
Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it Holy!

"REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY." (Exodus 20:8)

This is the 4th of the ten commandments that God gave unto Israel at Mount Sinai in the wilderness in the days of Moses.

In these last days there is much confusion in the churches about the keeping of the sabbath day, even though the whole subject is clearly set forth in the scriptures...

First of all, let me pose to you, the reader, two questions. According to the Bible...

1). Can we be saved by keeping the law?

Obviously not.(Romans 3:20-26, Galatians 3:11-14, etc...)

2). Can we be saved without keeping the law?

Certainly not! (Matthew 5:20, Revelation 22:14, etc...)

The law of God is written in the heart, or conscience, of every man and woman, and we are without excuse for not keeping it (Romans 2:14,15).

But there is verily a difference between the Old and New Testaments, as far as how the people of God serve him.

So, what about the sabbath day?

Well, first of all, the sabbath day spoken of in the 4th commandment is the 7th day of the week, according to the scripture.(Genesis 2:2,3, Exodus 16:25-30, Deuteronomy 5:12-14)

The 7th day of the week is that which we call by the Roman calendar "Saturday" (from the name of the mythical Roman deity Saturn). This is the sabbath day that God commanded his people Israel to keep holy (set apart) unto him by not doing any work therein.

This did not mean that they were not to water their animals (Luke 13:15) or show kindness to help their neighbor (Luke 14:5), as God showed them when he came to them in the flesh. But it meant that they were to take the 7th day and sanctify it unto the LORD their God, and refrain from their labours for personal gain, and stop worrying about making a living, or acquiring the necessities of this life, and just rest and trust in God, and worship and thank him for his provision.

He proved that to them with the manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16), when during the week, if the people saved the manna until the morning, it bred worms and stank (v. 20), but on the eve of the sabbath (rest) day, they were told to gather enough for two days, and to rest on the sabbath; and when they did, the manna did not stink, neither was there any worm therein (v. 24). In this God was showing them that they could stop the affairs of this life to sanctify a whole day unto him, and he was able in turn to give them all that they thought to have lacked by not

working. That was largely the purpose behind God giving Israel the 7th day sabbath. Jesus showed that clearly when he came to his people Israel; for he came, not to destroy the law and the prophets, but rather to magnify the law and fulfill it (Matthew 5:17, Isaiah 42:21).

We know that, although the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are called the New Testament [because they tell the story of all that Jesus did to establish his new covenant to Israel, as he said he would in Jeremiah 31:33], the New Testament did not actually begin until Jesus Christ was GLORIFIED (John 7:39, 12:16, 16:7); which came to pass on the day of the feast of Pentecost, the year 33 A.D., exactly 50 days after our Lord Jesus Christ was risen from the dead.

So, during the time chronicled by the writers of the four gospels, the people of Israel, and in fact the world, were under the dispensation of the law, and Jesus, the sinless Son of God, did not violate it, but came to illustrate it, demonstrate it, and magnify it.

And so he did.

But then came the New Testament, when Jesus accomplished his death, burial, and resurrection, was glorified, and poured out his Spirit so he could walk in his people; and his holy apostles (whom he had chosen) made known to us in their epistles to the churches that the ordinances of the law were "a shadow of good things to come" (Hebrews 10:1, Colossians 2:17), and that the keeping of them could never "make the comers thereunto perfect". Furthermore they declared that no man is justified before God by the works of the law (Romans 3:20-26, Galatians 3:11-14).

So then, wherefore serveth the law (Galatians 3:19)?

The Bible has very much to say about the law and its purpose. (See Romans, Ephesians, Galatians, Colossians, Hebrews...) But to make the matter very simple, the law of the Old Testament can rightly be divided into 3 distinct categories:

- 1) Moral law [that which declares what is right and wrong behaviour toward God or other men]
- 2) Judicial law [that which dictates the penalty for violating the moral law]
- 3) Ceremonial law [that which mandates ordinances and rituals performed only under the Mosaic law, as a shadow, or type, of greater things which were to come in the future]

We can know of a surety that the sabbaths, as they were observed under the Old Testament law of Moses, were part of the Ceremonial law, a shadow of that which was to come, because the apostles of Jesus Christ declared it to be so after his resurrection.

(Colossians 2:16,17, Hebrew 8:4-6)

So, the scripture makes clear that the 7th day sabbath of the Old Testament is NOT to be observed after the same manner by the New Testament Church of Jesus Christ. The writer of Hebrews spent the entire 3rd and 4th chapters of that letter explaining that the 7th day sabbath was given to illustrate the true rest of God which we "enter into" [a day of the week cannot be entered into...] by faith when we become born of water and of the Spirit by obedience to the

New Testament gospel preached by the apostles, and continue in the faith of Jesus Christ and his resurrection until the end of our mortal lives.

Is the law perished?
God forbid!

We Christians must remember that we are but a parenthesis in the realm of time, and that God is still the God of Israel; and he is not finished with them yet.

God will yet deal with his chosen people. In the third day he will raise them up--Hosea 6:2 (for those of you who know what time it is, you know that this is the night season of that second day, and the dawn of the third day, the day of the LORD, is nigh...).

He will bring Israel into the wilderness, as in the days of old (Hosea 2:14), and bring forth a holy remnant of them through great tribulation (Jeremiah 30:7, Ezekiel 14:21-23). And he will give them a new heart, and they will serve him according to the law of Moses, and they will be pleasing to him as they were supposed to be all along (Ezekiel 11:19,20, 36:22-28, Psalm 51:18), but never could be, not having the heart of their God within them.

In the days when God will deal with his people Israel, they will be keeping the law of Moses, including the sabbath days (Matthew 24, 20,21).

The Old Testament sabbath is part of the Ceremonial law, and is NOT to be imposed on the New Testament Christian; but it has not passed away...it is for the Jews, and as the scripture says,"blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in..." (Romans 11:25)...so as they were to keep the sabbaths in the Old Testament time, so they will keep it again (with a new heart) in the 7th day, the "Day of the LORD" (See Zechariah 14). That is why the sabbath day ordinance seems to be on both sides (timewise) of the New Testament Church, but yet remains a "shadow of things to come", and a part of the law which is "slain by the cross of Christ" (Ephesians 2:15,16), so that it is not kept by the New Testament Church after the manner of Moses, but rather in the Spirit by entering into his rest.

ROMANS 14:1-12

This is a very important message from the apostle Paul, and must be understood and obeyed. It is really very simple. "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." (v. 5)

First of all, this is referring to days that under the law were considered holy to the LORD God of Israel; NOT the pagan festivals invented by the whore of Babylon, like Christ Mass, Easter, Hallowe'en, etc...

Now Paul is telling us in this passage that if a brother who is weak in the faith--v.1--(NOT one who is not in the faith of Christ, or the apostles' doctrine: like a trinitarian, or adherent of any other catholic or protestant denomination, but one who is IN THE FAITH, but yet weak [not yet very learned]), feels that he shouldn't eat certain meats, or that he should observe certain days (sabbaths), that this brother should not be discouraged from doing so; because in so doing we would wound his weak conscience, and cause him to stumble. The reason for this is simply that, if one believes that something is forbidden him (even though it may not be), and he does it

anyway, he is violating his conscience, and doing something he believes to be wrong. Therefore to him it is sin. And God will reckon it so, because he is willfully doing something he thinks is wrong. God forbid I should ever cause my brother or my sister to sin against him!

So---if you are yet young in the faith, and feel in your heart that you should not work on the 7th day of the week, then you are free to exercise that belief.

The place where I necessarily must draw the line as a Christian, and a teacher ordained of God, is when you begin to impose that ordinance on others, and tell them that they must keep the 7th day sabbath after the manner of Moses in order to please God and be saved. That is error, and a most pernicious one!

You may keep the sabbath day if you like, and God will show you as you grow in him that you no longer need to (see the declaration of the apostles in the Acts, Chapter 15:22-29); but do NOT teach others that they are compelled by God to keep it, because we are simply not.

Millions are subverted and deceived by the denominations which teach that the 7th day sabbath must be observed in order to be saved, and that those who congregate on the 1st day of the week have thusly taken the "mark of the beast", and are going to hell.

Which brings us to another very important point...

There are multitudes who argue (just like the Pharisees and the Sadducees) about which day is the true sabbath day. There are those who say that the "New Testament sabbath" is on Sunday, and there are those who argue that it is on Saturday. That is just like a couple of 5-year-olds arguing about whose daddy can beat up the other. Neither one of them has a clue as to what they are talking about.

The New Testament of the Holy Bible (KJV) declares that the first day of the week (which the Romans call Sunday), is the "Lord's day", and that is the day of the week when the church of God traditionally met together, because it is the day of the week when the Lord Jesus was risen from the dead.

(Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 16:2)

The first day of the week is NOT the sabbath day; and the people in the churches need to stop telling people that, because even those who do not go to a church know that just doesn't make any sense. So many in the churches are sending a message of confusion to the lost in this world because they are just not searching the scriptures, and they are doing as Job did, who confessed, "...therefore have I uttered that I understood not..." (Job 42:3).

[These are the same people who try to convince sinners that God is three persons, or that from the catholic "Good Friday" to "Easter Sunday" is three days, or that all they have to do to be saved is to "accept Jesus into their hearts".]

They are deceiving and being deceived, and spreading their confusion to a lost and dying world because they know not the truth.

Here are the facts, church of God:

1) The Old Testament sabbath day is the 7th day of the week, Saturday.

2) The 1st day of the week is NOT, nor has it ever been, the sabbath day.

3) From the time of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, until the time of his return, the sabbath for his church is NOT A DAY OF THE WEEK: it is the REST we enter into by obeying the gospel and living by faith in God until we get to the kingdom of heaven.

4) We must not judge a brother or a sister who is weak in the faith, if they feel the need to observe the sabbath days or abstain from meats; neither should we flaunt our freedom before them to wound their conscience; rather we should speak the truth to them in love, pray for them, and let God show them the revelation of the liberty we have in Christ from the bondage of the law.

5) Any person who asserts that Christians must keep the 7th day sabbath after the manner of the law of Moses is a LIAR and a FALSE TEACHER; and even as Paul the apostle said of the false brethren who crept in among the Galatians, to subvert their souls by bringing them back under the law through the ordinance of circumcision,

"For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.",

...so these deceivers who would bring disciples back into bondage under the law neither keep it themselves, but desire to glory in your flesh [that is, they want to glory in how many people they can get into their following, so they can boast of how big their churches are!].

Friends, I don't care how big your church is---if you are not teaching and practicing the truth of the word of God, you are on the broad path that leads to DESTRUCTION!

Search the scriptures and see, all throughout, that it was always the multitudes that erred, and always the remnant who entered in.

And so it is today.

Brethren, if you are Christians, then it is your responsibility to know and be able to teach these things to a lost and dying world, and to defend the truth in the face of the gainsayers (that is a Bible word for those who preach false doctrines and contend against the truth). Study to show yourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. That means study the SCRIPTURES, not some man-made theology book!

The Bible says of the theologians and scholars:

"But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept,
precept upon precept, line upon line,
line upon line; here a little, and there a little;
that they might go, and fall backward,
and be broken, and snared, and taken."
(Isaiah 28:13)

But of the true believers Jesus says:

"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Luke 10:21)

It is the desire and prayer of this man of God that you who are reading this, if you are the seed of Jesus Christ, will receive these things well, search the scriptures to see that these things are indeed the truth of the word of God, and be diligent to become established in the doctrine of God our Saviour, so that we as a body may be as soldiers prepared unto the battle, to rescue the prisoners and ward off their captors by the truth, which is the testimony of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

That which he commanded his chosen apostles is commanded to all of us who believe their word as well...

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

(Matthew 28:19,20)

Amen.