

## Restoration of the Sabbath

*Cease* — the word is a command in itself, “Cease, stop, rest, My people. I love you. Remember how I ceased to work after six days of creation.” (Gen 2:2)

Keeping the Law or the commandments does not save us, but because we are saved by His grace, we can and do keep them – as a sign that we are saved. Unless we are saved, we cannot keep His commandments (Rom 8:4). The fourth commandment is a sign we are saved by His Spirit, who gave us the power to keep His commandments (1 Jn 2:4). Jn 14:21 is revelation by His Spirit.

The changing of the Sabbath gradually came in, from the seventh day to the first day. By then there was no thought of obedience to the Ten Commandments. It was just a day for pleasure, or to “go to church” on that day for an hour or so. Change gradually crept in, as a “creeping thing,” with respect to the understanding, or misunderstanding of the purpose of the Sabbath (Dan 12:10). Gradually, this false oral tradition made growth among the fallen churches.<sup>1</sup>

Yahshua’s observance of the Sabbath was in keeping with the commandments, as those who followed after Him kept the day holy to Yahweh. The prophets tell of the blessing that will follow a people who keep the Sabbath (Isa 56:2-4), and the curses on those for whom the Sabbath was made, if they did not receive the Sabbath as a blessing from Yahweh, in His love for man and His people (Eze 20:18-26). Recognizing that the day is holy to Yahweh will bring the true enjoyment of the promises.

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<sup>1</sup> Even Christians acknowledge the gradual, but *complete*, even *astounding* change in the life and worship of the first Church: “Between the years AD 100 and AD 500, the Christian Church changed almost beyond recognition. ... [At first] The organization of the church was still fluid...there were no creeds to be recited, no set forms of worship... [By AD 500] The worship of the church was entirely liturgical with fixed, set forms of prayer...”

“Most of these changes came gradually over four hundred years. On the whole they were for the good and reflected healthy growth on the part of the church. But not all the changes were necessarily for the better. Many today would consider the alliance with the state and the transformation of Christianity into an official religion to be at best a mixed blessing, if not actually a curse. Many would be less than enthusiastic about the pattern of ministry that emerged and about the suppression of the free forms of worship.” Tony Lane, *The Lion Book of Christian Thought* (Lion Publishing Company, Batavia, Illinois, 1984), pg. 8.

Mt 5:17-19 is for His people, His offspring to fulfill, to keep. However, in the second and third centuries in the Edah, gradual change crept in when the Edah had lost its witness of who it represented, including the celebration of the Sabbath (Ex 31:12,17) as a sign of who God's people are (Isa 43:12). This was to be the sign of the nation of twelve tribes, which would produce the fruit of the Kingdom (Mt 21:43). Instead, they were scattered abroad – even by the time James wrote his epistle early in the second century (Jms 1:1).

### **The Lord of the Sabbath**

In Mk 2:28, Yahshua said He was Lord of the Sabbath, and He is our Lord also. He was not in any way depreciating and devaluating the importance of the Sabbath, but to the contrary He pointed out the true significance of the Sabbath, to be kept by all that would obey the gospel. For it is recorded that He is Lord of the day that designates who His people are, and who His people are not. All will know according to this sign of the covenant, the keeping of the Sabbath (Dt 4:13; Ex 34:28). Yahshua kept the Sabbath, and we are to walk in His footsteps.

The Jews had completely misunderstood the Old Testament commandments, adding restrictions, much as in the other way Christianity misunderstands the commandments, taking them all away.

On the first day of the week, at twilight, Yahshua rose from the dead, and they began to gather for breaking of bread and worship after a day of rest on the Sabbath (Acts 20:7-12). The command to keep the Sabbath day holy has never been abrogated by the Word of God. The day is not for the *pleasure* of man, but it is for the *benefit* of man, and that blessing is obtained by resting one's body and mind on the Sabbath from all one's regular toil. It is not a day for one's own pleasure (Isa 58:13; Mt 5:17-19). Isa 49:6 – The light of the world is to work six days *and* rest on the seventh day *and* raise up the tribes of Israel.

## **No Longer their Lord<sup>2</sup>**

So we see the gradual change. The more the first church fell from the grace they needed to be God's people, the more they failed to keep the Sabbath. This was the sign of their fall. Correspondingly, the more and more they failed to represent Him. The more change came in (until 2 Cor 11:2-4 was fulfilled among them), the less witness they became in regard to the day that Yahshua is the Lord of. So of course they failed to keep the everlasting sign that Yahshua is their God who sets them apart from all other people and nations to be His people (Ex 31:13).

There's one outstanding feature and quality about His people – they obey His commandments unaltered (Jn 14:15,21-24; 1 Jn 2:4). Altered... alter... unaltered. Altered means modified to their own liking, adjusted, amended, readjusted, and changed. It means the adaptation of His commandments to their flesh.

The fourth commandment cannot be changed or altered, even by God Himself, much less by the pope. In AD 336 the Laodicean Council officially cut off the sign of Ex 31:13. There was no remedy after that (Jer 51:8).

Sabbath – Israel's chief failure was in not honoring the day, which the new nation would honor, in order to be that nation which would bring about the fruit of the Kingdom. Israel gave up, forfeited the Kingdom, for its failure to keep the Sabbath.

## **The Origin of the Sabbath**

The Sabbath goes back to creation as Ex 20:8-11 and Gen 2:2 say. God worked six days, and on the seventh day He rested from His labor (Ex 20:11). Ex 31:17 – The language is strong, so that Israel may learn the necessity of regarding the Sabbath as a day upon which He Himself rested, that is, ceased from His work. The Sabbath is the seventh day, and cannot change or be altered. The Bible clearly attributes the origin of the Sabbath to God's example Himself.

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<sup>2</sup> The distinction between "their Lord" and "ours" which Paul wrote of in 1 Cor 1:2 became greater and greater until Paul's "Lord" was no longer "their Lord." See the teaching, *Confusing Gods, Part 1*, pages 3-4, and pages 6-8 (940926T1).

Israel therefore knew the Sabbath, and the commandment to remember it was one that would be understood. The law says that the Sabbath, that is, the seventh day rest after six days of work, belongs to Yahweh. It is His day, and the basic reason for keeping it is that it is a day, which belongs to Him. Only His people who love and appreciate Him will keep it. It is a day he blessed, and He set it apart for observance, just as He commanded it to be kept (Dt 5:12; Ex 20:8-11).

Dt 5:14 – A good reason to rest – out of love for their animals and their servants. God is good to both man and beasts. Dt 5:15 – speaks of how the Israelites were slaves without rest in Egypt. God is a good Master who gives rest to His people and their animals, and servants (Ex 31:13-16; 34:21; 35:2; Lev 19:3,30; 23:3,38; Num 15:30-36).

When Israel was turned over to the nation who would keep the Sabbath and bear the fruit of the Kingdom, around 40 - 50 years later the gradual change came about. After the apostles died out, no longer did Israel remember the Sabbath and its purpose. Gradually, oral tradition crept in with respect to the understanding of the purpose of the Sabbath. Since they were no longer being God's people, the sign was taken away (Ex 31:13). The law was taken out of their hands (Dt 4:13; Ex 34:28). 2 Cor 3:3 – The fourth commandment is the sign of the covenant and given to the Mt 21:43 nation, until Isa 49:8.