

From Saturday to Sunday

The text of Constantine's Sunday Law of 321 A.D. is :

"One the venerable day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country however persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits because it often happens that another day is not suitable for gain-sowing or vine planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. (Given the 7th day of March, Crispus and Constantine being consuls each of them the second time." *Codex Justinianus*, lib. 3, tit. 12, 3; translated in *History of the Christian Church*, Philip Schaff, D.D., (7-vol.ed.) Vol. III, p.380. New York, 1884

Dr. A. Chr. Bang says regarding this Law :

"This Sunday law constituted no real favoritism to Christianity..... It is evident from all his statutory provisions that the Emperor during the time 313-323 with full consciousness has sought the realization of his religious aim: the amalgamation of heathenism and Christianity." *Kirken og Romerstaten* (The Church and the Roman State) p.256. Christiania, 1879

Other good commentaries on Constantine's Sunday Law can be found in :

- H.G. Heggtveit's book *Kirkenehistorie*; (Church History), pp.233, 234
- Dr. A.H. Lewis's book *A Critical History of Sunday Legislation from 321 to 1888 A.D.*, New York, D. Appleton and Co., 1888.

Regarding the calendar itself and the Sabbath day :

"According to the Assyrian-Babylonian conception, the particular stress lay necessarily on the number seven...The whole week pointed prominently towards the seventh day, the feast day, the rest day, in this day it collected, in this day it also consummated. 'Sabbath' is derived from both 'rest' and 'seven'. With the Egyptians it was the reverse...for them on the contrary the sun-god was the beginning and origin of all things. The day of the sun, Sunday, became necessarily for them the feast day...The holiday was transferred from the last to the first day of the week." "*Daglige Liv i Norden*, Vol.XIII, pp.54,55.

"The seven planetary names of the days were at the close of the second century A.D., prevailing everywhere in the Roman Empire...This astrology originated in Egypt, where Alexandria now so loudly proclaimed it to all... 'The day of the sun' was the Lord's day, the chiefest and first of the week. The evil and fatal Saturn's day was the last of the week on which none could celebrate a feast. Ibid pp.91,92

See also Prof. A.H. Sayce's work *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, pp.74,75

For information regarding Sabbath keeping as a Heresy, read John P. Perrion of Lyons book *Luther's Fore-Runners*, London, 1624. Robert Robinson's book *Ecclesiastical Researches*, chap.10, p.303

When the Jesuit St. Francis Xavier arrived in India he immediately requested to the pope to set up the Inquisition there.

"The Jewish wickedness" of which Xavier complained was evidently the Sabbath-keeping among those native Christians as we shall see in our next quotation. When one of these Sabbath-keeping Christians was taken by the Inquisition he was accused of having *Judaized*; which means having conformed to the ceremonies of the Mosaic Law; such as not eating pork, hare, fish without scales, &c., of having attended the solemnization of the Sabbath." *Account of the Inquisition at Goa*, Dellon, p.56. London, 1815

"Of an hundred persons condemned to be burnt as Jews, there are scarcely four who profess that faith at their death; the rest exclaiming and protesting to their last gasp that they are Christians, and have been so during their whole lives." Ibid p.64

"From the apostles' time until the council of Laodicea, which was about the year 364, the holy observation of the Jew's Sabbath continued, as may be proved out of many authors: yea, notwithstanding the decree of the council against it. *Sunday a Sabbath*, John Ley, p.163 London 1640. "Ambrose, the celebrated bishop of Milan, said that when he was in Milan he observed Saturday, but when in Rome observed Sunday. This gave rise to the proverb 'When you are in Rome, do as Rome does,' " Heylyn, *The History of the Sabbath*, 1613
The editor of the best biography of Columba says in a footnote:

"Our Saturday. The custom to call the Lord's day Sabbath did not commence until a thousand years later." Adamnan's *Life of Columba*, p.230, Dublin, 1857.

Pope Gregory I (AD 590-604) said :

"Gregory, bishop by the grace of God to his well-beloved sons, the Roman citizens: It has come to me that certain men of perverse spirit have disseminated among you things depraved and opposed to the holy faith, so that they forbid anything to be done on the day of the Sabbath. What shall I call them except preachers of anti-Christ?." Epistles of Gregory I, b.13, epist.1, found in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*.

In the 1st century.

Josephus says :

"There is not any city of the Grecians, nor any of the barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever, whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come!" M'Clathie, *Notes and Queries on China and Japan*. (edited by Dennys), Vol.4, Nos. 7,8, p.100.

In the 2nd Century

"The primitive Christians did keep the Sabbath of the Jews;...therefore the Christians for a long time together, did keep their conventions on the Sabbath, in which some portion of the Law were read: and this continued till the time of the Laodicean council." *The Whole Works of Jeremy Taylor*, Vol. IX, p416 (R. Heber's Edition, Vol.XII, p.416)

"The gentile Christians observed also the Sabbath." Gieseler's *Church History*, Vol.1, ch.2, par.30, p.93.

"The primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and did spend the day in devotion and sermons. And it is not to be doubted but they derived this practice from the Apostles themselves, as appears by several Scriptures to that purpose." *Dialogues on the Lord's Day*. p.189. London: 1701. By Dr. T. H. Morer.(church of England divine)

"The Sabbath was a strong tie which united them with the life of the whole people, and by keeping the Sabbath holy they followed not only the example but the command of Jesus." *Geschichte des Sonntags*, pp.13,14.

"It is certain that the ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed (together with the celebration of the Lord's day by the Christians of the East Church) three hundred years after the Saviour's death." *A learned Treatise of the Sabbath*, p.77.

In the 3rd Century.

"The seventh-day Sabbath was.. solemnized by Christ, the Apostles, and primitive Christians, till the Laodicean Council did in a manner quite abolish the observation of it." *Dissertation on the Lord's Day*, pp.33,34,44.

"As early as A.D.225 their existed large bishoprics or conferences of the church of the East (Sabbath-keeping) stretching from Palestine to India." Mingana, *Early Spread of Christianity*. Vol.10, p.460.

"Thou shalt observe the Sabbath, on account of Him who ceased from His work of creation, but ceased not from His work of providence: it is a rest for meditation of the Law, not for idleness of the hands." *The Anti-Nivcene Fathers*, Vol.7, p 413, From *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, A document of the 3rd and 4th centuries.

"After the festival of the unceasing sacrifice [the crucifixion] is put the second festival of the Sabbath, and is fitting for whoever is righteous among the saints to keep also the festival of the Sabbath. There remaineth therefore a Sabbatismus, that is a keeping of the Sabbath, to the people of God [Heb 4:9]" *Homily on Numbers 23*, par.4, in Migne, *Patrologia Greaca*, Vol. 12, cols.749,750.

In the 4th Century.

"It was the practice generally of the Easterne Churches; and some churches of the west....For in the church of Millaine [Milan];...it seems the Saturday was held in farre esteeme...Not that the

Easterne churches, or any of the rest which observed that day, were inclined to Iudaisme [Judaism]; but that they came together on the Sabbath day, to worship Iesus [Jesus] Christ the Lord of the Sabbath." *History of the Sabbath* (original Spelling retained) Part 2, par. 5, pp. 73,74, London: 1636, Dr. Heylyn.

"The ancient Christians were very careful in the observation of Saturday, or the seventh day...It is plain that all the Oriental churches, and the greatest part of the world, observed the Sabbath as a festival....Athanasius likewise tells us that they held religious assemblies on the Sabbath, not because they were infected with Judaism, but to worship Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, Epiphanius says the same." *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Vol. II, Book XX, chap. 3, Sec. 1, 66.1137, 1138

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In the 5th Century.

"Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church." *Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, Lyman Coleman, Ch.26, sec. 2, p.527.

"In Jerome's day (420 A.D.) the devoutest Christians did ordinary work on Sunday." *Treatise of the Sabbath Day*. by Dr. White, Lord Bishop of Ely, p.210.

"For although almost all Churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries [the Lord's Supper] on the Sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, refuse to do this." The footnote which accompanies the foregoing quotation explains the use of the word "Sabbath" It says : "That is, upon the Saturday. It should be observed, that Sunday is never called 'the Sabbath' by the ancient Fathers and historians." Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 5, chap. 22, p. 289.