

Discovering the Sabbath of Jesus

No Time Lost

The little town of Nazareth is located on the most southerly part of the mountain range of southern Galilee. Quietly it lies nestled on the side of a shallow ridge that runs in a semicircle, somewhat like a horseshoe. Here among the dwellings and groves of this small town, Jesus grew to manhood.

But, just now, come back with me, in imagination, to that village, where so many years ago the Master walked among men. Another day is quietly dawning, as the early rising sun chases away the bright mists that hang over the slope of Nazareth. From the home of the carpenter, Jesus steps forth and walks to the little church in the center of town. It is Sabbath morning in Nazareth.

Oh, how much you and I would like to go to church with Jesus! And, perhaps more important—how much we would like to go to church on the same weekly Sabbath that He kept. What peace of heart this would bring to us!—to be able to keep the Sabbath of Jesus.

And, my friend, you and I can. For we know enough, from Biblical and historical records, that we today can know of a certainty the Sabbath of Jesus.

For, you see, in order to trace back to the Sabbath of Jesus, we must know the truth about the weekly cycle itself. And here are the facts:

The seven-day week, as well as the Bible Sabbath that terminates it, had a common origin in history. Both originated at the Creation of our world. We learn this from Gen-

esis 2:1-3. There is no other way of accounting for the existence of that week. It is a towering monument to the fact that the true God made the earth and all things therein in six days, and rested on the Seventh day, just as He tells us in Genesis 2:1-3. It is because of the seven-day Creation Week and the Seventh day Sabbath that concluded it, that mankind, all over the world today, keeps this weekly cycle of seven days.

The weekly cycle, as we know it, has been maintained, from Creation, without confusion or loss of days. God gave the Seventh-day Sabbath to mankind when He made all things in the beginning. "The Sabbath was made for man," Jesus said (Mk 2:27), and so it shall stand as true—for Jesus said it, and He is our Creator (Jn 1:1-3,10; Eph 3:9; Col 1:13-17; Heb 1:1-3), the One who made the Sabbath.

From time to time you will hear someone say, "The weekly cycle has been lost, and so we cannot know the true Sabbath." But when pressed for the facts about this, his words are vague and confused.

The truth is that, from the Bible and the lives of races of men, scientists have an excellent understanding of the preservation of the weekly cycle throughout history. Even the records of the astronomers tell us that time has never been lost,—and if somehow that were to happen, now or earlier in history,—they could account exactly for any errors or losses of time in human history; they could restore the missing links in the weekly cycle. These are convincing facts, and they are true.

The unbroken continuation of the weekly cycle down through his-

tory can be established from Scripture, history, and science. First, let us consider the Biblical evidence:

If the weekly cycle had been lost between Adam's time (when the Sabbath was made) and Moses' day (when God put the Ten Commandments into written form), this situation would, at that time, have been corrected by the Divine Law-giver.

A striking illustration of the importance that our God attaches to Sabbathkeeping, is to be found in the miracle of the manna. For forty years, or 2,080 weeks, the Lord worked a number of miracles every week, thereby identifying the true Sabbath 2,080 times. We are told about this in Exodus 16.

God sent manna for the first five days of each week. That was a miracle. Then on the sixth day, He sent twice as much. Another miracle. And only that which fell on the sixth day could be kept over through the next day. Still another miracle. And then on the Seventh day, He sent none. It is very obvious that God wanted His people, who knew about Him, to keep the Bible Sabbath. And He worked miracles to help safeguard it. When, after all this evidence, some of them went ahead and broke the Sabbath, He clearly showed His will in the matter. Carefully read Exodus 16.

The great Moral Law of the Ten Commandments had governed mankind since the days of Adam. But, after the experience of the manna in Exodus 16, God wrote the Ten Commandments on solid rock—the most enduring thing there is. It was written on the most lasting substance in the world—something that would not pass away, in order to show us the

enduring nature of that Law. And it is Heaven's plan that it also be written on our hearts,—that every day we may obey these ten precious promises of happiness.

If the Sabbath had been lost between Moses' time and Jesus' time (which it was not), we would have the example of the Saviour Himself to guide us as to the correctness of the weekly cycle—and the Seventh day.

Scripture tells us:

“He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.”—*1 John 2:6.*

Throughout His earthly life, Jesus gave “us an example, that ye should follow His steps.” *1 Peter 2:21.*

We want to follow the steps of Jesus. We want to do as He did, with all our hearts! More than anything else in the whole wide world, this is what we want. I want it. And I know you want it also.

Jesus, “as His custom was,” kept the Seventh-day Sabbath according to the commandment (*Lk 4:16, 31; compare Jn 15:10*). If time or the Sabbath had been lost, Jesus would have found it for His followers.

Jesus was crucified on the sixth day of the week, which was the day before the Sabbath (*Lk 23:54-56*). On this same sixth day, which was also called the “preparation day” (*Mk 15:42; Lk 23:54*), His followers prepared “spices and ointments” to anoint His body for burial, and then “rested on the Sabbath day according to the commandment.” *Luke 23:56.*

And then came the Seventh-day Sabbath, and Jesus rested in the tomb (*Matt 28:1-7*). The next day He arose. It was the first working day of the week, and Jesus had a lot of work to do. That morning, after speaking with Mary, He traveled all the way to heaven, and then that evening appeared to many of

His disciples (*Jn 20:17, 19; Lk 24:13-36*).

So it was that, throughout the life and death of Jesus, He faithfully set us an example of obedience to the Sabbath commandment. And He taught His followers to do the same (*Matt 24:20*); for after His death, they kept the Sabbath also (*Lk 23:56*), and later in their missionary work (*Acts 13:14-16, 40-46; 16:12-15; 17:14*). They declared that we ought to obey God rather than men (*Acts 5:29*), and Paul could sincerely say of himself and his fellow believers:

“Do we then make void the Law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the Law.”—*Romans 3:31.*

The Word of God was being fulfilled, that Gentiles would one day faithfully keep the Sabbath which the Jews were desecrating (*Isa 56:3-7*).

There is such a wealth of historical information available regarding the unchanged nature of the weekly cycle, that we may know, without a doubt, that there has been no alteration in it down through the ages.

We can know it from the writings of historians. It is given us in the records of chronographers, who trace it in their study of the calendars of yesteryear. It is revealed in the existence of ancient races and their witness today. It is proven by the languages of earth. It is testified to by the stars of heaven, and verified by the leading astronomers of our own time. It is written in the encyclopedias and other standard reference works that deal with the subject.

Has the Sabbath been lost since Jesus' day? Here are some of the ways that we can know, for a certainty, that the Seventh day of the week—right now—is the same Seventh day of the week as when Jesus was on earth and kept it holy as an example for us:

1 - THE CALENDAR

The Julian calendar was in use when Jesus Christ was upon the earth. Its originator, Julius Caesar, died 44 years before Christ was born. This calendar, which continued in use for fifteen centuries, was not accurate in the length of its year, for it was 11 minutes and 14 seconds too long. What was needed was our method of “leap years.” By 1582, the vernal equinox, of March 21, had receded to March 11, making it ten days off schedule.

A change was recommended, by astronomers, and made at the time that Gregory XIII was the pope, and so the corrected calendar, with its “leap year,” was called the Gregorian calendar. It began to function on Friday, the 5th of October, 1582. Friday the 5th was changed to Friday the 15th. So that particular month was ten days shorter—but the length of its weeks was not affected. This is due to the simple fact that the number of days in the month or in the year has nothing to do with the number of days in the week. Thus the weekly cycle was not affected in any way.

On a diagram, on this page, we will give the calendar change that took place in October, 1582.

The inhabitants of Spain who retired to sleep on Thursday, October 4, awoke the next morning on Friday, the 15th. Some nations began the use of the new calendar at once. This included Spain, Portugal, and Italy. Part of Germany made the changeover in 1583, and the rest of the nation waited until 1700. About that time the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark also accepted it. And then, finally, in 1752, England and the American Colonies made the changeover.

THE LATIN CHANGEOVER**1582****SEPTEMBER**

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THE ENGLISH CHANGEOVER**1752****AUGUST**

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In October 1582, Portugal, Spain, and Italy began the use of this new calendar which included leap years.

This meant that, for these three nations of Europe, the year 1582 was ten days shorter than the calendar of the other nations of Europe.

But, all during this year and in

the years before and afterward, the weekly cycle never changed as nation after nation gradually changed over to the new calendar.

Between 1582 and 1752—and down to 1919,—all the nations of Europe gradually changed to the new calendar. But all during these 337 years—everyone had the very same days of the week.

In September 1752, England finally made the change over to the new leap year calendar.

This meant that for this important nation of Europe, the year 1752 was eleven days shorter than the calendar of the other nations.

But, all during this year and in the years before and afterward, the weekly cycle never changed as nation after nation gradually changed over to the new calendar.

But, all during those years, with mixed-up calendars—everyone was on the same weekly cycle. For, as you will see from the calendars we have included, the weekly cycle was not changed.

By the time England made the changeover to the new calendar, eleven days had to be changed instead of ten. Wednesday, September 2, was followed by Thursday, September 14. Russia and Greece continued to use the old-style calendar—the Julian Calendar—for over a hundred and fifty more years! Finally, in 1917 (Turkey), 1918 (Russia), 1919 (Serbia), and 1923 (Greece)—the last modern nations had adopted it! 341 years had elapsed since the changeover began.

For 337 years the calendars of Europe were all mixed up, and the dates of the months varied from country to country. But, all during that time the days of the week were alike, for they had not changed. When it was Monday in Russia, it was Monday in Germany, England, and Italy—although they were all living under different calendars. When the 20th Century began, Sabbath in Russia was the same as

Sabbath in England—although the dates were fourteen days apart.

The Encyclopedia Britannica calls it the “unalterable uniformity of the week,” for the weekly cycle has never been affected by calendar changes.

And because of this, the seven-day week, given by God to mankind at the Creation of the world, has never been touched by the calendar changes down through the centuries.

How many ways may we know that the weekly cycle—and with it, the Sabbath cycle—has never been changed? Let us count some more ways:

2 - THE JEWISH RACE

Our heavenly Father has given us more than written proof of the permanence of the weekly cycle and the Seventh-day Sabbath,—He has given us living proof: the Jewish race.

Every other Near-Eastern ethnic group has disappeared: the Hittites, the Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Moabites, the Philistines—all are gone. But the Jews remain—and with them the Seventh-day Sabbath.

It has been 3,400 years since the time that God gave them manna in the wilderness and told them to carefully keep each Seventh-day Sabbath when no manna fell. But, all during those long centuries since then, they have observed God's Sabbath—week after week, month after month, year after year, century after century.

Ask any Jewish acquaintance what day is the Sabbath. He will tell you that it is Saturday—the Seventh day.

Orthodox Jews, scattered throughout the world, have kept strict record of time. They have carefully observed the Seventh-day Sabbath throughout the ages. The existence and testimony of the Jewish race is alone enough to settle the

matter. The present writer considers it the most amazing and conclusive means of knowing the ancient Sabbath of Jesus and earlier times. There is no doubt that the God of heaven had carefully guarded the day that He sanctified and blessed as Creation. We have no excuse for not keeping it holy as His commanded.

But, since the time when Christ walked on earth and kept the correct Bible Sabbath, there have been others who have provided living proof also.

3 - PROTESTANTS AND CATHOLICS

Several years ago a young man was puzzled. What he read in his Bible did not agree with what the churches were doing. After the worship service one Sunday,—he asked if he could speak with his pastor for a moment.

Going aside, he said, Dr.—, the Bible says to worship God on the seventh day of the week; why do we not do this?"

Quickly the answer came back, "Oh, it doesn't matter for time has been lost and we cannot know which day was the seventh day of the week in the time of Christ."

"But why, then," said the young man, "do we keep the first day of the week holy today?"

"Oh, you see, we keep the first day of the week holy because Jesus rose on that day, and we know what day of the week He rose on."

The young man walked away and began keeping the Bible Sabbath commanded by God. It was obvious to him that the pastor was only giving excuses for disobedience.

The learned minister had told him that we cannot keep the Seventh-day Sabbath because we do not know what day of the week is the Seventh day on which Christ kept the Sabbath 2,000 years ago. And then he added that we must keep the first day of the week holy

today—because we know what day was the first day in the time of Christ!

From Christ's time down to our own, there have been faithful Sabbathkeepers who have kept the Seventh-day Sabbath. And there were also worldly Christians who, at an early time, adopted the holy day of Mithra, the Sun god, to worship Christ.

The fact is that not only have Jews and Christians kept the Seventh-day Sabbath for the past two thousand years, but Sundaykeepers have also preserved the knowledge of which day is which—all during that same time.

Two facts are indisputable: 1 - We KNOW that Jesus Christ kept the right day of the week as the holy Bible Sabbath, and He is our example in all things. 2 - We KNOW that the Seventh day of the week now is the same day that Christ observed while here on earth.

4 - HISTORICAL AND SCIENTIFIC RECORDS

The Roman Catholic Church has kept an accurate record of time, as down through the centuries they kept the rest day their leaders invented—Sunday. The majority of Protestants also kept Sunday, not having understood, at the time of the Great Reformation, that this was but a Catholic institution.

Historians have amassed an immense record of human events going back thousands of years. Those records tell us of people keeping the Seventh day holy far back in recorded history.

Astronomers have kept an accurate record of time. And theirs is one of the most accurate that you will find anywhere.

They tell us that, if all records of time should suddenly be lost, the astronomers could rediscover time from the mathematics of the stars in their motions. God put the stars in the heavens "for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years."

Genesis 1:14.

And then we have the calendars themselves. All calendars agree. There is no evidence whatsoever to support the false claim that "time has been lost."

And lastly, the standard reference works all tell us the same thing: No time has been lost in the weekly cycle. An example of this conclusive agreement is to be found in all of the major encyclopedias.

5 - THE LANGUAGES OF MAN

A young Yugoslav immigrant had recently entered the United States. One evening he found himself in front of church. Quietly sitting down he listened attentively, and afterward went up to the minister, and in broken English said:

"Sir, please to answer my question. This a question have already to asked my bishop in Yugoslavia. But," he laughed, "And I need for you to answer.

"In my country, Saturday is called '*Subota*.' In Exodus 20th, in Yugoslav Bible, the commandment says, 'The seventh day is *Subota*.' Then at calendar I look. It says *Subota* is the last day of week—your Saturday.

"Now, Sir, why my bishop tell me attend church on the first day of the week instead of on *Subota*?"

Fortunately, this young man was speaking to an unusual pastor, one that had earlier discovered this wonderful Biblical truth for himself. In reply, the pastor told him:

"This is an important question, but I will not laugh. I will answer your question with what God says about this. Listen carefully, for it is always dark if you close your eyes. Light is good from the lamp, but God's Word is the brightest lamp in all the world. Let us see what the Bible says."

All through this book you have been reading the kind of things that young man learned that evening.

Few of us realize that not only

in the Yugoslav language but in more than 160 of the languages of mankind—the name for the seventh day of the week (the day we call Saturday)—is “Sabbath.”

In Polish, it is “Sobota”; in Arabic, it is “As’sabt”; in Russian, “Subbata”; in Spanish, “Sabbado”; in Persian, “Shambin”; in Bulgarian, “Shubbuta”; in Greek, “Sabbaton”; in Portuguese, “Sabbado”; in Hindustani, “Shamba”; in French, “Sabbat”; in Hebrew, “Shabbath”; in Italian, “Sabbato,” in Latin, “Sabbatum.” And on and on it goes—through more than one hundred and sixty of the major languages of the earth.

This is because, in ancient times, men knew that the true Sabbath fell on the Seventh day of the week. As an example of this, look in a Spanish dictionary, and you will find that the word, “Sabbado” comes through the Latin word “Subitem,” from the ancient Hebrew word for “Sabbath.”

All over the world men can know what day is the true Sabbath of ancient times. For the day has never changed, just as God has not changed.

Dr. William Mead Jones was a noted London research scholar. He was also something of a linguist. One of his many unusual accomplishments was his “*Chart of the Week.*” From the information given on that chart, it is obvious that the Seventh-day Sabbath was known from the most ancient times.

On this chart are listed the names of the days of the week in 160 ancient and modern languages—and, in 108 of these 160 languages, the Seventh day is called “*the Sabbath.*”

In every case, the Sabbath is the word used in each of those languages for the seventh day of the week. And the root meaning of the word in each language is “*the Sabbath,*” or “*rest day.*” In a paragraph just before this, we quoted from more than ten of these languages,

showing how in each instance, the Seventh day is “*the Sabbath.*”

All over the Arab world of the Near East, it is the same, also:

“The only time reckoning on which Christians, Moslems, and Jews agree, in the Orient, is that of the days of the week. These are numbered and called by their numbers, save [except for Friday and Saturday, which are known [in Arabic] as ‘the day of assembling,’ and the ‘day of the Sabbath.’]—*Samuel M. Zwemer, D.D., “An Egyptian Government Almanac,” quoted in The United Presbyterian, September 26, 1929. [Dr. Zwemer, long known as an authority on Mohammedanism, was, for some years, a professor at Princeton University.]*

Whether it be called “Sab,” in Maba (a central African dialect), or “Subota,” in Russian (an Eastern European sub language),—the Sabbath is the day of rest in a large number of the languages of mankind all over the globe. With such an overwhelming array of evidence has been provided for us, in these last days, there is no question that *the Seventh-day Sabbath IS the Sabbath, for God never changed it.*

6 - SCIENTISTS AND HISTORIANS SPEAK

“*Seven has been the ancient and honored number among the nations of the earth. They have measured their time by weeks, from the beginning. The origin of this was the Sabbath of God, as Moses has given the reasons for it in his writings.*”—*Dr. Lyman Coleman, Statement.*

“One of the most striking collateral confirmations of the Mosaic history of the creation is the general adoption of the division of time into weeks, which extends from the Chris-

tian states of Europe to the remote shores of Hindustan, and have equally prevailed among the Hebrews, Egyptians, Chinese Greeks, Romans, and northern Barbarians,—nations some of whom have had little or no communication with others, and were not even known by name to the Hebrews.”—*Horne’s Introduction, Vol. 1, page 69.*

In the official League of Nations “Report on the Reform of the Calendar,” published at Geneva, August 17, 1926, are the following representative statements by noted astronomers:

s“The week has been followed for thousands of years and therefore has been hallowed by immemorial use.”—*Anders Donner, “The Report,” p. 51. Donner had been a Professor of Astronomy at the University of Helsingfors.*

“I have always hesitated to suggest breaking the continuity of the week, which without a doubt is the most ancient scientific institution bequeathed to us by antiquity.”—*Edouard Baillaud, “The Report,” p. 52. [Baillaud was director of the Paris Observatory.]*

Here are a number of other statements by eminent scientists and historians:

“The week is a period of seven days . . . It has been employed, from time immemorial, in almost all Eastern countries.”—*The Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, Vol. 4, p. 988, article, “Calendar.”*

“As to Question (1)—I can only state that in connection with the proposed simplification of the calendar, we have had occasion to investigate the results of the works of specialists in chronology, and we have

never found one of them that has ever had the slightest doubt about the continuity of the weekly cycle since long before the Christian era.

“As to Question (2)—There has been no change in our calendar in past centuries that has affected in any way the cycle of the week.”—*James Robertson, personal letter, dated March 12, 1932. [Dr. Robertson was director of the American Ephemeris, Navy Department, U.S. Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C.]*

“As far as I know, in the various changes of the calendar there has been no change in the seven day rota of the week, which has come down from very early times.”—*F.W. Dyson, Personal letter, dated March 4, 1932. [Dr. Dyson was Astronomer Royal, Royal Observatory, Greenwich, London.]*

“Some of these (the Jews and also many Christians) accept the week as of divine institution, with which it is unlawful to tamper; others, without these scruples, still feel that it is useful to maintain a time unit that, unlike all others, has proceeded in an absolutely invariable manner since what may be called the dawn of history.”—*“Our Astronomical Column,” Nature, London, No. 127, June 6, 1931, p. 869.*

“The week of seven days has been in use ever since the days of the Mosaic dispensation, and we have no reason for supposing that any irregularities have existed in the succession of weeks and their days from that time to the present.”—*Dr. W.W. Campbell, Statement. [Dr. Campbell was director of Lick Observatory, Mt. Hamilton, California.]*

“For more than 3,000 years science has gone backward, and with profound research, reveals the fact that, in that vast period, the length of the day has not changed by the hundredth part of a single second of time.”—*General O.M. Mitchell, Astronomy of the Bible, p. 235.*

“By calculating the eclipses, it can be proven that no time has been lost and that the Creation days were seven, divided into twenty-four hours each.”—*Dr. Hinckley, The Watchman, July, 1926. [Dr. Hinckley was a well-known astronomer of half a century ago.]*

“In spite of all of our dickerings with the calendar, it is patent that the human race never lost the septenary [seven-day] sequence of week days and that the Sabbath of these latter times comes down to us from Adam, through the ages, without a single lapse.”—*Dr. Totten, Statement. [Dr. Totten, of New Haven, Connecticut, was professor of Astronomy at Yale University when this statement was made.]*

“The continuity of the week has crossed the centuries and all known calendars,—still intact.”—*Professor D. Eginitis, Statement. [Dr. Eginitis was director of the Observatory of Athens, Greece.]*

“It is a strange fact that even today there is a great deal of

confusion concerning the question of so-called ‘lost time.’ Alterations that have been made to the calendar in the past have left the impression that time has actually been lost. In point of fact, of course, these adjustments were made to bring the calendar into closer agreement with the natural [solar year]. Now, unfortunately, this supposed ‘lost time’ is still being used to throw doubt upon the unbroken cycle of the Seventh-day Sabbath that God inaugurated at the Creation. I am glad I can add the witness of my scientific training to the irrevocable nature of the weekly cycle.

“Having been time computer at Greenwich [England observatory] for many years, I can testify . . . that all our days are in God’s absolute control—relentlessly measured by the daily rotation of the earth on its axis. This daily period of rotation does not vary one-thousandth part of a second in thousands of years. Also . . . the year is a very definite number of days. Consequently, it can be said that not a day has been lost since Creation, and all the calendar changes notwithstanding, there has been no break in the weekly cycle.”—*Frank Jeffries, Statement. [Dr. Jeffries was Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, and Research Director of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, England.]*

For More Information