

The Weekly Sabbath vs The Annual sabbaths

What's the difference?

Bible Study Notes

There is much contention within the Christian Church pertaining to the observance of the Sabbath Commandment. Many attempt to use the writings of Paul, **Colossians 2:14-17**, to try to argue the point that the Sabbath is no longer binding. Some may say that yes, we should not steal, murder, commit adultery or have any other gods but the Lord, they have no issues with any of the other 9 Commandments, but when it comes to the 4th Commandment, apparently that Commandment is no longer binding, *"it was for the jews it is said"*.

Paul says in **Colossians 2:14-17**, *"Let no man therefore judge you in **meat**, or in **drink**, or in **respect of an holyday**, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ"*, as a result many take this to mean that Paul is referring to the Sabbath of the 4th Commandment, not realising that Scripture speaks of more than one type of Sabbath.

As a result, it is my intention by searching the Scriptures to help clear up this point for others and give a clear concise answer according to Scripture.

We will first begin by taking a look at the weekly Sabbath of the 4th Commandment and then we will compare it to the annual sabbath days.

The Weekly Sabbath:

This Sabbath is first seen in Scripture during the week of Creation. God had finished His work of Creation on the first 6 days, and after He had completed this work, which included creating Adam & Eve, He made another day, *the 7th day*, upon which He rested from all His creative works. He then appointed this day to be a holy day, *a sanctified day*, a day that was set apart **above all others**.

*"Thus, the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 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. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.**" **Genesis 2:1-3 KJV***

This Sabbath was instituted before there was any Israelite upon the earth, as it was given during the first week, when only Adam and Eve existed, and sin had not yet entered the earth. It is also interesting to note that this same seven day cycle has continued since that very first week up until now; God in His omnipotence has preserved this cycle of time since He first created it.

Now one may say that the 10 Commandments, of which the Sabbath command is a part of, was given *only* to the Jews from God from Mt. Sinai but let's look into this further.

Notice what God says about Abraham, who himself was not an Israelite, though the Israelites did descend from him.

*"And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of Heaven and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed (see: **Galatians 3:16**) ; Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, **my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.**" **Genesis 26:4-5 KJV***

As we see, Abraham, the father of the Israelites and of those who are in Christ, **Galatians 3:7,29 KJV**, also kept the Commandments of God, of which the Sabbath was a part of. This clearly shows us that the Commandments of God were in place even before the children of Israel were a people.

Again, this point is repeated in **Exodus 16**.

As the children of Israel had just been delivered from Egypt, God through Moses, was leading them to Mt. Sinai, where He was going to speak audibly to them and reveal the Commandments to them, **Exodus 20**. However, before they got to Sinai, God made known to the children of Israel one of his Commandments, i.e. The Sabbath.

Notice:

*"And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is **manna**: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat... And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, **Tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD**: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.... Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.... See, for that **the LORD hath given you the sabbath**, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."* **Exodus 16:15,22-23, 26,29 KJV**

We clearly see here that the Sabbath existed before Mt. Sinai. None can argue this point.

This Sabbath of the 4th Commandment was written with the finger of God in the midst of the moral Law and cannot be changed for the Law of God is a transcript of the character of God, & He never changes, therefore, the Commandments cannot be changed. **Exodus 31:18; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8 KJV**

The Sabbath of the Lord was made for mankind and not mankind for the Sabbath. Jesus said Himself that He is the Lord of the Sabbath. **Mark 2:27,28 KJV**

It was His custom as well as that of the Apostles to keep the Sabbath Day, not the way the Pharisees intended it to be kept with their multitudinous manmade traditions, but the way that Christ intended for it to be kept when He created all things in the beginning of this earth's history. See: **Luke 4:16; Acts 18:1-4; Acts 16:11-13; Acts 13:42-45; John 1:1-3 KJV**

It is very important to note that the Sabbath of the 4th Commandment is not a part of the Mosaic Law, and I believe that this is where the confusions comes for most. The 7th Day Sabbath existed from creation before there was any Jew upon the earth and Jesus Himself, after creating all things, rested from all His labours and commands us all to do the same.

*"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: But **the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God**.... For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it."* **Exodus 20:8-11 (Deuteronomy 5:12-15) KJV**

*"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. **It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.**" Exodus 31:16-17 KJV*

The Sabbath is a sign between God and all those who are in a covenant relationship with Him. Yes, in the days of the Moses, the Israelites were God people, however, the Sabbath was kept by Abraham and all the other Old Testament Patriarchs who were not Israelites, It was kept by Christ Himself, His Apostles and even the early Christian Church in the Book of Acts. So it isn't just an old 'jewish sabbath' but rather it is a sign between God and His people which shows that they acknowledge Him as the one true God and the Creator of all things.

Let us now deviate here and look at the annual sabbaths.

The Annual Sabbaths:

Whereas the weekly Sabbath was instituted in creation week, the annual sabbaths were given solely to the Jewish nation, starting from their departure out of Egypt unto their possession of the promised land.

There were a number of annual sabbaths, and a brief survey of the Jewish festivals is necessary to complete the view of the subject matter before us.

Of these feasts, there were three major ones, namely the Passover, Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles. Between these feasts, which ran from the beginning of the Jewish year unto the end were the various annual Sabbaths observed.

Additionally, there were the new moons (new months) in connection with the seven annual sabbaths. These sabbaths were 1. The first day of unleavened bread. 2. The seventh day of unleavened bread. 3. The day of Pentecost. 4. The first day of the seventh month (Feast of trumpets). 5. The tenth day of the seventh month (The Day of Atonement). 6. The fifteenth day of the seventh month (The beginning of The Feast of Tabernacles). 7. The twenty second day of the seventh month (the day after the Feast of Tabernacles ended).

1. Passover:

This feast was given in commemoration of the time when the Angel of the Lord passed over the houses of the Hebrews on that night when the firstborn in every Egyptian family was slain. This feast signified the deliverance of the Israelites from bondage from Egypt. The spotless innocent lamb was slain and by its blood the children of Israel were protected. Likewise, Jesus Christ, the spotless, innocent Lamb of God, the true Passover Lamb was slain for our sins, and by His blood we shall be protected in the Day when He shall come to destroy the wicked. See: **Exodus 12; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8; John 1:29,35 KJV**

2. Pentecost:

This was the second of the Jewish feasts and it occupied a single day. It was celebrated on the 50th day after the first fruits of the barley harvest had been waved (offered) unto the Lord in sheaves (bundles). At the time of this feast, the first fruits of the wheat harvest were offered unto God. This fulfilment of this feast was reached on the 50th day after the resurrection of Christ, when the great outpouring of the Holy Ghost took place. **Leviticus 23:20-21; Numbers 28:26-3; Deuteronomy 16:9-12 KJV**

*"But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits**; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."* **1 Corinthians 15:20-23 KJV**

In the same way that the Israelites were to present their harvest to God in the days of Moses and the other prophets during the festival of Pentecost, we also notice that the Apostles presented a harvest to God of new believers, through Christ Jesus. Thousands of persons were added to the Church on the Festival of Pentecost in the days of the Apostles, **Acts 2:1-18,41 KJV**

3. Feast of Tabernacles:

This was the last of the major Jewish feasts. It was celebrated in the seventh month when they had gathered in the fruit of the land and extended from the fifteenth to the twenty-first day of that month. It was ordained as a festival of rejoicing before the Lord. **Leviticus 23:34-43; Deuteronomy 16:13-15**

This festival commemorated the final in gathering of the harvest of the field. The harvests had come to an end and the people were to rejoice and give God thanks for His bountiful harvest.

Likewise, Jesus Christ, who will sit upon the white cloud, with a golden crown upon His head and a sickle in His hand shall come to harvest the earth. The wheat shall be gathered into His Heavenly Kingdom and the wicked shall be trampled in the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God. See: **Matthew 13:37-43; Revelation 14:14-20; Revelation 7:9 KJV**

4. New Moons:

In connection with these feasts it was ordained that each new moon, that is, *the first day of every month*, should be observed with certain specified offerings, and with tokens of rejoicing. See: **Numbers 10:10; Numbers 28:11-15; 1 Samuel 20:5, 24,27 KJV**

5. Annual Sabbaths:

A) The first two of these annual sabbaths were the first and seventh days of the feast of unleavened bread, that is, the fifteenth and twenty-first days of the first month.

*"And on the fifteenth day of the same month is **the feast of unleavened bread** unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. **In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.**"* **Leviticus 23:6-8 KJV**

"And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten. In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein... And on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work." **Numbers 28:17-18,25 KJV**

During this festival, the Israelites were to eat bread that was without yeast (leaven), that is, **bread that will not rise.**

Jesus, the Bread of life, **John 6:35**, on the day after He died for our sins, laid in the tomb. **He had not yet rose. John 19:42.**

In the same way, we must get rid of the yeast (leaven) from our lives. **1st Corinth 5:6-8** tells us that yeast also represents sin & wickedness. We are encouraged to partake of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth and to put away the leavened bread of sin and wickedness in our lives.

We must remain dead to self as well, not my will, but God's will be done. **Mark 14:36, Matt. 16:24**

B) The third in order of the annual sabbaths was the day of Pentecost. This festival was ordained as a rest-day in the following language (for context read **Leviticus 23:11,15-21**):

"And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations."

Leviticus 23:21 KJV

C) The first day of the seventh month was the fourth annual sabbath of the Hebrews.

"Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month (new moon), shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD." **Leviticus 23:23-24**

This feast, also called the feast of trumpets, was the first of the Autumn feasts. During this time the Israelites were to sound the trumpets throughout the land, there were also to present offerings to the Lord. Offerings such as grain, olive oil, the finest flour, bull, lambs, rams and goats all without blemish and spot. **Numbers 29:1-6, Leviticus 23:23-5**

Jesus Himself, sounded the trumpets, by proclaiming the gospel. First on earth and then through His apostles after He ascended.

We are also called to sound the trumpets in the land, proclaiming the three angels messages of **Revelation 14:6-12**. That is, to preach the everlasting gospel throughout the ends of the earth. We all have a part to play in winning souls for Christ.

As Jesus said in **Matthew 24:14**, that the gospel must first be preached into all the world, as a witness, then shall the end come.

As God's chosen people, we must sound the trumpets of the Everlasting Gospel in these last days.

D) The great day of atonement was the fifth of these sabbaths.

"And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month an holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work therein." **Numbers 29:7** See also: **Leviticus 23:27-32; 16:29-31**

For a deeper look into the Day of Atonement, have a look at our study called, [The 2300 days and the 70 weeks of Daniel](#). Click the link to find it on our website.

- E) **The sixth and seventh of these annual sabbaths were the fifteenth and twenty-second days of the seventh month**, that is, the first day of the feast of tabernacles, and the day after its conclusion.

*"Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have **gathered in the fruit of the land**, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on **the first day shall be a sabbath**, and on **the eighth day shall be a sabbath**."* **Leviticus 23:39**

- F) Besides all these, **every seventh year was a sabbath of rest unto the land**. The people might labour as usual in other business, but they were forbidden to till the land, that the land itself might rest.

"And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof: But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still..." **Exodus 23:10-11**

*"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, **When ye come into the land which I give you**, then shall **the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD**. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard."* **Leviticus 25:2-4**

These were the feasts, new moons and sabbaths of the Israelites.

*"The first of the three feasts was ordained in memory of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage and was to be observed when they should enter their own land. **Exodus 12:25**. The second feast, as we have seen, could not be observed until after the settlement of the Hebrews in Canaan; for it was to be celebrated when the first fruits of wheat harvest should be offered before the Lord. The third feast was ordained in memory of their sojourn in the wilderness and was to be celebrated by them each year after the ingathering of the entire harvest. Of course, this feast, like the others, could not be observed until the settlement of the people in their own land. The new moons, as has been already seen, were not ordained until after these feasts had been instituted. The annual sabbaths were part and parcel of these feasts and could have no existence until after the feasts to which they belonged had been instituted."* **History of the Sabbath, pg. 86, J.N.Andrews**

As these feasts were not to be observed **until the Hebrews should possess their own land, the annual sabbaths could have no existence until that time**. And so, of the sabbaths of the land. These could have no existence until after the Hebrews should possess and cultivate their own land; after six years of cultivation, the land should rest the seventh year, and remain untilled.

Contrasts between the weekly Sabbath and the annual sabbaths:

1. The Sabbath of the Lord was instituted at the close of the first week of time, while the annual sabbaths were ordained in connection with the Jewish feasts. 2. The one was blessed and hallowed by God, because that he had rested upon it from the work of creation; the others (annual sabbaths) have no such claim to our regard. 3. When the children of Israel came into the wilderness, **the Sabbath of the Lord was an existing institution**, obligatory upon them; but the annual sabbaths then came into existence from that time onwards. It is easy to point to the very act of God, while leading that people, that gave existence to these sabbaths; while every reference to the Sabbath of the Lord shows that it had been ordained before God chose that people. 4. **The Sabbath of the Lord was made for man**; but the annual sabbaths were designed only for residents in the land of Israel. 5. **The one was weekly, a memorial of the Creator's rest; the others were annual,**

connected with the memorials of the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt. 6. The one is termed "the Sabbath of the Lord," "my Sabbaths," "my holy day," etc; while the others are designated as "your sabbaths," "her sabbaths," and similar expressions. See: **Exodus 20:10; 31:13; Isaiah 58:13; COMPARE WITH Leviticus 23:24, 32, 39; Lamentations 1:7; Hosea 2:11.** 7. The one was proclaimed by God as one of the ten Commandments and was written with his finger in the midst of the moral law upon the tables of stone, and was deposited in the ark beneath the mercy-seat, in the Most Holy Place of the Sanctuary; the others did not pertain to the moral law, but were embodied in that **hand-writing of ordinances that was a shadow of good things to come, Colossians 2:14-17.** 8. The distinction between these festivals and the Sabbaths of the Lord was carefully marked by God when he ordained the festivals and their associated sabbaths, **Leviticus 23:1-3.**

*"The providence of God thus struck out of existence these Jewish festivals, **the whole typical (symbolic) system was abolished, having reached the commencement of its antitype, when our Lord Jesus Christ expired upon the cross. The handwriting of ordinances being thus abolished, no one is to be judged respecting its meats, or drinks, or holy days, or new moons, or sabbaths, "which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."** But the Sabbath of the Lord did not form a part of this handwriting of ordinances; for it was instituted before sin had entered the world, and consequently before there was any shadow of redemption; it was written by the finger of God, not in the midst of types and shadows (symbols), but in the bosom of the moral law." **History of the Sabbath, pg. 90, J.N.Andrews***

Friends, I hope that this study was clear and brought greater insight into the difference between the weekly Sabbath of the 4th Commandment and the annual sabbaths. One is a sign between God and His people, the other were a shadow of things to come, pointing the children of Israel to a greater reality, a better sacrifice, The true Lamb which takes away the sins of the world. These handwriting of ordinances have been taken away and nailed to the cross because Christ fulfilled them all in His death, but the Sabbath of the 4th Commandment runs through to all eternity, for Isaiah himself, under the influence of the Holy Spirit tells us that all of the redeemed shall worship God from month to month and from Sabbath to Sabbath. This clearly shows us that the Sabbath that was instituted from Creation could not have been abolished or nailed unto the cross but is in fact still binding to this very day.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will open your eyes that you may see the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, for He is the way, the TRUTH and the life.

*"For as **the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make,**
shall remain before me, saith the LORD,
so shall your seed and your name remain.*

*And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another (new month),
and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD."*

Isaiah 66:22-23

"After resting upon the seventh day, God sanctified it, or set it apart, as a day of rest for man. Following the example of the Creator, man was to rest upon this sacred day, that as he should look upon the heavens and the earth, he might reflect upon God's great work of creation; and that as he should behold the evidences of God's wisdom and goodness, his heart might be filled with love and reverence for his Maker.

*In Eden, God set up the memorial of His work of creation, in placing His blessing upon the seventh day. The Sabbath was committed to Adam, the father and representative of the whole human family. Its observance was to be an act of grateful acknowledgment, on the part of all who should dwell upon the earth, that God was their Creator and their rightful Sovereign; that they were the work of His hands and the subjects of His authority. Thus, **the institution was wholly commemorative, and given to all mankind.** There was nothing in it shadowy or of restricted application to any people."*

Patriarchs & Prophets pg. 47-48