

Sunday—Christian or Pagan?

*For over 1600 years Christendom has sanctified Sunday as its “Sabbath.”
But what is the true origin of Sunday worship?*

Today, millions of the devout and faithful assemble each Sunday either to celebrate Mass and partake of the Eucharist, or to listen to a sermon and worship God. Convinced they are doing the will of God, they sincerely believe that going to church on Sunday is the Christian thing to do.

What about Sunday-keeping? Did God ever command the faithful to keep Sunday, or is it a *tradition* of men? What is the true origin of Sunday worship? When, how, and by whose authority was Sunday instituted as the weekly day of worship?

The Ancient Origin of Sunday: Shortly after the flood, the ancient ruler Nimrod began to establish his despotic kingdom. He and his wife, Semiramis, introduced the apostate religious system known as the “Babylonian Mysteries,” from which all ancient and modern-day pagan religions originated.

Nimrod was a legendary warrior and a champion of the people in their rebellion against God. Yet, it was Satan who inspired the building of Nimrod’s kingdom and the tower of Babel, as well as his occult religion—all in defiance of God. He received man’s worship under the guise of the sun or fire god and the sacred serpent. Alexander Hislop comments on this early apostasy and the red dragon of Revelation 12:3: “[T]he word rendered ‘Red’ properly means ‘Fiery’; so that the ‘Red Dragon’ signifies the ‘Fiery Serpent’ or ‘Serpent of Fire.’ Exactly so does it appear to have been the first form of idolatry that under the patronage of Nimrod appeared in the ancient world. The ‘Serpent of Fire’ in the plains of Shinar seems to have been the grand object of worship. There is the strongest evidence that apostasy among the sons of Noah began in fire-worship, and that in connection with the symbol of the serpent” (*The Two Babylons*, p. 226; available online at www.biblicaltruthministries.org and www.cbcg.org).

The apostasy begun by Nimrod found its zenith in the lavish temples and huge pyramids dedicated to the sun god, where men offered animal and human sacrifices. Hislop writes about the origin of sun worship as follows: “The beginning, then, of sun-worship, and of the worship of the host of heaven [astrology], was a sin against the light [against the true God Himself]—a presumptuous, heaven-daring sin. As the sun in the heavens was the great object of worship, so *fire* was worshipped as its earthly representative.

“Along with the sun, as the great fire-god, and in due time, identified with him, was the serpent worshipped. ‘In mythology of the primitive world,’ says Owen, ‘the serpent is universally the symbol of the sun.’ In Egypt, one of the [most common] symbols of the sun, or sun god, is a disk with a serpent around it. The original reason was that identification seems just to have been that, as the sun was the great enlightener of the physical world, so **the serpent was held to have been the great enlightener of the spiritual, by giving mankind the ‘knowledge of good and evil.’**... At all events, we have evidence, both Scriptural and profane, for the fact, that the worship of the serpent began side by side with the worship of fire and the sun” (Ibid., pp. 226-227; emphasis added).

The worship of the sun has a long and daring history, dating from prehistoric times to the close of the fifth century of the Christian era. Together with all of its mystical rituals and sacrifices, it spread from “Mother Babylon” to Egypt, Greece, Rome, Europe, India, China, all of Southeast Asia, Africa, and Central and South America—the entire world. All of these civilizations had highly developed forms of sun worship. The belief in and practice of astrology was predominant in sun worship.

Even God’s chosen people succumbed to the lure of sun worship. Except for brief periods of time in their history, Israel and Judah typically failed to faithfully keep God’s Sabbaths and

holy days—falling instead into idolatry, worshipping the false gods of the nations around them. The leaders of the nation of Judah even *worshiped the sun*—and no doubt its god, on his day, Sunday—from the temple in Jerusalem! The prophet Ezekiel records God’s own words: “And He [God] brought me [Ezekiel] into the inner court of the LORD’S house, and behold, at the opening of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, *were* about twenty-five men [priests and elders] with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east; and **they worshiped the sun toward the east**. And He said to me, ‘Have you seen, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they do the hateful things which they do here?’ ” (Ezek. 8:16-17).

This passage alone proves that God condemns any form of worship that is centered on the day of the Sun or Sunday.

Over time, the worship of the six then-known planets was incorporated into the worship of the sun. The Romans named the seven days of the week accordingly—in honor of their pagan deities (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the sun and the moon). Later, the pagan Germans renamed some of the days in honor of the Germanic gods, whose names and qualities corresponded to those of the Roman gods. Therefore, the day of the Sun became Sunday; the day of the Moon became Monday; the day of Mars (the Roman god of war) became Tuesday (after Tiw, pronounced *too*, the German god of war—“Tiw’s Day”); the day of Mercury became Wednesday (Woden’s Day, the Germanic version of Mercury); the day of Jupiter became Thursday (Thor’s Day, the Germanic version of Jupiter); the day of Venus became Friday (after the Germanic female god Frigg or Freyja—pronounced *fry-ya*); and the day of Saturn became Saturday.

These descriptive names of the days of the week demonstrate that Sunday worship was pagan long before it allegedly became a Christian institution. The day of the Sun, *dies Solis*, or Sunday, was pre-eminent over all other days of the week. Although other so-called gods had days named after them, only *dies Solis* was proclaimed to be holy.

Samuel Bacchiocchi writes: “There is no question that the existence of the planetary week with its ‘Sun-day’—*dies Solis*—is crucial for determining any influence of Sun-worship on the Christian adoption of Sunday observance, inasmuch as the Sun before the existence of a weekly ‘Sun-day’ was venerated every morning” (*From Sabbath to Sunday*, p. 237).

“The *dies Solis* was evidently the most sacred [day] of the week for the faithful of Mithra and like the [professing] Christians, they had to keep Sunday holy and not [the seventh-day] Sabbath.... The gods have arranged the days of the week, whose names the Romans have dedicated to certain stars. The first day [of the week] they called the day of the sun because it is the ruler of all the stars” (Ibid., p. 250, footnote 53).

As it was then, so it is today: the day of the Sun, *dies Solis*, Sunday, was always the most prominent day of worship and stood at the head of all the days of the week. Sunday has always been the predominant pagan occult day of worship to the sun god.

But *when* did Sunday, which was venerated by pagan sun worshippers, become the holy day of the week for Christians?

It was the Roman emperor Constantine who first issued an edict concerning Sunday in AD 321: “Let all the judges and town people, and the occupation of all trades, rest on **the venerable day of the sun**; but let those who are situated in the country, freely and at full liberty, attend to the business of agriculture because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines, lest the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted them by heaven” (*Corpus Juris Civilis Cod. Liv. 3, Tit. 12:30*).

This pagan Sunday law was henceforth enforced as a Christian festival. The church historian Eusebius, in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, indicates that from the time of Constantine’s Sunday edict, the sanctity of the Sabbath was transferred to the first day of the week. “And all things whatsoever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord’s

Day [Sunday], as more appropriately belong to it, because it has a precedence and is first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath” (Cox’s *Sabbath Literature*, Volume 1, p. 361).

Thus, since this fourth-century edict, much of Orthodox Christendom has accepted Sunday as the “Lord’s Day,” or the so-called “Christian Sabbath.” To this day the Roman Catholic Church pontifically claims that it had the authority to change God’s Fourth Commandment and transfer the solemnity of the seventh-day Sabbath to Sunday, the first day of the week. This flagrant, bold boast of authority is diametrically opposed to the Word of God. God has never relinquished His authority to any man at any time to change His Sabbath commandment! After Jesus’ resurrection and just before He ascended to heaven, He told His disciples, “**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.** Therefore, go *and* make disciples in all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; **teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.** And lo, I am with you always, *even* until the completion of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20).

There is no question that the Roman Catholic Church fully comprehends that **the Scriptures absolutely require the observance of the biblical Sabbath**, the seventh day of the week, called Saturday today. Cardinal James Gibbons fully admits that Sunday-keeping is a Catholic institution based solely on the traditions of the “early church fathers,” the edicts of Emperor Constantine (321 AD), and the ecclesiastical authority of the Catholic Church in the Councils of Laodicea (336, 364 AD). Gibbons also admits that the establishment of Sunday worship is not based on the authority of the Scriptures: “**You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify.**” (*Faith of Our Fathers*, 1892, p. 111). Rome’s challenge to Protestants is that if they truly believed the rallying cry of the Reformation—“*solo scriptura*”—they would reject the Catholic tradition of Sunday-keeping and would be ardently keeping the seventh-day Sabbath as God commands.

As we peel back the layers of historical and scriptural evidence of sun worship/Sunday-keeping, it is undeniable that this false teaching is a *great sin* against God and violates the Fourth Commandment. Yet, Orthodox Christendom continues to channel mankind into the mire of its humanly-devised tradition of Sunday worship—a day originally devised by Nimrod and Semiramis to worship Satan the devil. Sunday-keeping is part of the “Mystery of Iniquity,” Satan’s grand counterfeit that *looks* Christian and proclaims to *be* Christian, but is, in fact, *false*, counterfeit—a blatant lie! (II Thess. 2:3-12; Rev. 13:11-14).