



SAVED TO SERVE

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DID THE GREGORIAN CALENDAR CHANGE THE SABBATH FROM CREATION?

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will address a common discussion among some Bible believers that we should adhere to the Jewish Calendar and that we do not know the true Sabbath day from Creation because it has been changed by man through various calendars.
2. **Current Event:** The Sabbath Is Not On Saturday | Bishop Thibeaux
[youtube.com/watch?v=uJhFyjUs35k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJhFyjUs35k)
3. **Note:** In this study, when we use the term "calendar," we are referring to a chart that sets the days, weeks, and months. It is extremely important to understand that in the beginning, God set in motion the tracking of time and the seven-day weekly cycle **with His Word** (Genesis 1:1-5). This was the first "calendar." Later on, the celestial bodies (sun, moon, stars) were used to track the days, months, and years as it was under the Hebrew Calendar. Today, we use the Gregorian Calendar to track the days, months, and years. Understand this point: some people mistakenly refer to God's Seventh-day Sabbath as the Jewish Sabbath when the Lord's Sabbath predated the Jewish nation. Likewise, people exalt the Hebrew Calendar based on the moon cycle, when God's Calendar predated the moon cycle. God started the days before the sun, moon, and stars were created.
4. In which year(s) was the Julian Calendar, named after Julius Caesar, put into effect? **Answer:** 46-45 B.C. See references below.

The Julian calendar takes effect for the first time on New Year's Day

In 45 B.C., New Year's Day is celebrated on January 1 for the first time in history as the Julian calendar takes effect.

<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/january-1/new-years-day>

The Julian Calendar

The Julian calendar was proposed in 46 BC by (and takes its name from) Julius Caesar, as a reform of the earlier Roman calendar, which was largely a lunisolar one.^[2] It took effect on 1 January 45 BC, by his edict.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julian_calendar

5. When was the Gregorian Calendar, named after Pope Gregory XIII, introduced? **Answer:** 1582 A.D.

What Calendar Do We Use? | All about the Gregorian Calendar

In 1582 AD, this new, "Gregorian Calendar" was introduced, named after Pope Gregory XIII, who pushed for the change.

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/what-calendar-do-we-use-gregorian>

6. Based on the prophecy and calculations in Daniel 9:24-27, in approximately which year was Jesus Christ born? **Answer:** 4 B.C. (Jesus was 30 years old at His baptism in 27 A.D. Remember when you subtract, you are crossing over from A.D. to B.C. so you must add 1)
7. This means that Jesus lived in the period Julian Calendar and still kept the true Sabbath from Creation. Let's see what exactly took place with the change from the Julian to the Gregorian Calendar. Read the following and see the chart.

What Calendar Do We Use? | All about the Gregorian Calendar

Just before the time of Pope Gregory XIII, the calendar being used by the Romans and many Christian churches was the Julian Calendar. Put into effect by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C., the Julian Calendar was also a solar calendar that included leap years. This calendar worked well over the years, but as centuries passed, the calendar date and the season of the year seemed to be getting out of sync.

...With help from astronomers and mathematicians, they figured out that the Julian Calendar was miscalculating the length of the solar year by 11 minutes. That 11 minutes added up year after year, and by the 1570s, Pope Gregory XIII and his peers realized that their calendar was off by 10 days!

To make up for the lost 10 days from the Julian Calendar, the Gregorian Calendar simply moved up the date to skip 10 days. So, when the people went to sleep 1 night, the date was October 4, and when they woke up, the date was now October 15. Can you imagine that?

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/what-calendar-do-we-use-gregorian>



8. The change from the Julian to the Gregorian Calendar only fast forwarded the date 10 days. However, the 7-day weekly cycle from creation remained the same! Let's now study to see that we no longer have to adhere to the Jewish Calendar which was instituted under the theocracy of God. What was the name of the first month of the year for the Jews according to the Bible? Exodus 12:1-2; Exodus 13:3-4

9. **Note:** [Abib], "The first month of the Jewish ecclesiastical year, corresponding nearly to the Gregorian April. After the Babylonish captivity this month was called *Nisan*. [Mid 6th century BC.]" <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Abib>
See also Exodus 12:1-2; Exodus 13:3-4; Esther 3:7.

10. How did the Jews know when a new month began for the new year? Numbers 10:10; Psalm 81:3 **Answer:** The blowing of trumpets in the new moon.
11. What event was about to transpire when God told the Jews "this month shall be unto you the beginning of months"? Exodus 12:2, 11

"The first of these festivals, the Passover, the feast of unleavened bread, occurred in Abib, the first month of the Jewish year, corresponding to the last of March and the beginning of April. The cold of winter was past, the latter rain had ended, and all nature rejoiced in the freshness and beauty of the springtime." {PP 537.3}

12. What was the Passover a reminder of for the Jews? Whose rule were they under, prior to God's deliverance? Exodus 13:3; Exodus 20:2

13. **Note:** When God delivered Israel from the bondage of the Egyptians, He was taking them from under the Egyptian government and placing them under His government. The civil and religious system of Israel then became a theocracy, a divine system of government ruled by God where His priests and prophets officiate. Furthermore, it is a fact that God's theocratic government supports the Biblical Calendar. See Exodus 12:1-2.

14. As a result of Israel's rebellion against God, they became subject to Babylonian rule. King Zedekiah refused to be subjected to the king of Babylon (Jeremiah 27:12-17; 2 Kings 24:20). How did God respond to King Zedekiah's refusal and Israel's sins? Ezekiel 21:25-26; 2 Kings 25:1, 2, 21

15. The theocratic government of God was never re-established on earth. Therefore, how does God advise us to live under the rule of secular governments? Romans 13:1-2; Matthew 22:21

16. Where did the three Hebrews draw the line in obeying civil authorities? Daniel 3:16-18; Acts 5:29

17. **Note:** Just like the three Hebrews, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, this is where we should draw the line in obeying civil authorities. Civil authorities have jurisdiction to enforce the last six commandments of the Decalogue, regarding human relationships (see Romans 13:1-4), but they have no authority to enforce the first four commandments which deal with our worship and adoration of God (Exodus 20:1-11).

18. We just discovered that in matters of worship and our religious faith, we should follow God and not man. The introduction of the Jewish/Hebrew Calendar was connected to worshipping on feast days (Leviticus 23:4-44). Since the feasts were connected to worshipping God, should we follow the Hebrew Calendar and keep the feasts? Colossians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 5:7

See also our previous lesson below, "The Feast Days and Communion Service."

<https://www.prophesyagain.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Notes/Feast-Days-&-Communion-Observance.pdf>

"It was Christ's desire to leave to His disciples an ordinance [Lord's Supper] that would do for them the very thing they needed--that would serve to disentangle them from the rites and ceremonies [feasts] which they had hitherto engaged in as essential, and which the reception of the gospel made no longer of any force. To continue these rites would be an insult to Jehovah." {5BC 1139.6}

19. **Note:** Throughout history, there have been changes to calendars (Jewish Calendar, Julian Calendar, Gregorian Calendar, etc). However, while men may change the name of the months and the amount of days in a month, the same seven-day weekly cycle has not changed since Creation (Genesis 1; Genesis 2:1-2). Hence, we can be sure that we are keeping the true Seventh-day Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11). Today, people claim that a new day begins at midnight, according to the Gregorian Calendar. However, it is important to know that from Creation, before there were calendars, God's Word designated each new day to begin in the evening (Genesis 1:5; Leviticus 23:32). Simply put, the Sabbath is a salvational truth, but the keeping of a particular calendar (Jewish vs Gregorian) is not a salvific test in these last days.
20. **Note:** We will now transition and address some rebuttals that people have on this subject, of whether or not we should follow the Jewish Calendar.
21. Which calendar did the Adventist Pioneers use to reckon the time of Jesus Christ moving from the Holy to the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary in 1844? See quotation.

"In like manner the types which relate to the Second Advent must be fulfilled at the time pointed out in the symbolic service. **Under the Mosaic system the cleansing of the sanctuary, or the great Day of Atonement, occurred on the tenth day of the seventh Jewish month** (Leviticus 16:29-34), when the high priest, having made an atonement for all Israel, and thus removed their sins from the sanctuary, came forth and blessed the people. So it was believed that Christ, our great High Priest, would appear to purify the earth by the destruction of sin and sinners, and to bless His waiting people with immortality. **The tenth day of the seventh month, the great Day of Atonement, the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary, which in the year 1844 fell upon the twenty-second of October, was regarded as the time of the Lord's coming.** This was in harmony with the proofs already presented that the 2300 days would terminate in the autumn, and the conclusion seemed irresistible." {GC 399.4}

22. Does this mean that we should adhere to the Jewish Calendar since our pioneers used it to know when Jesus began His ministry in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary? See further quotations below. **Answer:** No, they used it to understand when the 2300 day prophetic time would be fulfilled, according to Biblical reckoning. However, they did not use the Jewish Calendar in their daily lives. Additionally, Sister White never advocated in her writings for us to be following the Jewish Calendar or keeping the feast days as they were kept in Bible times.

1903
January 7, 1903
A Happy New Year
EGW

"The old year has gone. The words, "I wish you a Happy New Year," are repeated far and near, by parents and children, brothers and sisters, acquaintances and friends. In a world like ours, this New Year's greeting seems more appropriate than the "Merry Christmas," so lately echoed from lip to lip. On every hand are pale faces, brows furrowed from pain and care, or forms bowed with age. Wherever we turn may be seen the garb of mourning. The suffering, the careworn, and the aged can no longer be merry. In many a household there is a vacant chair; a beloved child or a husband and father, whose presence gladdened the last Christmas and New Year's festivity, is gone from the circle. To that bereaved family a merry Christmas seems a mockery. But whatever the cares and sorrows of life, whatever its mistakes and errors, the words, "A Happy New Year," uttered as an expression of love and respect, fall pleasantly upon the ear." {ST January 7, 1903, par. 1}

January 5, 1881
Happy New Year
EGW

"This beautiful morning of January 1, 1881, I greet the children and youth of the Instructor [Jesus] with a Happy New Year. The old year, 1880, with its burden of records, has passed out, and the new year, with its prospects, hopes, and labors, has come." {Youth Instructor January 5, 1881, par. 1}

"January 1, 1859—The commencement of another year. My husband went down into the water and buried seven with Christ in baptism. Two of them were but children. One prayed earnestly in the water to be kept unspotted from the world. As Jesus was raised from the dead so the candidates were raised up out of the water. May they live a new life unto God. Will they be enabled to crucify self and imitate the self-denying life of Jesus?" {2MR 346.1}

Happy New Year! January 1

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Psalm 90:12 {OHC 7.1}

"Another year of life is now in the past. A new year is opening before us. What will be its record? What will we each inscribe upon its spotless pages? The manner in which we spend each passing day will decide this question...." {OHC 7.2}

23. Read Acts 18:21. Paul said that he must go to Jerusalem to keep the feast. Since this was after the death and resurrection of Jesus, should we also be keeping the feast days today? **Answer:** As stated in Colossians 2:14, the ordinances/feasts were taken out of the way and nailed to the cross. Paul went up to the feast for the purpose of evangelism not to keep the feast as essential to salvation. See the following points below.

a) During the early stages of the Christian church, what did the Pharisees, who recently converted to Christianity, try to get the Gentiles to do as an unnecessary test of salvation? Acts 15:1, 5

b) What did God reveal to the apostles were the essential points that they needed from the Mosaic law for their salvation? Acts 15:19-20, 28-29

c) After receiving this revelation from God, how did the apostles use these doctrinal truths in the churches? Acts 16:4, 5

d) Since Paul wrote that the ordinances were nailed to the cross and that we should not preach the previous points as salvific (circumcision, etc), why did he go to Jerusalem to keep the feast? 1 Corinthians 9:19, 20, 22

"Paul greatly desired to reach Jerusalem before the Passover as he would thus have an opportunity to meet those who should come from all parts of the world to attend the feast. **Ever he cherished the hope that in some way he might be instrumental in removing the prejudice of his unbelieving countrymen, so that they might be led to accept the precious light of the gospel.** He also desired to meet the church at Jerusalem and bear to them the gifts sent by the Gentile churches to the poor brethren in Judea. And by this visit he hoped to bring about a firmer union between the Jewish and the Gentile converts to the faith." {AA 389.1}

24. In the time of Joshua, God made the sun and moon stand still so that the Israelites could defeat the Amorites in war (Joshua 10:11-13). Also, in the days of King Hezekiah, the dial went backward ten degrees (2 Kings 20:11). Some say that this is evidence that the seven-day weekly cycle has been altered and that we cannot know when the true Sabbath day is. Do these instances prove that the world is off of the seven-day weekly cycle given by God at Creation? **Answer:** No. When does a day begin? According to the Bible, a day begins in the evening time (Genesis 1:5; Leviticus 23:32). In the previous mentioned accounts, the sun never set. A new day never began. Therefore, they simply had a long day.

25. **Note:** A careful study of the Bible will reveal that God's seven-day weekly cycle has not changed since it was given to mankind at Creation. When manna fell as food for the Israelites, God reminded them of His Seventh-day Sabbath by not sending them food on the seventh-day (Exodus 16:15, 21-23). Jesus, who is God, kept the true Sabbath while here on earth and His disciples and apostles did the same (Luke 4:16; Acts 13:14, 27, 42-44). The Sabbath truth was passed down to certain Protestant Reformers such as the Waldenses, and later, our Adventist Pioneers kept and taught the Sabbath. Furthermore, while the Gregorian Calendar has a seven-day weekly cycle, we can know with certainty that man did not make the seven-day weekly cycle; God did!

26. When will God establish His theocratic government again? Ezekiel 21:26-27; Revelation 19:13, 15-16 **Answer:** God's theocratic government will be reinstated once Jesus returns, after His saints are redeemed from the earth, and when sin and sinners are finally destroyed. At that point, God will continue to count time according to His reckoning (Isaiah 66:22-23). Our focus while on earth should be on God's weekly, seven-day cycle, which leads us back to Creation and the Sabbath, and not on which calendar we should use.

27. **Further Study:** Some individuals use Isaiah 66:22-23 to say that we will be following the new moon cycle on the new earth and therefore, we should be following the Hebrew Calendar and also keeping the feast days here on earth. What is the meaning of Isaiah 66:22-23? Notice, that while the new moons were used in scripture to track the beginning of months (1 Samuel 20:18, 27), they were also a time of gathering people together for a meal (1 Samuel 20:5; Luke 12:37). Based on the Bible, we

understand that God's Word established the first "calendar" which set in motion the days of the week (Genesis 1:5). The seven-day weekly cycle on the new earth will primarily be based on God's Word, as it was in the first week of Creation, and not based on the moon cycle. The new moons on the new earth will be a time of gathering God's people together to eat and to worship. Therefore Isaiah 66:22-23 does not prove that we should be following the cycle of the "new moons" and keeping the feasts because the feasts were also connected to animal sacrifices. There will be no animal sacrifices on the new earth (Isaiah 65:25).