

THE SABBATH: A DAY FOR YOU!

Down through the ages, many questions have arisen about the Sabbath. Which day is the Sabbath? Who made the Sabbath? To find the answer to these questions, we must consult the Scriptures, for it is in them that we find the commandment for the Sabbath. When we find the answers to these age old questions, we must take heed. The Bible is the very Word of the Heavenly Father. No man has the authority to alter the commandments of the Almighty.

The Sabbath at Creation

The first reference to the Sabbath is found in **Genesis 2:2. And on the seventh day Elohim ended His work which He had made.** Notice that after working the six days, beginning with the first day of creation, The Creator made an end to work and rested on the seventh day. From the Hebrew we learn that Sabbath means rest, to desist from toil, to cease from work. Referring then to what our Messiah said, **The Sabbath (rest) was made for man**, and from **Genesis 2:2**, we learn that “the rest” was simply made by the Creator Himself desisting from further work and resting upon a certain day, which the Scriptures say was the “seventh day.”

“The rest,” or “the Sabbath,” which the Creator Himself made for man, is that period of time corresponding to that day when He rested from creating the Universe, stated to be the “seventh day.”

Has Time Been Lost?

Some claim that time has been lost, that the Sabbath was lost in Joshua's long day, that mankind as a whole entirely lost contact with the Creator, and hence, failed to keep the identical day upon which the Creator Himself had rested. This is easily answered from the Scriptures. Our Heavenly Father, who created the Sabbath for man, certainly knew which day corresponded to the seventh day upon which He rested, and so we find Him revealing it to His "chosen people" in such a definite way that they could not be uncertain about it. This was 2500 years after He had made the first Sabbath for man. Israel had been delivered from Egyptian slavery, and were being provided with manna rained from heaven, as they journeyed through the wilderness. For the first six days of the weekly cycle, the Creator rained down manna for Israel, but on the seventh day (the rest day for them) He rained none. The sixth day they were to gather a double portion in preparation for the coming Sabbath when no manna would be found.

Yahweh said to Moses, "**Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or no. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day, they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.**" And Moses conveyed the word of Yahweh the Almighty to the people, saying, "**This is that which Yahweh has said, 'Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath (rest) unto Yahweh.'**(Yahshua)" The next day Moses said, "**Eat that today; for today is a Sabbath unto Yahweh; to-day you shall not find it in the field. Six days shall you gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none.**" Some, perhaps, doubted, and went out to see if the Almighty was really working through Moses. They learned that the Heavenly Father did know which day was His Sabbath, for He provided none on that day. "**It came to pass that there went out some of the people on the seventh day to gather, and they found none.**" And there, our Heavenly Father revealed that not only was the seventh day still the Sabbath, as it was at Creation, but it was also a part of His law and one of His commandments--and

this was before His ten commandment law was given to Moses and Israel at Mount Sinai. (Exodus 16:4-5; 23-30).

The Sabbath of the Ten Commandments

At Sinai, on the third day of the third month, our Heavenly Father revealed His ten commandment law to Israel. In that law was the command to rest upon the seventh day: "**Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of Yahweh thy Mighty One; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it**" (Exodus 20:8-11).

Even before this law was given, our Heavenly Father had made Israel to understand which day was His Sabbath by refraining to rain down manna from heaven for them on the seventh day. Even if every man on earth at that time had forgotten which day was the Sabbath, our Heavenly Father had made the seventh day clear to Israel, as He fed them week after week, for forty long years in the wilderness. Therefore, when He gave Israel the Sabbath commandment, the day was definitely set as the seventh day of rest.

From the time our Heavenly Father revealed the Sabbath day to Israel until the Messiah came some 1,500 years later, there were always righteous servants of our Heavenly Father on earth who faithfully kept His commandments. Abraham kept the law even before it was given at Sinai. He obeyed the Almighty's voice, kept His charge, His commandments, His statutes, and His laws (**Genesis 26:5**). And so, when Yahshua came, we find Him repeatedly referring to "*the*" Sabbath, not "*a*" Sabbath; "the Sabbath made for man," which our Heavenly Father revealed to be the seventh day.

Sabbath Abolished?

Yahshua the Messiah did not abolish the law, nor did He do away with the Sabbath commandment. He states this in **Matthew 5:17**, "**Think not that I come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I have not come to destroy, but to fulfill. Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.**" Heaven and earth are still here. All has not been fulfilled. Nothing, therefore, has passed from the law. The Sabbath stands unchanged. The women who ministered to Him and heard the teaching from His own lips, knew that He upheld His Heavenly Father's commandments, including the seventh day Sabbath; and so we find the women still observing the fourth commandment after His death, having "rested the Sabbath day, according to the commandment," (Luke 23:56).

The Sabbath in Our Week

One may wonder, what day was the Sabbath in the time of the Messiah? If we examine **Matthew 28:1**, we find the Sabbath was the day that preceded the first day of the week, just as it did at creation, as it did at Sinai, and as it does today. Nowhere in all the Scriptures do we find any other day except the seventh day as the Sabbath. Our calendar bears witness to the fact that the week still has seven days, and the Sabbath (the seventh) is that which ends the cycle. "**From even unto even, shall you celebrate your Sabbath,**" (Leviticus 23:32).

That period of time in the weekly cycle from Friday evening at sunset until Saturday evening at sunset is, was, and will continue to be the "Sabbath" of the Bible. We learn that it will be observed even during the 1,000-year reign of Yahshua the Messiah. "**And it shall come to pass, that from one Sabbath to another, shall all**

flesh come to worship before Me, saith Yahweh," (Isaiah 66:23).

We see that the Sabbath was still being observed during the period of time between sunset Friday and sunset Saturday and was not changed to another day, as documented in **Hebrews 4:8-11: "For if Yahshua had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of Yahweh. For he who has entered His rest has also ceased from his works, as the Almighty did from His. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."**

The Sabbath precedes Sunday, or the first day of the week. The first day of the week--Sunday--follows immediately after the close of the Sabbath. **"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn (or draw on) toward the first day of the week,"** was the relation of the Sabbath and Sunday in the New Testament. This order has not altered; the Sabbath is still at the end of the week; Sunday is still the first day of the week. Take time to look at your own calendar. It will verify this fact.

The Sabbath is a Sign

The Sabbath is a sign between our Heavenly Father and His chosen people: **"It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days Yahweh (Yahshua) made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed," (Exodus 31:17).** It is also a sign between our Heavenly Father and His obedient people whatever the race, in all ages.

In **Isaiah 58:1**, our Heavenly Father rebukes His people, saying, **"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression and the house of Jacob their sins."** And then the Sabbath sin is brought right out into the light, that "My people" might know wherein they transgressed, and a glorious promise is made to the one who takes our Heavenly Father at His word and keeps the Sabbath holy. **"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of Yahweh, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in Yahweh; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of Yahweh hath spoken it," (Isaiah 58:13-14).**

The Sabbath for All Mankind

Let us recall what the Messiah said, **"The Sabbath was made for man,"** not for the Jew, not for a chosen few, but for **"man"**; all inclusive, for mankind, or the human race. Now, please refer to the promise our Heavenly Father made to "man"--yes, any man: **Thus says Yahweh, "Keep judgment, and do justice; for My salvation is near to come, and My righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that does this, and the son of man that lays hold on it; that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil," (Isaiah 56:1-2).** If the keeping of the Sabbath is reserved for Jews only and not for all mankind, then likewise, the command to refrain from doing any evil is also for the Jew alone, and the remainder of the human race may do as it pleases.

To make the matter even more clear, the prophet continues with our Heavenly Father's words: **"Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to Yahweh speak, saying, 'Yahweh hath utterly separated me from His people,'" (Isaiah 56:3).** Do you understand this? Even if you are not of the Israel race--those known as "My people,"--the promise is for you, whether black or white, Jew or Gentile. If you have joined yourself to the Most High, then do not say that He has separated you from His chosen people. You can-

not say, then, that the Sabbath is for the Jews only. Our Heavenly Father has not made a separation between you and the Jews. The Sabbath was made for "man," and being a "man" it was made for you. The blessings attached to it are yours, as well as to the most devout Jew, if you take hold and obey the Sabbath command.

Yahshua's Example

If the Sabbath had been lost prior to the time of Yahshua's birth, He would have known the correct day for the Sabbath. He said, **"He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness," (John 8:12). Peter said, "The Messiah also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His steps," (1 Peter 2:21-22).**

On the traditional Sabbath Day, the day before the first day of the week (Sunday), we find Yahshua in Sabbath services. **"As His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read."** Again we read that **He "taught them on the Sabbath days," (Luke 4:16,31).** If Yahshua had wished to abolish the Sabbath day, surely He would have taught His disciples so. But, the fact that He did not so teach them can be seen after His death, when His intimate followers were still found resting on **"the Sabbath day according to the commandment," (Luke 23:56 and Acts 13).**

The Apostles to the Gentiles

Paul was an apostle especially called to take the good news to the Gentiles. He had learned the truth through a personal experience with his risen Savior, and from the teaching of those who had followed Yahshua in His ministry. He would surely have known of the abolishment of the Sabbath, had there been such. However, on the contrary, we find Paul following Yahshua's example and saying: **"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Messiah," (1 Corinthians 11:1).**

Since the Messiah was a seventh-day Sabbath Keeper, we would expect to find Paul observing the same Sabbath. As we read, **"Paul as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures," (Acts 17:2).** At Antioch, Paul went into the synagogue on the Sabbath and preached the good news (Acts 13:14). When the Jews were gone out, the Gentiles asked Paul to preach the good news to them the next Sabbath day. This would have been an excellent opportunity for Paul to have told them that the Sabbath was abolished, or that the next day was the Sabbath, if he wished but we find no such record. On the contrary, **"The next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together (Jews as well as Gentiles) to hear the words of Yahweh," (Acts 13:42-44).**

Again, at Corinth, we find Paul working the six days of labor, but on the Sabbath days he was teaching the people the good news of the risen Savior. Here in this Gentile city, he worked with his hands to support the ministry, but reserved the Sabbath day for teaching the Scriptures: not for one or two Sabbaths, but for a year and six months, seventy-eight weeks of toil and seventy-eight Sabbaths to be kept holy, for the worship of the Heavenly Father (Acts 18). The Sabbath was made for Paul, as well as for the Jews and for you and for me. **"The Sabbath was made for man."**

Listen to this Sabbath promise: **"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to Yahweh, to serve Him and to love the name of Yahweh, to be His servants, EVERY ONE that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant: even them will I bring to My mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer...for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people," (Isaiah 56:6-7).** Yes, our Heavenly Father's house is a house of prayer for all people, and the Sabbath is Yahweh's appointed rest for "all people," even for "everyone." Read carefully Isaiah 56:1-12, and take notice of its wonderful promises to those who take our Heavenly Father at His word. Become His servants, revere His Holy Name

and keep His sacred Sabbath day holy.

Hear now the admonition in **Hebrews 4:1**. "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." "There remains therefore a keeping of the Sabbath to the people of Yahweh," (**Hebrews 4:8 NASB**). The Sabbath is one of the commandments of the law, and John says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law," (**1 John** The keeping of the commandments is spoken of in **Revelation 14:12**, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of Yahweh and the faith of Yahshua." It is interesting that keeping the commandments is mentioned in the last book of the Bible, where it is linked to the faith of Yahshua.

"Blessed are they that do His commandments (this includes the Sabbath), that they may have right to the tree of life" (**Revelation 22:14**). "Blessed...is the man that keepeth the Sabbath" (**Isaiah 56:2**). These wonderful promises of temporal blessings, as well as eternal life, are for you! If you have not been keeping the Sabbath, make today the time to say, "Father, I take you at Your word. From this time on, by Your grace, I will keep Your Sabbath. Bless me, according to Your promises, that I in turn, may be a blessing to others."

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