

## Colossians and the Sabbath

Modern translations are changing the meaning of Colossians 2:16

They have changed the words of scripture to fit their supposition that these texts indicate that the Sabbath is no longer important. However, we need to be true to the original meaning of the apostle's writings.

Modern translations are bringing in greater and greater departures from the original.

Here's one such translation (Jerusalem Bible) which someone posted on a forum and declared even a child can understand from this that the Sabbath is finished.

“From now onwards never let anyone else decide what you should eat or drink or whether you are to observe the annual festivals, new moons, or sabbaths. These are only pale reflections of what was coming, the reality of Christ.”

Here are some more.

### **The Living Bible (Catholic Edition) writes:**

“So don't let anyone criticize you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating Jewish holidays and feasts or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths. For these were only temporary rules that ended when Christ came. They were only a shadow of the real thing- of Christ.”

### **The Philips Bible reads:**

In view of these tremendous facts, don't let anyone worry you by criticizing what you eat or drink, or what holy days you ought to observe, or bothering you over new moons or Sabbaths. All these things have at most only a symbolical value: the solid fact is Christ.

### **The International Children's Bible reads:**

So don't let anyone make rules for you about eating and drinking or about a religious feast, a New Moon Festival, or a Sabbath day. In the past, these things were like a shadow of what was to come. But the new things that were coming are found in Christ.

Modern Bibles are continually seeking to word the text in such a way that it appears to be obvious that the Sabbath, which the Jews observed, is fading away, or is a shadow. But again we must ask, is this the original meaning of these verses, or is it a work of "rewriting" scriptures, to prepare a people for the deception of the counterfeit Sabbath?

### **Let's look at the original verse.**

“Therefore let no "pron" (certain ones, any man) therefore "krino" (judge, to preside over with the power of giving judicial decisions) you in meat (act of eating) and in drink or in "meros" (a part, a portion, as respects a part) a holyday, (feast day) or a new moon or Sabbaths. Which things is (are) a shadow of things coming. But the body is of Christ. Let nobody "katabrabeuo" (decide against, defraud, deprive) you of your reward, purposing self-abasement and worship of angels....”

### **Notice:**

1. The original doesn't make ANY mention of anything being “Jewish”.
2. This makes no mention of anything “fading away”.

3. It says nothing of “temporary rules that ended”. It isn’t even speaking of “law” or “Sinai”.
4. It is written in future context, NOT PAST context. “These are a shadow of THINGS COMING!” Paul wrote this many years after Christ’s death.
5. It doesn’t say the festivals or new moons or sabbaths are shadows of Christ. They are shadows of things COMING.
6. It doesn’t say Christ is the “substance” of the sabbaths, new moons. It says "the body is of Christ". The word is “body” or “somah” which means “the body, a sound whole, servants”.

The context highly suggests this "body of Christ" refers to the body of believers who are of Christ.

The same word "somah" (body) is used in verse 19 "...the head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together...grows." The "body" are those who will follow Christ’s rule and authority. For He is the head of all rule and authority (2:10) They will not be subject to the elementary spirits, (2:8) which bring in things that “seem to promote rigor of devotion” (2:23) "but are not according to Christ." (2:8) Instead the true "body" of Christ will be subject to Christ.

The whole issue will be over whether we worship Christ and make him our head, or the "certain ones" who will attempt to set themselves over Christ's body of believers as judges, following the spirits in the counterfeit.

Colossians 1:17 and 18 points out that all things were created by Christ and for him and that He is the head of the body, the church.

We are to be “Rooted and grounded in Him, and established in faith.” Vs 2:7. Christ is the head of the body, we are the joints and bands receiving nourishment from Him, knit together. Vs. 2:19

On the other hand Colossians tells us the spirit world is seeking to beguile the world, (2:8) and push the worship of these fallen angels, (2:18) who are not upholding the Head. (Jesus) (2:18-19) We are to be sure no one makes a prey of us according to human traditions according to the elemental spirits of the universe and not according to Christ. (.2: 8.) We are told that the doctrines and commandments of MEN will all perish. ( 2:22) And we are not to subject ourselves to the regulations of the elemental spirits of the universe. (2:20) We are to seek the things which are from above. (3:1)

When people come judging us, saying we are under a curse because we serve and obey Christ, and refuse to follow the dictates of men and spirits, which are contrary to the commands of God, we have the assurance that Christ triumphed over the cosmic powers, ( 2:15) and we will triumph with HIM, if we follow Him and put off all things that are against His law of righteousness (3:4-10)

This is the setting in which we find this text about not letting anyone judge us on the sabbath issue! Interestingly enough this message is also addressed to the Laodiceans (2:1)(symbolic of the last church). This is a message for the endtime, to alert us to beware of the spirits push for the false Sabbath in direct defiance to the Lord of the Sabbath day. Christ is the head of the true body of believers. Christ is the true head of all authority and rule. Vs. 10. Christ is Lord of the SABBATH DAY, (Mark 2:27) (not Lord of Sunday. He

never claimed Sunday as His day. That is the day of celebration straight from the pagan spirits)

### **The Cosmic Invincible Sun Lord of Mithraism**

The Cosmic Mysteries of Mithras were rising at the very time Christianity was spreading across Roman Empire. The similarities of Mithras and Christianity are astounding, and leaves no doubt that this was a clever pagan counterfeit from the "elements of this world" to confuse Christianity. Mithraism was a relatively new pagan religion, which drew from the myths of paganism "and set forth that the gods were ultimately reducible to a single being considered under different aspects, and that the multiple names by which they were worshipped were the equivalent of that of Helios (the Sun)" (Franz Cumont, "Mystries of Mithra" p.187) The invincible Sun.

To see that this was a counterfeit of Christianity one only has to see all the similarities which we do not have space to address here. However, there are several points where Christianity obviously joined the Mithra celebrations.

1. Mithra worshippers celebrated the birth of the Sun on the 25th of December. Christianity adopted this day in the 4th century as the birthday of Christ..

"They both preached a categorical system of ethics, regarded asceticism as meritorious, and counted among their principal virtues abstinence and continence, renunciation and self-control." (Cumont p. 191)

They also held Sunday sacred (Franz Cumont, "Mystries of Mithra" p. 191)

### **The spring equinox**

All of this was adopted into Christianity.

A serious question we must ask, is what "LORD" is being worshipped? The cosmic SUN, or the eternal SON?

Colossians tells us that Christ is the head and the authority.

"See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. RSV (Col 2:8)

Apostolic Letter, Dies Domini

Now let's go read the Pope's "Sunday letter", and his call for "keeping the Lord's Day Holy".

You will find the whole parcel we are warned against in Colossians chapter two. We find the judging of people on a false Sabbath, false festivals based on the cycles of the moon, the food and drink regulations.

All in the name of the "spirits"!

### **1. Festivals:**

The mention of "EASTER" is prominent in the pope's letter:

"Every seven days, the Church celebrates the Easter mystery."...#3

“For the Christian, Sunday is above all an Easter celebration, ...#8

“The weekly Easter, The day of the Risen Lord and of the Gift of the Holy Spirit” #18

Somehow, the two heathen festivals, Sunday and Easter, become “the very heart of worship” in the so called Christian church according to the pope. This is a startling and frightening transformation!

The ancient Easter festival was a highly pagan and sensual celebration of fertility and life. The term Easter is not of Christian origin. It is another form of Astarte, one of the titles of pagan goddess, the “queen of heaven”.

For many decades Christians remembered Christ’s resurrection on the Passover dates. (Evidence that Paul did not “condemn” Jewish festivals.) They continued, in a Christianized way, to observe “Passover” in memory of Christ’s death. But the “church fathers” in Rome and Alexandria, changed that to coincide with the fertility festivals.

Those who observed Christ’s death and resurrection on the Passover dates, were called “Quartodecimans,” meaning “fourteenth”. When these, under the leadership of Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, refused to bend to the Roman pressure to “change the date”, Victor of Rome excommunicated them.

The usual formula for a decree was: “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us.”

At the council of Nicaea, the Easter controversy was dealt with.

“On the one side were the old, historical, apostolic traditions; on the other side, the new, Christian, Catholic spirit, striving to part company with its ancient Jewish birthplace. The Eastern Church, at least in part, took the former view, the Western Church, the latter view...The sight of some churches fasting on the same day when others were rejoice, and of two Passovers in one year, was against the very idea of Christian unity. The celebration of it on the same day as was kept by the wicked race that put the Saviour to death was an impious absurdity. ..the Jewish practice must give way to the new innovation.” (Stanley “Eastern Church lect. 5, p. 54 )

So here we have an enforced “festival” substituting pagan calculations of the cycles of the moon, rather than the Biblical dates. Easter, the very day the pagan Spring Festival celebrated the return of the sun’s strength for life and fertility).

### **Then of course there’s Christmas:**

Declares the Pope in His "Dies Domini," Lord's Day Letter:

“After Easter and Pentecost, the most solemn celebration is undoubtedly the Nativity of the Lord, “ #77

“Celebrating this annual cycle of the mysteries of Christ, the holy Church venerates with special love the Blessed Virgin Mary, ....In a similar way, by inserting into the annual cycle the commemoration of the martyrs and other saints on the occasion of their anniversaries, the Church proclaims the Easter mystery of the saints who suffered with Christ and with him are now glorified. When celebrated in the true spirit of the liturgy, the commemoration of the saints does not obscure the centrality of Christ.....the Liturgical year, is expressed most eloquently in the fundamental and sovereign character of Sunday as the Lord’s Day. Following the season of the Liturgical Year in the Sunday observance which structures it from beginning to end.... #78

Sunday emerges therefore as the natural model for understanding and celebrating feast-days of the Liturgical Year, which are of such value for the Christian Life that the Church has chosen to emphasize their importance by making it obligatory for the faithful to attend....they are established in tradition and how well they are supported by civil legislation.. #79

What more do you want! It's all there!

The spirits, the festivals, the false, man made sabbath, the legal enforcement, the pious reasoning to make all this false stuff sound righteous, and of course the whole Easter season festival comes with restrictions on what one eats and drinks on certain days.

It's all there! But it is NOT OF CHRIST- it is directly against the things of heaven. It is man made traditions and doctrines. It fits the warning of Colossians two perfectly.

### **God's Commandments against Man's Commandments**

A most interesting and alarming thing continues to appear when speaking to certain people. They have said that the 7th day Sabbath is man's commands, and some go so far as to say Sunday is the Lord's day. Thus totally twisting the reality of both scripture and history.

It seems we must outline once again the solid scriptural authority that the seventh-day is the Sabbath of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is the head of all rules and authority, and the head of His people.

1. Jesus Christ, created, sanctified and blessed the 7th day Sabbath.

Colossians makes this plain enough!

Colossians 1:15-18

(Christ) is the image of the invisible God... For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or authorities: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church:

Now go back to the account of the creation and we find out exactly what "sabbath" Christ created, blessed, sanctified and rested upon.

Genesis 2:2-3

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

2. Jesus Christ called us to remember the seventh day Sabbath to keep it Holy.

Exodus 20.8-11

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

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.

In this context remember what Jesus said about the Sabbath and His Lordship.

Mark 2:27-28

And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath

Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

Colossians says in:

Colossians 2:9,10

In Him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fulness of life in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

2. The Sabbath is a sign that we trust in Christ Jesus Who gives us life, and sanctifies us.

Lev. 31:13

Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.

Ezekiel 20:12

Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them.

It took a Creator to create us, and it takes the same Creator to "recreate" or "sanctify" us.

Colossians establishes the fact that Christ is the Creator of all things (1:14-16) It establishes the fact that Christ is the authority over all things. (2:9,10,13) It establishes the fact that only Christ can "recreate us" with fulness of life in Him, (2:9,10) and then it warns of "man made" commandments which are NOT OF CHRIST, (2:8) but have the appearance of wisdom promoting rigor and devotion (2:23) , but will perish, and in those man made commandments is a "man made" sabbath. (2:16)

Colossians tells us the "man made" commandments have no power to sanctify us. (2:24) The Sabbath isn't just a sign of "justification", of the work that God has done for us: (which people want to say the "new christian sabbath, sunday" means) The Seventh-day Sabbath is also a symbol of "sanctification", it symbolizes what God wants to do in us. The Sabbath, a symbol of Creation and re-creation, symbolizes God's creative power working in us, restoring us to what God wants us to be.

Why do we "clean up" on Friday, the day the Bible calls the day of preparation? That too is symbolic as well as literal; it is a soul searching to have Christ cleanse our hearts and minds, so that we can KEEP THE SABBATH HOLY, in the company of Christ, for only when Christ has made us holy, can we keep the Sabbath holy. On the Sabbath we cease from work, and rest in Him. The Sabbath reminds us that just as we have not created ourselves, we cannot redeem ourselves, we must trust fully in Him.

2. The Sabbath is a sign of loyalty.

Ezekiel 20.20

Keep my sabbaths holy; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God.

Revelation 13 and 14 show that last great conflict will center on WHOM do we worship and follow. Will it be the Creator God, Who created all things (including the seventh-day Sabbath) or will it be the dragon (the fallen angel) and His authorities and principalities.

People will worship either the ONE, "who made the heavens, and the earth" (Rev. 14:7) or they will worship the "dragon".

The dragon gives "power and authority to the beast" and "men worship the dragon ...and they worship the beast" (Rev. 13:4)

**Colossians warns:**

See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For...Christ is the head of all rule and authority...therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or in regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath. These are a shadow of WHAT IS COMING. The body belongs to Christ. So let no one disqualify you insisting on self abasement and worship of angels.

Rev. 14:12

Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that KEEP GOD'S COMMANDMENTS and HAVE THE FAITH OF JESUS.