

The Feasts of YHWH

Part 2 of 7

The Sabbath

The first place the Sabbath is mentioned in Scriptures is in the Creation Week:

Thus the heavens and earth were finished and all the host of them. And on the seventh day Elohim ended His work which He had made: and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And Elohim blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which Elohim created and made.

Genesis (B'reisheet) 2:1-2

A few questions need to be asked here concerning these verses. Why does Elohim need to rest? Who is the Sabbath for? What significance does this day have? First of all, it is absolutely absurd to think that Almighty YHWH *needed* a day of rest. It is important to understand the sequence of the creation week in order to find out whose day of rest the Sabbath really is for. Man is the last thing that YHWH created, even though he was the first thing that YHWH thought about creating. YHWH made everything before Adam *for him*. He made the perfect environment for His special creation to dwell in. The whole creation account was for the well being of mankind. He brought forth grass and seed yielding plants for food for man. Man was to have dominion over every created thing. And the Sabbath, the last thing created, was for man's rest. The significance of the Sabbath Day is the Lord of the Sabbath, Y'shua Messiah, and our eternal rest that we have in Him.

The Sabbath – Seven Thousand Years and the Millennial Reign

In traditional Jewish thought, there are seven thousand years from creation until the end of the Messianic Era, and the seven days of creation are a picture of the seven thousand years. This understanding is primarily from Psalm 90:4, ***For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.*** We can also see that Peter was familiar with this thought because he

teaches it in his letter: ***But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day***¹.

Each day of creation represents a thousand years, and the seventh day represents the 1000 year reign of Messiah². Thus, the Sabbath day represents the millennial reign of King Messiah, a period of solemn rest, when He comes and dwells with His people and gives us that final Shabbat (rest). It is no wonder that Y'shua says that He is the Lord of the Sabbath!³

So, we are able to see in the Torah, Psalms, and Apostolic Writings, the picture of the seven thousand years time, with the last thousand years being the Sabbath rest when Messiah returns.

The Holiness of the Sabbath – The first thing set apart as “Holy”

...And Elohim blessed the seventh day and sanctified (kadash) it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which Elohim created and made.

YHWH is an Elohim of order, and from the very beginning He set the order of things. The seventh day has been set apart from the very beginning of time for the sole purpose of being a day of rest. He labored for six days and rested on the seventh, this was the model – His pattern for man to follow. The Creator and Sustainer of all things, Almighty YHWH, established the order of things, and He called this day holy.

YHWH shows us that the seventh day is important to Him and to us. This is shown in the fact that the Sabbath is the first thing in Scripture that is “sanctified”. The Hebrew word for sanctified is “Kadash,” which means to be, make, pronounce, or observe as clean. We have to keep in mind just **Who** it is that is doing the sanctifying – it is Almighty YHWH! If He is the one pronouncing something clean – that thing is truly clean. Kadash is translated into English as “Holy”.

There is a connection between clean and holy in the eyes of Elohim. If YHWH is pronouncing something to be clean, by default that thing is holy. To show this, we can look at Leviticus 11, where YHWH gives commandments about clean and unclean food. At the close of the chapter, He says:

¹ II Peter 3:8

² Revelation 20

³ Matthew 12:28, Mark 2:28, Luke 6:5

For I [am] YHWH your Elohim: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I [am] holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I [am] YHWH that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your Elohim: ye shall therefore be holy, for I [am] holy. This [is] the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten. Leviticus (Vayikra) 11:44-47

Leviticus 11 shows the connection between clean and holy. YHWH desires for His people to be holy. One thing that qualifies them as being holy is that they are not defiled with unclean things.

Until the seventh day, nothing that was made was *kadash* or holy. This is something that needs to be taken into consideration by those who want to replace the Sabbath with Sunday or any other day. YHWH Himself made this day holy. The Sabbath is not just for the Jews – the Sabbath was established for *mankind*, from the very beginning of time. It’s just as much a part of creation as the sun, the moon, and the stars. In essence the creating was not complete on the sixth day, but rather on the seventh day. On the seventh day, YHWH created holy rest: the Shabbat⁴. He created an institution that would last for all eternity.

The Fourth Commandment

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

But the seventh day is the sabbath of YHWH thy Elohim: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

For in six days YHWH made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore YHWH blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

It’s interesting that the Fourth Commandment is unique from all the “thou shall nots” - you are commanded to “remember” the Sabbath. In other words, YHWH tells us not to forget the Sabbath, but to memorialize it and keep it holy. It’s already holy, so you

⁴ Shabbat is the Hebrew Word for Sabbath.

don't have to do anything to make it holy. We can't do anything to make it unholy either, but we are ordered to regard this day as holy. We need to take part in this solemn rest at this appointed time. We need to recognize the fact that YHWH called this day holy and we need to enter into the holiness that is represented on this day. We need to enter into Yah. YHWH and His Holiness are one and the same. This is our appointment with our Master to enjoy Him and His goodness, His love, His Word and His Holy Spirit, on His day.

Beyond the fact that YHWH instituted the Sabbath from creation, He gave this day to His covenant people, Israel. YHWH only has one people, and that is Israel. All Gentiles that serve Him are joined or grafted into His people⁵. So when we talk about the idea of the Sabbath not being for "Christians" because it is just for Israel, that concept is biblically unsound. Christians are joined to Israel, and there is one law for the home born (Israel) and for the stranger (Gentiles)⁶. Therefore the idea of there being a requirement for the one group that does not apply to the other is unfounded. Mainstream Christianity has a problem with only one of the Ten Commandments. Nobody says: "thou shall not murder is just for Israel" or "thou shall not commit idolatry is just for Israel" or "thou shall not steal is just for Israel". So why is it that the Sabbath would be an exception? We need to understand that the Sabbath is just as important as the rest of the commandments, and just like the rest of them, it has never ceased or changed.

For the most part, "the Christian church" rejects any adherence to the Law of Moses (the Torah). Mainstream Christianity teaches that we only have two commandments today: to love YHWH and to love your neighbor as yourself. This teaching comes from Y'shua's response regarding the greatest commandment⁷. When we seek to understand what it is that Y'shua is showing us, we see that the contemporary thought in regards to this group of verses is not at all what is being explained. Y'shua says, "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets". In other words, if we can do these two commands, we realize the sum of all divine revelation and responsibility. When you look at the law and the prophets, what you will find is that they are teaching us one of two things: how to love YHWH or how to love mankind (our neighbor). So, when you love YHWH with all your heart, mind, and soul; and love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing the very thing that was purposed in and through the Torah. *So in terms of the Sabbath, being one of the Ten Commandments, we are being instructed on how we show love towards YHWH when we keep the Sabbath.* When we can get that revelation we are able to see that there is a balance between the Law and grace. It is because of the grace of YHWH that he gives us a law in the first place. He

⁵ Romans 11:16-29

⁶ Numbers 15:15-16, 29.

⁷ Matthew 26:32-40

didn't have to tell us how to please Him. YHWH told us exactly what He expects for us to do. He also has given us the power to do it (the Holy Spirit). We are able to see that the law is about relationships, and the Ten Commandments really tells us how to relate to Elohim and to men - how to love them both. Y'shua never taught against the Sabbath and neither did Paul, so how can the church teach against it?

It is popularly taught and thought that Paul against the Torah. The problem with this is the fact that Paul was a Torah teacher. People try to put the Old Testament against the New Testament, but in his day there was no New Testament. The Tanach (the Torah, Prophets, and Writings, what is regarded as the Old Testament) was the only "Scriptures" available. Look carefully at the words Paul wrote to Timothy:

And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Messiah Y'shua. All Scripture is given by inspiration of Elohim, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of Elohim may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works⁸.

Anyone who teaches or believes that Paul taught against the Sabbath would have to believe that he meant to say that all Scripture, except the parts that have to do with the Sabbath, is profitable to believers. Paul taught from the Law, He kept the Law. He taught the things that Y'shua taught, which were also according to the Law. Paul taught Timothy that Exodus 31 is profitable for doctrine...

And YHWH spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am YHWH that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to YHWH: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days YHWH made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed. And he gave unto Moses, when he had

⁸ || Timothy 3:15-17

made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of Elohim.⁹

If someone wants to do away with the Sabbath, let them first look and see what “perpetual” means. The Hebrew word is ‘ôlâm, which means; long duration, for ever, ever, everlasting. The Sabbath is forever. YHWH gave the whole Law to Moses, wrote the Ten Commandments down with His very finger in stone, and then ended the whole discussion with the Sabbath. The Sabbath is important. Paul would never teach contrary to it.

People, out of ignorance, strive to do away with the Sabbath. They say the first century church changed it to Sunday. There are two verses people use to support the Sunday Sabbath (besides the *idea* that since Y’shua was resurrected on the first day, Sunday is the new Sabbath): Acts 20:7 and 1Corinthians 16:2. Neither of these verses can show anything other than the fact that there were two meetings on Sunday in the so-called New Testament. To put against those two verses there are many verses to show that either Paul was in the synagogue on the Sabbath or just in the synagogue (the place where Jews went on the Sabbath): Acts 13:14-15, 27, 42, 44; 14:1; 15:21; 17:1, 2, 10, 17; 18:4, 19, 26; 19:8; 22:19 and 26:11. In these verses we don’t see any difference between the Jew and the Gentile, they are both in the same place at the same time; in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Some verses even get specific and say the Gentiles were learning the Law. This is plain to see! How can someone take two verses and put them against more than twenty verses. This is not even adding to the discussion the thirteen epistles written by Paul to the assemblies (fourteen if you count Hebrews). We have to understand that Paul does not contradict himself in his writings. He said things like - ***Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good¹⁰***. How could Paul in one breath say the law is holy and in the next speak against it? Paul actually teaches us the complete opposite; he was pro-Torah (law). Paul repeatedly emphasizes that we are *justified* by faith in Y’shua Messiah and not by the law¹¹. In other words, we are not made or declared righteous in the eyes of YHWH by keeping the law. What we have to remember is if we don’t have the law, we won’t know what sin is; we won’t know what YHWH likes or dislikes.

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against Elohim: for it is

⁹ Exodus 31:12-18

¹⁰ Romans 7:12

¹¹ Romans 3:28

not subject to the law of Elohim, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please Elohim. (Romans 8:4-8)

These verses let us know that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, through the Spirit of YHWH in us. If we are in the spirit, we are actually doing the things that YHWH would have for us to do, which is the law. If we are in the flesh, we would do the things that are contrary to YHWH, which is sin. The very purpose of the Spirit is to cause us naturally do that which we would not naturally do¹². Y'shua told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would bring all things that he taught them to their remembrance¹³; he taught them Torah. Paul understood these things, and this is what he taught in his writings. What we have to train ourselves to do is interpret Paul's writings from a Hebrew frame of mind, and not this Greek thinking. The so-called New Testament that mainstream Christianity would have for you to believe in is a religion that is totally disconnected from the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Paul was an Israelite. Y'shua is the Messiah of Israel. YHWH is the Elohim of Israel. The Torah came from YHWH. The Sabbath is part of the Torah. This is the understanding that Paul had, and this is what he taught.

People also try to suggest that Y'shua changed the Sabbath, or nullified it. He in no way does away with the Sabbath¹⁴. He disputes the fences that the Pharisees create d in their efforts to keep people from breaking the Sabbath. In Judaism, there are many traditions that were instituted by men and not ordained by YHWH, which was their way of keeping people from breaking the Torah. They would make laws to prevent you from breaking laws. Let's get something straight right here and now, if Y'shua broke any of YHWH's laws that would make Him a sinner. If Y'shua sinned He cannot be my or anyone's Savior. Y'shua did not break the Sabbath.

Does Y'shua annul the Sabbath in those verses? Elohim forbid. In verse seven of the noted chapter, we find the answer to the whole matter; He says" ...you would not have condemned the **guiltless.**" Y'shua was guiltless; He committed no offense to the Torah. He is Lord even of the Sabbath so He is truly able to say just what is lawful to do or not to do on the day that He established. People try to say this is an example of Y'shua saying something that would equate to "I made the rule so I can break it", however, that could not be further from the truth. Y'shua said that He was innocent; He broke no law. Y'shua Himself said – "I did not come to destroy the law, I came to fulfill it"¹⁵ . He cannot then break the Sabbath, because that would make Him a liar.

¹² Ezekiel 36:27

¹³ John 14:26

¹⁴ Matthew 12"1-8

¹⁵ Matthew 5:17, paraphrased

Y'shua goes on to teach these Pharisees just what the Sabbath is all about, and this is the lesson that men need to learn even today. The Sabbath is not about bondage, but rather it's about freedom. The Sabbath is rest. They ask, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath."¹⁶ These people had put so many restrictions on the Sabbath when it was never about restrictions, it was about rest and communion with YHWH. The Sabbath was made for man. The Sabbath is for our benefit, it was made for us.

The Sabbath is for man, but it's unto YHWH. This day is *the* designated day of worship. It is the day ordained by the Creator *Himself* to rest. The seventh day has both functional and prophetic purposes. When we are able to understand both and set aside man-made traditions, the perfect will of Elohim will be realized in our lives. The first day of the week is not a holy day – it never was and never will be. If we as followers of the Son of Elohim, Who is Y'shua HaMoshiach, want to exemplify the hope of our Savior's return and walk in obedience to our Heavenly Father in accepting the very first thing that He called holy, we must remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

-My Master is YHWH

¹⁶ Matthew 12:10