

## Correspondence Course Lesson 4: The Sabbath Day

THE book of Acts is the history of the early New Testament Congregation of YHWH. It covers the major events in briefest summary form. This book attests to the fact that to be a believer is to live a certain way. Millions of people believe that Sunday has replaced the seventh-day Sabbath. Somehow they have come to assume that they can keep the Fourth Commandment by observing Sunday. Others feel that it is not necessary to keep any specific day of the week as a Sabbath. They believe every day is a "spiritual" Sabbath. Let's look directly into the Word of Yahweh for the truth about this key commandment.

When and how was the Sabbath "made"?

***Gen 2:2 And on the seventh day Elohim completed His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.***

***Gen 2:3 And Elohim blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because He rested from all His work on it, which Elohim had created to make.***

**COMMENT:** Yahweh created the Sabbath by the act of resting on the seventh day of what is commonly called creation week. He blessed and sanctified the Sabbath-put His divine favor upon it and set it apart for a special use and purpose of time that was to occur once every seven days. (The Sabbath begins in the evening, at the close of the sixth day, and ends in the evening, at the close of the seventh day. See **Leviticus 23:32** for an example of when Yahweh begins and ends days.)

For whom did Yahshua say the Sabbath was made?

***Mar 2:27 And He said to them, The Sabbath came into being for man's sake, not man for the Sabbath's sake.***

***Ecc 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear The Elohim, and keep His commandments; for this applies to every man.***

**COMMENT:** "The Sabbath was made for man," declared Yahshua. Every seventh day from creation week was set apart by Elohim as time to be specially observed by mankind. The Sabbath was made for Adam and all of his descendants, including everyone today. The seventh-day Sabbath was to benefit all who would ever live-if they would keep it as Elohim intended. Ecclesiastes also tells us that the responsibility to keep our Heavenly Father's commandments applies to every man, or in the original Hebrew literally means that keeping the commandments makes man-kind complete. We work six days and toil for our bread that we eat and the roof over our head. We may not lie or steal from our neighbor, but it is only after resting on the seventh day Sabbath and seeking a relationship with our Maker that does make our week and life complete.

How did Elohim intend the Sabbath to benefit mankind?

***Exo 20:8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy;***

***Exo 20:9 six days you shall labour and do all your work;***

***Exo 20:10 and the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your Elohim; you shall not do any work, you, and your son, and your daughter, your male slave and your slave-girl, and your livestock, and your stranger who is in your gates.***

***Exo 20:11 For in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all which is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; on account of this Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.***

***Deu 5:12 Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy (Set apart), as Yahweh your Elohim has commanded you.***

***Deu 5:13 Six days you shall labour, and shall do all your work,***

***Deu 5:14 and the seventh day shall be a Sabbath to Yahweh your Elohim. You shall not do any work, you nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male slave, nor your female slave, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your livestock, nor your stranger that is within your gates; so that your male slave and your female slave may rest like yourself.***

***Deu 5:15 And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your Elohim brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm. On account of this Yahweh your Elohim has commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.***

**COMMENT:** Notice that Elohim made the seventh day of the week holy-and he commands us to keep it that way. The Sabbath, then, is holy time. And it was made to be a great blessing for all humanity. The word Sabbath means "rest" in Hebrew. Physical rest and mental relaxation after a busy week are obvious reasons for keeping the seventh day Sabbath. Yahweh knew humans would need periodic rest and change from work. But the purpose for keeping Yahweh's Sabbath goes far beyond simply resting on it and being refreshed physically.

Is the Sabbath also a reminder of Yahweh's creation?

***Exo 20:11 For in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all which is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; on account of this Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.***

**COMMENT:** Keeping Yahweh's seventh-day Sabbath every week reminds us that Elohim is the Creator of all that exists, including all of humanity. Thus the Sabbath is a memorial of Yahweh's creation, which includes Yahweh's great spiritual purpose for creating mankind.

Elohim set aside a special or hallowed one-seventh of the week to be a reminder of Him as Creator and of His purpose for our existence. The Sabbath is time in which we can be spiritually rejuvenated by having close spiritual contact with Elohim. It allows us time to think more about Elohim, to pray to and worship Him (both in private and in fellowship with others) and to study the Bible to understand more about His awesome purpose for our lives and how to achieve it.

Did Yahshua keep the Sabbath?

***Luk 4:16 And He came to Nazareth where He was brought up. And as was His custom, He went in on the day of the Sabbath, into the synagogue, and He stood up to read.***

***Luk 4:31 And He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And He was teaching them on the Sabbaths.***

**COMMENT:** Yahshua regularly attended religious services on the Sabbath "as His custom was." Yahshua, our perfect example, kept the seventh-day Sabbath properly. So did the Congregation He founded. The example set by our Messiah and His apostles is recorded in the Bible for us to follow today. We are told that Yahshua set us an example to follow Him in all things.

***1Pe 2:21 For you were called to this, for even Messiah suffered on our behalf, leaving behind an example for us, that you should follow His steps;***

Was it also the Apostle Paul's custom to keep the Sabbath?

***Act 17:2 And according to Paul's custom, he went in to them and reasoned with them from the Scriptures on three Sabbaths, Acts 17:1-2.***

**COMMENT:** It is quite plain that the apostle Paul observed the same day Yahshua did. And if Yahshua lives His life in us today (**Gal 2:20**), we will also be keeping the same day Yahshua kept-the seventh-day Sabbath. Had Yahshua done away with any of His Father's commandments or changed the Sabbath to some other day, He certainly would have revealed it to Paul. But no changes were made. Paul taught the early congregations exactly what Yahshua taught him to preach, as the Bible clearly shows.

Did Paul, even in a predominantly gentile city, observe the seventh-day Sabbath?

***Act 17:2 And according to Paul's custom, he went in to them and reasoned with them from the Scriptures on three Sabbaths.***

**COMMENT:** For more than 18 months in Corinth, Paul labored during the first six days of the week as a tentmaker. Then he preached every Sabbath-on Saturday, the seventh day.

Notice how the Sabbath was regarded by gentile converts in the early Congregation, Paul preached to both Jews and gentiles on the Sabbath

***Act 13:42 But the Jews having gone out of the synagogue, the gentiles begged that these words be spoken to them on the next Sabbath.***

On the next Sabbath, how many came to hear Paul?

***Act 13:44 And in the coming Sabbath, almost all the city was gathered to hear the Word of Yahweh.***

**COMMENT:** Notice that it was the practice of the early congregation both Israelites and Gentiles to meet together on the Sabbath day. You will not find one scripture in the entire New Testament that would even remotely suggest that the apostles changed one of the commandments of Yahweh and in particular the Sabbath day. The early Jewish leaders who did not believe in Yahshua were looking for any bit of evidence to condemn the Apostles. Don't you think if Paul had done away with or changed one of the very commandments of Yahweh that he would have been accused? And yet you never hear anyone accusing him of doing away with the Sabbath day. There is one scripture in **Acts 20:7** that the King James Bible wrongly translates the first day of the week, but look in the original Greek and you will find it states;

***Act 20:7 And on one of the Sabbaths, the disciples having been assembled to have a fellowship meal together, being about to depart on the next morning, Paul reasoned to them. And he continued his speech until midnight.***

Also, if Paul changed the Sabbath to Sunday here in Acts 13, it would have been a perfect opportunity to tell the Gentiles we will continue this tomorrow on Sunday when we meet, but Paul, the apostle to the gentiles, did not tell them to meet him tomorrow on Sunday for worship, he clearly waited a whole week until the next Sabbath to preach again. If we could find even one text in the New Testament giving us as strong authority for Sunday observance as we have for Sabbath keeping, we would have Scriptural authority for observing the first day of the week. But it just isn't there.

Since Paul followed the example of Yahshua our Messiah who dwelt in him, what did he command the gentile believers?

***1Co 11:1 Be imitators of me, as I am also of Messiah.***

***Phi 3:17 Be fellow-imitators of me, brothers, and consider those walking this way, even as you have us for a pattern.***

**COMMENT:** Paul taught the gentile believers to imitate his obedience to Elohim, even as he imitated Yahshua's obedience. The believing gentiles of the early Congregation of Yahweh always assembled on the Sabbath day, just as our Messiah did while in the flesh, in order to keep the day Yahweh commands in his Word.

One last point on the Apostle Paul and the Sabbath day. Some in their desperation to do away with Yahweh's Sabbath have claimed Paul said it doesn't matter what day we keep in **Romans 14:1-5**, but a close look at these scriptures will show that the Sabbath day is not even mentioned. As a matter of fact Paul is speaking about Brethren who were vegetarians and judging others who were eating meat because it may have been sacrificed to

an idol. These brethren in turn were fasting and this is what Paul is addressing. He claims the ones who are fasting on that day set it apart for Yahweh, and the ones who are not fasting do not. If one is honest with oneself he will admit that the Sabbath is not even mentioned and has nothing to do with **Rom14**.

Also, some will use Colossians the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter to try to discredit the Sabbath day; again taking the scripture out of context. If we look at who Paul is writing to (Non Jewish believers) who are being judged by other gentiles for keeping Yahweh's Sabbath and Holy days, then look at Paul's response.

***Col 2:8 Watch that there not be one misleading you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Messiah.***

***Col 2:16 Therefore do not let anyone (outside the body) judge among you about eating, or drinking, or in how you keep the feast days, or the new moon, or the Sabbath day,***

***Col 2:17 which remain shadows of coming things, but the body of Messiah.***

Clearly the argument was not whether to keep these days but in the way they were being kept. The gentile Colossians were Gnostics, and believed anything of the flesh such as feasting during Sukkot was evil because they were feeding the flesh, but look at Paul's response. He says don't be judged by these pagans but follow the example of the Congregations of YHWH because these days **REMAIN** shadows of coming things.

### **Rejoice in Yahweh's Sabbath Day!**

Is the keeping of Yahweh's Sabbath commandment a grievous burden to believers?

***1Jo 5:3 For this is the love of Yahweh, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not a burden to us.***

**COMMENT:** Yahweh's Ten Commandments, including the Fourth, are a blessing to keep, not a burden. Through a complete misunderstanding of the Scriptures, some people have tried to make the Sabbath command appear as a "yoke of bondage." They talk as if the Sabbath is a great curse to mankind. Let's completely dispel this myth.

Was man made for the Sabbath, or was the Sabbath made for man?

***Mar 2:27 And He said to them, The Sabbath came into being for man's sake, not man for the Sabbath's sake.***

**COMMENT:** The Sabbath, as we have learned, is holy time. Yet, it was made for man to be a great blessing to all mankind. The Sabbath is one of the greatest blessings the Creator has bestowed upon the human family. The true observance of the Sabbath would keep man in contact with Elohim. Without that contact, he cannot know the tremendous purpose for his existence or understand the laws that govern success in life. He is cut off from the understanding of what he is, where he is going and how to get there.

However, as a result of Elohim having caused the Jews to be taken into Babylonian captivity for polluting his Sabbaths (**Jer. 17:21-25, 27; II Chron. 36:5-7, 16-19, 21**), many of the Jews who were allowed to return to Jerusalem by Cyrus, king of Persia, became very strict in observing the Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees of Yahshua's day had a list of about 65 activities defined as "work" that they prohibited. These prohibitions made Sabbath observance a "yoke of bondage." These additions went far beyond the spirit and intent of the Fourth Commandment. Yahshua rebuked the self-righteous Pharisees for their traditions and swept those human regulations aside.

Is the Sabbath part of the very creation of Yahweh, even though we can not actually see it?

**Gen 2:1 And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their host.**

**Gen 2:2 And on the seventh day Elohim completed His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.**

**Gen 2:3 And Elohim blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because He rested from all His work on it, which Elohim had created to make.**

**Rom 1:19 because the thing known of Yahweh is clearly known within them, for Yahweh revealed it to them.**

**Rom 1:20 For, from the foundations of the world, the invisible things of YAHWEH are clearly seen and understood, in the things He created, even His eternal power and divinity; so that they might be without excuse;**

**Rom 1:21 because they knew YAHWEH, and did not glorify Him and give thanks to Him as Elohim, but became vain in their imaginations, and their unwise heart was darkened.**

**Rom 1:22 Professing to be wise, they became foolish**

**Rom 1:23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible Elohim into a likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed animals, and creeping things.**

**Rom 1:24 Because of this, YAHWEH gave them up to filthy lusts of their hearts, and their bodies to be dishonored among themselves,**

**Rom 1:25 who changed the truth of Elohim into the lie, and worshiped and served the created thing more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.**

Notice that creation was not complete until the Sabbath was made by the act of our Heavenly Father and his Son resting. So the Sabbath is not just a concept, it is part of the very creation of Yahweh. Clearly Romans shows us that the Sabbath was the only invisible (unseen) part of creation for mankind to always have proof of his creator. By rejecting the Sabbath day mankind in his foolishness, lost sight of the true Creator and started to worship the created things such as the sun, moon, stars etc.

How did Yahshua show it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath?

**Mat 12:9 And moving from there, He came into their synagogue.**

**Mat 12:10 And, behold, a man having a withered hand was there. And they asked Him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbaths? (That they might accuse Him).**

**Mat 12:11 But He said to them, What man of you will be who will have one sheep, and if this one fall into a pit on the day of the Sabbath, that he would not grab it and raise it out?**

**Mat 12:12 How much more, then, does a man excel a sheep! So that it is lawful to do well on the Sabbaths.**

**Mat 12:13 Then He said to the man, Stretch out your hand! And he stretched out. And it was restored sound as the other.**

Did Yahshua acknowledge that it was proper to rescue an animal that had fallen into a ditch on the Sabbath, and thus by implication handle other genuine emergencies that cannot wait until after the Sabbath to be resolved?

**Luk 14:5 And answering to them He said, Which of you if his donkey or ox shall fall into a pit, and he will not at once pull it up on the Sabbath day?**

**Luk 14:6 And they were not able to reply to Him against these things.**

**COMMENT:** Elohim wants us to use honest, sound judgment in applying the spirit and intent of what we can or should not do on his Sabbath day. Yahshua taught balance and wisdom and having the right attitude in observing the Sabbath. The Jews, steeped in physical rituals, could not understand the spiritual application of the Sabbath commandment. They would rescue an animal from a ditch on the Sabbath, but condemned Yahshua for healing an unfortunate human being on that day.

By adding their own traditions and interpretations, they had made the Sabbath a burden to keep. Today Orthodox Judaism has over 1,000 rigid restrictive laws for Sabbath observance.

Should we pursue our own interests and pleasures on the Sabbath? Are we to delight in Elohim's holy Sabbath day? How do we do this?

***Isa 58:13*** *If you turn your foot away because of the Sabbath, from doing what you please on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, to the holiness of Yahweh, glorified; and shall glorify Him, to the holiness of not doing your own ways, from finding your own pleasure or speaking your words;*

***Isa 58:14*** *then you shall delight yourself in Yahweh. And I will cause you to ride on the heights of the earth, and make you eat with the inheritance of your father Jacob. For the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.*

**COMMENT:** The Sabbath belongs to Elohim. He made this one day each week holy time. Employment, shopping, mowing the lawn, cooking and home maintenance are to be done on the previous six days of the week. Neither is the Sabbath the appropriate time for indulging in hobbies, sports and other special interests. Such activities take our minds away from Elohim and the entire purpose for his Sabbath.

The Sabbath will be a day of gladness and joy—a delight to those who honor and worship our Heavenly Father. Resting from our work and mundane pleasures on Elohim's day gives us an opportunity to spend much more time in prayer to our Heavenly Father, and in studying, discussing and meditating upon his Word—filling our minds with the thoughts and character of our heavenly Father and his Son, Yahshua.

The Sabbath is also a time for real family togetherness that may not otherwise be possible—a special time and opportunity to teach our children about Elohim and his ways. It is also a time when we can observe and appreciate the beauties and marvels of Yahweh's creation.

Keeping the Sabbath as Yahweh instructs will give us the spiritual lift and inspiration we need to help us work the next six days with joy and purpose. Thus the Sabbath will become a great delight to us as we learn the way of Elohim on His weekly Holy Day.

### **Fellowship on the Sabbath**

The Sabbath is a day of physical rest and spiritual refreshing. It is also a day for holy convocation and fellowship with other believers, if we are blessed to be near other like minded believers. It is very important that we understand the truth about true fellowship.

Yahshua our Messiah, who set the example of how we should live, taught by His own life and practice that an assembly of Yahweh's people is to be held on every Sabbath. It is a day for the united worship of Elohim by His called and chosen people. It is a time for Yahweh's ministers to preach and expound the principles of Yahweh's living laws from His inspired Word.

What are New Testament believers admonished regarding the assembling of themselves?

***Heb 10:24*** *And let us consider one another, to incitement of love and of good works,*  
***Heb 10:25*** *not forsaking the assembling together of ourselves, as is the custom of some, but exhorting, and by so much more as you see the Day drawing near.*

Just how important is true fellowship within the body of believers that comprises the Congregation of YHWH?

***1Jo 1:3*** *We announce to you what we have seen, and what we have heard, that you also may have fellowship with us. And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Yahshua Messiah.*

***1Jo 1:6*** *If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and we walk in darkness, we lie and are not practicing the truth.*

***1Jo 1:7*** *But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another,*

***and the blood of His Son Yahshua Messiah cleanses us from all sin.***

**COMMENT:** Yahshua's presence is in his Sabbath day, making it holy. When the Father's own obedient children, each joined to Messiah (**John 15:1-5**), each walking with Messiah in harmony-assemble on his Holy Day, they actually have fellowship with Messiah. He is there, in their midst, in spirit. And Yahshua joins them together in fellowship with Him and the Father. Sometimes new believers misinterpret that this fellowship can only come through a large corporate church, but most of the early congregations were small and met in houses.

***Mat 18:20 For where two or three are assembled together in My name, there I am also among them.***

Was the Sabbath actually a separate covenant that our Heavenly Father made with His children to show all of mankind who the only true Elohim was and who His covenant people are?

***Exo 31:12 And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,***

***Exo 31:13 And you speak to the sons of Israel, charging them, only My sabbaths you shall keep; for it is a sign between Me and you for your generation; to know that I am Yahweh your sanctifier.***

***Exo 31:14 And you shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy for you; the profaners of it shall sure be executed; for everyone doing work in it, that soul shall be cut off from the midst of his people.***

***Exo 31:15 Work may be done six days, and on the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, holy to Yahweh; everyone doing work on the Sabbath day surely shall be put to death.***

***Exo 31:16 And the sons of Israel shall guard the Sabbath, to observe and do the Sabbath for their generations; it is a never ending covenant.***

***Exo 31:17 It is a sign forever between Me and the sons of Israel; for in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.***

***Exo 31:18 And when He finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave to Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of Elohim.***

Hebrew is a pictograph language originally being made up of 22 pictures that would spell out words, such as the picture of a man and the picture of a weapon would be the word picture for an enemy. The original word picture for the Sabbath is "to return to the house of the covenant." This is very interesting since the Sabbath was the very sign of the family covenant of Yahweh, but the Sabbath was no only a sign of the covenant between Yahweh and His covenant children but was also a way to sanctify (set apart) His covenant children from the pagan false ways of Satan's society. It can be one of the greatest blessings of ones life if he truly keeps this day holy and uses it as a way for fellowship with our Heavenly Father.

Yahweh the great Creator of the universe has set this time apart for us His covenant people.

***Gen 1:14 And Elohim said, Let light sources be in the expanse of the heavens, to divide between the day and the night. And let them be for signs and for (Holy day) seasons, and for days and years.***

***Lev 23:1 And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,***

***Lev 23:2 Speak to the sons of Israel, and you shall say to them, The set feasts of Yahweh which you shall proclaim, holy gatherings, shall be these: These are My appointed feasts:***

***Lev 23:3 Work is to be done six days, and on the seventh day shall be a Sabbath of rest, a holy gathering; you shall do no work; it is a Sabbath to Yahweh in all your dwellings.***

The word for seasons in **Genesis 1:14** is *moedim* and literally means a holy appointment. Can you imagine that the great Yahweh, the creator of all things, omnipotent, omnipresent, and all ruling, has set apart this special 24 hour time from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday (biblical reckoning of a day) for His covenant children. Don't

you think we should have the respect for Him to at least also set apart this time for Him and keep it holy as His word says?

Also the Hebrew word for holy gathering in **Leviticus 23:2** literally means a rehearsal. The Sabbath has a two fold meaning of our freedom in the Messiah. One aspect is the freedom from sin that we have through the blood of the Messiah Yahshua and our covenant relationship with Him through baptism, and the other aspect is it is a reflection of the millennial reign of the Messiah. Just as Yahweh made the earth in six days and the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, He has given mankind six thousand years to run His own systems, and schools and governments, and when mankind is at the point of totally annihilating himself (and we are almost there) Yahshua will return for the 1,000 year millennial reign of peace throughout the world. Each Sabbath day when we come out of the world and rest on that day and don't do any menial tasks such as cutting the grass, cooking, doing laundry, we are commemorating and looking forward to the soon return of our master Yahshua, and the freedom that we will have from Satan's society.

When Adam and Eve sinned part of the curse was that man would have to toil in sweat to put food on the table and survive.

***Gen 3:17 And He said to the man, Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat from it, the ground shall be cursed because of you; you shall eat of it in sorrow all the days of your life.***

***Gen 3:18 And it shall bring forth thorns and thistles for you, and you shall eat the plant of the field.***

***Gen 3:19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until your return to the ground. For you have been taken out of it; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.***

The Sabbath is a promise that Yahshua has redeemed us from that curse and in the millennium we will reign with him.

***Gal 3:13 Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the Torah, having become a curse for us; for it has been written, "Cursed is everyone having been hung on a tree;"***

Each and every seventh day we can come out of the world and the pressure of having to work by the sweat of our brow to survive in Satan's system. We are blessed that for that 24 hour period we can focus on communion with our Heavenly Father and our Saviour and leave all the worldly cares of this evil world behind for 24 hours every Saturday.

#### **Points to remember:**

- 1) The Sabbath is one of the 10 commandments, which remain forever
- 2) The Sabbath was made at creation and not at Mount Sinai.
- 3) The Sabbath is an eternal sign of the covenant of Yahweh and His children.
- 4) The Sabbath is made for mankind as a blessing to honour and worship our Creator.

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