

## **The First Six Days of Creation**

The great and terrible God, whose form is beyond comprehension, scintillates His glory on the waters in the midst of the darkness. And perhaps, God, thinking some light would be good here, speaks the words: "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3).

And now, what never was, in obedience to divine command, appears.

"And the evening and the morning were the first day" (Genesis 1:5).

So, day one has past, and the evening marks the beginning of day two. There, God creates the firmament, which is the atmosphere, to divide earthly waters from the heavenly (Genesis 1:6-8).

"And the evening and the morning were the second day" (Genesis 1:8).

Now, God once again creating order, decides that on day three, waters under the firmament will be in one place, which He called Seas, so that the dry land could appear, which He called Earth. With this, Earth, God founded agriculture, as he commanded, "the earth to bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself...and it was so" (Genesis 1:9-12). As the tender grass, grains, and fruit trees appeared, God saw that it was good (Genesis 1:12).

"And the evening and the morning were the third day" (Genesis 1:13).

On day four, God foresaw that animals and humans would not only need food, but to keep track of time. So, God put lights in the atmosphere that would differentiate between day and night. The greater light would rule the day and the lesser light the night. "[He] made the stars also" (Genesis 1:16). For these lights, shining upon earth would "be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years" (Genesis 1:14-18). And God saw that this was good (Genesis 1:18).

"And the evening and the morning were the fourth day" (Genesis 1:19).

Now, that heterotrophs not only have a source of food, but are oriented in time, God begins day five calling aquatic and flying creatures into existence. He tells the waters to, "bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life," and out of

the ground God forms the, "fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven," and breathes the breath of life into them (Genesis 2:19; 1:20; 6:17; 7:21-23; Ecclesiastes 3:19, 20). The great whales, with other moving aquatic creatures begin to appear and the fowls of the air begin to fly therein, and God commissions them to, "[b]e fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and...multiply in the earth...[A]nd God saw that it *was* good" (Genesis 1:20-22).

"And the evening and the morning were the fifth day" (Genesis 1:23).

So, the waters below and the firmament were made first, and thus populated first. On the sixth day, God turns to His attention to populating the dry land, Earth. To the earth He says, "bring forth, the living creature, after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so" (Genesis 1:24). For the Lord God, had formed the terrestrial animals from the dust of the earth, and into their nostrils breathed the breath of life (Genesis 2:19; 6:17, 7:21-23; Ecclesiastes 3:19, 20). But God was not done yet. After creating the animals in sea, earth and sky, the Three Person Godhead had a conference. And they said, "[l]et us make man in our image, after our likeness," (Genesis 1:26) which would have dominion over all the animals. "So God created man[kind] in [H]is *own* image, in the image of God created [H]e [mankind]; male and female created [H]e them" (Genesis 1:27). And humanity, like the animals, were to, "[b]e fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," but to them God added the responsibility of subduing the earth, and having dominion over all the animals (Genesis 1:28). Now, all beings God created from the dust of the earth - flying creatures, land creatures, and humans- were to eat from the produce thereof. Humans were to eat nuts, grains and fruits (Genesis 1:29). And the animals were to eat vegetables (Genesis 1:30)\*. And when God saw all He made, "behold, *it was* very good" (Genesis 1:31).

And the evening and the morning were the sixth day (Genesis 1:31).

### **The Creation and Keeping of the Sabbath**

God, reflecting on all that He had made over the first six creative days, decides that on the seventh, He would cease His creative work. Genesis 2:2-3 read:

"And on the seventh day God ended [H]is work which [H]e had made; and [H]e rested on the seventh day from all [H]is work which [H]e had made.

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it [H]e had rested from all [H]is work which God created and made."

This day, from sunset to sunset (Leviticus 23:32), is the time God bids us to remember Him as the Creator of this world. For God, in the fourth of the Ten Commandments, the Decalogue, commands His people to,

"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, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed that sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:8-11).

And on this day God expects us, "to loose the bands of wickedness,...undo the heavy burdens,...let the oppressed go free, and that [w]e break every yoke...deal [our] bread to the hungry...and bring the poor that are cast out to [our] house[s]...when [we] [see] the naked, that [we] cover him; and that [we] hide not [ourselves] from [our] own flesh" (Isaiah 58:6, 7). This is how Jesus kept the Sabbath. For in addition to habitually going to the synagogue to read and teach the scriptures, (Luke 4:16; 6:6), Jesus performed acts of healing and restoration (Luke 6:6-11; John 5:1-9). Thus in keeping this day of rest, we perfect our love to God and our fellow men, which are the great commandments (Matthew 22:34-40). It is this fourth commandment, the heart of the Decalogue, that reflects what the heart of the Christian should be. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God...Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief," as the Israelites of old (Hebrews 4:9, 11). God had told them not to gather manna on the seventh day (Exodus 16:22-26), yet they hardened their hearts against the LORD'S word, and, "there went out some of the people on the seventh day to gather, and they found none" (Exodus 16:27).

Now, the same seventh day God ordained in creation is the same seventh day, Saturday, we have today. For the order of the week days have not changed. Consider the Jews who from ever long have been keeping the Sabbath day. They do so from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. Consider the day Jesus died. The Bible tells us, "that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on," and that "upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning [the women] came to the

sepulchre...[a]nd they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus" (Luke 23:54; 24:1-3). And we know Good Friday is the day that Jesus was laid in the grave, while Resurrection Sunday is when He arose. The seventh day must then be Saturday. Look, the Sabbath was held in such high regard that the women did not anoint Jesus' body with spices and ointments on God's day of rest. Rather, they, "rested the sabbath day according to the commandment" (Luke 23:56). Even Jesus rested in the grave on the Sabbath day.

The Prophetess, Ellen G. White, in vision is taken into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. There she beholds the ark of the covenant in which the Decalogue is housed, written on two tables of stone with the finger of God ([Broadside3 April 7, 1847, par. 3](#)). And here is part of what she sees:

On one table was four, and on the other six. The four on the first table shone brighter than the other six. But the fourth (the Sabbath commandment,) shone above them all; for the Sabbath was set apart to be kept in honor of God's holy name. The holy Sabbath looked glorious—a halo of glory was all around it. I saw that the Sabbath was not nailed to the cross. If it was, the other nine commandments were; and we are at liberty to go forth and break them all, as well as to break the fourth. I saw that God had not changed the Sabbath, for He never changes.

Jesus in relaying the signs of the destruction of Jerusalem and His second coming, says:

**"But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day" (Matthew 24:20).**

In fact, a little before that declaration, Jesus assures the disciples that **"[T]his gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14).**

What then is the everlasting gospel? Revelation 14:6-12 tell us. John the apostle, "[S]aw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Revelation 14:6,7).

Note, the latter part of this angel's message is almost verbatim from the fourth commandment (Exodus 20:11). The fourth commandment will be the test of loyalty for God's people in the last days. God still expects us the reverence His holy day on the seventh day, for in it is the glory of His name. But man has sought out many inventions (Ecclesiastes 7:29).

### **The Change**

Subtle was the transition from Sabbath to Sunday worship. Decree by decree, and canon by canon, God's commands were substituted with man's traditions (Matthew 15:1-9). As per Dr. T. H. Morer,

The primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the day in devotion and sermons. And it is not to be doubted but they derived this practice from the apostles themselves, as appears by scriptures to the purpose (189).

But, the apostle Paul also prophesies that before Christ returns, the church would fall away from the truth, and be led by the man of sin, "whose coming is after the working of Satan" (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 9). For instead of receiving the love of the truth, the church would spurn God's word and be sent, "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thessalonians 2:11). And so it came to pass. As early as A.D. 150 to three centuries thereafter, the leaders of the church in Constantinople, seeking to separate themselves from Jews, starting transferring the solemnities of the Sabbath to Sunday, erroneously called the Lord's day\*. But notice how the deception crept in:

"It is certain that the ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed together with the celebration of the Lord's day by the Christians of the East Church, above three hundred years after our Saviour's death.' *A Learned Treatise of the Sabbath*, p. 77)" (Coltheart 7).

Before, the seventh day Sabbath was abandoned by Christians, Sunday sacredness was added to their practices. And the Roman Catholic Church purported this added rest day was in honor of Jesus's resurrection (Marcussen 35). But if we examine the gospels' accounts of Jesus' burial and resurrection, we see that all time references revolve around the Sabbath (Matthew 27:57-28:8; Mark 15:42-16:8; Luke 23:50-24:9; John 19:38-20:10). And there is no verse in scripture, commanding God's

people to honor Sunday in remembrance of Christ's resurrection. The rather, God has given us the ordinance of baptism of which Paul writes:

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). See also Colossians 2:12.

Now, when Constantine I ascended to the throne, (A.D. 305), the empire was soon to fall apart. The northern part of Rome was being sacked by the Gothics tribes who were growing in power (White 59). Constantine thus, decided to fuse the two main rival religions: Mithraism and Christianity. The former, "was worship of the Mithra, the Persian Sun god. Its adherents worshipped the sun at sunrise on the first day of the week" (White 56). While Christians, worshipped Christ and honored God as Creator on the seventh day (White 56). In synthesizing the two, the empire would be united under one religion. Note that by the time Constantine I converted to Christianity, Jews were hated by the government and clergy (Seaver 6, 7). And, Christians at Alexandria and Rome were already using Sunday to distinguish themselves from Jews. So in the Edict of March 7, A.D. 321 Constantine I declares:

"Let all the judges and town people, and the occupation of all trades rest on the venerable day of the sun. But let those dwelling in the country freely and with liberty attend to the culture of their fields...'Codex Justin,' lib. iii, tit. xiii, l. 3" (Lewis 19).

This was the first civil legislation of Sunday rest.

By A.D. 336, the church's odium for Jews was so pronounced that the leaders of the Roman Catholic decreed this canon in the Council of Laodicea:

"CANON XXIX. Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the LORD'S Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be Judaizers, let them be Anathema from CHRIST" (Fulton and Shaff 259).

This Council made official the church's exaltation of Sunday and disregard of the Sabbath (*The Whole Works of Jeremy Taylor*, Vol. IX, 416 (R. Herber's Edition, Vol XII, 416).



Even Socrates remarks:

"For although almost all churches throughout the world celebrated the sacred mysteries (The Lord's supper) on the Sabbath of every week\*\*, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, refuse to do this" (Socrates 289)

Now, is the Roman Catholic Church conscious of this? Listen to the Papacy's words.

"Which is the Sabbath day?

"Saturday is the Sabbath day.

"Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

"We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336) transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday" (Geiermann, 41).

"Q. What warrant have you for keeping the Sunday, preferably to the ancient Sabbath, which was the Saturday?

"A. We have for it the authority of the Catholic Church, and apostolical tradition.

"Q. Does the scripture any where command the Sunday to be kept for the Sabbath?

"A. The scripture commands us to hear the Church, St. v Matt. xviii. 17, St. Luke. x. 16, and to hold fast the traditions of the apostles, 2 Thess. ii. 15; but the scripture does not in particular mention this change of the Sabbath" (Challoner, 202).

Friends, "'The Catholic Church...by virtue of her divine missions, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday.' --*The Catholic Mirror, September 23, 1893, a Baltimore-based Catholic weekly (the official organ for Cardinal Gibbons)*" (Ferrell 97).

\*"The Mithraites called Sunday 'the Lord's Day,' in honor of Lord Mithra" (White 59). According to the Bible the seventh day Sabbath is the Lord's day (Matthew 12:8).

\*\*The footnote for "on the sabbath of every week" reads: "That is, upon Saturday. It should be observed, that Sunday is never called '*the sabbath*' ([Greek translation]) by the ancient Fathers and historians, but '*the Lord's day*' ([Greek translation])..."

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### **The Protestant Perspective and God's Charge**

Now, do Protestant churches know that Sunday sacredness is not Biblical?

Listen to the Methodists' words:

"The reason we observe the first day instead of the seventh is based on no positive command. One will search the Scriptures in vain for authority for changing from the seventh to the first.' Clovis G. Chappel, *Ten Rules for Living*, p. 61" (Marcussen 37).

Listen to the Baptists' words:

“Harold Lindsell, former editor of Christianity Today, said, 'There is nothing in scripture that requires us to keep Sunday rather than Saturday as a holy day.' Christianity Today, November 5, 1976” (Marcussen 37).

Listen to the Episcopal's words:

“The Bible commandment says on the seventh day thou shalt rest. That is Saturday. Nowhere in the Bible is it laid down that worship should be done on Sunday' Phillip Carrington, Toronto Daily Star, October 26, 1949” (Marcussen 37).

Need we continue? Friends, the Sabbath was given to man during the creative week to honor God as Creator (Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11). So when a person keeps Sunday instead of Sabbath, to whom do they give homage?

The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] church" (Segur 225).

““You are a Protestant, and you profess to go by the Bible and the Bible only; and yet in so important a matter as the observance of one day in seven, you go against the plain letter of the Bible, and put another day in the place of that day which the Bible has commanded. The command to keep holy the seventh day is one of the ten commandments; you believe that the other nine are still binding; who gave you the authority to tamper with the fourth?' *Library of Christian Doctrine Why Don't You Keep Holy the Sabbath Day?* pp. 3, 4. London: Burns and Oats (R.C.)” (The Mission Study Bible 551).

Friends, God's law is immutable. He cannot change. For this reason Jesus had to take on the form of humanity and die the ignominious death of the cross (1 John 3:1-6; Philippians 2:5-8). There He nailed to the cross handwritten ceremonial laws and sabbaths, like the Day of Atonement, that pointed to Himself (Colossians 2:10-17; Leviticus 23:26-32). For this reason, we no longer have to keep the Passover, the Day of Atonement, or offer burnt offerings. For as the moon reflects the sun's light, so were these ordinances a reflection or shadow of Jesus. And these ordinances are separate from the Ten Commandments.

So, when Paul writes, "Let no man judge you in meat, or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days," he qualifies this statement in the next verse saying, "[w]hich are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Colossians 2:16, 17). In fact, the sentence is not complete without that clause. In that same manner, when Paul says, "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," (Romans 14:5), he is not giving man license to disregard God's holy Sabbath day. Rather, the context of this statement is around fast days and foods offered to idols. The Jews would customarily fast once or twice a week, and thus esteemed certain days more than the other (Luke 18:12). And we know Paul could not be making an alteration to the commandments of God, for later on Paul declares,

"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Romans 14:10).

And by what standard shall we be judged?

"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2:12).

In the verses preceding this statement, we see James makes direct reference to the Ten Commandments (James 2:8-11).

If God could change the words His finger edged in stone to save the human race, would not our loving Father do that and save humanity the suffering we experience today, and even the poignant suffering of His only begotten Son? It was love that drove God to send His Son for us (John 3:16). For God is love (1 John 4:8, 16), and the law is a transcript of God's character; "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10).

Today, God calls us to reciprocate His love. If we love Him, we would keep His commandments (John 14:15).

"For this is the love of God, that we keep [H]is commandments: and [H]is commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3).

This is the new covenant, Friends:



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"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people..." (Hebrews 8:10).

Upon these better promises, God seeks a relationship with us; we would be so intertwined with God, that His law, even His character, love, would be written upon on our hearts.

Do we want to express our love for our Maker? Do we want to express our love for the Redeemer? By God's grace, let us, by our lifestyle, actuate our love to God. Let us do what he bids us, and keep holy His Sabbath day.

Thank You Jesus!

Amen!

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