

Colossians - Chapter 2
“The Law and Sabbath Days – Shadows of Things to Come”
Colossians 2:16-17

Verse 16

1. If we are complete in Christ, if we are circumcised and baptized in Christ, if the law has been blotted out and torn to pieces, Paul's conclusion is “*Let no man therefore judge you...*” Don't allow the religious legalists to put a yoke of bondage on your necks.
 - The cross canceled the debt and dominion of the Old Testament law.
2. False teachers were telling these believers that they needed to keep aspects of the Old Testament law system in order to be accepted by God and truly experience a deeper spiritual life. They were teaching that they must keep:
 - Jewish dietary laws - “*meat, or in drink*”
 - Under the law, certain animals were “clean,” others were “unclean.”
 - Today, we have freedom to eat anything. 1 Timothy 4:3-5
 - Jewish festivals - “*holyday, or of the new moon*” 1 Chronicles 23:31-32; Isaiah 1:13-14
 - “*an holyday*” - There were three festivals per year during which all Jewish males had to present themselves before the Lord at Jerusalem: the feasts of Passover, Tabernacles, and Pentecost.
 - “*new moon*” - This was the start of the Hebrew month, when the moon passed between the earth and sun and would become invisible or a narrow crescent. This was a monthly observance with sacrifices, trumpets, etc.
 - Jewish Sabbath days - “*sabbath days*”
 - There were many Sabbath days observed within the Old Testament law system.
3. The weekly Sabbath day was given to the nation of Israel and was a sign of the covenant relationship that God had with the nation of Israel (Exodus 31:12-13, 17-18). Why did God give to Israel the Sabbath rests?
 - God had an original plan, whereby He would live and dwell on the earth with mankind in perfect rest, peace, and tranquility. This plan was interrupted by sin, but will one day be fulfilled. God will bring peace and rest to this earth, and He will bring His tabernacle to dwell on this earth, establishing His kingdom and occupying His eternal resting place in Zion, on this earth, with mankind.
 - The nation of Israel is the chosen instrument through which God will bring about this eternal rest to the earth. God promised Israel eternal rest in His habitation in Zion. Exodus 15:17-18
 - God will come and dwell among them and give Israel, the earth, and Himself perfect rest (Jeremiah 30:10, 31:1-3). This is the promise to His people, Israel.

- The Sabbath day was a weekly reminder and picture of the eternal rest God had promised to them on the earth, in the future.
 - It wasn't that they were just to wake up and remember that it was Saturday. There was something of significance that they were to memorialize that day - the eternal rest that is coming for them on this earth in the future.
4. Why don't we observe the Sabbath day today? Why is it a non-issue?
 - As believers in the body of Christ, we don't have an **earthly** hope of an **earthly** rest as Israel does. We are seated in heavenly places in Christ. It is already an accomplished fact. We are complete in Christ, possess all spiritual blessings, and have already found complete rest in Him.
 - The work of redemption was finished and complete. Now today, Christ bids us to believe upon and rest in His finished work. He is our place of rest and peace with God. It is not through your works or performance, but it is by resting in the finished work of Christ. Colossians 2:14
 - We do not rest in a **day** - we rest in a **Person** - Jesus Christ.
 - Because we rest in a Person, not a day; we are given the capacity to see every day alike and esteem every day unto the Lord.
 5. If a person desires to abstain from certain foods or recognize one day above another, he certainly can do so, but it becomes wrong if this person believes that by keeping these rules he becomes more spiritual or more accepted of God. Romans 14:1-8
 6. If any person or religion judges you based on these outward observances, they really are judging Jesus Christ. They are saying that what Christ did on the cross is not enough. We must add something to it. His cross work is not sufficient.

Verse 17

1. The Old Testament law (with its feasts, ceremonies, Sabbath rests, etc.) was full of shadows of things to come for the nation of Israel. These types and shadows will find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ's coming kingdom to this earth.
2. Notice Paul did not say that these Old Testament observances were shadows of things that are now fulfilled. He said they were shadows of "**things to come.**"
3. These things have nothing to do with us today, in the present. They have to do with God's program for Israel in the future. This is why it says that they are shadows "**of things to come.**" This is speaking of Israel's future kingdom on earth.
 - For example, the Sabbath day pointed to an eternal rest for the nation of Israel in the future kingdom on earth. There is no significance for the Christian today at all. We have already found an eternal rest in Christ. Colossians 2:10
4. Notice Paul exclaims, "*...but the body is of Christ.*"
5. We don't need a **shadow**; we have the **substance!** We have been made one with Jesus Christ. We have been brought into an intimate union of complete oneness with Christ. We lack nothing at all. As part of His body, we have a present living union with Christ. Ephesians 5:30-32

6. We don't need the Old Testament shadows that pointed Israel to a future day in which their Messiah would rule and reign on earth and give them rest. We have Christ in our hearts as a present reality.
7. Why would we want to mess around in the shadows when we have the reality in Jesus Christ? **Illustration:** Hugging a shadow.
8. Remember the theme of this entire passage. We are complete in Christ! Tell the religious legalists to hit the road, because you are complete in Christ!!

**Rapture
of the church**

**Second coming
of Christ**

**Sabbath Days:
shadows of things
to come for Israel**
Colossians 2:16-17

Old Testament

*SABBATH DAY
COMMAND GIVEN
TO ISRAEL
Exodus 19:2-3*

*CHRIST'S
FINISHED WORK
ON THE CROSS*



**Body of Christ
Dispensation
of Grace**

*SABBATH DAY
COMMAND IS DONE
AWAY IN CHRIST -
WE REST IN A
PERSON (CHRIST)
NOT A DAY*

Tribulation

*7 YEARS
OF WRATH*

**Kingdom
Rest for
Israel**

*THE SHADOW OF
THE SABBATH IS
FULFILLED IN
ISRAEL'S KINGDOM
REST ON EARTH*

