

Keeping Yahweh's Appointments

שמר מועדים יהוה

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Acknowledgments:

Dedicated to my Grandfather:

Winfred Oval Brown

1909-1968

Teacher, Pastor, Musician, Piano Technician
My Childhood Friend



With Love ♡ & Thanks to my wife **Rachel**

For my **Children** ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡

Jesse-Susanna-Sharon-Judah

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For

☞ *Input and Belief*

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*Without whom the writing of this book
might not have been possible ♡*

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Introduction

The purpose of this work is to begin bringing a great controversy to a close. That controversy is twofold: whether the Fourth Commandment to keep the sabbath holy is required for God's people under the New Covenant; and whether there is a *particular* day, and which one it is. Arguments on this subject go on every week. The number of writings on it are so many that it proves the existence of people who want to know. My reason for wanting to know is as the prophet said, "my people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge." For this reason, something inside me just could not rest until I had every element of the Commandment known. But once that knowledge came I recognized a great responsibility. First, to apply it in my personal life. Second, to teach others. The first part carries with it an obligation: once you know, you do. The second carries with it a curse. If you teach something which is a lie, you will be judged accordingly. It means that you didn't *rightly divide* the Word of Truth - a *workman that should be ashamed*. Nobody doing this wants to be wrong. That is why I submit it in humility, with fear and trembling, and after much prayer, research, and *doing* - about ten years worth.

This work does not purport to be a "how to" on sabbath keeping, or an exhaustive study on methods of calculation of days and times. I proclaim the work to be that of a mere layman *for* laymen (even though I was ordained at age 17). It does purport, however, to be *authoritative* as far as scripture and history reveal. Nonetheless, I want no one who reads this to think that, because I think I have discovered something that few others have, I make some sort of demand. If there be any demand on our behavior, it is found in Yahweh's Natural, Eternal Law. No matter how hard we resist, the natural consequences of disobedience to that Law will either eventually humble and cause us to cease our stiff

necked resistance, or we will be destroyed.

The Fourth Commandment is a pivotal one, the keeping of which is a *sign* between Yahweh and His people. The sign is so Yahweh can recognize *who* His people are by *when* and *how* they keep it. If there is a particular day, we need to know when it is. Otherwise, we merely go about keeping days after the manner of heathen, and so are recognized by them as no different than they. We must separate that which clearly belongs to Yahweh and us. And just because people have *traditionally* kept a certain day for a period of time does not mean it is correct. Ye shall not follow after a multitude to do evil. Exodus 23:2. The sign doesn't just follow *us* wherever we are, we follow *it*. Otherwise Israel would never have been spewed from the land. So the burden is on *us* to **remember the sabbath and keep** (*shamar*: to guard/protect) it holy.

With that in mind, I tell you that Yahweh's people are destined to return to *all* of His Natural Laws which were not *added* to merely *atone* for sin. It is my *prophetic revelation* that this is part of what is referred to as "the restitution of all things." Acts 3:21. His people are responsible to a degree for this process. He said "*occupy* till I come." He said to those who overcome, they would sit with him on His Throne. What shall we overcome but our *lukewarm* condition and the residual effects of the heathen who live among us violating His Laws. Likewise for most of the masses filing in like zombies to sit in church pews every Sunday. They have neither sought nor found Him. As He said, they "praise Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me." Wherefore, "do not give that which is holy unto the dogs." Matthew 7:6. But go to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Feed them, and tell them of earthly things: when Yahweh's appointments are. For if you tell them of earthly things and they believe not, how shall they believe if they are told of heavenly things? John 3:12.

Chapter One

Yea, We Establish The Law

In order to even get to first base with regard to the sabbath and calendar issues contained in this booklet, it is first necessary to establish whether or not the Law upon which they rest is valid. Within this question is a broad spectrum of what appears to be contradictions within the printed Bible itself. Hopefully, we can demonstrate that many are not really contradictions at all, but our lack of knowledge about what the writers were speaking of.

How many times have I heard Judeo-Christian preachers say that the laws of "God's chosen nation the Israelites are not applicable to new testament Christians because 'we are not under law, but under grace'" quoting Apostle Paul. The problem with this theology is that it fails to consider that the phrase 'under law' refers to the "judgment" of the law we are not "under" after Christ's sacrifice. Some even take it one step further to claim that 'the Law was *nailed to the cross*,' supported by an alleged 'confirming' scripture in Colossians 2:14-17. Failing to recognize what Paul was speaking of, they automatically contradict themselves.

For example, I think probably everyone (including those preachers) would agree that as Christians we should not sin. But most people don't seem to equate *sin* with disobeying the laws engraved in stone at Mt. Sinai. However, if we as Christians are not subject to that law, meaning God's Moral Law, then why do we bother to teach our children to not steal, to not have other gods before Yahweh, to not bear false witness, to honor their father and mother, to keep the sabbath holy, etc?

‘To the contrary, “sin is the transgression of the law.” I John 3:4. Therefore, “Shall we sin, because we are not under the [judgment of the] law, but under grace? God forbid.” Romans 6:15. Paul explains, “if the uncircumcision [Gentiles] keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?” Romans 2:26. Many think that because we have a “righteousness which is by faith” that “faith” is some magical thing which makes obedience to the law a kind of ritualistic unnecessary work, or even bondage. But Paul declared “Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.” Romans 3:31.

That law Paul speaks of existed from the beginning of creation. Long before Israel encamped at the foot of Mt. Sinai, blessings came to Abraham and his seed because he “obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.” Genesis 26:5. He was “full of faith” or “faithful,” indeed “the father of our faith.” When a woman is “faithful” to her husband, she is “full of faith.” She does not violate the law against adultery and have relations with another man. Likewise, if we are “full of faith” or “faithful,” we do not transgress Yahweh’s Laws deliberately by ‘having relations’ with other gods, which includes *anything* that would lead us off the path of righteousness and his moral law.

The book of Hebrews clears up the misunderstanding as to another “law” Paul refers to at times. The writer declares, “For **the law** having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with **those sacrifices which they offered year by year** continually make the comers thereunto perfect . . . For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins . . . In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.” Hebrews 10:1, 4, and 6. From these passages it is

clear that the *sacrificial* law is what Paul speaks of as being “added **because of transgressions**, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made . . .” Galatians 3:19. There could be no *transgressions* unless there was a moral law in place to transgress against. Therefore, animal sacrifice was that necessary *addition* to the moral law to temporarily “atone” for those transgressions. “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22.

The writer goes on to state, “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them: And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” Hebrews 10:16-17. In this manner “He [Christ] taketh away the first [Old Covenant - Laws written in stone/animal sacrifice necessary], that he may establish the second [New Covenant - Laws written in hearts]. By the which will we are sanctified **through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**” And, “He had offered **one sacrifice for sins** for ever.” Hebrews 10:9-10 & 12. This is one reason why Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70. The waning Levitical priesthood (many not even Levites appointed by the Herodian dynasty) kept slaughtering bulls and goats at the Temple. This was like a continuous rejection of Yahshua’s sacrifice, and had to be formally abolished as not only “moot” but outright blasphemy.

Yahshua not only became the “one sacrifice,” but in contrast with the abolishment of the sacrificial laws He firmly established the eternal quality of the moral law as recorded in Matthew 5:

vs. 18 *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

- vs. 19 *Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*
- vs 20 *For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*
- vs. 21 *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:*
- vs. 22 *But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."*

Apparently, under the old covenant one could hate his brother in his heart, call him names, and it was never construed as murder because *there were not two or three witnesses to a corpse*. (Numbers 35:30). But here we see a higher standard with the law written in our hearts under the new covenant.^{1/} The Matthew passage also explains why those who teach would receive the greater condemnation. James 3:1. Those who break *these least commandments* and teach men so shall be called *least* . . . I wonder what the punishment is for those who break the greatest and teach men so? “. . . The prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail. For the leaders of this people

^{1/} For the same reason one cannot now look upon a married woman with lust without being an adulterer, although it took a physical act under the old covenant. Matthew 5:28.

cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.” Isaiah 9:15-16. The false prophet is to be put to death. Deuteronomy 18:20-22.

Remember that Yahshua didn’t say to the woman caught in adultery, “Go, and if you keep on living that lifestyle I’ll make sure to cover for you again.” He said, “Go and sin *no more*.” Yahshua’s sacrifice should remind us that we who have sinned and come short of His Glory don’t deserve the gift of redemption He gave, only the punishment He received. To show our gratitude and love for Him, we must seek to obey Him at all costs. As He said, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” John 15:10. And, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” Revelation 22:14-15.

To sum it up, “If we sin [break the Law] wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” Hebrews 10:26. And, we have “counted the blood of the covenant wherewith [we were] sanctified an unholy thing, and . . . done despite unto the Spirit of grace.” Hebrews 10:27-29. Indeed, we “crucify the son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” Hebrews 6:6. Moreover, “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.” Proverbs 28:9.

May Yahweh help us never reach that point, for “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Hebrews 10:31. Let us instead be as the Apostle Paul: “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man . . .” Romans 7:22 (quoting David in Psalm 1:1-3, and paraphrasing the Psalmist, *cp.* Psalm 119:35, 97, 113).

KEY TO UNDERSTANDING

If you agree with this writing so far, then here is a key to understanding what seems to be page after page of “laws” in the Old Testament: they will either fall under one of the Ten Commandments, *categorically*, or they are not part of the moral law and therefore not one of the “least” or “Greatest” commandments. For example, most “fundamental Christians” are against homosexuality. They say it violates God’s Law. Can you name which of the Ten Commandments it falls under? It is the Seventh, against *adultery*. Anything which *adulterates* something intended naturally for a different purpose is *adultery*. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 1:

- vs. 26 *For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:*
- vs. 27. *And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.*

“Against nature.” “Leaving the natural use.” This is adultery/adulteration. Either homosexuality is adultery or it does not violate one of the Ten Commandments. Another example of adultery is found in Leviticus 19:

- vs. 19 *Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.*

Either improper mixtures of that sort fall under the Seventh Commandment against *adultery*, or they are not one of the

“least” or “Greatest.” Simple logic should tell us that if we take an original creation such as the buffalo (bison) and mate it with a Brahma cow, we are defiling that which Yahweh created: a buffalo, and a cow. They are *both cattle*. But when mixed they are not what Yahweh created. The offspring is a ‘*beefalo*.’ If a cayenne pepper is planted next to a bell pepper, cross-pollination results in the bell becoming hot and/or the cayenne becoming mild. If you mix the wool of a sheep with linen or cotton, you mix plant and animal. Most of us have worn or are now wearing *adulterated* clothing. We look like all the other heathen, not “set apart” or “peculiar” as His people should be.

Many of the Judeo-Christian preachers have made these kinds of laws appear to be either nonsense or irrelevant in our modern day. To them and the majority of their congregations, much of those laws are related only to the ancient Temple priests and their requirements, or to an ancient agrarian society which we have left in the dust, moving on to modern ‘civilization.’ Worse yet, those laws are forsaken under a convoluted ‘new covenant.’ This is because they need to understand the ‘categorizing’ of those laws under the Big Ten. Moreover, they need to understand that Yahweh didn’t change, His people have forsaken *Him*.

With this understanding, which may be new to some, *all* of the sabbath patterns can be properly categorized under the Fourth Commandment to remember the sabbath and keep it holy. These are located generally in the 25th chapter of Leviticus as seven-year patterns leading to the great Jubilee in the 50th year, and in the 23rd chapter as “feasts.” The term “feasts” is translated from the Hebrew word *mowadah*, which literally means “an appointment.” From here we can now proceed to see just what is meant by Keeping Yahweh’s Appointments.

Chapter Two

The Sabbath: A Moral Issue

Although, after reading Chapter One many would readily agree with me that the “moral laws” are still to be obeyed, some refuse to make a connection that keeping the sabbath holy is a moral issue. Justifications for this are cloaked in terms of us now being “in Christ” under the “New Covenant,” and that those who “keep sabbaths” and expect others to do so reject Christ’s freedom. Supporting “authorities” range from the claim that (1) not all Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament, (see Romans 13:9-10, Ephesians 6:1-3, I Cor. 10:14); (2) God’s laws were allegedly ‘nailed to the cross’ (Colossians 2:14-17); to (3) Yahshua stating, “Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath” when he and the disciples were caught by the Pharisees plucking grain on the sabbath, as if He being “Lord of the sabbath” was some magical term which disposes of it. Mark 2:23-28. We’ll cover these various justifications in the next few chapters.

For now, let’s look at what the law actually states in Exodus 20:

- vs. 8 *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*
- vs. 9 *Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:*
- vs. 10 *But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: 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.*
- vs. 11 *For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh*

day" wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Six days were given to man to do his business. Then just as Yahweh rested from creation, the sabbath was made for man and all his household to cease from their labors and separate unto Yahweh on that day (i.e. to keep it holy - *set apart* - Strong's #6942 - Hebrew). As you can see from the text, even mere animals which were not the object of Yahshua's redemption and salvation were given rest under the 'old covenant' on the sabbath. How does the 'new covenant' affect them? If a 'new testament Christian' owns them, does this mean they aren't required to give *them* rest on the sabbath? This is where the morality base of sabbath-keeping becomes clear: If you love the members of your household, your hired servants, and your animals, you won't make them work week in and week out at your whim. And if you love your Heavenly Father, you'll rest your own body on *the* sabbath and *meet with Him*. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Romans 13:10.

Beyond the scope of household resting, the sabbath was also made for man to understand some things. He says in Exodus 31:

- vs. 12 *And the LORD spake unto Moses saying,*
- vs. 13 *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 the LORD that doth sanctify you.*

* * *

- vs. 16 *Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.*

vs. 17 *It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.*

Notice in verse 13 he doesn't say "the sabbath" (singular) is what is established as *a sign*, he says "keep[ing] *My sabbaths*" (plural) is *a sign* (singular). The keeping of the *plural* (sabbaths) is what is proof of the *singular* (sign). In other words, so that we may know and be confident that it is Yahweh that sanctifies us and not some other source, we meet and rest *on particular days* - i.e. My sabbaths! They are *made for man* (Mark 2:27), but they are *His sabbaths*. In this sense, we begin to see that there may be a *particular calendar* within which these days are scheduled.

He states in verse 16 that these sabbaths are "for a *perpetual covenant*!" The word *perpetual* is the Hebrew word, *olam*, which means "*concealed*, i.e. the *vanishing* point; generally time *out of mind*." (Strong's number 5769). Not "age-long," but *perpetual* - *never ending*. This may explain why many theologians are hung-up about the sabbath in that to them it appears that this *perpetual covenant* has been kept only by the Jews of today, who allegedly keep the seventh-day sabbath, while the Christian church is 'free' from that 'bondage,' and now keeps "The Lord's Day." However, as we showed earlier, those in the "New Covenant" have His Laws written on their hearts. Christian churches don't really even keep "The Lord's Day" holy as a sabbath.

Israel historically had a problem with His sabbaths. Those stiffnecked people had a knack for bringing judgment on themselves for failure to keep them holy. It seems nobody likes to be 'confined' to a *peculiar* schedule. But that is no excuse. Who are we to think that we are different? To warn

the people of pending judgment, the prophet declares as recorded in Jeremiah 17:

- vs. 21 *Thus saith the LORD; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem;*
- vs. 22 *Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers.*
- vs. 23 *But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction.*

What soon followed this warning was the captivity of Judah into Babylon for **seventy** years. Scripture reveals an even more precise reason for this. Besides the sabbath which followed six working days there were also instituted sabbaths on a larger scale of *years*, both of which fall under the category, spirit, and letter of the Fourth Commandment. The latter is found in Leviticus 25:

- vs. 1 *And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,*
- vs. 2 *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.*
- vs. 3 *Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;*
- vs. 4 *But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.*

Notice in verse 4 this sabbath is “for the LORD,” and it is the *land* that “keeps” it - *unto the LORD* in verse 2. “The earth is

the LORD'S and the fulness thereof." Psalm 24:1. It is *His* property, and just as we are commanded to give rest to all those within our care, including our animals, He wants rest for all that is *His*. Because *we* are the ones he placed here to be caretakers, so to speak, we must make way for the land to rest to cover our *moral* responsibility for Yahweh's creation.

Israel then, and Israel now keeps the fields active twenty four-seven (24-7).^{2/} As the scribe records in II Chronicles 36:

vs. 20 *And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him [Nebuchadnezzar] and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:*

vs. 21 *To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years. [i.e. 70 years].*

The idea that all or some of His sabbaths are nullified in the "New Covenant" just doesn't make sense in light of the fact that Yahshua's blood was not spilled to save the soil or animals, but *people*. We are given charge over the soil, and our moral responsibility is done away with? A more detailed discussion on this follows in Chapter Four. What is truly revealing about the passage above is that, although Israel would not be a proper caretaker of the earth, Yahweh took care of it anyway by *spewing them out*! (See Deuteronomy 28:63). Jeremiah tried to warn them. They would not listen. They probably said the same things we say now - "it's not convenient," or "surely Yahweh doesn't expect us to be in

^{2/} "24-7" is an idiomatic expression regarding the modern "24 hour day," 7 days a "week."

‘bondage’ to the sabbath.” It’s in the ‘Old Testament.’

The prophet gives a beautiful insight as to what is accomplished by obeying the sabbath rest command in Isaiah chapter 58:

- vs. 13 *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 the LORD, honorable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:*
- vs. 14 *Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; 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 the LORD hath spoken it.*

This provides a glimpse into the Kingdom, and the intimacy which Yahweh desires with His people. If Yahweh makes an appointment, He keeps it. If we don’t show up, He still returns every *set time*. Because He knows that in the present era we may not know when the appointment actually is, He waits patiently for us to re-discover it. He knows how the false pen of the scribes and the false shepherds have deceived us. So He waits. The diligent find it when they seek. Afterward, they quickly discover that there is no bondage in it, only harmony with Yahweh and all creation.

The only difference between now and then is that Ancient Israel *knew* when the sabbath was and that they were obligated to keep it, but they didn’t as a whole. Still, Yahweh pleaded with them through Isaiah to “delight” themselves in Him. When they refused to do so for “finding their own pleasure,” then the prophet said in Ezekiel 20:

- vs. 24 *Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths,*

- and their eyes were after their fathers' idols.*
- vs. 25 *Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.*

How grieved Yahweh must have been to have followed through with this judgment - giving them *statutes that were not good*. Think of how many statutes we have now which are *not good* - those which implement the I.R.S., OSHA, EPA, FCC, FDA, FHA (not future homemakers!), and the hoards of other government agencies waiting to catch us in violations which are not even remotely related to Yahweh's Laws. Those government laws are there to give us a reason to cry out to Him for the bondage, just as our ancestors did in Egypt. The question is, will we repeat history and spend forty years wandering in the wilderness after we are delivered, or will we go directly into the promised land? Although our people are beginning to cry out, not many are diligent enough to seek out the answer as to why we have *statutes that are not good*.

One of the blessings about resting on the sabbath is the quiet time available to hear and study the Word. When a hectic week full of problems has just passed, we can actually have a reason to say "enough." We then spend time with our brethren and families to reflect on Yahweh's goodness, mercy, and *rest*! After reading his Law and other important portions of scripture, the resting period gives us an opportunity to reflect on what we have read, and *hear His Voice*. On one of the high sabbaths, Nehemiah 8 records:

- vs. 8 *So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*
- vs. 9 *And Nehemiah, which is the Tir-sha-tha [governor], and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that*

taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

- vs. 10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*
- vs. 11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved.*
- vs. 12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.*

This of course transpired when Yahweh brought the remnant of Judah back from Babylon after the 70 years were over. As we read earlier in Jeremiah, those 70 years of being cast out of the land was due in large part to the desecration of the sabbaths. Upon return, the people were very sensitive to the reading of the Law during the restoration of the Feast of Tabernacles. Their hearts were tender, and they wept. Later, other righteous acts were done, one of which was re-establishing certain sabbath requirements, as recorded in Nehemiah 13:

- vs. 15 In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals.*
- vs. 16 There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath*

unto the children of Judah and in Jerusalem.

- vs. 17 *Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?*
- vs. 18 *Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.*
- vs. 19 *And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.*
- vs. 20 *So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.*
- vs. 21 *Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.*
- vs. 22 *And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. . .*

Nehemiah discerned that by the work going on, and merchants appearing, he had a *moral duty* to bring it to the peoples' attention to *sanctify the sabbath day*. What do you think would happen if our leaders *made* everyone close up shop and stop their working on the sabbath? For now, it is up to the remnant of His people on *HIS* schedule to sanctify the sabbath *in their personal lives* regardless of what the masses are doing, lest we be destroyed along with them.

Chapter Three

To Keep Or Not To Keep

In spite of the logic behind the sabbath keeping (and mounds of scripture to back it up) several arguments are used to justify setting it aside. One of them is the misunderstanding that, because sacrifices occurred on the sabbath and feast days, when Yahshua came as the *final* sacrifice the keeping of all Holy Days was then regarded as “unnecessary.” But those who argue this should also apply the same to work days as well. Indeed, why have *any days*, there were sacrifices in them all....Numbers 28:3-11. We don't have to throw the baby out with the bath water. So, I've provided a more detailed discussion of the origin of this misunderstanding and its answer in the next chapter.

Perhaps the safest argument is that *now* there is no 'particular' day to be kept holy after Christ. It goes something like this: “He showed those Pharisees that He was Lord of the sabbath, and to spite them, he made it where we only have to observe 'one day in seven,' the day of *our choice* of course. And besides, with the kind of jobs we have 'in these modern times' we can't always dictate which day we want off. And God certainly foreknew this.”

Others, whom I consider to be serious men of God, have justified the “one-day-in-seven” concept by the existence of the International Date Line!^{3/} Grounds for supporting both the 'one-day-in-seven' and 'no-day-above-another' concepts

^{3/} For a full discussion on this matter, see *Digest of the Divine Law* by Howard Rand. Pages 61-62. Available from Destiny Publishers, Merrimac, Massachusetts 01860.

is found in Romans chapter 14:

- vs. 5 *One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.*
- vs. 6 *He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.*

To understand any scripture being used to contradict a well-established law, such as keeping the sabbath holy, we must use the principle found in II Timothy 2:15: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Applying this process of "rightly dividing" in the Romans passage:

First, notice that the sabbath is not mentioned. Furthermore, nothing is written in the entire 14th chapter for anyone to even presume that the sabbath is the "day" being spoken of. Moreover, it was never up to *man* to "esteem" the sabbath above another day. Yahweh commanded it so.

Second, notice that Paul didn't quote Yahweh Himself to say, "Speak ye unto my people and say, verily, I have now made it optional to keep *the* sabbath holy." And yet those who believe that Romans 14 nullifies the Fourth Commandment use it vicariously so. However, every time He commanded *anything* it was done by clearly saying, "thus saith Yahweh," or "Yahweh your God commanded to teach you," saying "ye shall [or] ye shall not." (See Deuteronomy chapters 5 and 6).

Third, placing verses 5 and 6 in context, Paul begins Romans 14 by saying:

vs. 1 *"Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."*

During that time period there was not, and neither is there now, anything "*doubtful*" to "dispute" about the Fourth Commandment to keep the sabbath holy. Indeed, the Ten Commandments are the very foundation of the Kingdom government. Moreover, within the very same period of this admonition Paul himself was gathering with his students *on the sabbath*. (See Acts 13:14- 44; 15:21; 16:13, 17:2; 18:4). So there must be an explanation for what Paul was speaking of.

The key is in verse 6, which says, "he that eateth" and "he that *eateth not*" both do so "*to the Lord*." Some think this is talking about clean and unclean meats, 'he that eateth pork' versus 'he that eateth not pork.' This is probably due to the use of the word "unclean" in verse 14 in the King James Version. However, the word in the Greek text translated "unclean" in verse 14 is not the same word for unclean meats, *akathartos* (Strong's #169). It is here the word *koinos* (Strong's #2839) or *common*, which literally means "shared by all," the root for *koinonia* (fellowship).

And although the text could be comparing those who eat meat and those who only eat "herbs" (*cp.* vs. 2), it seems to be speaking of those who *fast* versus those who *eat* because in verses 5 and 6 Paul begins a new subject: *particular days* during which some "*eateth*" and some "*eateth not*." Either way, the principle is the same: *men* are doing the esteeming.

Fasting days brought controversy on several occasions in the Gospels: "And they said unto him, why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?" Luke 5:33. Certainly it can be presumed from the text that those who fasted often esteemed those days "above" the others, and were

questioning why other people didn't do the same.^{4/}

The Pharisees loved to fast and make sure everyone knew on a particular *day* that they were fasting by the way they appeared. But Yahshua instructed us, "Moreover, when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast . . . but thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." Matthew 6:16-18.

There is only one day which the law required the congregation to fast, the Day of Atonement - tenth day of the seventh month. (Leviticus 16:29-30). Although the disciples of John (*and* the Pharisees) fasted on other days and apparently weren't condemned in so doing as if they were adding to the law, Paul put those and any other "esteemed" days in their proper place in Romans 14 verses 5 and 6.

As you know Yahshua condemned the Pharisees for their "commandments of men" which either added to, or subtracted from, the Law. (See Mark 7:5-13). One such 'commandment' related to the sabbath which most are aware of is the so-called "sabbath day's journey," which limits the

^{4/} In fact, the Jewish Calendar as found in Unger's Bible Dictionary records 23 fasts during the year which are not commanded by Yahweh *anywhere* in the Law! A few of these are: "Fast in memory of the tables of the law broken by Moses;" "Fast for three days if no rain falls;" "Fast on account of worship of golden calf;" "Fast for excesses during Passover;" "Fast because the law was translated into Greek;" and "Fast: no reason assigned." Without exception, these fell within the *regular work week*, i.e. "one *day* above another."

distance to be travelled that day.^{§/} What they are not aware of is that it was never a part of Yahweh's Law given at Mt. Sinai. It was man's addition, like many other Pharisaical works. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." Deuteronomy 4:2.

With this understanding, the verse in Mark 2:28 where the Pharisees claimed Yahshua and his disciples broke the sabbath by plucking and eating grain can be clarified by simply being quoted *in context* with the prior verse 27: "And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." So we see the New Testament does at least once affirm the sabbath: it was *made for man*. Accordingly, "the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" means: man was created first (sixth day of creation), then came the sabbath, of which the Son of man is a supreme *authority* (*kurios*,) of.

If it were true that the sabbath was not required to be kept any longer, He could have easily stated such at that juncture. After all, he is Yahweh's Son, the supreme *authority* on the subject who could set them straight. Certainly he knew what the Father wanted. However, instead of issuing a "thus saith Yahweh, the sabbath is done away with at my coming, (or when Jerusalem is destroyed)" He kept it holy, exposing the false standard of the Pharisees, and showing that it is *lawful* to do good in it, such as healing. (Matthew 12:12). While the Pharisees, adding to the law, thereby actually subtracting from it, held traditions which made them appear righteous while burdening others. (Mark 7:1-13; Cf. Matthew 23:4-7).

^{§/} The origin of the Pharisees' customs regarding the sabbath day follows in Chapter Six.

The meaning of Yahshua's statement that He was "Lord" of the sabbath becomes clear. As the authority, He reminds us that it's okay to eat as well as rest on the sabbath. As long as we're not *harvesting* the grain (laboring), we can walk out in our garden and pluck something to eat. That's no different than picking something off of a plate and eating it. Yahweh didn't make a law against that.

When ancient Israel was delivered from the bondage of Egypt, Yahweh desired for them to enter into His rest. "For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, 'and God did rest the seventh day from all his works.'" Hebrews 4:4. We can be confident that, as our example, this is the kind of rest Yahshua did.

The author of Hebrews concludes that the same "gospel" the ancient Israelites heard was preached also unto *us*. *Ibid* 4:2. But hardening their hearts "they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief." *Ibid* 4:6. So he "swore in His wrath" that they would not enter into His rest. *Ibid* 3:11-19 & 4:3. The Apostle Paul helps us to avoid this by saying "exhort one another daily . . . lest any of you be hardened through deceitfulness of sin." *Ibid* 3:12-13.

With this we can see that we, as Christians, can be deceived by sin. So should we find that we are not even keeping the particular sabbath day we profess to believe in, "let us . . . come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16. Moreover, "let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." *Ibid* 4:11. And let us, at the very least, agree to discover and keep His sabbaths whenever they really may be, that we may truly enter in to *His* rest in *His* appointments.

Chapter Four

Understanding Paul

As you can see from the previous chapter, Paul's words have been misinterpreted (as all scripture can be) to the extent of nullifying Yahweh's law on the sabbath, not to mention others such as the food laws (which we won't detail in this writing). One reason is because of certain *key* words such as "unclean" in Romans 14 being an improper translation, causing teachers to inject something into the text which plainly does not exist. This is easy to do because Paul seems to be speaking out of both sides of his mouth at times.

For instance, in Galatians 5:4 he states: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." But then in Romans 2:13 he states, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Many of these are easily cleared up with the understanding that he is speaking of *different kinds of law*. Mostly, that which is of the *sacrificial* versus that which is of the *moral*. Obviously, no one is 'justified' by the sacrificial ordinance now that Christ has come. But to those who "do his commandments," he gives the "right to the tree of life" and permission to "enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14.

Although not everyone who has misinterpreted Paul's writings has done it with deliberate intent to contradict Yahweh, those who are teachers (Greek = *masters*) will have little excuse for misleading the flock. Perhaps they might find mercy due to confusion from the scribal mistranslations. Deliberate misleading, on the other hand, is one reason why the *Scribes* were lumped into the same "woes" as the Pharisees.

(See Matthew 23). The prophet declares in Jeremiah 8:

vs. 8 *How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the false pen of the scribes worketh for falsehood. (Marginal rendering - K.J.V.).*

Because of what appears to be great contradictions on the law in the *translations* of Paul's writings, some claim that Paul actually *perverted* the law, and his writings should not be in the New Testament collection. Although we understand these 'Paul Bashers,' we would like to appeal to both them *and* those who think he properly set forth a change in the law.

To begin understanding Paul, much of the New Testament writings are set in the context of Yahweh's reconciliation with the people of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and the controversy sparked by the remnant of the House of Judah surrounding that event. (See Luke 2:25; Acts 13:23-27; Acts 26:6, 7). As many of you know, Israel was "married" to Yahweh. (Jeremiah 3:14). Israel was divided into two kingdoms in Solomon's son, Rehoboam's day. (I Kings chapter 11). The Northern House of Israel was given a bill of divorcement because of her adulteries (Jeremiah 3:6-8) and sent into captivity. (II Kings 18:11-12; also Isaiah 50:1). And Yahweh said to them "ye are not my people, and I will not be your God." Hosea 1:9. The law regarding divorce was then activated as found in Deuteronomy 24:

vs. 1 *When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.*

- vs. 2 *And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.*
- vs. 3 *And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife;*
- vs. 4 *Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.*

Paul explains how this applies to the divorced Northern Kingdom of Israel, speaking to them - his *brethren* in Romans chapter 7:

- vs. 1 *Know ye not brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? (emphasis added).*
- vs. 2 *For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.*
- vs. 3 *So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she is called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.*
- vs. 4 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto death.*

Paul did not repeat the part in the law stating that the woman given a *bill of divorcement* was allowed to marry again. But he clearly showed the principle of one who had gone and

married another *prior to* a bill of divorcement and was not released from the law until her first husband dies: the *adulterous* woman. In Israel's case she had done just that: *married* other gods prior to the divorce. Then when He finally divorced her, she could not return to Yahweh - *even if she divorced them also*. (See Deut. 24:4 above. And See Ezekiel 37:11: "*Our hope is lost: we are cut off . . .*"). This is why Yahshua died: to release Israel (his bride) from the law - *so she could marry another* - this time Immanuel or *God with us*, i.e. Christ after He was raised from the dead. For this reason we look forward to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Revelation 19:9. This, in my opinion, is the meaning of the Gospel.

Another passage showing reversal of the judgment Israel was under is found in Galatians 4:

- vs. 4 *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,*
 vs. 5 *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (emph. added).*

Even though Paul here doesn't use the *marriage* analogy (male and female) he nonetheless shows the need to redeem His people from being "under the law," which we now know to be the law of divorce in Deuteronomy 24.

The reality of the redemption was so powerful that it created this great controversy between the remnant of Judah and those "gentilized" Israelites who were accepting Yahshua as their redeemer. Paul faces this in Colossians 2:

- vs. 8 *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. . . .*
 vs. 11 *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins*