

Christian view of Sunday.

Many, probably most, Messianic believers came out of churches that view Sunday in this way. After coming out of the Sunday church, they transfer the rules of their NS ("Native Sabbath," i.e., Sunday) to their TS (Target Sabbath," i.e., Saturday). They think it's okay to buy and sell after the Saturday morning service. And they think it's not necessary to attend a holy convocation every Sabbath. They think that attending once in a while is sufficient, just enough so they still "feel connected" to the local body. This is not Sabbath-keeping. It is Sabbath-breaking, because it ignores the commandment about having a holy convocation.

There are times when unforeseen circumstances of an urgent nature come up, of course. Things like sickness, infirmity, bad weather, and family emergencies sometimes prevent us from attending the holy convocation. In a serious emergency, we might even have to buy something. If the ox falls in a ditch on the Sabbath, it is not a sin to get it out. These are the exceptions, though, and we are not talking about the exceptions. We are talking about people who stay home on the Sabbath when they could attend a holy convocation in a local assembly in their area.

THE CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN VIEW OF SUNDAY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH-KEEPERS

Seventh-day Sabbath-keepers of previous generations probably did not have to deal with this problem of NS ("Native Sabbath") transfer as much as we do, because faithful Sunday Christians of past generations actually treated Sunday as a Sabbath. (See the information about Sunday "Blue Laws" on the next page.) Until a few decades ago, virtually all Bible-believing Christians were in universal agreement that God wanted Christians to keep the Sabbath. They were not in universal agreement about *which day* (Saturday or Sunday), but they all agreed that Christians should keep the

HEBREW & GREEK WORD STUDY

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of Yahweh, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My feasts. Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation: ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of Yahweh in all your dwellings." (Lev. 23:2f)

In the KJV, the Hebrew word *mikra* is translated "convocation." In modern English the word *convocation* evokes visions of formal, solemn, high-church assemblies in Episcopal churches. However, the general, primary meaning of *convocation* is "the act or process of convoking." The verb *convoke* simply means to call people to assemble together for a meeting. The *con-* prefix ("with" or "together") provides the "togetherness," and the *-voke* (related to words such as *vocal* and *voice*) provides the "calling."

Therefore a convocation is an assembly of people who have been

Sabbath. Even if they called it "the Lord's Day" instead of "the Sabbath," they still believed that the principles of Sabbath-keeping should be transferred to Sunday. I am old enough to remember a time when virtually all businesses and stores and restaurants were closed on Sundays. No sporting events or school activities were held on Sundays. Everything, even gas stations, closed down for the (Sunday) Sabbath.

I believe the reason the Church has gotten away from keeping Sunday as the Sabbath is because there is no Biblical basis for keeping Sunday as the Sabbath. Preachers have to really twist the Scriptures and yank them out of context to present the case for a Sunday Sabbath. Even with their twisted Scriptures, they can only present it as an alleged custom, not as a commandment, because there is no Biblical authority for a Sunday Sabbath.

The positive result of this is that

called to come together for a specific purpose. In the context of the Sabbath, that purpose is for congregational worship.

The word *convocation*, though rarely used in modern English, is an excellent choice for translating the Hebrew word *mikra*. The stem of *mikra* is the verb K-R-A, which means "to call," often in the sense of proclaiming or calling out. The verb is used in the well-known phrase "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." This is why Strong's Concordance correctly defines *mikra* as "something called out, i.e. a public meeting..."

The Greek New Testament word translated "church" also carries the idea of calling. The church is the *ekklesia*, the "called-out" assembly. The *ek-* prefix means "out of and the rest of the word provides the "calling." We are a called-out people who have been called to assemble together every Sabbath for worship.

more and more Christians are coming to realize that the seventh day of the week is the only possible day that can rightly be called the Sabbath. The negative result is sloppy Sunday-keeping, which results in sloppy seventh-day Sabbath-keeping. People decide to start keeping the seventh-day Sabbath, but they treat Saturday no differently than they formerly treated Sunday. If they bought and sold on Sunday, they buy and sell on Saturday. If they attended Sunday morning services sporadically, they attend the Saturday holy convocation sporadically. If they sometimes stayed home from Sunday services because they were tired, or wanted to clean their garage, or wanted to watch a football game on TV, they will stay home from the Sabbath services for these same reasons.

If we truly believe in keeping the Sabbath, we are obligated to keep it as *the Sabbath*. This means not only abstinence from working, buying, and