Why I Observe the Seventh-day Sabbath

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Dear Bible believer:

Some of my family and I are learning to keep the Biblical Sabbath, which occurs every Friday sundown through Saturday sundown. The transition has, at times, been difficult, and has taken considerable time. Being life-long church people, of our problem has not been in observing the Sabbath, but in just *changing our minds* about it. We have found that our continuing efforts have been immeasurably blessed as we are finding victory.

Sabbath observance has become the greatest witnessing tool we have ever encountered. And Yahweh tells us through the prophet that it is a sign of the identity of the Millennial elect.

I have written down the biblical reasons we have made the commitment to Sabbath observance in hopes that you will be curious enough to investigate some wonderful truths for yourself. Things you will read in this tract will surely change your mind at least to a small degree -- and perhaps even steer your destiny.

Preliminary Notes:

Bible excerpts are from the Revised Standard Version or other as marked.

"Yahweh" is the name of our Father in Heaven. "The LORD," as found in the Bible, is a replacement term for the name Yahweh. Check your Bible translation notes.

"Yahshua" is the name of our Savior, transliterated incorrectly as "Jesus" in the 15th century by some of the early translators. The name "Gee-Zus" (Jesus instead of Yahshua or Joshua) has become common since.

Many believers are earnestly re-learning in order to worship with more authenticity. That is why this essay will use the correct names, Yahweh and Yahshua.

What Does the Bible Say About the Sabbath?

Let's make an assumption to begin the study. Let's assume for the time being that the Law of Yahweh beginning with the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 was not "nailed to the cross" - that the ordinances of the heavenly Father, which he gave to help bring peace to a lawless world, are still in force today. Receive it just for now. Perhaps by the end of the study, you will find that what you *have assumed temporarily for the sake of the study* is really the case.

Sabbath Owned and Commanded

Exodus 20: 8. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 11. For in six days the LORD (that is, Yahweh) made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

The first day of the week is Sunday. Biblical days run according to the moon, not the sun. Biblical days begin at sundown. The Biblical seventh-day Sabbath runs *Friday sundown to Saturday sundown.* The Sabbath observance was *originally* commanded by Yahweh, not by Moses. If Yahweh is your god, then realize that your god commanded ALL his people, Jewish, Israelite and Gentile to observe a 24-hour period from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. Those commanded in love to observe may include YOU. Study on to find out.

Sabbath Observance for Israel Emphasized

Exodus 31:12. And Yahweh said to Moses, 13. "Say to the people of Israel, 'You shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, Yahweh, sanctify you. 14. You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you; every one who profanes it shall be put to death; whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 15. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to Yahweh."

The Sabbath is an unmistakable, distinguishing sign of the people belonging to and set-apart by our Heavenly Father. Observance is so important that there is a ban, and even an ultimate penalty of death, imposed on those who will not observe it.

Why?

So that the world may have a *witness to the Creator* and a *sign of his presence* in the *practice of his people.* This passage also maintains that Sabbath observance consists in

(a) not working as a rest and an observance and
(b) keeping the time set apart unto Yahweh, the Sustainer of the Patriarchs and our Father.

Notice that it is Yahweh, your god, which speaks these words, not Moses.

Sabbath Observance also for those not born as Jews

Isaiah 56: 6. "And the foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh, to minister to him, to love his name, and to be his servants, every one who keeps the Sabbath, and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant -- 7. these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. 8. I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered."

Most Christians maintain that Sabbath observance is only obligatory for Jews under the Mosaic Covenant and of no effect for non-Jews. But this passage from the prophets speaks of "foreigners" (non-Israelites) joining themselves to Yahweh. Moreover, "others" (non-Israelites) *have been gathered.* His House of Prayer will be *for all who will come into his covenant*, not just Jews; and his servants will be known *because they keep the Sabbath* as a sign of his possession. Burnt offerings were put off by

Yahshua (Jesus) when he became to be the last sacrifice then destroyed the place of sacrifice, i.e. the Temple, soon after. But the Sabbath has never been eliminated, as we will very clearly see.

Yahshua (Jesus) Kept the Sabbath, every Sabbath, on the seventh day

Luke 4:16. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.

Indeed, Yahshua your Savior observed ***every* seventh-day** Sabbath – this was his habit, his law, and his domain. He took *a rabbinical part* in worship. After all, Yahshua was not only a Rabbi, but a *Raboni*, a master Rabbi - this means that he was a *master teacher of Israel.* (Rabbi literally means "my great one.") Since his followers knew him as a master teacher, a Raboni, wouldn't he teach that which he diligently observed, and wouldn't he observe that which he diligently taught? If he is the same yesterday, today and forever, doesn't he still teach the two-fold observance of the seventh-day Sabbath? Wouldn't he teach Sabbath since his Father told him (and us) that observing it is *the everlasting covenant sign* of his people?

Of course he would.

Yahshua the Sabbath Master

Mark 2:27. And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: 28. so that the Son of man is LORD (master) even of the Sabbath.

Your Savior said that the Sabbath *came to be* for the sake of humanity. It was "MADE FOR MAN." This passage is always interpreted as having Yahshua say,

"The Sabbath is not important."

But as LORD of the Sabbath, he meant to show friends and enemies alike the proper observance of his Sabbath. All his life, Yahshua did two things on the Sabbath:

(a) he rested from his labors (sometimes in a deserted place), and

(b) he attended or ministered a holy convocation.

He commented that it was right to *do good* on the Sabbath and he demonstrated exactly what "good" consists of – observance and good works.

Yahshua's Supporters kept the Sabbath as Commanded

Luke 23:55. And the women, who had come with him out of Galilee, followed after, and beheld the tomb, and how his body was laid. 56. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. *And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.*

Your Savior kept the seventh-day Sabbath all his life and taught his friends to do the same. Here is an instance in which, even under the *tremendous stress of the death of a family-head*, those who followed Yahshua (his *servants*) *rested* according to the commandment: ***Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy***: the fourth of ten commandments.

Paul Kept the Sabbath

Acts 17:1. Now when they … came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue: 2. and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures.

Paul is often misrepresented as writing that the Commandments, including the fourth, "were nailed to the cross." If Yahshua nailed the Sabbath and the other nine commandments to cross (or if he was nailed to the cross as representative of the commandments), why is Paul continuing the "custom" of seventh-day Sabbath observance? ***And why does he say he hastens to Jerusalem to keep the feast?***

This is one of many, many instances in Scripture that is *purposefully recorded through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to show* that these early evangelists kept the commandments of Yahweh, particularly the Sabbath. They did so because they knew that the Savior taught them

(a) to keep "every word that comes from the mouth of Yahweh," and that

(b) the Sabbath was the sign to an unbelieving world of their union with Father Yahweh.

The Sabbath is Observed in the Millennium

Isaiah 66:22. "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, says Yahweh; so shall your descendants and your name remain. 23. From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, *all flesh* shall come to worship before me.

When? If Father Yahweh and Yahshua his son annulled seventh-day Sabbath observance for the so-called "Church Age," then why do we herein find seventh-day Sabbath observance instituted *in the Millennium rule* of Yahshua? All flesh will not only keep the Sabbath but also the prescribed feasts of Yahweh ("new moons," meaning the biblical calendar). For me, this was the most convincing passage of all: if Yahshua were indeed raising up a people for his name and for his Kingdom on earth, shouldn't Kingdom members (perhaps even you and I) begin *living as though we were in the Millennial Kingdom?* Indeed, we are in the Kingdom! A Kingdom has laws, and among the laws of the Millennial Kingdom will remain the ordered worship of Yahweh and the keeping of Yahweh's Sabbath.

Feast of Tabernacles Also Observed in the Millennium

Zechariah 14:16. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Yahweh Sabaoth (that is, the LORD of Hosts), and to keep the feast of tabernacles. 17. And it shall be, that whoso of all the families of the earth go not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Yahweh Sabaoth, upon them *there shall be no rain.*

This tells us that in the Millennial Reign, *all the yet-existing nations of the world* will be required to send dignitaries to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The judgment upon the nations that do not send emissaries is clear – **drought** – no rain.

If this is so in the Millennium, shouldn't we be keeping the **Feast of Tabernacles** and the **seventh-day Sabbath** now? Don't you think that when Yahshua's return is made public, he will commend those who are already observing Kingdom living? It is so clear in this inspired word that observance

is required! Yes, it is required even now. If the seventh thousand-year period is the Millennium of the Messiah, then he must be making his public appearance soon. Time has run out. (Fully six thousand years have passed!)

Don't you think that when Yahshua's return is made public, he will demand to know why 'believers' are not keeping the words of his Father, as was his custom and his command?

Yahweh's Sabbath Commandment Remains

Hebrews 4:9. There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of Yahweh. 10. For he that is entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works, as Yahweh did from his. 11. Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, that no man fall after the same example of disobedience.

In fact, Sabbath observance is here plainly prescribed for the people of Yahweh, even in the so-called "Church Age." How much more plainly may the importance of it be expressed? Seventh-day Sabbath observance is a command that is a sign of your Heavenly Father's ownership; it is a joyful blessing; it is a sign and a mark that sets a believer apart from the world. (Did you know the word *holy* means *set-apart?*) Isn't obedience to the Ten Commandments desirable and commanded? And *how can we say that they are written on our hearts* if we so blatantly disregard one or more?

What are the Objections to Christians Keeping the Biblical Sabbath?

Sabbath is for Jews Only

This argument is clearly destroyed in Isaiah 56:6, 66:22 and many other passages from the mouth of Yahweh himself. The seventh-day Sabbath is for "all flesh."

Law Passed Away

Something is passed away through the New Covenant, but not the words of Yahweh. The Son of Yahweh, Yahshua, has said, "Though heaven and earth shall pass away, my words will not." This is all the more true for the Father, whose words Yahshua spoke continually. What has passed away is the sacrificial system, as demonstrated in two historic occurrences:

(a) the resurrection of Yahshua after he was sacrificed, and

(b) the destruction of the only place of sacrifice, the Temple in Jerusalem.

Yahshua was a perfect example of the **law** – and *that is how he fulfilled it.* (That means he kept it completely.) He did not destroy it; therefore his commandments could not have possibly passed away.

The Sabbath was Transferred to Sunday by the Apostles

There is absolutely no scripture to make this claim. The Apostles all, without exception, kept the Sabbath. One time, Paul had a carry-in dinner and took an offering on the first day, but that passage *in no way* infers that he tried to change the seventh-day Sabbath of Yahweh. In fact, one of the marks of Antichrist is that *he will change days and times*.

The Roman Catholic Church boasts of changing the Sabbath to Sunday; and Roman Catholic bishops have boasted that one sign that Protestant churches are "daughters" of the Catholic Church is in that

Protestant Churches have followed along in ditching the Commandments, specifically the fourth. If there is any doubt about this, take a look at Sabbath Confessions at this link.

www.jacksonsnyder.com/arc/2001/Sabbath-Confessions.htm

This boast is not just an ancient one. The current Pope (Benedict, formally the Cardinal Ratzinger) wrote all about this in the name of Pope John Paul II in the directive ***Dominus Iesus***, most of which is found here.

www.jacksonsnyder.com/arc/Indices/Dominus-Iesus-Archive.htm

Paul Preached Against Sabbath-keeping

Two passages from Paul are often quoted as proving that the seventh-day Sabbath is no longer binding. On the contrary, both passage *affirm* rather than *deny* seventh-day Sabbath-keeping. The first:

> Romans 14:4. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? ... 5. One man esteems one day as better than another, while another man esteems all days alike. ... 6. He who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord... (RSV)

This passage *may* or *may not* refer to the Sabbath. Either way, would one statement about secular holidays annul the Ten Commandments? No.

The other passage is:

> Colossians 2:13. And you ... God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14. having canceled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ... 16. Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath. 17. These are a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. (RSV)

"Legal demands" refers to blood atonement -- sacrifice of animals for the remission of sins. This passage is *affirming* Sabbath-keeping rather than denying it. Assuming Paul is writing to the Gentile believers at Colossae -- he is saying that the *legal demands of the sacrificial system for atonement of sin* were nailed to the cross, not the fourth commandment or any other. Yahshua died as the last sacrifice; but by his own word, his death was never intended to destroy the Torah (ordinance) of the Heavenly Father, but fulfill it in all points. Although sacrificing animals is distasteful and forbidden by Yahweh, righteous living and commandment-keeping is not.

Indeed, these Gentile (or Jewish) converts were living righteously *counter to their culture* by following the commandments and hailing Yahshua as Sovereign. That's why *unbelievers* (the majority) *were passing judgment* on these new believers -- because they were keeping the seventh-day Sabbath and the sacred calendar of Yahweh. Paul is admonishing them to *continue in the right* despite others passing judgment for these acts of devotion, for, after all, Sabbath- and Feast-keeping are earthly shadows of the heavenly substance of something that *belongs to Messiah.* What is his he tells us is ours also.

No passages may be taken out of the context of the entire Bible corpus to prove certain doctrines, especially those that run against the grain of the whole.

The very fact that certain of the "early church fathers" (Greek-speaking leaders of Gentile converts) vehemently insist that their parishioners **do not observe** the Sabbath is proof that the people were indeed keeping them. (Check any of the Epistles of Ignatius for instance.)

Every day is Sabbath

In order to disobey Yahshua with a clear conscience, *I chose this notion* as the best justification for not keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. *Every day is indeed Sabbath*, for "when we enter his rest we cease from our labors." But this scripture is found in the same place as the one I quoted above, "So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of Yahweh." Taken altogether, this is a clear injunction *to keep Yahweh's Sabbath*, not a loophole to disregard it.

This is another case of convenience rather than obedience. But I tell you that observing the seventh day, as Scripture teaches, soon become one of the greatest joys of the believer's life, and also one of the greatest points of persecution from other "believers."

I Choose Whatever Day is Convenient

I have heard all these reasons for not observing the Sabbath: "I can't keep the seventh-Sabbath because *I have* to work." "*I will* lose my job." "That is *my only* day." "I'll choose any day *I want*" or "The Lord will honor any day I choose."

Dear friend, *you haven't the authority to set your personal preferences above Yahweh's commands, which are established forever.* If a 'believer' cannot be obedient to this simple rest today, how will one ever be found worthy to rule and reign with Yahshua in the Millennium?

No, *your will cannot be the overarching law.* The classic term for this viewpoint is *anomianism* (*or antinomianism: ie.* what the Bible calls *the mystery of lawlessness.* A good article on this heresy is found here.

www.whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/Edit_Antinomianism.html

Wesley's famous sermon, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection," is here.

www.whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/Wesley.Christian.Perfectio.html)

If you as a believer have to work on the Sabbath (as I did when this truth became clear to me), then you may *diligently pray* to be released from Sabbath labor. And Yahweh Almighty, who makes the rules and governs the universe, *will annul your employer's rules in favor of His* in due time. Try that prayer and see if it isn't answered - in always is, eventually - because it is righteous and unassuming. When your prayer is answered, then that should be proof enough.

Yahshua / Jesus Was Resurrected on Sunday

A quote: "Because Jesus was resurrected on the first day of the week, Christians are to hold that day (Sunday) as the day of worship and, in some understandings, as the 'Christian Sabbath.'"

I was shocked to find that, after years of preaching "Easter " Sunrise services, that the Greek of the New Testament teaches that Yahshua (Jesus) was NOT resurrected on Sunday! Behold the literal translation of the Greek of Scripture:

> Matthew 28:1. Now late on the Sabbath day, as it began to *dawn toward the first day of the week*, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher.

Clearly, Yahshua came back to life *on the Sabbath.* The phrase, "as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week," means that this was *Saturday evening* just before sundown. *He was already resurrected* by the time they returned to the tomb on the first day! Remember, in the Bible and by the Hebraic clock, the first day of the week begins on Saturday night at sundown. The women honored the Sabbath, and when it ended on Saturday evening, they came forth to the tomb. The phrase "dawn toward" is a loose translation of

επιφωσκουση εις μιαν (*epiphoskous eis mian*),
which literally means

"drawing on toward *one*" ("one" means "day one").

The word "dawn" is not in there. This same teaching is reiterated in Luke.

Most Bible "translations," *in order to conform with religious tradition and uninformed practice*, **intentionally** mistranslate this passage to read, "After the Sabbath on the first day of the week." There are literally *hundreds of Bible passages* that have been altered to conform to popular religious notions; this is just one. But because it is *status quo* does not mean it is correct. Yahshua returned from death on the seventh-day Sabbath. He kept the Sabbath even then. If we do not and if we are made accountable to his commandments, we will suffer. Better to obey now.

Who Instituted Sunday?

The Roman Emperor Constantine, a worshiper of the sun god Helios, consolidated his empire by calling the Christian bishops together in Nicaea (325 AD) and establishing a Christian Church based upon the superstitions and rituals of the pagans. This was the origin of the Roman Catholic Church. In this synthesis of Christian, Jewish and pagan practices, the day of the sun god Helios, Sun-day, was established as the Christian Sabbath; and December 25, the birthday of the god Helios, was set as Christmas, the birthday of the Messiah. The bishops who were compelled to come to the council all too willingly submitted to the Emperor's authority. The few bishops *who dared to keep the faith either were not invited* to the Council, or were exiled or killed.

Through the rest of his life, Constantine continued his reinvention of Christianity in the image of sun worship, forcing it on the corrupt hierarchy. He and his conspirators wrote the *Nicene / Nicean Creed*, which is still recited in many churches every Sunday. On his deathbed, after finishing his creation of the Roman Catholic Church in the image of sun worship, he converted to it through baptism. Constantine, not your Jesus Christ, was the founder of the modern-day church. His mark, and the mark of Helios the sun god, remains in every church in the world through the creeds and through the observance of Christian holidays steeped in paganism, such as Christmas and Easter - and the Sun-day sabbath.

A Remnant

Today the worship prescribed by Yahweh, practiced by Yahshua, and recorded in the Bible, is still mostly hidden behind pagan holidays, symbols, titles, rituals and mistranslations created so many years ago by this Roman Emperor and his successors, the Popes and their cronies. Today old pagan traditions, beliefs and practices are even more prevalent than in times past within Christian churches. Only a remnant of Messianic Sabbath-observers survived through the "Church Age" of the last two millennia Most of the followers of the Messiah were wiped out through ongoing persecutions, *carried out in the name of the Church*, just as Scripture had predicted all along. Yet, even today when history is clear and correct translations of the words of Yahweh and Yahshua are accessible, those who *would be believers* remain under a strong delusion.

Speaking of the world of today, the prophet Isaiah tells us Yahweh's disposition in his final chapter:

> Isaiah 66:4. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.5. Hear the word of Yahweh, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, *that cast you out for my name's sake*, said, Let "the Lord" be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

What To Do About the Sabbath

The overarching concern of the believer should be (a) what would please Yahweh and his Son, Yahshua, and (b) what is expected in the Millennium Kingdom, which, according to a universal timeline, is soon to be upon us. This may be expressed in *obedience* to what and to who is right. Obedience is a valued characteristic in this world, but an *essential* characteristic in the next. So here is what to do:

(1) Pray to Yahweh for a revelation of truth in the matter of the seventh-day Sabbath and any other days Yahweh has already established, especially the Feast of Tabernacles, which scripture says was especially established for non-Jews and must be observed *by all* in the Millennium. (All who want rain, that is.)

(2) Study the passages above in more detail using a correct literal translation of the text.

(3) If you find yourself intellectually convinced of the value of Sabbath observance (if for no other reason than to be obedient), then **challenge Yahweh to make a way for you *to actually become observant.***

What to do on the Sabbath

Like you, I am a pilgrim in Sabbath observance. I still sometimes go to church on Sunday – there is certainly no prohibition against worshiping on any day. (Though I must admit to you that I am increasingly disturbed by the pagan symbols and godless practices of some churches.) But starting Friday night at sundown, I do not work at a job for pay until after Saturday sundown. Yahweh made it possible for me to have this time off *as an answer to prayer*.

On Friday night and/or Saturday morning, we get together as a family to study the Bible based on a systematic plan to help us learn more about Yahweh and Yahshua from a Biblical rather than a traditional (church) perspective. We study for an hour or more, and it is a delight – a wonderful time of sharing the things of our Father and learning what we may soon become. Then we pray. Then we

listen. Then we spend several hours actually *resting*. We do all the good we can - there is no prohibition ever about doing good. This is what it takes to observe the Sabbath in a biblical manner.

We have found that there is no bondage to it; rather, we are blessed in being obedient, *knowing it is the right and obedient thing to do*. And we find that when we are obedient in a few things, we begin to believe we can be obedient in greater things. AND, as I mentioned before, it is the greatest tool for evangelism that we have ever had.

Try a test: Just say to a fervent Christian that you observe the commandment of Yahweh and observe the seventh-day Sabbath; see what kind of *unreasonable* and *demonic ridicule* comes forth from your Christian friends! Yet such a statement seldom fails to provoke a time for "reasoning together."

We pray you great blessings as you seek that which is good and holy. Thank you for taking your time to read this tract. May Yahweh bless it to your good through his marvelous Son, Yahshua Messiah.

> Exodus 20: 8. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; 10. but the seventh day is a Sabbath unto Yahweh thy Almighty One: 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.

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