

Lord's Day

TEXT: Isaiah 58:13,14; Matthew 12:1-13

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Exodus 20:8-11

KEY VERSE: And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow. — Acts 20:7

The basic principle of setting aside one day of the week to worship God and rest from work, is as old as Creation. It precedes even the Mosaic Law. During the time of Moses, God gave the Children of Israel specific rules to follow concerning that holy day. The Sabbath day, our Saturday, is still observed by the Jewish nation as their day of rest, and it is also remembered as a perpetual covenant. (See Exodus 31:16.) The Sabbath Day is not to be confused with the Lord's Day. When Jesus arose from the grave on the first day of the week, a new era began—not that the Law was destroyed, but fulfilled. The Lord's Day, our Sunday, is the day set aside by Christians around the world as a day of rest and of honor to our Lord Jesus Christ. The child of God looks forward to each Lord's Day, when he can gather with fellow Christians and set aside worldly concerns, enter into the house of God and reap the promised blessings of the Lord.

1. In Genesis 2:2,3, we read that on the seventh day God rested from all His work, the creation of the world. The word sabbath means “to rest from labor.” What do you think is meant by the statement that tells us, God “blessed” and “sanctified” it?

2. When God gave the Ten Commandments to the Children of Israel, what were they commanded to do on the Sabbath Day? (See Exodus 20:8-11.) Under the Law, what could happen to a person who worked on the Sabbath Day? See Exodus 35:2.

3. To the Pharisees who complained because His disciples picked corn on the Sabbath, Jesus said, “the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day” (Matthew 12:8). Explain what you think is meant by that verse.

4. Under the Law, the Israelites were instructed to bring the offering of the “firstfruits.” This offering was made “on the morrow after the sabbath” (Leviticus 23:9-12). Christ’s Resurrection took place on the first day of the week, which is “on the morrow after the sabbath.” Paul tells us that Christ became the first fruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20). What significance does this have on the fact that Christians today observe Sunday as the “Lord’s Day”?

5. Look up the following Scriptures and list the significant events that occurred on Sundays.

Mark 16:9, Luke 24:13, Luke 24:36, John 20:26, Acts 2:1, Acts 20:7, Revelation 1:10,

6. The Lord’s Day is distinguished from the Sabbath Day of the Mosaic Law not only because it is on a different day, but because none of the Old Testament Sabbath regulations were transferred to the Lord’s Day. When the Apostles and elders met in Jerusalem to give rules for the Gentile Christians (Acts 15:1,2,19-29), why do you think they didn’t include a demand for Sabbath observance in the rules? See Romans 14:1-6; Galatians 4:9-11; Colossians 2:16,17.

7. The Lord’s Day is in the possessive form and means, “belonging to the Lord.” Just as the Old Covenant related the Sabbath to God’s Creation of the World, under the New Covenant we relate Sunday, the Lord’s Day, to our new creation in Christ Jesus. Every Sunday, therefore, is a weekly memorial to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We can see in 1 Corinthians 16:1,2, and also in our key verse that the Early Church consecrated the day to worship and almsgiving (but not to earning). What are some of the things Christians today can do to show respect for the Lord’s Day?

8. In Isaiah 58:13,14 we read the promise that God gave to the Jews if they would honor the Sabbath Day. List the things God required of the people in order to receive that promise. Can we also expect to receive such blessings if we honor the Lord’s Day?

Thought Provoker: The legalistic burdens of the Sabbath Day have been removed by Jesus, but are we guilty of removing the blessing from our sabbath, the Lord’s Day? Are children today growing up without knowing what the Lord’s Day is really about: Are we taking full advantage of that Day to wait upon God in prayer, to delight in His Word, and to fellowship with other Christians? Is Sunday the happiest day of our week?