

Is Sunday the Christian Sabbath?

We see the religious world celebrating the "Sabbath" on the first day of the week, that is, Sunday! Is this correct?

Are Christians to gather on the "Christian Sabbath" according to the Scriptures?

Or as the Seventh Day Adventists and others say, are we to meet on the "seventh day", the sabbath according to Jewish law?

First, we want to examine the Scriptures to find which books of the Bible we live under (that is, we are to obey) today.

Your Bible is made up of two parts. The Old and New Testaments. Do we follow the Old or the New?

Lk 24:44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

The OT contains 3 divisions according to the Scriptures, although we sometimes divide them into 5 - the books of the Law, History, Poetry, the Major Prophets and the Minor Prophets.

There are 39 books in the OT and 27 in the NT, making 66 books total. In the OT, there are 5 books in the Law, 10 books of history, 7 books of poetry, 5 books of the major prophets, and 12 books of the Minor prophets.

In the NT there are 4 gospels, the book of conversions, 21 epistles and 1 book of prophecy.

Where does the New Testament Begin?

Does the New Testament begin with the birth of Jesus? The most obvious answer is to be found in the word "testament." A Last Will and Testament is a document which goes into effect after a person dies.

The word "testament" is the same as the word "covenant", and these words are used interchangeably in different versions of the Scriptures.

Heb 9:16 For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. 17 For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. (NASB)

Heb 9:16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. (KJV)

The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, belong to the New Testament in the sense that they detail the earthly life of Jesus.

Mat 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Keep in mind that Jesus came to earth to do what was necessary to bring us His Testament.

However, the four Gospels do not belong to the New Testament in the sense that the New could not enter into force until after the things they record took place.

Heb 9:16 For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. 17 For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.

Heb 9:23 Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

Jesus had to ascend into heaven and there to offer his blood to God as a sacrifice before the covenant went into effect. This is similar to the probate period seen in common law. It is necessary to read the will which has been put into effect by the death of the one who made it.

Jesus' will was not in force nor revealed while He was on the earth.

Mat 13:10-11 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" (11) Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

Jesus lived and died under the law of Moses!
Gal 4:4 But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

Jesus did reveal some of “how it would be ‘in the kingdom of heaven,’” but we must be careful not to include things Jesus taught to the Jews about the OT in the NT.

For instance, are we to circumcise our children on the 8th day? Jesus was circumcised!

Luke 2:21 And when eight days were completed before His circumcision, ...

Gal 5:2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you.

For instance, are we to be baptized in John's baptism? Jesus was!

Matt 3:13 Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him.

Acts 19:4 And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

For instance, are we to pay the temple tax? Jesus did!

Matt 17:27 "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?
17 If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

For instance, are we to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath? Jesus did!

Lk 4:16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.

Act 20:6-7 We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days. (7) On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

Even the small amount Jesus taught about His covenant was not revealed to the people.

Mt 13:10 The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?" 11 He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. ... 17 For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

The reading of Jesus' Last Will and Testament began on the day of Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection with Peter doing the preaching (reading).

Acts 2:14 But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: "Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words. ... 33"Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, ... 34 "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,... 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified."

When did Jesus' new testament (covenant) take effect?

On the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus.

When Jesus died and the will was read!

The four Gospels cover a time of transition
"between" the two testaments.

There are things Jesus did in the four books which
had to do solely with the Old Testament.

Jesus was circumcised Lk 2:21.

Jesus paid the temple tax Mt 17:27

Jesus to the synagogue on the Sabbath Lk 4:16

For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, Mt 23:23

There are things in the gospels which have to do
solely with the New Testament

"unless one is born again, he cannot see the
kingdom of God" Jn 3.3

"It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes
to become great among you shall be your servant,
Mt 20:26

And there are things in the gospels which had to do solely with the time of transition itself.

"John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." Acts 19.4

It took years for Jesus' Testament to be completely revealed.

1Co 13:10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.

Jas 1:25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty

We find that Jesus disciples still held to points of the law until it was revealed to them that the Law of Moses had been taken out of the way.

Circumcision Acts 15

The change was not clearly understood by the church until it was revealed to the apostle Paul as he wrote to the Galatians and the Colossians (about 68-70 AD).

Gal 5:3-4 And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. (4) You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

About the same time, obedience to the new Covenant was the subject of the letter to the Hebrews.

Heb 1:2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

Heb 8:13 When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

It was at least nine years after the day of Pentecost when the gospel was finally preached to the Gentiles (Cornelius' household, Acts 10, 11, AD 43), although it had been preached to a Gentile who converted to Judaism much earlier (Nicolas the proselyte, Acts 6, AD 34-35).

Even later (Acts 15, AD 50-51) a serious discussion arose about circumcision.

Did the disciples understand that the law had passed upon Jesus death?

NO!

Lk 23:56 *And they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.*

Did Peter preach that all men had a right to come
to the Lord on Pentecost?

He did, but he didn't realize it!

*Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that **God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified.**"*

37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

*38 And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the **promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."***

Did Peter understand that the Gentiles were to be allowed into the church on the day of Pentecost?

NO!

Acts 10:28 And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean. 29 "That is why I came without even raising any objection when I was sent for. And so I ask for what reason you have sent for me.

Did the church in Jerusalem understand that the Gentiles were not to be circumcised in order to be saved on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2, AD 33) or at the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10, 11, AD 43) or at the discussion in Acts 15 (AD 50)?

Acts 15:1 And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." 2 And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.

Jesus lived and died under the Law (the OT)

Jesus obeyed God's OT perfectly

Jesus kept the Sabbath

We keep none of these things!

Jesus died on the cross

Jesus' Last Will and Testament began to be proclaimed on the day of Pentecost.

We are now under the Law of Christ (the NT).

We must live by the NT!

We must keep all of these things!

Mat 17:5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

Mat 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."