

The Sabbath

- The Hebrew word, Sabbath, means "seven." So, that is what Aramaic people called the seventh day. We call it Saturday.
- In the Law of Moses, the Sabbath was made a day of rest (not a day of worship). Only Israelites were under the Law of Moses, no one else. Read the parts of Exodus and Deuteronomy just before the Ten Commandments. No other group was ever told by God to "remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy." They all had their own laws by which they were judged (Romans 2:12 - 14) Israelite worship was restricted to the tabernacle or temple, to which most faithful Israelites went about three times per year. Obviously, they could not go there every week. For most, it was too far. The Israelites celebrated the Sabbath in memory of the day in which God rested after the six days of creation.
- Synagogues are not part of the Law of Moses. That practice was invented by the Jews in Captivity in Babylon. It continues to this day among Jews. Jesus took advantage of the fact that a group of religious Jews were gathered in one place, so He went there to speak. Paul did the same in the book of Acts.
- The New Testament does not specify the day on which Christians should gather. The only time-valued statement is in Hebrews 3:13, daily. The reference in Acts 2:46 reports what the first Christians did, but does not recommend copying it. The reference in Hebrews does recommend daily meeting. But, by the time the first church manual was published about 115 AD, Sunday meetings were the custom. They chose Sunday because it was resurrection day, the first day of the week. The references in Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:2 tell what the early church did, but there is no recommendation to repeat it.
- Sunday became a "day off" in 312 AD when the pagan emperor Constantine wanted to do something nice for the Christians because they worked hard, paid their taxes, and never revolted. So, he closed government offices on Sundays, so no one could process any paperwork, so most businesses had to close. Before that, everyone (except Jews) worked seven days a week, 12 hours per day. So, church meetings were either before sunrise or after sunset. After that, Christianity became fashionable and things went downhill fast.