

# WHAT ABOUT THE SABBATH? (2)

Joe Slater

Is the Sabbath law in effect today? Should Christians keep the seventh day of each week as a holy day? Some people think that Exodus 31:16 proves that the Sabbath will always be in effect: *“Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.”*

“Perpetual,” however, does not mean “going on and on without ever ending.” Rather, the Sabbath would continue as long as the covenant between God and Israel endured. This becomes clear when other “perpetual” parts of that covenant are studied.

For example, the Levitical priesthood was perpetual (Exodus 29:9). Yet that priesthood is no longer valid. Jesus is our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, not the order of Levi (Hebrews 7:11, 12).

Circumcision was an everlasting (perpetual) covenant (Genesis 17:13; Leviticus 12:3). Yet today circumcision is nothing (1 Corinthians 7:19; Galatians 6:15). Scripture plainly states that those who tried to bind circumcision were wrong (Acts 15:1-29; Galatians 5:2).

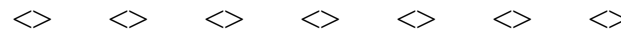
The annual Day of Atonement was a perpetual statute (Leviticus 16:29, 34). Yet Hebrews 9:1-12, 24-28 tells us that Jesus atoned for our sins “once for all” when He died on the cross and offered His blood before God in Heaven.

Something perpetual, then, does not necessarily continue infinitely without ever ending. Like the Day of Atonement, circumcision, and the Levitical priesthood, the Sabbath law continued as long as the Old Covenant was in force. Today, however, we live under the New Covenant, not the Old. Jesus is the mediator of the New

Covenant (Hebrews 9:15). Just as a person’s last will and testament goes into effect when that person dies, so Jesus’ New Testament went into effect when He died (Hebrews 9:16, 17).

Jesus kept the Sabbath day (Luke 4:16). Some say we should follow His example by observing the seventh day as holy. However, Luke’s record says Jesus went to the Synagogue on the Sabbath. Do modern Sabbatarians follow Jesus’ example by meeting at the Jewish Synagogue? Jesus also paid the temple tax (Matthew 17:24-7). Should we follow this example also?

Sabbath observance, the temple tax, and many other things Jesus did were part of the Law of Moses under which He lived and died. He obeyed it perfectly. However, as shown in previous paragraphs, the New Testament came into force at the death of Jesus Christ. Therefore, people living today are not under the Old Testament law (including the Sabbath) like Jesus was.



## Unbeliever's Q & A

Unbeliever’s question: “Since God is infinitely good and all-powerful, why doesn’t He do away with all evil and violence?”

Bible answer: “He is going to do precisely that when Christ returns (2 Peter 3:7).”

Unbeliever’s question: “Why is He waiting so long?”

Bible answer: “He is giving you time and opportunity to repent so that you may not be among the evil He will destroy (2 Peter 3:8).”

--Cecil May, Jr. (Montgomery, AL) via *Preacher Talk*

## Manage Your Time

*“Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil”* (Ephesians 5:15, 16).

Dick Tracy had a watch that did a whole lot more than tell time. Technology has finally caught up with Tracy. Watches are now being sold that can do a whole lot of things.

We have time staring at us all the time, from the lower right hand of the computer screen to the dash board of the car. In my home we have an alarm clock in the bedroom, a wall clock in the bathroom, a clock in the stove, microwave and coffee pot. Plus we have a cuckoo clock that is always a little slow, but reminds us on the half hour that time is passing. The relentless ticking of the clock reminds us of our own mortality.

With everything around us reminding us that the minutes are passing, you would think we would be better time managers. The fact of the matter is that time management is one of the greatest stressors in our culture.

In Ephesians, we find that the apostle Paul didn't give much attention to what time it was as he was about redeeming the opportunities. The word in Greek is actually "ransoming" the time. It might be better understood as gathering up every opportunity.

Use your time wisely. Order your life with what is consistent with the light that shines on you. Lead a life that testifies of your faith and dedication to God.

It is time to walk wisely in a world that is filled with darkness.

--Dennis Russell (Santa Maria, CA)