

SUNDAY — THE CATHOLIC SABBATH

by Avram Yehoshua

The SeedofAbraham.net

There is nothing in the New Testament, and certainly nothing in the Old, that supports Sunday as a day that has replaced the 7th day Sabbath of Creation (Gen. 2:1-3), which God gave to His chosen people Israel (Ex. 16:22-26; 20:8-11). There are three New Testament texts which the Church uses to try and support Sunday as the new day for the new faith, but these texts, once examined, do not prove Sunday observance, nor that Sunday has replaced the 7th day Sabbath.¹

There is scant writing about the first day of the week, as all the writers of the New Testament called Sunday. From just the perspective that the 7th day Sabbath had been part of God's law for Israel for 1,400 years before Yeshua (Jesus) was born in Bethlehem would seem to indicate that if a change had been made, there would have been ample New Testament Scripture to support it. There's not one word that says that the 7th day Sabbath has given way to Sunday.

Trying to equate the Lord's Day with Sunday is also a futile task because nowhere in the New Testament is the first day of the week (Sunday) equated with the Lord's Day.² It is totally unsupported by Scripture. Some try to explain why the Sabbath has given way to Sunday by pointing to the resurrection, but this, too, cannot be substantiated. There's no Scripture that declares that Yeshua rose on Sunday nor is there any Scripture linked to an alleged Sunday resurrection for a change from Sabbath to Sunday.³ The original theological reasons for why the Roman Catholic Church altered the Sabbath to Sunday can be read in an article called *Sabbath Denigration*.⁴

The Roman Catholic Church openly declares that there is nothing in the New Testament that supports a change from the 7th day Sabbath to Sunday and mocks the Protestant churches whose motto is *Sola Scriptura*, which means that only Scripture should determine one's faith and practice. The Roman Catholic Church says that it has the authority to change the day. The Roman Catholic Church is wrong because nowhere in the Word of God does God delegate that kind of authority to Man (or a church). For instance, if God's Word had said, 'If you want to change the Sabbath day to another day, you can' or something to that effect, then the Roman Catholic Church would have had the authority to do so, but there's nothing in the Word like that.⁵ Unless it is in God's Word, Man is breaking God's Word by changing what God has instituted.

¹ For those three texts (and why the 7th day Sabbath is still valid) see Samuele Bacchiocchi's, *From Sabbath To Sunday* (Rome: The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977), pp. 90-131. It's the definitive work on the issue of Sabbath and Sunday.

² Nowhere in Scripture is the 'Lord's Day' is equated with Sunday. The Lord's Day in the Old Testament was the 7th day Sabbath (Ex. 16:23, 25, 29; 20:10; 35:2; Lev. 23:3; Dt. 5:12-14; Is. 58:13; Mt. 12:8; Mk. 2:28; Luke 6:5) and would come to be seen as a term for Judgment Day (Isaiah 2:12; 13:6, 9; Jer. 46:10; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18; Obadiah 1:15; Zephaniah 1:7, 14; Malachi 4:5; Acts 2:20; 1st Cor. 5:5; 2nd Cor. 1:14; 1st Thess. 5:2; 2nd Peter 3:10).

³ See *The Resurrection and Mark 16:9* is at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Resurrection-and-Mk.-16.9.pdf>.

⁴ *Sabbath Denigration* can be seen at <http://seedofabraham.net/Sabbath-Denigration.pdf>.

⁵ Some might try and point to Jesus giving Peter the keys of the Kingdom (Mt. 16:9), but those keys didn't authorize Peter nor anyone else from changing God's Word. Those keys were symbols of authority to properly teach God's Word, adjudicate between two or more grieved parties, and to legislate or make rules for the believing community, which of course would not mean to change, do away with, or pervert God's laws (Dt. 4:2; 12:32; Luke 16:17; 2nd Tim. 3:16-17).

CATHOLIC WORDS ABOUT SUNDAY

John Stoddard in 1826 points out the fact that the Bible gives no Scripture about Sunday replacing the Sabbath day:

‘A striking instance of this is the following: The first positive command in the Decalogue is to ‘Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy,’ and this precept was enforced by the Jews for thousands of years. But the Sabbath Day, the observance of which God commanded, was our Saturday. Yet who among either Catholics or Protestants, except a sect or two, like the ‘Seventh Day Baptists,’ ever keep that commandment now? None. Why is this? The Bible, which Protestants claim to obey exclusively, gives no authorization for the substitution of the first day of the week for the seventh. On what authority, therefore, have they done so? Plainly on the authority of that very Catholic Church which they abandoned and whose traditions they condemn.’⁶

Statements and confessions by Catholic dignitaries and official Catholic papers, along with Protestant realizations of the unbiblical tenure of Sunday, abound and some will be presented in quote form for all to see what the Catholic Church and a number of Protestants have said.

Cardinal Gibbons, a famous 19th century Catholic archbishop in the USA, is quoted as saying,

‘is not every Christian obliged to sanctify Sunday and to abstain on that day from unnecessary servile work? Is not the observance of this law among the most prominent of our sacred duties? But, you may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify.’⁷

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), a revered ‘Father’ and pillar of the Roman Catholic Church and a priest of the Dominican order, wrote,

‘In the New Law the observance of the Lord’s day (Sunday) took the place of the observance of the Sabbath (Saturday), not by virtue of the precept (of God), but by the institution of the Roman Church and the custom (tradition) of Christian people.’⁸

Gaspar de Fosso, the Archbishop of Reggio remonstrated the Protestants in 1562 saying:

‘The Protestants claim to stand upon the written word only. They profess to hold the Scripture alone as the standard of faith. They justify their revolt by the plea that the Church has apostatized from the written word and follows tradition. Now the Protestants claim, that they stand upon the written word only, is not true. Their profession of holding the Scripture alone as the standard of faith is false. PROOF: The written word explicitly enjoins the observance of the seventh day as the Sabbath.’

‘They do not observe the seventh day, but reject it. If they do truly hold the Scripture alone as their standard, they would be observing the seventh day as is enjoined in the Scripture throughout. Yet they not only reject the observance of the Sabbath enjoined in

⁶ John L. Stoddard, *Rebuilding a Lost Faith By An American Agnostic* (New York: P. J. Kennedy and Sons, 1826), p. 80.

⁷ James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, originally published in 1876, pp. 111-112 (63rd edition); p. 86 (76th edition); republished and copyright 1980 by TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., pages 72-73.

⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theological* SS Q[122] A[4] R.O., paragraph four.

the written word, but they have adopted and do practice the observance of Sunday, for which they have only the tradition of the Church. Consequently the claim of ‘Scripture alone as the standard,’ fails, and the doctrine of ‘Scripture and tradition’ as essential, is fully established, the Protestants themselves being judges.’⁹

In the doctrinal catechism by Rev. Stephen Keenan, officially endorsed by the then Archbishop of New York, the question is asked and answered:

‘Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?’

‘Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her—she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.’¹⁰

Karl Keating, writing under the Imprimatur of the Catholic Church said,

‘After all, fundamentalists meet for worship on Sunday, yet there is no evidence in the Bible that corporate worship was to be made on Sundays. The Jewish Sabbath, or day of rest, was, of course, Saturday. It was the Catholic Church that decided Sunday should be the day of worship for Christians, in honor of the Resurrection.’¹¹

On 25 August 1900, the Catholic Press wrote:

‘Sunday is a Catholic institution, and its claims to observance can be defended only by Catholic principles. From beginning to end of Scripture there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week [Saturday] to the first.’¹²

The Catholic Mirror, the official publication of James Cardinal Gibbons, Sept. 23, 1893, stated:

‘The Catholic Church...by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday.’¹³

Peter Geiermann, C.S.S.R., *The Converts Catechism of Catholic Doctrine* (1957), p. 50 wrote:

‘Question: Which is the Sabbath day? Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day.’

‘Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday? Answer. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.’¹⁴

Lest some think that the Catholic Church replaced the 7th day Sabbath with Sunday because of the resurrection, there is nothing in Scripture that speaks of Sunday replacing the Sabbath because of the

⁹ J. H. Holtzman, *Canon and Tradition*, published in Ludwigsburg, Germany in 1859, p. 263. Archbishop of Reggio’s address in the 17th session of the Council of Trent, Jan. 18, 1562, in Mansi SC, Vol. 33, cols. 529, 530. The Archbishop of Reggio (Gaspar [Ricciulli] de Fosso) made this speech at the last opening session of Trent (17th Session) reconvened under a new pope (Pius IV) on 18 January 1562.

¹⁰ Rev. Stephen Keenan, *A Doctrinal Catechism*, Imprimatur by John Cardinal McCloskey, Archbishop of New York, Copyright 1876 by T. W. Strong, page 174.

¹¹ Karl Keating, *Catholicism and Fundamentalism*, copyright 1988 by Ignatius Press, San Francisco, bearing the Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur of the Catholic Church, page 38.

¹² Taken from http://www.nisbett.com/sabbath/sunday_not_lords_day.htm.

¹³ Taken from <http://www.biblesabbath.org/confessions.html>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

resurrection. In other words, even though Yeshua rose on Sunday, Scripture does not speak of changing the Sabbath to Sunday because of that, meaning that it's not God's will to replace the Sabbath, even because of the Sunday resurrection.

Peter R. Kraemer, Catholic Church Extension Society (1975), Chicago, Illinois, wrote:

'Regarding the change from the observance of the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Sunday, I wish to draw your attention to the facts:'

- a. 'That Protestants, who accept the Bible as the only rule of faith and religion, should by all means go back to the observance of the Sabbath. The fact that they do not, but on the contrary observe the Sunday, stultifies¹⁵ them in the eyes of every thinking man.'
- b. 'We Catholics do not accept the Bible as the only rule of faith. Besides the Bible we have the living Church, the authority of the Church, as a rule to guide us. We say, this Church, instituted by Christ to teach and guide man through life, has the right to change the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament and hence, we accept her change of the Sabbath to Sunday. We frankly say, yes, the Church made this change, made this law, as she made many other laws, for instance, the Friday abstinence, the unmarried priesthood, the laws concerning mixed marriages, the regulation of Catholic marriages and a thousand other laws.'

'It is always somewhat laughable, to see the Protestant churches, in pulpit and legislation, demand the observance of Sunday, of which there is nothing in their Bible.'¹⁶

T. Enright, C.S.S.R., in a lecture at Hartford, Kansas, Feb. 18, 1884 said,

'I have repeatedly offered \$1,000 to anyone who can prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. 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 civilized world bows down in a reverent obedience to the command of the holy Catholic Church.'¹⁷

PROTESTANT ACKNOWLEDGMENT ABOUT SUNDAY

An Anglican Archbishop of Quebec speaks about Sunday:

'Toronto, Canada, Oct. 27 (BUP).—Rev. Philip Carrington, Anglican Archbishop of Quebec, sent local clergymen into a huddle today by saying outright that there was nothing to support Sunday being kept holy. Carrington defiantly told a church meeting in this city of straight-laced protestantism that tradition, not the Bible, had made Sunday the day of worship. He quoted the biblical commandment which said the seventh day should be one of rest, and then stated: 'That is Saturday.' 'Nowhere in the Bible is it laid down that worship should be done on Sunday,' the Archbishop told a hushed, still audience. Local parsons read his comments today with set, determined looks. They refused comment.'¹⁸

¹⁵ Stultify means, 'to cause someone to appear absurd or foolish' (from the Latin *stultus* 'foolish').

¹⁶ Taken from <http://www.biblesabbath.org/confessions.html>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ News Item, Albertan (Calgary, Alberta, Canada), Oct. 28, 1949.

Anglican—Episcopal

Isaac Williams in *Plain Sermons on the Catechism*, vol. 1, pp. 334, 336, writes:

‘And where are we told in the Scriptures that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day...The reason why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the church has enjoined it.’¹⁹

Canon Eyton in *The Ten Commandments*, pp. 52, 63, 65 writes:

‘There is no word, no hint, in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday...into the rest of Sunday no divine law enters...The observance of Ash Wednesday or Lent stands exactly on the same footing as the observance of Sunday.’²⁰

Bishop Seymour in *Why We Keep Sunday* says,

‘We have made the change from the seventh day to the first day, from Saturday to Sunday, on the authority of the one holy Catholic Church.’²¹

Baptist

Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, in a paper read before a New York ministers’ conference, Nov. 13, 1893, reported in *New York Examiner*, Nov.16, 1893, said,

‘There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week...Where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament, absolutely not.’

‘To me it seems unaccountable that Jesus, during three years’ intercourse with His disciples, often conversing with them upon the Sabbath question...*never alluded to any transference of the day*; also, that *during forty days of His resurrection life*, no such thing was intimated.’

‘Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history...But what a pity it comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun god, adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism!’²²

William Owen Carver in *The Lord’s Day in Our Day*, p. 49, states,

‘There was never any formal or authoritative change from the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath to the Christian first-day observance.’²³

¹⁹ Taken from <http://www.biblesabbath.org/confessions.html>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

Congregationalist

Dr. R. W. Dale in *The Ten Commandments* (New York: Eaton & Mains), p. 127-129, wrote,

‘...it is quite clear that however rigidly or devotedly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath...(the) Sabbath was founded on a specific Divine command. *We can plead no such command* for the obligation to observe Sunday...*There is not a single sentence in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday.*’

Timothy Dwight in *Theology: Explained and Defended* (1823), Ser. 107, vol. 3, p. 258, wrote,

‘...the Christian Sabbath [Sunday] is not in the Scriptures, *and was not by the primitive Church called the Sabbath.*’

Disciples of Christ

Alexander Campbell in *The Christian Baptist*, Feb. 2, 1824, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 164, wrote,

“‘But,’ say some, ‘it was changed from the seventh to the first day.’ Where? When? And by whom? *No man can tell.* No; it never was changed, nor could it be, unless creation was to be gone through again: for the reason assigned must be changed before the observance, or respect to the reason, can be changed! It is all old wives’ fables to talk of the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day. If it be changed, it was that august personage changed it who changes times and laws *ex officio*—I think his name is Doctor Antichrist.’²⁴

In *First Day Observance*, pp. 17, 19 it states:

‘The first day of the week is commonly called the Sabbath. This is a mistake. The Sabbath of the Bible was the day just preceding the first day of the week. *The first day of the week is never called the Sabbath anywhere in the entire Scriptures.* It is also an error to talk about the change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. There is not in any place in the Bible any intimation of such a change.’²⁵

Dwight L. Moody

Dwight L. Moody in *Weighed and Wanting* (Fleming H. Revell Co.: New York), pp. 47, 48, wrote,

‘The Sabbath was binding in Eden, and it has been in force ever since. This fourth commandment begins with the word ‘remember,’ *showing that the Sabbath already existed when God wrote the law on the tables of stone at Sinai.* How can men claim that this one commandment has been done away with when they will admit that the other nine are still binding?’²⁶

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

Lutheran

In the *Augsburg Confession of Faith*, art. 28, written by Melanchthon and approved by Martin Luther, in 1530, and as published in *The Book of Concord of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Henry Jacobs, ed. (1911), p. 63, it states,

‘They (Roman Catholics) refer to the Sabbath Day,’ having changed it ‘into the Lord’s Day, contrary to the Decalogue, as it seems. Neither is there any example whereof they make more than concerning the changing of the Sabbath Day. Great, say they, is the power of the Church, since it has dispensed with one of the Ten Commandments!’²⁷

Dr. Augustus Neander, *The History of the Christian Religion and Church* (1843), p. 186, wrote,

‘The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a Divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic Church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday.’²⁸

In *The Sunday Problem*, a study book of the United Lutheran Church (1923), p. 36, it states,

‘We have seen how gradually the impression of the Jewish sabbath faded from the mind of the Christian Church, and how completely the newer thought underlying the observance of the first day took possession of the church. We have seen that the Christians of the first three centuries never confused one with the other, but for a time celebrated both.’

John Theodore Mueller in *Sabbath or Sunday*, pp. 15, 16, writes,

‘But they err in teaching that Sunday has taken the place of the Old Testament Sabbath and therefore must be kept as the seventh day had to be kept by the children of Israel...These churches err in their teaching, for Scripture has in no way ordained the first day of the week in place of the Sabbath. *There is simply no law in the New Testament to that effect.*’

Methodist

John Wesley in *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley*, John Emory, ed. (New York: Eaton & Mains), Sermon 25, vol. 1, p. 221, writes,

‘But, the moral law contained in the ten commandments, and enforced by the prophets, he [Christ] did not take away. It was not the design of his coming to revoke any part of this. This is a law which never can be broken...Every part of this law must remain in force upon all mankind, and in all ages; as not depending either on time or place, or any other circumstances liable to change, but on the nature of God and the nature of man, and their unchangeable relation to each other.’²⁹

Harris Franklin Rall in the *Christian Advocate*, July 2, 1942, p.26, wrote,

‘Take the matter of Sunday. There are indications in the New Testament as to how the church came to keep the first day of the week as its day of worship, but there is no pas-

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

sage telling Christians to keep that day, or to transfer the Jewish Sabbath to that day.’³⁰

Presbyterian

T. C. Blake, D.D., in *Theology Condensed*, pp. 474, 475, writes,

‘The Sabbath is a part of the decalogue—the Ten Commandments. This alone forever settles the question as to the perpetuity of the institution...Until, therefore, it can be shown that the whole moral law has been repealed, the Sabbath will stand...The teaching of Christ confirms the perpetuity of the Sabbath.’³¹

SOME POINTS ABOUT SUNDAY

1. There is not a single verse in the New Testament that states Sunday is the Sabbath or the Lord’s day.
2. There is not a single verse in the New Testament that states that the 7th day Sabbath has been altered, changed, abolished or replaced.
3. There is not a single verse in the New Testament that commands Christians to keep the first day of the week (Sunday) as a day of rest, worship or holiness.
4. There is not a single verse in the New Testament that states that Jesus ever kept the first day of the week (i.e. Sunday) as the Sabbath or spoke of the Sabbath’s alleged nullification.
5. There is not a single verse in the New Testament that applies to the first day of the week any sacred title (e.g. blessed or holy; Gen. 2:1-3) or pronounces any penalty for its non-observance (as does the Sabbath; Ex. 31:12-17).

CONCLUSION

From both Catholics and Protestants come confirmations that God has never replaced the 7th day Sabbath with Sunday. This was done by the fiat and audacity of the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church has led billions of Christians astray over the last 1,900 years, but God is restoring His holy 7th day Sabbath to those who desire His Truth over Catholic manipulation. Does any man (or church, which is made up of men) have authority from God to change His ways? Not according to God (Dt. 4:2; 12:32; Rev. 22:18).

There isn’t any biblical support for honoring Sunday above other days. The 7th day Sabbath of the Lord God of Israel is still very much in effect. It’s not only a time of assembly and worship, it’s a full 24 hour day of holiness set apart to God that He has given to those who believe in His Son so that they can be refreshed by both not working and by seeking His Presence.

Daniel, 570 years before Christ rose from the dead, wrote about what the Catholic Church would do in altering and destroying God’s holy Sabbath and Law:

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

‘He (the Pope) shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall wear out the holy ones of the Most High, and shall attempt *to change the sacred seasons (the Feasts of Israel) and the Law*; and they (believers in Christ) shall be given into his power for a time, two times, and half a time.’ (Dan 7:25 NRSV)

The ‘time’ is over; the deception is being revealed for what it is: a satanic deception that has blinded the eyes of believers for 1,900 years.³² Jesus is calling all those who believe in Him to lay down their traditional interpretations for why Sunday, Easter and Christmas are kept and to pick up His Word and learn to walk in *His Ways*.³³

³² See *The Lifting of the Veil: Acts 15:20-21* by Avram Yehoshua. *The Lifting of the Veil* reveals the New Testament’s position on the Law of Moses. The Church interprets the four rules of James (Acts 15:20) as table fellowship and completely misses God’s point. Understood from its Hebraic perspective the four rules are the theological foundation that establishes Mosaic Law for every believer. The latest edition can be read for free at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Lifting-of-the-Veil.pdf>.

³³ See *Law 102* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Law-102.pdf> for why many church interpretations against the Law of Moses are not biblical.

See *Christmas—Its Origin* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Christmas-Its-Origin.pdf> for why Christmas is not Christians.

The celebration of Easter is pagan and has absolutely nothing to do with the resurrection of Christ. See <http://www.lasttrumpetministries.org/tracts/tract1.html>.

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