

## Is Sunday the “Lord’s Day”?

by Kyle Pope

In Revelation 1:10 John states at the beginning of his record of the vision he received while on Patmos, ***“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day”*** (NKJV). To what day of the week is John referring?

### Saturday—The Sabbath?

Some have argued that the day John calls *“the Lord’s Day”* must refer to the Sabbath day, because of the place it held under the Law of Moses. God commanded the Israelites, *“the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it”* (Ex. 20:10-11, NKJV). This was an observance that God commanded the Israelites from the time of the giving of manna onward (Ex. 16:23-29), but it was not something commanded upon all people, nor something observed prior to this. In speaking of God’s relationship to Israel, Nehemiah 9:14 declared, *“You made known to them Your holy Sabbath, and commanded them precepts, statutes and laws, by the hand of Moses Your servant.”* When the Law of Christ was given, although nine of the Ten Commandments were restated in one form or another, the Sabbath law was not. In fact, Christians are taught that observance of special days is something of indifference before God (Rom. 14:5-6). Concerning its observance, Paul said, *“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ”* (Col. 2:16-17). If Paul says no one may “judge you” regarding the observance of “sabbaths,” and such things were “a shadow” and not the “substance” that is in Christ, clearly the Sabbath is no longer binding upon Christians.

In addition to this, nowhere else in Scripture is the Sabbath called *“the Lord’s Day”* or even the *“day of the Lord.”* Usually the phrase *“day of the Lord”* or *“day of the LORD”* (using the personal name of God) refers to days of judgment in general or to final judgment (e.g. Is. 2:12; 13:9; Jer. 46:10; Joel 2:1; Amos 5:18; Zeph. 1:7-8; Mal. 4:5; Acts 2:20; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10). Although it is called *“the Sabbath of the LORD”* (Ex. 20:10), that speaks to that fact that God established and commanded its observance for Israel as an act of worship to Him. This is echoed in Isaiah 58:13 where God chastens Israel — note the **italics** as used in the New King James Version—***“If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words.”*** We should note here that in the phrase *“holy day of the LORD”* the word “day” is italicized, indicating that the translators have supplied it to complete the sense, but it is not in the Hebrew text. The Jews were to consider Saturday a “holy day” that belonged to “the LORD,” but since this is not binding under Christ it is unlikely that John would call this *“the Lord’s Day.”*

### Or Sunday — The First Day Of The Week

While we must reject Saturday as the day John identifies as *“the Lord’s Day,”* there is good reason to conclude that it is Sunday.

**1. The Scriptural evidence indicates that the first day of the week was a special day of assembly for Christians.** Scripture repeatedly identifies it as the day Jesus rose from the dead. Luke writes, *“Now on the first day of the week, very early in the*

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