say about men who would break the least of the commandments, or teach others to do so?

Matthew 5:19

Note: To be called "least in the kingdom of heaven" does NOT mean that the offender will be in heaven with a menial position. It means that the name of the offender will be given the lowest regard in heaven and what would be the lowest estate in terms of the heavenly judgement? The worst thing that can happen to any man is to have his name blotted out of the book of life and he be judged worthy of death (Exodus 32:33; Malachi 3:16-18; Rev.21:27; 20:15).

A TURNING AWAY FROM GOD

While Christ was explicit concerning the immutability of the law of God, through His Word He has warned of the satanic efforts that will be applied to lessen the importance of that law in the minds of men.

2. What warning was given to the young Church by the apostle Paul?

Acts 20:29,30

Note: When Satan infiltrates a Church with his agents, the most severe test will come from within her own ranks. Outsiders will not present the same danger of deception or betrayal.

3. What was predicted to take place before the second coming of Jesus?

2Thessalonians 2:3

4. What was to be the nature of this apostasy, which resulted in its perpetrators receiving the unholy insignia of "the man of sin"?

2Thessalonians 2:4

5. Under what symbol was this power revealed to Daniel?

Daniel 7:8,25

Note: This symbol was seen to be the Roman Catholic Church (Review lessons 9 and 10 for more detail). Specific mention is made of the determination of this power to attempt to change times and laws. This cannot be a reference to man's laws as these are frequently changed; the attempts to rearrange the law, can only be in respect to that which is deemed to be unchangeable -- God's law. The only portion of the law of God that deals, in particular with time, is the fourth commandment -- to worship God and honour Him by dedicating to Him the one day He has nominated -- the Sabbath. Hence it is prophesied that the Roman Catholic Church will attempt to remove the Sabbath, of which Jesus is Lord (Mark 2:28) and substitute her own worship day without the authority of Jesus. The substituted day is therefore a false and Christless "Sabbath" and the work of the son of perdition, i.e. death (2Thess.2:3; 2Peter 3:7; Rev.19:20).

ENGINEERING THE CHANGE OF THE SABBATH

Has the Roman Catholic Church actually done this, as has been prophesied of her? She does not hide the fact and states in absolute terms her position concerning the substitution of a man made Sabbath.

When asked for proof from the Bible that supports the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, in place of Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, the answer returned as follows:--

"There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the Holy Catholic church alone. The Bible says "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it

holy". The Catholic church says, No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo! The entire civilised world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the Holy Catholic Church."

Priest Thomas Enright, CSSR, President of Redemptorist College, Kansas City, Missouri, in a lecture at Hartford, Kansas, and printed in the 'American Sentinel', June 1883, a New York Roman Catholic journal.

Another statement supporting the above:--

"You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorising the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we (Catholics) never sanctify."

Faith of Our Fathers, p.89, by Cardinal Gibbons, James Murphy Company, New York 1917).

ISRAEL -- GOD'S EXAMPLE FOR TODAY

6. When God's ancient people went into false worship, what did they worship?

Ezekiel 8:15,16

Note: Whenever God's people apostatised and went into false worship, they became involved in sun worship. For this reason, when God gave Moses the instructions for the building of His sanctuary, He instructed that the door should face the east (lesson 13 pp.4, 5). In this way, when the people faced the sanctuary in worship, their backs were toward the rising sun.

To worship the sun, the people would face the east (at sunrise), thus turning their backs on the Lord's house. Such defiance was considered by God as an act of rebellion and idolatry, an act He describes as spiritual adultery (Ezekiel 8; Jer.3:8,9). In orientating the sanctuary

diametrically opposed to sun worship, God indicates that there can be no compromise or integration of the worship of the true God, the Creator, with any other so-called god (Jer. 10:10,11; 2Cor. 6:14-18; Rev. 14:6-11; 18:4).

7. During a time when Israel fell into extreme national apostasy, God commissioned a prophet to alert the nation of their course and call them back to the worship of their Creator. Who was that prophet?

1Kings 18:17-21, 39

Note: Baal was the sun god, and nearly the whole nation had become involved in sun worship.

8. What did Jesus promise would take place just before the time of His coming?

Malachi 4:4-6

Note: This prophecy has the dual function of being applicable to the time of the first advent of Christ and again to the period just preceding His second advent (Review lesson 19).

In prophesying the Elijah message to appear in the years preceding His second coming, God (Jesus) foresaw, that at that time, there would be a "universal" (catholic) worship system that resembled or duplicated sun worship, while at the same time profess to be giving full allegiance to the Creator. Israel did just this and it is recorded that we might be warned (2Kings 17:32,33; Ezek. 23:36-39).

God's warning to the world in the last days (present time) is a repeat of the warnings and admonitions given to His people in the days of Elijah. Israel became caught up in the heathen practice of sun worship, and God's professed people today have either knowingly, or unwittingly followed a similar path. They have adopted worship practices that are straight out of the ancient practice of sun worship, then have the presumption to call it God worship (Jer. 7:8-10). Again, God, in His love for them, is giving the Elijah message (also known as

the three angels message, Revelation 14. See lesson 19): - worship God the way God says to worship Him - the corrupt worship practices are not acceptable to God - and have nothing to do with these false doctrines.

There is a vast number of types and symbols, used in the Roman Catholic Church and other churches, that are straight out of paganism, the perpetrators of sun worship. One of the most notable of these is the observance of Sunday, in place of Sabbath, as the weekly day of worship. Sunday was the day that the sun worshippers held in honour of the worship of their god, the sun! Paganism totally denies the Creator, the God of righteousness and worships all manner of false gods. We need not wonder how the God of light and love looks down to see the homage offered to Him with rites and ceremonies that were and are used in a religious system that blasphemed Him and denied Him and killed His faithful saints (Ezekiel 20:31,32,39).

The pagan religion even sacrificed little babies by placing them into the arms of a metal idol (Molech) when those arms had been heated to red heat. There the infant would be burned alive. It is hard to believe, but God's people, Israel, embraced the religion of the heathen; they built alters to Baal to worship the sun and burned their own babies in human sacrifices to Molech. Yet Israel did worse than the heathen -- they sacrificed more often than the heathen (2Chron.33:1-10). A divided and conflicting system of worship (syncretistic religion) is an abomination to God and He will not accept the oblation of the defiant or the willingly ignorant (2Kings 17:32,33; Prov.28:9).

God sent Elijah to warn Israel of their corrupt worship practices and their blending of the Holy with the profane. He was to tell the people that except they repent and forsake their false worship practices, God would destroy them (Please note Deut.12:29-31; Lev.18:24-30). **God now sends "Elijah" again, in our day, with exactly the same message!**

9. What did Israel do when they did not follow the worship practices given them by God?

Ezekiel 23:36-39

Note: We are repulsed by these reports and confidently declare that we would not practice such open defiance of the God of heaven (Matthew 23:29-36). We would not sacrifice our children to idols, yet we sacrifice our little ones to the god of television and permit this satanic master to teach our children and ourselves the most abominable and shameful principles (Please see Psalm 101:2,3. Note that Egypt symbolically represents worldliness [Ezekiel 20:7,8; 1John 2:15,16]. The righteous, by choice, are blind and deaf to iniquity [Isaiah 42:19-21; Philippians 4:8]).

10. How did God regard the offerings and oblations from a people who had turned away from Him in heart?

Isaiah 1:11-15

Note: The Sabbaths spoken of here have been profaned by the unholy practices of the people and God would not accept their worship (Ezekiel 22:8,26).

11. What solution did God offer to the rebellious people, that their worship may then be acceptable to Him?

Isaiah 1:16-20

GOD LOVINGLY SHOWS US THE WAY

Israel was condemned for her apostasy, but God's hand was stretched out to save, if only she would take it. Though we have attempted to worship God on the venerable day of the sun (Sunday) and not on the day He has designated, Sabbath (Saturday), does this mean that He has cast us off from Himself? --- Not yet. The hand of God is stretched out to us, if only we would take it. Notice the following example...

12. A woman from Canaan, a heathen, of the race that God drove

out from before the Hebrews as they entered the promised land, came to Jesus for a miracle of healing on behalf of her demon possessed daughter. How did Jesus respond to her plea?

Matthew 15:22-28

13. What was required on her part to receive salvation from Jesus?

Matthew 15:28

Note: The faith she exercised was in the saving power of Jesus. He could save her only as she believed and resolved, through the power of God, to obey the commandments (if only she could receive the crumbs of salvation from Jesus vv.24-27 and John 6:35,47-63). Jesus is come to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, those whom Israel had neglected to evangelise (for example, this woman). On another occasion, in His compassionate deliverance of the woman caught in adultery, Jesus said --- Go and sin no more. This equally applied to the Canaanite woman, for God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34,35). He gives each of us the same invitation --- hear, surrender and obey. Salvation can only be for those who abide by its terms and conditions, it is only for those who obey Him (Dan.9:4; Heb.5:8,9).

Jesus Christ is the Creator and all of His followers call Him LORD. Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath because He sanctified, or designated the Sabbath as the memorial of creation. It follows that all who would worship the Creator will do so on His Holy Day. If we have been keeping Sunday for the purpose of worshipping the Creator God, He now calls us to repent and give glory to Him by keeping the day that distinguishes those who serve God from those who serve Him not. Many of God's professed people keep nine of the commandments, why not keep the whole ten? Unless we do, we are lost (Luke 6:46; Mark 2:28; Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13; Acts 17:30; Malachi 3:18; James 2:10; 1John 2:3-6).

Having become convicted on the Sabbath, how do we keep it? What does God require of us? And how can we get the blessing that the Sabbath holds? This, we shall discuss in our next lesson.
