

"Hear O' Israel"

Teachings

Shabbat – Part 2

Beit Emet Congregation ~ Vancouver, WA

Ben Ehrhardt, Shamash

www.hearoisrael.com

Back in March of this year, I taught on the significance of Shabbat in relation to the other mitzvot (commandments). Some of you were not with us at that time. Since then, Yahweh has shared more with me regarding Shabbat. And, quite frankly, I've been involved, lately, in some conversations that indicate that we need to go through this afresh.

Now, the word "Shabbat", or Sabbath, is found in the ISR Scriptures 200 times, not to mention references like "the Seventh Day", etc. There are, altogether, over 300 references to Shabbat. We find Shabbat, of course, in the "Ten Commandments" in **Shemot 20:3-17**. In fact, it is the fourth Commandment (Mitzvot) and is in **verses 8-11**; ***"Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart. Six days you labor, and shall do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of YHVH 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. For in six days YHVH made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore YHVH blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart.*** Again, in **Shemot 23:12** Yahweh says; ***"Six days you are to do your work, and on the seventh day you rest, in order that your ox and your donkey might rest, and the son of your female servant and the sojourner be refreshed."*** Obviously, we are not to cause others to work either for us or in our place. As Moshe recounts the events of the exodus and wilderness to the children of those who came out of Mitsrayim, this is repeated in **Debarim 5:12-15**; ***'Guard the Sabbath day, to set it apart, as YHVH your Elohim commanded you. Six days you labor, and shall do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of YHVH 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 ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, so that your male servant and your female servant rest as you do. And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Mitsrayim, and that YHVH your Elohim brought you out from there by a strong hand and by an outstretched arm. Therefore YHVH your Elohim commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.'*** The word for set-apart in both of these scriptures is "qadash" and means, in addition to set-apart; to consecrate, to honor, to dedicate. There are other very similar words. But because of their origins, I will not use them in this context.

So, this is one of the "Big 10". Yahweh deems it important. In fact, Yahweh didn't just command us to keep Shabbat, He kept it from the Beginning. **B'reshith 2:2-3**; ***And on 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. And Elohim blessed the seventh day and set it apart, because on it He rested from all His work which Elohim in creating had made.*** Yahweh commanded our forefathers, the children of Yisra'el, to keep the Shabbat even before the Torah was given at Sinai. When they were camped in the Wilderness and Yahweh began to provide the "manna", we read in **Shemot 16:22-30**; ***And it came to be, on the sixth day, that they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Mosheh. And he said to them, "This is what YHVH has said, 'Tomorrow is a rest, a Sabbath set-apart to YHVH. 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.' "*** And they laid it up till morning, as Mosheh commanded. ***And it did not stink, and no worm was in it. And Mosheh said, "Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to YHVH, today you do not find it in the field. Gather it six days, but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, there is none." And it came to be that some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather, but they found none. And YHVH said to Mosheh, "How long shall you refuse to guard My commands and My Torot? See,***

because YHVH has given you the Sabbath, therefore He is giving you bread for two days on the sixth day. Let each one stay in his place, do not let anyone go out of his place on the seventh day.” So the people rested on the seventh day. Here Yahweh gives them what they need, even before Shabbat begins and still they rebel. In the short time since they had left Mitzrayim, the children of Yisra’el grumbled at every turn and resisted their Deliverer and Provider. More on delivery and provision in a bit.

Now, let’s look in **Shemot 31:12-17** **“And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, And you, speak to the children of Yisra’el, saying, ‘My Sabbaths you are to guard, by all means, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, to know that I, YHVH, am setting you apart. 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, and on the seventh is a Sabbath of rest, set-apart to YHVH. Everyone doing work on the Sabbath day shall certainly be put to death. And the children of Yisra’el shall guard the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as an everlasting covenant. Between Me and the children of Yisra’el it is a sign forever. For in six days YHVH made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.’ ”**

I think that there are several things we can look at here. First of all, Yahweh says that we are to **“guard”** His Shabbats. The word for guard is “shamar” and means to keep, observe, preserve, retain and protect. Think about “preserve” the next time someone tells you that some “church fathers” changed it to a different day. More on that later. Then, Yahweh says that the Shabbat is a sign between HIM and us throughout our generations. Let’s look at “sign”. It’s Strong’s word #226 (oth) which means a **mark**, token, ensign, remembrance or monument. He’s marking us when we accept HIS Shabbat. This is a mark forever for those that keep HIS Shabbat.

It’s interesting to note here that Yahweh placed the lights in the firmament (sun, moon and stars) as a “sign” (**oth or mark**) for days and seasons and years (**B’reshith 1:14**). He put a **“mark” (oth)** upon Qayin in **B’reshith 4:15**. Yahweh set the rainbow in the sky as a sign (mark or oth) of His covenant with Noach and future generations (**B’reshith 9:12-17**). Yahweh gave circumcision as a mark (sign) of His covenant with Avraham and all the children of Yisra’el, past, present and future (**B’reshith 17:11**). Placing the blood of the Passover lamb on the doorposts and lintels of their houses was a token/oth or their belief and obedience for the children of Yisra’el that saved the lives of the first-born (**Shemot 12:13**). In **Debarim 6:4-9** the Sh’ma tells us to bind the Torah, as a sign/mark on our hands and as frontlets between our eyes. Do you see a pattern here? There are many more. But, let’s finish this thought with Yahweh’s Words in **Yehezqel 20:10-20**; **“So I took them out of the land of Mitsrayim, and I brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them My laws and showed them My right-rulings, ‘which, if a man does, he shall live by them.’**

And I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, to know that I am YHVH who sets them apart. But the house of Yisra’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. But I acted for My Name’s sake, not to profane it before the gentiles, before whose eyes I had brought them out. And I Myself also lifted My hand in an oath to them in the wilderness, not to bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, the splendor of all lands, because they rejected My right-rulings and did not walk in My laws, and they profaned My Sabbaths. For their heart went after their idols. And My eye pardoned them, from destroying them. And I did not make an end of them in the wilderness. And I said to their children in the wilderness, ‘Do not walk in the laws of your fathers, nor observe their rulings, nor defile yourselves with their idols. I am YHVH your Elohim. Walk in My laws, and guard My right-rulings, and do them. And set apart My Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between Me and you, to know that I am YHVH your Elohim.’

There is another part to this **“mark”** (or marking) thing. Yahweh says that He marks His people, those who believe and guard His Torah, like the circumcision. Only He does the marking. Go to **Yehezqel (Ezek.) 9:3-6**, **And He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, “Let the punishers of the city draw near, each with his weapon of destruction in his hand.” And look, six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his**

battle-axe in his hand. And one man in their midst was clothed with linen and had a writer's ink-horn at his side. And they came in and stood beside the bronze altar. And the esteem of the Elohim of Yisra'el went up from the kerub (cherubim), where it had been, to the threshold of the House. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's ink-horn at his side, and YHVH said to him, "Pass on into the midst of the city, into the midst of Yerushalayim, and you shall put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it. And to the others He said in my hearing, 'Pass on into the city after him and smite, do not let your eye pardon nor spare. Slay to destruction old, young men, maidens and children and women, but do not come near anyone upon whom is the mark, and begin at My set-apart place. So they began with the elders who were in front of the House.'" Here, the mark is Strong's #8420 (Tav) and is a mark as in a signature. Revelation 7:2-4; ***And I saw another messenger coming up from the rising of the sun, holding the seal of the living Elohim. And he cried with a loud voice to the four messengers to whom it was given to harm the earth and the sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees until we have sealed the servants of our Elohim upon their foreheads." And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed out of all the tribes of the children of Yisra'el.*** Here, the Greek word for sealed is #4972, "sphragizo", and it means to mark, as with a signature, seal or engraving (for ownership). Yahshua, Himself, tell us in Rev. 3:10-12; ***"Because you have guarded My Word of endurance, I also shall guard you from the hour of trial which shall come upon all the world, to try those who dwell on the earth. See, I am coming speedily! Hold what you have that no one take your crown. He who overcomes, I shall make him a supporting post in the Dwelling Place of My Elohim, and he shall by no means go out. And I shall write on him the Name of My Elohim and the name of the city of My Elohim, the renewed Yerushalayim, which comes down out of the heaven from My Elohim, and My renewed Name."***

Now, let's see a another "marking" in Revelation 13:15-17, ***"And there was given to him to give spirit to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause to be killed as many as would not worship the image of the beast. And he causes all, both small and great, and rich and poor, and free and slave, to be given a mark upon their right hand or upon their foreheads, and that no one should be able to buy or sell except he that has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."*** Then Rev. 14:9-11; ***And a third messenger followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark upon his forehead or upon his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of Elohim, which is poured out undiluted into the cup of His wrath. And he shall be tortured with fire and sulphur before the set-apart messengers and before the Lamb. And the smoke of their torture goes up forever and ever. And they have no rest day or night, those worshipping the beast and his image, also if anyone receives the mark of his name."*** The word here for "mark" in both scriptures is Strong's NT #5480 (kharagmah) and means graven mark (signature) or stamp of servitude. Of course, there are several more scriptures that tell us of the punishment of these people.

Going back to Shabbat, let's look for a minute or two at the word itself. **Shabbat** is Strong's #7673 and means; to rest, to cease or to desist. It is spelled; shin, bet, tav. As we've seen many times, the letters of the aleph / beit have meanings apart from the words they are in enrich the meaning of the word. For example, "**shin**", the 21 st letter of the aleph/beit, means tooth (as in "tooth for tooth" or perfect recompense) and, because of its shape, is symbolic of the Divine Flame of Torah. Shin also represents one of the Names of Yahweh; El Shaddai or Elohim is sufficient. Literally it means Elohim is sufficient nourishment (shad = breast as nourishment and dai = enough). There is also a connection with the title "Elohim" (or Mighty One) in that the numeric value of the shin equals 300 and so does the value of the word Elohim. So, we see that the Almighty is sufficient. This bears out in the text of **Shemot 16:22-30**, that we read earlier, when Yahweh gave the children of Yisra'el enough manna to see them through Shabbat. This is why a "shin" is placed on the Mezuzah that we place upon the doorposts of our houses. While the number 300 is fresh in our minds, what other 300's can you think of? The length of the ark that Yahweh instructed Noach to build was 300 cubits, according to **B'reshith 6:15**. There were 300 foxes sent by Samson to burn down the fields of the Philistines (**Shofetim / Judges 15:4-5**). There were 300 men with Gideon that defeated the Midianites and the Amalekites in **Shofetim Chapter 7**. Yahweh is indeed sufficient for our needs.

The next letter is "**beit**". Beit literally means "house". But it refers to the House of Elohim. Yahweh

says in **Yeshayahu 56:7b**; *“for my house is called a house of prayer for all the peoples.”* The Torah precedes the detailed description of the Tabernacle and all of its vessels and utensils by stating in **Shemot 25:8**; *“And they shall make Me a Set-apart Place, and I shall dwell in their midst.”* However, when you examine the Hebrew, it literally says He will dwell in them (plural). In other words, in each and every one of us who prepares a set-apart place for Him within. The numeric value of “beit” is 2.

The last letter is the “**tav**”, the last letter of the aleph / beit. The letter “**tav**” means; sign, seal or stamp, with the implication of making an impression or indentation as a footprint or fossil. The rabbis teach that the Torah is the impression (stamp) of Divinity. They also teach that Yisra’el is the impression (stamp) of Torah. Torah is certainly the story of Yisra’el. In the same manner, Yahweh has engraved (stamped or sealed) us (Yisra’el) in the palms of His hands in **Yeshayahu 49:16**; *“See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are always before Me.”* The numeric value of “**tav**” is 400.

Now, as we look at the word “**Shabbat**” again, we can see that the meanings of the letters (shin, beit, and tav) enhance the meaning of our “**rest**” by telling us that if we make ourselves **EI Shaddai’s Dwelling Place**, He will **seal** us. If we total the numeric values of these letters we see that the numeric value of “Shabbat” is 702. 702 corresponds to the phrase “He Rested” in **B’reshith 2:3**. 702 is also the value of the words abide, tarry, stay, draw nigh, draw near and approach.

Looking back in **Shemot 20:8-11**; *“Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart. Six days you labor, and shall do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of YHVH 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. For in six days YHVH made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore YHVH blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart.”* Now it’s interesting to note that when giving the Ten Commandments, Yahweh uses 15 verses in both Shemot and Devarim. HE uses four verses, in each, just for Shabbat.

Of the 613 commands, or Mitzvot, six refer to Shabbat. 1) Remember (**Zachor**) the Sabbath, **Shem. 20:8**. 2) Observe (**Shamor**) the Sabbath, **Shem. 31:16**. 3) Set Apart (**Qadash**) consecrate or sanctify the Sabbath, **Shem. 20:8**. 4) We are to do no work. Now, this is very interesting to look at. The word “**work**” appears 420 times in Scripture and there are quite a few Hebrew words and several Greek words that translate into work. But, only three are used when referring to the Sabbath. First, Strong’s #4399 **Melakah** which means business, industry, cattle, occupation or thing made. Second, we have Strong’s #4639 **Ma’aseh** which means a transaction or art, specifically a poem, or property. Third is Strong’s #5647 **Abad** which means to keep in bondage or to be a bond servant. Now **abad** is linked to **abodah** which refers to all the work of making the Tabernacle. Now the second time this command was given to Moshe was in **Shemot 31:12-17**, as we read earlier, during the construction of the Tabernacle. So, Yahweh commanded us to refrain from work, even the building of HIS House. However, we see from Bemidbar 28:9-10, as well as several other scriptures that the offerings in the Tabernacle, and later in the Temple, were to continue uninterrupted. So these priests were not breaking Shabbat. 5) We are to rest **Shabbat** or **Shabbaton**, according to **Shemot 16:23, 23:12, 31:15, 34:21** and **35:2**. 6) We are not to travel outside our place of locality, **Shemot 16:29**; *“See, because YHVH has given you the Sabbath, therefore He is giving you bread for two days on the sixth day. Let each one stay in his place, do not let anyone go out of his place on the seventh day.”* Now, **place** here is Strong’s #4725 **Maqom** or **Meqomah**

and means locality, country, place or home. One’s house, or tent, is not listed as one of the meanings. When the Torah was given, the children of Yisra’el were in the Wilderness and so travel was not an issue. In the Wilderness, our forefathers dwelt together. They celebrated Shabbats and all the mo’edim together. Even in the Land, they dwelt as family. Today, however, some of you have to travel some distance to get here to worship with the Mishpocah. Yahweh did not set mileage limits. But, I think the definition of “**place**”, above, should set your minds at ease.

Shabbat, like the rest of the mo’edim, is a rehearsal of a future event. This is a “shadow picture” of an event so important that it requires rehearsal each week. Folks, this is a big deal. If we don’t get this right, it carries a death penalty. This is actually a rehearsal for the Millennial Reign of Messiah Yahshua. How do we know this? Well, let’s begin at the end. I like to skip to the end of the Book to see how things turn out. I was reading one of Monte Judah’s old newsletters. He had a good

teaching on Revelation. In the beginning of his article he nailed down something really cool.

Revelation 1:10

refers to the “Lord’s Day” in the King Jimmy. I’m only using the “L” word here for reference. OK? Don’t stone me just yet. It says , **“I (John/Yochanan) was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,”** Now, when I looked up the term “Lord’s Day” it clearly means Shabbat in this verse (the Seventh Day Sabbath). In fact, the four most used versions of the Bible (KJV, NKJV, NIV and ASV) all use this term. Interestingly though, the more “true to the language” translations, like the Scriptures and HRV use the “Day of YHVH”. Now this is interesting. The “Day of YHVH” or “Day of The Lord” always refers to the Millennial Kingdom. Yeshayahu, Yehezqel, Yirmeyahu, Yoel, Amos, Obadyah, Tsephanyah, Zekaryah, Mal’aki, followed by Acts, 1 & 2 Cor., 1 Thess. And 2 Kepha all refer to this “Day” as the Millennium. So we have Moshe, the prophets and the apostles all referring to this as a picture of Messiah’s coming kingdom, when HE will rest from HIS labors of dealing with HIS enemies. Even Yahshua referred to Himself as the Lord (or better translated, the Master) of the Sabbath in **Matt. 12:5**. So, the Day of YHVH is the Sabbath. Yahshua also explained that the Shabbat was made for man, not man for the Shabbat in **Mark 2:27**. This is why HE set apart the Shabbat. To show us the rehearsal for the coming kingdom. So, the Shabbat was made for man.

If we are to be conformed into the “image” of Yahshua, shouldn’t we then look to what HE did on Shabbat, how HE observed it. In the beginning of HIS ministry **Mark 1:21**; **“And they went into Kephar Nahum, and immediately on the Sabbath He went into the congregation and taught.”** Again in **Mark 6:2**

Yahshua is in the synagogue teaching. HE declared Himself the Anointed One in the synagogue, in Nazareth in **Luke 4:16-21**; **“And He came to Natsareth, where He had been brought up. And according to His practice, He went into the congregation on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Yeshayahu was handed to Him. And having unrolled the scroll, He found the place where it was written: ‘The Spirit of YHVH is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to bring the Good News to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away crushed ones with a release, to proclaim the acceptable year of YHVH (the Jubilee Year). And having rolled up the scroll, He gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the congregation were fixed upon Him. And He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been filled in your hearing.’”** There are more instances in **Luke 4:31**, **Luke 6:6** and **Luke 13:10**. What is it, the recent christian cash cow “WWJD”? Well, “what did Yahshua do?” HE observed the Shabbat.

What did Yahshua’s taught ones (disciples) do. They were all Torah observant Hebrews. They kept Shabbat. But, did they change after HIS resurrection? Not according to **Acts 13:14-42**, where we find Rabbi Sha’ul (Paul) teaching in the synagogue in Antioch on Shabbat. In **Acts 15**, where we read about the great debate over whether all the new converts (returning Ephraimites) are to be circumcised before they are allowed to fellowship with the Jews, Ya’akov (James) delivers a famous speech at the close of **verses 7-21**; **“And when there had been much dispute, Kepha rose up and said to them, ‘Men, brothers, you know that a good while ago Elohim chose among us, that by my mouth the gentiles should hear the word of the Good News and believe. And Elohim, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Set-apart Spirit, as also to us, and made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by belief. Now then, why do you try Elohim by putting a yoke on the neck of the taught ones which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But through the favour of the Master Yahshua Messiah we trust to be saved, in the same way as they.’ And all the crowd was silent and were listening to Barnabah and Sha’ul declaring how many miracles and wonders Elohim did among the gentiles, through them. And after they were silent, Ya’akov answered, saying, ‘Men, brothers, listen to me: Shimeon (Kepha) has declared how Elohim first visited the gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name. And the words of the prophets agree with this, as it has been written: “After this I shall return and rebuild the Booth of David which has fallen down. And I shall rebuild its ruins, and I shall set it up, so that the remnant of mankind shall seek YHVH, even all the gentiles on whom My Name has been called, says YHVH who is doing all this, who has made this known from of old.” Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the gentiles who are turning to Elohim, but that we write to them to abstain from the defilements of idols, and from whoring, and from what is strangled, and from blood. For from ancient generations Mosheh has, in every city, those proclaiming him – being read in the congregations every Sabbath.”** Here Ya’akov is saying

that these people returning to faith are to learn in the synagogues on Shabbat. That's why we are here.

From the very beginning, Yahweh established the Shabbat as the seventh day of the week. Again, back in **B'reshith 2:2-3**

tells us that He created in six days and rested on the seventh day. He set the pattern for us at creation. Has that ever changed? I have an astronomy program that Bob Wadsworth gave me that can show the sky over us at anytime, past, present and future, day-by-day all the way back over 100,000 years. Guess what, the 7 days of the week are all accounted for and we know from the moon, when the month begins. We also now are aware of when the barley is "abib", or ripe, in the Land. So, we can know, if we choose to, the start of months and years. This is not a calendar issue. We may not really be sure what year it is since creation. But, this you can be sure of. Yahweh has preserved for us, His children, the days of the week.

Nowhere in Scripture has Yahweh changed the Shabbat. If anyone tells you that **some men** had, or have, the authority to alter Scripture and change Shabbat; well, I wouldn't stand too close to them. The "lightning bolts" are going to start flying pretty soon now. Yahweh warns His people about "profaning" His Shabbat, as in **Shemot 31:14**; **'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.'** Now, according to Webster's dictionary, profane means to degrade, or abuse, or defile. Anyone who profanes it shall be put to death. Scripture also says that they will be "cut off from among their people" or cut off from those who are **marked**, then death will follow. Folks, it gives me no pleasure to say that all who have profaned His Shabbat, knowing the truth, and I know many who do, they're risking it all.

We'll even observe (guard) Shabbat in the Millennial reign of Yahshua Messiah. As the prophet **Yeshayahu** said in **Chapter 66:22-23**; ***"For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make stand before Me," declares YHVH, "so your seed and your name shall stand. And it shall be that from New Moon to New Moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before Me," declares YHVH.***

Now, let's look, for a moment, at a tough one. **Colossians 2:16-19**; ***"Let no one therefore judge you in eating or in drinking, or in respect of a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths – which are a shadow of what is to come – but the Body of the Messiah. Let no one deprive you of the prize, one who takes delight in false humility and worship of messengers, taking his stand on what he has not seen, puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the Body – nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments – grows with the growth of Elohim."*** Now, I realize that there are those who use this scripture to say that they can eat whatever they like, celebrate all the pagan holidays they wish and keep any Sabbath they choose. Colosse was in Asia Minor (part of the Diaspora and therefore subject to Roman rule and heavily influenced by Greek thinking. The believers Sha'ul was writing to here, were constantly bombarded by western gentile thinkers trying to undermine the faith in keeping Shabbat, the Feasts and eating kosher. Do you see any similarities to today? What Sha'ul is saying here is to let no one judge you for eating kosher, or about the Feasts or about observing the new moon (the beginning of the month), or Sabbaths. You see these are shadow pictures of things to come. Let no one steal your "prize" or "Bridal veil", those who value false humility (really prideful), who hold angels in high esteem (worship), basing, pinning his hope on what others tell him, puffed up by his flesh oriented thinking (prosperity doctrine and false promises – Yahweh never promised you earthly riches, only persecution for HIS Namesake, Yahshua) and not holding fast to the HEAD of the Body (Yahshua/The Word/The Torah) from which we are all fed, nourished and grow in strength and stature in Elohim.

Yahweh has promised blessings if we esteem (honor) His Shabbat. Let's look at a few of them.

Yeshayahu 56:4-7; ***For thus said YHVH, "To the eunuchs who guard My Sabbaths, and have chosen what pleases Me, and hold fast to My covenant: to them I shall give in My house and within My walls a place and a name better than that of sons and daughters – I give them an everlasting name that is not cut off. Also the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to YHVH, to serve Him, and to love the Name of YHVH, to be His servants, all who guard the Sabbath, and not profane it, and hold fast to My covenant – them I shall bring to My set-apart mountain, and let them rejoice in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and***

their slaughterings are accepted on My altar, for My house is called a house of prayer for all the peoples.” Then, there’s my personal favorite in Yeshayahu 58:13-14; ***“If you do 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 YHVH ‘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 YHVH. And I shall cause you to ride on the heights of the earth, and feed you with the inheritance of Ya’aqob your father. For the mouth of YHVH has spoken!”***

Now, this is one where we need to be honest with ourselves. It’s really easy to take off on Shabbat, cruise around the countryside, go hiking, fishing, watch TV or whatever because we call it “rest”. Think about it. Be honest with yourself. Am I setting the Day apart? Am I turning from my own pleasure? My own ways? My own words? Am I on a date with my Beloved? My Husband? I heard it said constantly in the church, and still hear from christians today, “I have ‘**relationship**’.” Well folks, this is the “**relationship**”. If we long to “walk with Yahweh in the cool of the evening” as Adam did; we can. Yahweh sent His Son. Yahshua **is** the Way for us to return to Yahweh. And, Shabbat **is** the return to Yahweh. It begins here. If we make that Dwelling Place within ourselves for Him, He will come and dwell in us and put His **oth** (His mark) on us and write our name in His hand.

I want to close with a portion of Rav Sha’ul’s letter to the Hebrews. Since Sha’ul gets a lot of credit for advocating that the torah has passed away. **Ibrim 3:7-4:11; Therefore, as the Set-apart Spirit says, “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tried Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. Therefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.’ As I swore in My wrath, ‘If they shall enter into My rest ...’ ”** (Quoting Tehillim 95:7-11) **Look out, brothers, lest there be in any of you a wicked heart of unbelief in falling away from the living Elohim, but encourage one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened by the deceivableness of sin. For we have become partakers of Messiah if we hold fast the beginning of our trust firm to the end, while it is said, “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.” For who, having heard, rebelled? Was it not all who came out of Mitsrayim, led by Mosheh? And with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter into His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they were unable to enter in because of unbelief. Therefore, since a promise remains of entering into His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the Good News was brought to us as well as to them, but the word which they heard did not profit them, not having been mixed with belief in those who heard it. For we who have believed do enter into that rest, as He has said, “As I swore in My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest...” And yet His works have come into being from the foundation of the world. For somewhere He has said thus about the seventh day, “And Elohim rested on the seventh day from all His works,” and in this again, “If they shall enter into My rest...” Since then it remains for some to enter into it, and those who formerly received the Good News did not enter in because of disobedience, He again defines a certain day, “Today,” saying through Dawid so much later (Tehillim 95) , as it has been said, “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.” For if Yehoshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. So there remains a Sabbath-keeping for the people of Elohim. For the one, having entered into His rest, has himself also rested from his works, as Elohim rested from His own. Let us therefore do our utmost to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.**

Baruch HaShem Yahweh !