

## The Lord's Day

**Worship on the First Day** – New Testament believers probably worshipped on both the Sabbath and the Lord's Day for a time. As more non-Jewish believers came into the church the day of worship focused on the Lord's Day, or first day of the week (Jn. 20:19, 26). New Testament believers gathered on the first day of the week to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord (Lk 24:1ff; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2). The disciples gathered on the first day, called the Lord's Day (Jn 20:19). However, it is important to understand that the Sabbath was not shifted to the Lord's Day, but rather the church realized that Christ had fulfilled the Sabbath (Heb. 4:1-13) as He did for all other points of the law (see Heb. 2:5-18; 8:6-13; 9:1-28; 10:1-12ff).

**Jesus Fulfilled the Sabbath Rest** – The Sabbath was the seventh day of rest set aside in Genesis 2:1-2. This day of rest was a weekly observance (Ex 20:8-10) and also a yearly observance in that every seventh year was to be a sabbatical year (Ex 23:9-11; Lev 25:1-7; Dt 15:1-6). The year of Jubilee was observed at the end of seven sabbatical years (49 years; see 25:8-17). Jesus fulfilled the Sabbath rest, just as He fulfilled the sacrifices (Heb 4:1-11; 10:1-18).

**The Lord's Day was a New Beginning** – The Lord's Day was the Sabbath plus one day, i.e. the eighth day. The eighth day is a significant day in the Bible. It is the day of new beginnings. Priests were consecrated for seven days (Lev 8:1-36) and on the eighth day began their priestly work (Lev 9:1-2). After a male child was born there were seven days of cleansing and the child was circumcised as a sign of a new covenant on the eighth day (Gen 17:12 Lev 12:3; Rom 2:28-29). Anyone healed of a disease was cleansed for seven days and pronounced clean on the eighth day (Lev 14:10, 23; 15:14, 29; Num 6:10). The eighth day was the day of holy convocation especially for the feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:36, 39; Num 29:35; Neh 8:18). Animals to be used in sacrifice had to be at least eight days old (Lev 22:26-27). Numbers have significance in the Bible and eight is the number of the Messiah. The numerical value of the letters of the name J-e-s-u-s is 888.

It is clear that well before the end of the first century A. D. that the early church was worshipping on the first day of the week, called the "Lord's Day" (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1-4; Rev 1:10).

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