

Keeping the Sabbath Day



The Sabbath day was institute by Elohim (God) in the very week of Creation! He worked six days to create the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, and then He named the seventh day a day of rest, and set the example for us by resting Himself. Sabbath is an integral part of the creation story, a day of rest that was set apart for us!

And in the seventh day Elohim completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. Genesis 2:2.

“Work is done for six days, but on the seventh day it shall be set apart to you, a Sabbath of rest to Yahuah. Anyone doing work on it is put to death.” Exodus 35:2. This verse shows the importance of keeping Sabbath, we are to keep the seventh day of the week set apart to worship Yahuah and rest!

The Sabbath has truly been a soothing balm in my life as a young mother! It was one of the first commandments I followed after coming to Torah, and it has made such a change in my family’s life; the choice to take a Sabbath rest each week has brought true shalom (peace) to our lives.

I am the keeper of my home, I homeschool, run a small homestead, blog and am writing a book. I also try to be a good helpmeet for my husband. While all of this is literally the exact life I want to lead, it can be, and very often is, physically, emotionally and spiritually draining. A day of true rest every week sustains me and gives me the strength I need to thrive for the rest of the week. The Sabbath has allowed me to enjoy this season of my life so much more that I could have working myself to the point of burnout each week! The Sabbath was created to meet this need in every one of us.

The fourth commandment given to Moshe (Moses), is the only commandment in which we are told to “remember”. *Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart.* Exodus 20:8. This commandment is not just a suggestion, and also not “just for the Jews”, it is an instruction to take an actual, physical day of rest every week, for our well-being! It is just as important as the other nine commandments, such as “do not murder”.

The Sabbath is much more than just a legal requirement, but it is a gift from Yahuah to His people.

And Yahuah spoke to Moshe, saying, “Speak to the children of Yashar’el, and say to them, ‘The appointed times of Yahuah, which you are to proclaim at set-apart gatherings, My appointed times are these: Six days work is done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a set apart gathering. You do no work, it is a Sabbath to Yahuah in all your dwellings.’” Leviticus 23:1-3. The word for “appointed times” here is “mo’ed” in the Hebrew, and it is the same word that appears for the Sabbath in Genesis. We can therefore clearly see that the Sabbath was appointed in the week of Creation, and Yahuah tells Moshe to remind His people of the Sabbath time and again!

Humans need a day of rest to reset our bodies and minds, in order to function properly. We cannot possibly thrive if we never take time to rest. Resting for one day each week helps to calm our nervous systems after six days of busyness, and gives our tired bodies a break from physical work while giving our minds a chance to relax while focusing on Yahuah and His Word.

Yahuah uses the Sabbath to remind us of our limitations. We are not robots, capable of constant work. That can and will cause us to burnout and become sick! Yahuah did not rest because He needed to, He rested because He knew WE would need to! The Sabbath is a time to keep our minds on the Creator who is limitless.

The Sabbath is a time to focus on Yahuah and what He has done for us, and to do this we need to take our focus off of our busyness and worldly enjoyments or worries, it is a time to realign ourselves with Yahuah and His Word.

While we are told by so many in the church that keeping the Sabbath day is being “under the Law”, bondage, burden and a curse, I have found the opposite! While it can be difficult to keep the Sabbath in modern times, doing so has been a great blessing to my family! I would hardly call a day of rest from work and chores, spent resting with my precious family and learning Scripture, a burden!

“And you shall guard the Sabbath, for it is set apart to you. Everyone who profanes it shall certainly be put to death, for anyone who does work on it, that being shall be cut off from among his people. Six days work is done, on the seventh is a Sabbath of rest, set apart to Yahuah. Everyone doing work on the Sabbath day shall certainly be put to death. And the children of Yashar’el shall guard the Sabbath, to perform the Sabbath throughout their generations as an everlasting covenant. Between Me and the children of Yashar’el it is a sign forever. For in six days Yahuah made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.” Exodus 31:14-17. (Emphasis mine.) It was, and still is, a sign of the covenant between Yahuah and His people. Keeping the Sabbath sets believers apart from the rest of the world when we set it apart from the rest of the week.

So there remains a Sabbath-keeping for the people of Elohim. Hebrews 4:9. This verse from the New Testament makes it clear that we are to keep the Sabbath, even in our time! Yahusha never “did away” with this commandment! And humanity’s need for rest didn’t magically disappear at any point in history.

It looks as if there is a large-scale attack on the idea of keeping Sabbath. All over the world, businesses and stores are open seven days a week, people are expected to work every day, or else to be able to join in on sporting activities or parties during the weekends. It is not unusual to see people bringing work home on weekends, or catching up on chores and yardwork on the days they aren’t working. Owners of small businesses feel pressed to stay open all week in order to stay afloat. And even churches and Torah fellowships have stores or online shops open on Sabbath, many of them teaching that the Sabbath is unnecessary and a burden to believers!

“Also the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to Yahuah, to serve Him, and to love the Name of Yahuah, to be His servants, all who guard the Sabbath, and not profane it, and are holding onto My covenant – them I shall bring to My set apart mountain, and let them rejoice in My house of prayer. Their ascending offerings and their slaughterings are accepted on My slaughter-place, for My house is called a house of prayer for all the peoples.” Isaiah 56:6-7. Even if we are not “Jews”, or blood descendants of Yashar’el, we are expected to keep Sabbath! Yahuah expects every person who loves Him and honours Him to keep the Sabbath day holy, regardless of family traditions or blood relations.

The Messiah and the Sabbath.

Yahusha kept the Sabbath, as did his apostles and the early ecclesia (church)! But in today’s church we are told that “Jesus” broke the Sabbath as an example for us. Let us examine some New Testament passages to see what really happened.

At that time Yahusha went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. And His taught ones were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain, to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, “Look, Your taught ones are doing what is not right to do on the Sabbath!” But He said to them, “Have you not read what Dawid did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he went into the House of Elohim and ate the showbread which was not right for him to eat, not for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or did you not read in the Torah that on the Sabbath the priests in the Set-apart Place profane the Sabbath and are blameless? But I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the Set-apart Place. And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire compassion and not offering,’ you would not have condemned the blameless. For the Son of Adam is Master of the Sabbath.” Matthew 12:1-8. Yahusha is the Master (Lord) of the Sabbath!

And having left there, He went into their congregation. And see, there was a man having a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, “Is it right to heal on the Sabbath?” – so as to accuse Him. And He said to them, “What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, shall not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more worth is a man than a sheep! So it is right to do good on the Sabbath.” Matthew 12:9-12. Then Yahusha went on to heal and restore the man’s hand! This story is repeated in Mark 3. The Messiah knew that the Pharisees had traditional “law” that made the Sabbath day even stricter than the Torah did, thereby adding to the Law of Yahuah – a great sin! Yahusha made it clear that doing good and helping others was not against the Sabbath!

And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” Mark 2:27 Yahuah created the Sabbath for His people, not for His

own benefit. Yahusha taught that the Sabbath was a gift from His Father to all of mankind.

Yahusha taught on the Sabbath! *And He came down to Kephrah Nahum, a city of Galil, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths.* Luke 4:31. Our Messiah showed us that worshipping Yahuah and learning Scripture on Shabbat is important.

The one who says he stays in Him ought himself also to walk, even as He walked. 1 John 2:6. Yahusha cared greatly about His Father's Shabbat! Therefore, we need to follow His example in our lives, respecting the Sabbath and keeping it holy and set apart to Yahuah!

It is sad to see that most believers don't even know they should be keeping a physical Sabbath day! And I will admit that this was me a few short years ago. Many in the church are told that "Jesus is our rest." And while that may be true, the Messiah also told us that He is our bread and wine, but He never meant that we should never eat and drink in the physical, just as He never meant that we should never physically rest from our work.

What shouldn't we do on the Sabbath day?

"But the house of Yashar'el rebelled against Me in the wilderness. They did not walk in My laws, and they rejected My right-rulings, which, if a man does, he shall live by them. And they greatly profaned My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out my wrath on them in the wilderness, to consume them." Ezekiel 20:13. Yahuah is angered when His people don't keep the Sabbath! Let's take a look at what the Bible says we shouldn't do on Sabbath:

"If you do not turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My set apart day, and shall call the Sabbath 'a delight,' the set apart day of Yahuah 'esteemed,' and shall esteem it, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in Yahuah. And I shall cause you to ride on the heights of the earth, and feed you with the inheritance of Ya'acob your father. For the mouth of Yahuah has spoken!" Isaiah 58:13-14. While keeping the Sabbath day, we are not supposed to spend the day doing whatever we feel like, but we should rather focus on Yahuah and the Scriptures, learning the Word and teaching it to our children.

"Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart. Six days you labour, and shall do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of Yahuah your Elohim. You do not do any work – you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates." Exodus 20:10. We should not cause anyone else to violate the Sabbath.

In those days I saw in Yehudah those treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, and figs, and

all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Yerushalayim on the Sabbath day. So I warned them on the day they sold food. And men of Tsor dwelt there, bringing in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold them on the Sabbath to the children of Yehudah, and in Yerushalayim. Then I contended with the nobles of Yehudah, and said to them, "What evil matter is this that you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers do the same so that our Elohim brought all this evil on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Yashar'el by profaning the Sabbath." And it came to be, when the gates of Yerushalayim were shaded before the Sabbath, that I commanded the doors to be shut, and commanded that they shall not be opened till after the Sabbath. And I stationed some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day. And the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares spent the night outside Yerushalayim once or twice, and I warned them, and said to them, "Why do you spend the night around the wall? If you do so again, I lay hands on you!" From that time on they came no more on the Sabbath. And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and they should come, guarding the gates, to set apart the Sabbath day. Remember me, O my Elohim, concerning this also, and pardon me according to the greatness of Your loving-commitment! Nehemiah 13:15-22. This passage makes it clear that buying, selling and trading profanes that Sabbath day. Shopping should be kept to the six working days of the week!

"Do not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day." Exodus 35:3. Don't start a fire, get wood prepared the day before, and get fire going before Sabbath begins.

Thus said Yahuah, "Guard yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Yerushalayim, nor take a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, nor do any work. And you shall set apart the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers." Jeremiah 17:22.

The Sabbath is a day of rest and relaxation, so we shouldn't do any of the work we do during the week, such as working at your job, overtime, chores, gardening, shopping or strenuous labour, like collecting and chopping wood or heavy exercise and gymming, or travelling long distances.

What can we do on the Sabbath day?

And he said to them, "This is what Yahuah has said, 'Tomorrow is a rest, a Sabbath set apart to Yahuah.' That which you bake, bake; and that which you cook, cook. And lay up for yourselves all that is left over, to keep it until morning.'" Exodus 16:23.

Use the day before Sabbath as a preparation day to make sure your home is tidy and comfortable, stock up on anything you need from the store and

prepare your heart and mind for the coming Sabbath. Put off anything non-essential for the first day of the week. On preparation day, we can prepare delicious meals for Sabbath decorate with beautiful flowers in vases.

You can enjoy a family evening the night before, a nice meal, a Scripture reading and perhaps a movie together. Take a relaxing walk, have a picnic, study Scripture, pray, praise and worship music, blow shofars, spend time as a family, meet up with a local fellowship, show kindness to people in need, make something creative like painting Bible verses, relax in nature, “Oh, taste and see that Yahuah is good!” (Psalm 34:8). We can diffuse essential oils like frankincense, myrrh, orange and spikenard. And we can even tune in to the live Shabbat discussion on The Unexpected Cosmology’s Discord server.

“And the people of the land shall also bow themselves at the entrance to this gate before Yahuah, on the Sabbaths and on the new moons.” Ezekiel 46:3. We should worship Him on Sabbath, with praise and prayer, with thanksgiving and song and blowing the shofar.

Being involved in ministry as long as it is driven by helping others, fellowshiping and completely focused on Yahuah and Scripture. Our Sabbath ministry should not be self-centered, and not focused on self-sufficiency, it should rather point us to Yahuah, the Ruach and Yahusha as our spiritual place of rest and our sole source of provisions, protection and blessings. Sabbath should always remind us of our dependence on Yahuah!

I find it necessary to remind myself to keep a humble spirit on Sabbath, and do my best to be patient and act in love towards my family, others we may meet, and towards anything unexpected that may happen. This is especially important in my season of life, with young children, pets and a running homestead – there will always be messes made, or little accidents to sort out, but if I keep myself humble and my mind on Yahuah, it is easier to do what needs to do and get back to a place of rest.

The most important thing is to remain humble and teachable, earnestly seeking Yahuah’s truth, and allowing Him to teach us more about Himself and His Sabbath

“Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who becomes strong in it, guarding the Sabbath lest he profane it, and guarding his hand from any evil.” Isaiah 56:2. The day should be spent slowly and intentionally, without distractions, truly resting and enjoying the day that Yahuah has given us to recover from the busyness of life. It is a delight and a blessing to keep the Sabbath!

What about Sunday Sabbath?

The idea of a “Sunday Sabbath,” or Sabbath on the first day of the week instead of the seventh, was instituted by man (namely the Roman Catholic Church in its early days) rather than the by the Father. The change was not mentioned anywhere in Scripture, not even in the New Testament, and wasn’t kept by Yahusha, the apostles or early ecclesia before the time of the Council of Nicaea and advent of the RCC in the early 4th century.

The “lord” of Sunday Sabbath is also questionable, as the lord of the sun, or sun god, was worshipped by the Romans, who carried many of their pagan beliefs over when “Christianity” was adopted on a wide scale in the nation of Rome.

Recipes and ideas to make on your preparation day:



I love to cook and bake in preparation for Sabbath! Some of our favourites are cinnamon buns, sourdough English muffins, Challah bread, salads such as carrot, potato or Greek salads, and a delicious soup or curry to enjoy on the eve of Shabbat and warmed up if necessary the next day.

Sourdough English Muffins:

On the morning of Prep day mix

- 4 cups of flour
- 1 cup sourdough starter
- 2 cups of water
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp. raw honey

Allow the mixture to rest, covered, in a warm area. Then cook slowly in a skillet, making each muffin roughly the size of a burger bun. These are great to make sandwiches in, or dipped in soup!

Cinnamon Buns:

- 1 cup sourdough starter
- ½ cup warm milk
- ½ cup yoghurt or milk kefir
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- Pinch of salt

Combine to make a sticky dough and allow it to rise for at least 2 hours, or overnight.

Knead it with minimal flour and roll out on a floured surface. Sprinkle on cinnamon and sugar (I like to use brown sugar or coconut sugar). Cocoa powder is an excellent choice too! Roll it into a tight spiral and slice through with a sharp knife to form individual buns. Bake in a preheated oven, at 375F until golden brown. Remove from oven, allow to cool and then add your favourite frosting (mine is honey buttercream!)

Easy Challah bread:

- 4.5 tsp active dry yeast
- 2 ½ cups warm water
- 2 tbsp. sugar or honey
- 2 tsp salt
- 1/3 cup coconut oil, olive oil or butter
- 3 eggs plus the white of one egg for the glaze
- 6 ½ - 8 ½ cups of flour, add the extra slowly until dough is slightly sticky

Glaze:

- 1 egg white
- 1 tsp cold water

1. Dissolve the yeast in warm water and allow the yeast to proof (bubble).
2. Add sugar, salt, eggs and flour in with yeast mixture and mix until slightly sticky.
3. Cover and allow the dough to rise in a warm place until doubled in size.
4. Divide the dough in half, and then divide each half into 3 pieces.
5. Roll each piece into a rope and braid the 3 ropes together on a greased baking tray. (You will have 2 braided loaves).
6. Allow the loaves to rise for another 30-60 minutes.
7. Brush the loaves with the glaze, sprinkle with sesame seeds, poppy seeds or sea salt if desired.
8. Bake at 350F or 180C for 20-25 minutes, or until the bread is golden brown.

Note: I am working on a sourdough challah recipe, I will update this article once I have perfected it.

Sausage and Sauerkraut Soup:

A definite family favourite, made with beef sausage!

1. Dice 1 large onion, 1 large carrot and 2 garlic cloves and sauté in butter.
2. Dice 3 white potatoes and add to the pot with the above.
3. Add 3 tbsp. tomato paste, 5 cups of beef or chicken broth, 1/3 cup of pearl barley, ¼ cup lentils and salt and pepper to taste. I also like to add 1 tsp each of ground cumin, coriander and turmeric, but this is optional.
4. Simmer this mixture in a large saucepan.
5. While the soup is cooking, sauté 1lb of Biblically clean beef or chicken sausage in butter in a skillet until nicely browned, then cut up the sausage into slices and add the sausage and cooked juices into the soup.
6. Cook the soup until everything is cooked through, and take off the heat.
7. Add 8oz of sauerkraut and mix through.
8. Enjoy with a slice of buttered challah or an English muffin!