

# San Juan church of Christ

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## What Does God's Word Say About...

### The Sabbath Day

The Sabbath was commanded of Israel as a memorial of their deliverance from bondage in Egypt. This commandment was given solely to the nation of Israel. The Sabbath was not a commandment given to any nation before the exodus from Egypt (Neh. 9:14). Moses wrote, "The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, with all those of us alive here today" (Deut. 5:3). God instructed in scripture, "the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; you shall not do any work" (Deut. 5:14). They were to travel no more than six furlongs [ $\frac{3}{4}$  mile] this day; no kindling of a fire even for cooking or for light (Ex. 35:2-3). Those who say we should keep the Sabbath today ignore all of the laws and penalties given for that day by God. This day was set aside by God, for the nation of Israel, as a day of rest. The law of the Sabbath included the penalty of death for violations (Num. 15:35). The Sabbath was a covenant between God and Israel and no other nation, past or present, including the Gentiles.

The "Law of Moses" was a "shadow" of what was to come in the New Testament (Col. 2:16-17). This means that the Law given to Moses, including the Sabbath, would be done away with when Christ died on the cross (Col. 2:14; Heb. 9:15-17). Those who claim that the Sabbath is still in effect today use the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:17-18, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill...until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished." The meaning of what Jesus was saying in these verses is that the Law of Moses would be done away with when all was "fulfilled and accomplished" at His death on the cross. When Jesus was dying on the cross, He said, "It is finished." (John 19:30). What was Jesus referring to except that the Law of Moses was "finished"? The price for our redemption from sin was paid in full by Jesus. "You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law." (Gal. 5:4). When Jesus breathed His last, the old covenant and its laws, including the Sabbath, was done away with (Heb. 9:15-17).

The first day of the week, which we now call Sunday, became the day of worship for Christians for several reasons: (1) it is the day of Jesus' resurrection (John 20:21), (2) Jesus met with the apostles later that same day (John 20:19), (3) it is the day the first century church met. Christians met on the first day of the week to observe the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7) and to take up a collection (1 Cor. 16:1-2). There is nothing in the N.T. authorizing the observance of the Sabbath. Hebrews 4:1-11 indicates that the Sabbath rest awaits the Christian in eternity with God in heaven.