

SABBATH VS SUNDAY KEEPING IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

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The following are all the scriptures in the book of Acts that have anything to do with Sabbath vs Sunday keeping. These scriptures show that the original disciples and apostles, Jews and Gentiles alike, were conducting the Christian religion wherever they went in the context of the Sabbath and Holy Days according to Lev. 23. The one scripture in Acts that some believe shows Sunday keeping, turns out to be only an **assumption** when read in complete context of the verses.

Acts 2:1 And when the day of **Pentecost** was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Acts 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

Note: Verses 3-41 give the events and the sermon preached by Peter on this Day of Pentecost. Pentecost is listed with all the other of the Lord's true Holy Days in Lev. 23 and is one of the seven annual Holy Days. On this Holy Day, the Old Testament Israelites were given the ten commandments at Mt. Sinai. On this New Testament Pentecost, God gave his holy spirit to the first Christians. This one annual Holy Day is kept by the Catholic Church; and from what I understand is kept on the same day that the Churches of God keep it once every seven years. The reason for the Catholics not keeping it on the correct day the other six years is that they base the calculation of it on the Roman calendar instead of the Hebrew calendar. The Hebrew calendar is the true context of this and all God's Holy Days. Pentecost must be counted in order to fall on the correct day. Lev. 23 says 50 days must be counted beginning from the day after the Sabbath within the days of unleavened bread. The 50th day from that Sabbath is Pentecost and always falls on a Sunday.

The original disciples were assembled there, not keeping a brand new Christian day, but one of the seven annual Holy Days of Lev. 23 that had always been kept. So the question must be asked, "Where does it say in the Bible that Pentecost is still in effect, but the other Holy Days are now done away?? NOWHERE! That is an ASSUMPTION!"

Acts 12:1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.

Acts 12:2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

Acts 12:3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. **(Then were the Days of Unleavened bread.)**

Note: Remember that Jesus had promised James and John that they would die in the same way as he did. (Mk 10:35-39) Here, James is killed with a sword, as Jesus had his side pierced with a sword on the cross. Also notice here that James is killed at the very same time Jesus had been killed, at the time of the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Peter was put in prison also and the following verses tell of how he was miraculously freed at this time of the Days of Unleavened Bread. Why would the Days of Unleavened Bread be mentioned here if the disciples were not still keeping them?

Acts 12:4 And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after **Easter** to bring him forth to the people.

Acts 12:5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

Note: According to Grolier Encyclopedia, early Christians observed Easter on the same day as Passover, 14-15 Nisan. In the second century Easter was transferred to the Sunday following 14-15 Nisan if that day fell on a weekday. In the fourth century Good Friday became a separate commemoration of the death of Christ and Easter Sunday devoted exclusively to the resurrection. Question: Which 'Christians' were observing correctly according to God's will - first century, second century, or fourth century?

Grolier also states, Easter is currently determined as the first Sunday after the full moon on or after March 21 in Eastern Orthodox churches. However, it is set according to the Julian rather than the Gregorian calendar so usually falls several weeks later than the Western Easter.

Question: Which churches are using the correct calendar according to God's will - Eastern or Western - and where is the proof?

Actually, the word Easter is NOT the original word in this verse at all. The word is Pascha or Passover, #3967 in Strongs Greek Dictionary. There is no such thing as the celebration of Easter in the Bible. The name Easter is derived from a pagan spring fertility festival of the Anglo Saxon goddess Eostre. It was adopted as a 'Christian' name in order to convert the pagans. The truth of Easter's pagan origin is seen in that it is still celebrated today with bunnies and eggs, symbols of fertility. Anyone who is really interested in the truth can see the step by step departure from the original true practice of the observation of Passover by Jesus and the disciples, then changing the true name, Passover, to the pagan name Easter, then to the second century celebration of the Sunday following 14-15 Nisan, then to the fourth century addition of Good Friday...

Acts 13:13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

Acts 13:14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and **went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down.**

Note: Here we find Paul and everyone with him keeping the Sabbath day in Antioch. The following verses, 15-41, give the sermon which Paul preached to them on this Sabbath...

Acts 13:42 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them **the next Sabbath.**

Acts 13:43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

Acts 13:44 And **the next Sabbath day** came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

Note: Notice here that the keeping of the Sabbath was never in question but kept as a matter of course from week to week, and that all converts, Jews and Gentiles alike, were keeping the Sabbath.

Acts 16:11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;

Acts 16:12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

Acts 16:13 **And on the Sabbath** we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.

Note: Notice here that Paul in his travels was keeping the Sabbath beside a river where there was no synagogue. Because of this preaching a woman named Lydia and her household were baptized (vs 14-15)

Acts 17:1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

Acts 17:2 And Paul, **as his manner was**, went in unto them, and **three Sabbath days** reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

Acts 17:3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

Acts 17:4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

Acts 17:5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

Note: Notice here that Paul was preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to Jews and Greeks on the Sabbath days. Just because many Jews did not believe in Christ and caused trouble, that did not hinder Paul (Apostle of the Gentiles) from keeping the Sabbath and preaching on that day.

Acts 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;

Acts 18:2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

Acts 18:3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

Acts 18:4 And he reasoned in the synagogue **every Sabbath**, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

Acts 18:5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

Note: Here Paul is preaching to Jews and Greeks every Sabbath.

Acts 20:6 And we sailed away from Philippi **after the Days of Unleavened Bread**, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.

Acts 20:7 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; and continued his speech until midnight.

Acts 20:8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

Acts 20:9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

Acts 20:10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

Acts 20:11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

Acts 20:12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

Acts 20:13 And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot.

Acts 20:14 And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene.

Acts 20:15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.

Acts 20:16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem **the day of Pentecost**.

Note: The book of Acts covers the ministries of Paul and Peter from AD 29 to AD 67, a period of 38 years. It consistently shows that the Sabbath and Holy Days were kept by converted Jews and Greeks alike all during this time. Now suddenly we have a situation of this one instance where Paul is preaching on the first day of the week, Sunday. So we ask WHY? Being careful not to ASSUME anything, we ask the following questions:

Keeping the seventh day Sabbath is based on the fourth commandment of God and was in effect since creation. Is there any commandment to keep the first day of the week or is Sunday keeping based on a commandment of God? No.

Keeping the Sabbath is based on the example of Jesus Christ. Is there any example or commandment of his to change it? No.

Keeping the Sabbath is based on the example of the early disciples and apostles throughout this book. They did not change to Sunday keeping after Christ ascended to Heaven. Is there any statement made that they were supposed to change the day because of Christ's resurrection on Sunday? No.

Is there any statement made here or elsewhere that Paul converted from Sabbath to Sunday keeping? No.

Is there any reason given for this incident of preaching on the first day of the week? No. If there is no reason given, should we ASSUME that it was done to change God's fourth commandment to Sunday? I would be afraid to ASSUME this without proof.

Since there is only this one scripture that shows Paul preaching on Sunday, could this have been an isolated incident with no intention of changing the day of worship? For example, could the reason have been that since Paul was only in Troas for seven days (therefore he must have arrived there the previous Monday so they only had had one Sabbath service together during the seven days) and since he was going to depart on the morrow (Monday), could it be that he preached to them Sunday evening when they came together to break bread (have the evening meal) until midnight simply to make the most of the time and have one more meeting with them before he departed? Yes! There would be nothing wrong with doing this, and this meeting on Sunday evening does not do away with their regular Sabbath keeping.

*Is there any statement that a separation should be made between Jews and Christians concerning the days they keep? No. Jews and Greeks were both keeping the Sabbath. Notice the context of this preaching. Verse 6 says. "We sailed away from Phillipi **after the days of unleavened bread.**" Then verse 16 says, "he hasted if it were possible to be at Jerusalem for the **day of Pentecost.**" If Paul was now converted to Sunday keeping, why would he still be talking about the same old Holy Days?*

The term 'breaking bread' is referred to in the Bible both as eating a regular meal as well as to the symbolic bread of the body of Christ at the Passover meal. In those days they did not 'slice' bread as we do today, but they 'broke' it. Notice these scriptures...

Lam 4:4 The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them.

Mt 14:19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

Acts 20:11 When he (the young man who fell) therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

Since these scriptures show that breaking of bread is part of a regular meal, how do we know that the breaking of bread which the disciples came together for here in verse 7 was not just a regular meal? Where is the proof that this breaking of bread must be the eucharistic participation of Christ's body?

Acts 27:7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone;

Acts 27:8 And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

*Acts 27:9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because **the fast** was now already past, Paul admonished them,*

Note: Paul is here talking about the Day of Atonement, the only commanded fast day of the year according to Lev 23.

CONCLUSION

This concludes the scriptures found in Acts concerning the Sabbaths and holy days. Many other scriptures verify that Christians ought to keep the Biblical Holy Days. As we saw, the earliest disciples and apostles, Jews and Greeks, kept the Sabbath and Holy Days of Lev 23. Jesus himself did. The only exception is in Acts 20:7 of their gathering on a Sunday evening. The reason for this is not given. Therefore, it should not be ASSUMED that God wanted them to depart from the already established Sabbath and Holy Days. Subsequent changes made to Sunday keeping and worldly holidays were never authorized by God; and those who keep them are deceived and led astray by supposed authority of men. Let us follow the Lord's example of Sabbath keeping and return to the faith once delivered unto the saints.