

A HISTORY OF THE CALENDAR CHANGE

HOW CAN WE BE SURE THAT THE SEVENTH DAY OF OUR MODERN WEEK (SATURDAY) IS THE ORIGINAL SEVENTH DAY OF BIBLE TIMES?

It is commonly believed that many changes of the calendar have taken place since the time of Christ upon the earth. This is not true. There has been only one change. This change, from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar, had no affect whatsoever upon the order of the days of the week.

The Gregorian calendar, the one we use today, came to us by way of Babylonia, Palestine, and Rome. The old Roman calendar was not based accurately on the movements of the heavenly bodies. The result was a continuous shifting of the seasons. By the time of Julius Caesar, reform was imperative. Julius Caesar called an Alexandrian astronomer and mathematician, Sosigines, to analyze the Roman calendar and recommend necessary changes. As a result, the calendar was changed in the year 46 B.C., (46 years before Christ). The order of the days of the week was not changed. The new calendar was called the Julian calendar, in honor of Julius Caesar. The month of July was named in honor of Julius also.

When Augustus Caesar succeeded, Julius, he also wanted a month named after himself, so he gave the name "August" to the month formerly called "Sextilis." July had thirty-one days and August considered himself as important as Julius so he took one day from February, leaving it only twenty-eight days, and lengthened August by one day, giving it thirty- one. The changes made by Augustus did not affect the order of the days of the week.

The Julian calendar stood unchanged for 1,600 years. It made provision for a year of 365.25 mean solar days. But the year actually consists of 365.242195 days. Because of this slight discrepancy, as the centuries passed, the seasons shifted. By 1582 A.D. this discrepancy had grown to ten days. It was Pope Gregory XIII who undertook to make the correction necessary. He established our present calendar which has been named in his honor, the Gregorian calendar.

He omitted ten days following October 4, 1582. What would have been October 5 became October 15. The diagram below will help you to visualize the change. You will see that it did not change the order of the days of the week.

1582	OCTOBER						1582
Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	
	1	2	3	4	15	16	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
31							

Spain, Portugal, and Italy adopted the new Gregorian calendar at once. France waited until December of the same year, 1582, and it adopted the change in the calendar by calling the 10th of December the 20th of December. The Catholic states of Germany adopted the new calendar in the year 1583. The Protestant states of Germany did not adopt the new calendar until 1700. About that same time the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark adopted the new calendar.

Because all the countries of Europe did not change their calendars at the same time, there were times when there was a difference of ten days between the date of the month in one country and the country right next to it. In spite of this, the days of the week were always the same. Although England did not adopt the new calendar until the year 1752, when it was Saturday in Spain it was Saturday in England.

The Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 4, article on "Calendar," p. 988, tells us, "The week is a period of seven days, having no reference whatever to the celestial motions- a circumstance to which it owes its unalterable uniformity... It has been employed from time immemorial in almost all eastern countries."

The astronomer Hinckley says: "By calculating the eclipses, it can be proven that no time has been lost, and that the creation days were seven, divided into twenty-four hours each." The Watchman, July 1926.

Professor Totten, of Yale, tells us: "In spite of all of our dickerings with the calendar, it is patent that the human race never lost the septenary sequence of week days, and that the Sabbath of these latter times, comes down to us from Adam, through the ages, without a single lapse..."

The Hebrew people spoke of the days of the week by number rather than by name. The only day that had a name was the seventh day which was called, the Sabbath, or rest day. The day before the Sabbath was designated as a preparation day. On this day, preparations were made so that the Sabbath might truly be a day of rest for all the family. All the days were numbered and spoken of in reference to the Sabbath. The first day was "first toward the Sabbath." The second day was "second toward the Sabbath," and so on. This was also the practice among the Syrians, Arabians, etc.

The ancient Egyptians named the days of the week in honor of the sun, moon, and five of the planets. The Romans adopted this system of naming the days of the week.

In at least 108 different languages of earth the name for the seventh day that corresponds with our "Saturday" is a word meaning "rest day." The following chart lists some examples:

LANGUAGE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
English	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Latin	Dios Solis (Day of Sun)	Lunae (Moon)	Martis (Mars)	Mercurii (Mercury)	Jovis (Jupiter)	Veneris (Venus)	Saturni (Saturn)
Spanish	Domingo	Lunes	Martes	Miercoles	Jueves	Viernes	Sabado
Italian	Domenica	Lunedì	Martedì	Mercoledì	Giovedì	Venerdì	Sabato
Maba (Central Africa)	ahad (one)	ettenin (the two)	ettelet (three)	araba (fourth)	xamis (fifth)	dzumma (assembly)	sab (Sabbath)
Russian	Voskresenje	Ponedjeljnik	Vtornik	Sereda	Cetvertok	Pjatinica	Subbota

We have recorded history covering the period from the time of Christ to our day. History clearly reveals the changes in the calendar during this time, but it also clearly shows that the order of the seven days of the week has never been changed.

If there had been any loss of time or change of time, affecting the order of the days of the week between the time of creation and the time of Christ, our Lord would have made it right. He is our example. He knew which day was the Sabbath. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4:16

Even after his death, the followers of Jesus..."rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." Luke 23:56 Notice that the day kept by the followers of Jesus was the Sabbath day of the commandment. This takes us right back to the commandments in Exodus, chapter 20. According to the commandment, which day is the Sabbath? "But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God...." Exodus 20:10 How did the seventh day become the Sabbath? "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: 11

To keep the Sabbath of the Bible one is taken right back to creation when God created all things "by Jesus Christ." Ephesians 3:9 Three acts went into the making of the Sabbath. God "rested on the seventh day," "God blessed the seventh day," and God "sanctified it." Genesis 2 -1-3

In the beginning before there were clocks, the setting of the sun marked the end of one day and the beginning of another. Genesis 1:31 tells us that a day was made-up of an evening and a morning, or the dark part, or night, followed by the daylight hours. Naturally the Sabbath was to be kept from sundown to sundown, because this was the portion of time originally blessed by God. Leviticus 23:32 says, "...from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath." That the Sabbath of the commandment was a 24-hour period is clear from the fact that it was so kept by Jesus, our example, and by His followers. The Hebrew people have kept the original Bible Sabbath for some four thousand years.

Jesus was crucified on a Friday and arose from the dead on a Sunday. The New Testament says the day in between these two days is the "Sabbath day according to the commandment."

FRIDAY

"And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on."
Luke 23:54

SATURDAY

"And they returned and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment."
Luke 23:56

SUNDAY

"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning they came unto the Sepulcher bringing the spices which they had prepared... He is not here, but He is but He is risen." Luke 24:1-7

Just as surely as the Bible teaches that Christ was crucified on Friday and arose on Sunday, just as surely does it teach that the day comes between Friday and Sunday, the day we now call Saturday is the original seventh day of Bible times.