

THE BIBLICAL SABBATH: UNCHANGED FROM CREATION TO THE CALENDAR ON YOUR WALL

By Pastor Dan Gayman

Our Creator established the biblical Sabbath on the seventh day of the first week of earth's history. The seven-day week is the most historic measure of time known to man. The origin of the seven-day week is the literal six days of creation (Genesis 1) plus the seventh day of rest, which concluded that first week. ***“And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day . . . And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made”*** (Genesis 1:31; 2:2).

The English word *week* is directly linked to the Hebrew root word for seven. In Scripture, the word *week*, in measuring days or years, is seven. The week is clearly visible in the six, literal twenty-four hour days of work followed by the Sabbath in Genesis one. The week, consisting of *seven days*, is pronounced in Genesis 8:10 & 12 as Noah waited for the water to recede. Jacob fulfilled his week of seven years for Rachel (Genesis 29:18,27-28). The *seven weeks* that followed the offering of the wave sheaf at Passover totaled forty-nine days; the fiftieth day that followed was designated as Pentecost (Leviticus 23:15-16).

The seventy *weeks* of Daniel 9 were the equivalent of four hundred and ninety years in the prophetic scheme of that vision. The words *seven* and *week* cannot be separated. The unbroken continuity of the week has endured all centuries and all known calendars. It remains unchanged from the dawn of creation. The seventh day of the week on the Gregorian calendar in use today remains unchanged from the Julian calendar, which was calculated by the Greek astronomer Sosigenes in 46 BC.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 3, p. 740, reads as follows under Chronology: *“It is to be noted that in the Christian period, the order of days in the week has never been interrupted. Thus when Gregory XIII reformed the calendar in 1582, Thursday, 4 October was followed by Friday, 15 October. So in England, in 1752, Wednesday, 2 September, was followed by Thursday, 14 September.”* Notice how ten days were dropped from the calendar. One day was the fourth, and the very next day was the fifteenth of October. The fourth was Thursday, followed by Friday. Recalibrating the calendar did absolutely nothing to change the biblical Sabbath of the seven days or the succession of the days of the week.

When our Lord Jesus Christ observed the Sabbath under the Julian calendar, He celebrated Sabbath on the day we call Saturday. The Saturday (seventh day of the week) on our Gregorian calendar is the same day of the week as it was in the days of Jesus Christ. The biblical Sabbath cannot be divorced from the seventh day of the week. All historical research confirms that the seventh day on the Gregorian calendar is the same day marked on the Julian calendar of 45 BC.

Jehovah marked and blessed the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. No other day of the week can be called the Sabbath. The Muslims celebrate Sabbath on Friday, the sixth day of the week; the Roman Catholics and affiliated Protestant Churches originating from that church observe Sunday, the first day of the week, as the Sabbath. The early Christians continued to observe Sabbath on the seventh day of the week following the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ. The Council of Laodicea in 363 A.D. forbade Christians to observe the biblical Sabbath under penalty of death. While the Roman Western and the Greek Eastern Church transferred from the *seventh* to the *first day of the week* (Sunday), the faithful in Jesus Christ continued to observe the biblical Sabbath in unbroken succession throughout the centuries. Scattered, autonomous flocks of faithful Christians continued to observe the biblical Sabbath.

Many people believe that any day of the week suffices for the Sabbath, as long as you rest one day in every seven. This is not what God commands. Following the exodus from Egypt, the Israelites quickly learned that the manna (their angel-food cake) did not appear on the seventh day of the week, the Biblical Sabbath. About this, we read: ***“And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none”*** (Exod. 16:27). In response to this disobedience, God said, ***“How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws”*** (verse 28).

That same eternal God who speaks an unchanging Word of truth from one generation to another (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8, Psa. 33:11) continues to bid us to keep the Biblical Sabbath of the seventh day of the week. Let us be faithful in our calling to do so!