



10-6-07

Beresheit-In the Beginning

Genesis 1:1-6:8

Isaiah 42:5-43:10

Hebrews 4:3-4

Introduction

In a mere 146 verses, we are given the Creation entire, the story of Adam, Chavah, and the serpent, and the expulsion from Gan Eden; the conflict between Cain and Abel; and the genealogy of their descendants until Noah.

Genesis 1:31-2:3

1:31 And God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. **2:1** Thus the heaven and the earth were finished, and all their array. **2** By the seventh day God completed His work which he had done, and he abstained on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. **3** God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He abstained from all His work which God created to make.

It has always amazed me at how these verses can be ignored or explained away as no longer being relevant to the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath. God established the Sabbath as part of Creation. It is embedded in the very fabric of the universe and is an integral part of what the Lord has created.

Exodus 16:26 "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, *which is the Sabbath*, there will be none."

Exodus 16:30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

Exodus 20:10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no 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.

Hebrews 4:4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh *day* in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works."

Luke 4:16 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.

Acts 17:2 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures.

There are many more Scriptures that establish the validity and perpetuity of the seventh day Sabbath but I felt it very important that we are to do as our Messiah Yeshua did. In Luke 4:16 we are told that Yeshua went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Messiah Himself established that the seventh day was the Sabbath because He was raised in a Jewish society that upheld the sanctity of the seventh day Sabbath.

If it was good enough for Yeshua then why wouldn't it be good enough for us? How often do we hear someone say, "What Would Jesus Do?" Luke 4:16 tells us what He would do – He would keep the seventh day Shabbat. It is a plain and simple fact that Scripture points out to us. Yeshua then goes on to tell us this:

John 15:10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

We have established in past teachings that the Greek word for commandments, as used here, is *entole* which means the Mosaic Law or in other words – the Torah. Yeshua is telling us to keep His commandments as He has kept His Father's commandments. Yeshua kept the Torah of His Father and now He asks us to keep His Torah and in doing this we show our love for Him. So, to keep the Sabbath day is to show our love for Yeshua and His Father. How much plainer can it be? Yeshua did not go against His Father's commandments, which is the Torah, so how can we claim we can do otherwise?

To go one step further we can establish that the Apostle Paul kept the seventh day Sabbath as well. In Acts 17:2, we once again see the words *as was his custom* used in conjunction with the seventh day Sabbath. As far as I know the Jewish people have never, ever kept any other day as the Sabbath day except for the seventh day. Yeshua chose to be born into a Jewish family and was raised according to the ways of that people. If, as we believe, that Yeshua is the Living Word of God, therefore the Torah incarnate, then it was through Yeshua that the Father created all that there is culminating with the setting of the seventh day as a day of rest or a Shabbat. The Hebrew word Shabbat means just that – rest. God Himself set the example for how we are to honor the seventh day. It is to be a day of complete rest, set apart to God and to God's people.

When I am told that there is no one else to fellowship with in an area where a Torah keeper lives so they worship on Sunday in a Church where the Torah is set aside, I have to wonder to myself would it not be better to worship by oneself and keep the seventh day Shabbat? How are we honoring the Lord if we break the covenant He set Himself in the bedrock of creation? The Sabbath day was set by God as the capstone of His greatest work – creation! He presented it to mankind as His gift to them.

Leviticus 23:3 ' Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work *on it*; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

I don't mean to berate anyone nor am I trying to insult anyone because they may be attending a local Church on Sunday in seeking out fellowship. The possibility exists that you might be setting an example for someone if you can share what you believe. If you are not using the opportunity to share about the Torah but keep silent so you will not be asked to leave then you might have to ask yourself some really hard questions.

Matthew 10:32 "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. **33** "But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. **34** "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.

Many may think that this passage only speaks about denying Yeshua before others but I also believe this passage is speaking about denying Torah, the Festivals, the Sabbath, and any other thing connected to a Messianic Walk. To deny Yeshua is grievous enough but in denying the Master you are also denying His lifestyle as well. You may think I am stretching the point some in saying this but I urge you to stop and think it through.

Yeshua's earthly parents had Him circumcised on the eighth day in accordance with Torah. His parents brought Him to the Temple after His birth so His mother Miriam could be cleansed in accordance with Torah and the Redemption of the Firstborn could be performed also in accordance with Torah. If Yeshua's parents were Torah Observant and Yeshua was raised in this lifestyle why do we even dare to believe that He was not? Why do we think that a Hebraic or Jewish lifestyle was not His own way of living, so therefore, we believe ours is not? Why do many of us believe that Hebrew and Jewish are two separate things?

We tend to try to separate things from their roots or heritage. It is one thing to say we support Israel and the Jewish people, but it is another thing altogether to live that lifestyle. One can be a Christian Zionist and profess a love for Israel and support for the Jewish people but keep that life at arms length. I have also seen the same thing within the Messianic Movement with Messianic Zionists who profess a love for Israel and the Jewish people but do not truly desire the lifestyle that entails. Please understand I am not condemning anyone but urging you to think about the decisions you are making.

Isaiah 42:21-25

21 *The Lord* desired for the sake of [Israel's] righteousness that the Torah be made great and glorious. **22** But it is looted, downtrodden people, all of them trapped in holes, and hidden away in prisons; they are looted and there is no rescuer; plundered with none to say 'Give it back!' **23** Who among you will give ear to this, will hearken and hear the outcome? **24** Who delivered Jacob to plunder and Israel to looters? Was it not *the Lord*, He against Whom we have sinned? They did not wish to go in His ways and did not listen to His Torah. **25** So He poured out His fiery wrath upon him, and the power of war; it burned him from all around, but he would not know; it burned within him, but he did not take it to heart.

If one believes they are really part of Israel then the Torah is part of who they are. Yet when we read this passage from Isaiah we see that while the Lord desired that the Torah be part of Israel's life it was not. For forty years that Israel wandered in the Wilderness Moses taught

the Torah to the Children of Israel. Why did it take forty years to do so? Maybe because a new generation was being raised up to take the place of the previous generation who had defied God or maybe, just maybe, it takes a lifetime to barely begin to scratch the surface of living a Torah based life?

Isaiah goes to say that even when Israel lost the Torah because they had turned away from it they did not even desire to get it back. Isaiah tells us that Israel hungered after the Lord and His Torah but did not realize what it was they wanted so desperately. This hunger burned within Israel but they did not take it to heart.

Psalm 39:3 My heart was hot within me; while I was musing, the fire burned. *Then* I spoke with my tongue.

King David knew the Lord and the Spirit of the Lord lived within him. Yet even David sinned before the Lord and due to the blood on his hands he was not allowed to build the Temple of the Lord God but it fell to his son Solomon to do this even though Solomon sinned against the Lord by turning away from the Lord and worshipping the gods of his many wives.

The contradictions within the Bible make us wonder at God's ways. Why did He do this or not do this? Why did He allow this to happen and not this? Maybe this is a test of our faith that we are permitted to question the Lord but we must be ready to accept that He may not answer us or explain why He does what He does. Abraham negotiated with God over Sodom and Gomorrah. Moses interceded on Israel's behalf with God many times. We are instructed to come before God on behalf of others. We question the hand of the Lord but in the end we must accept His will, whether we understand it or not.

Hebrews 4:3-4

Hebrews 4:3 For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," [Psalm 95:11] although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. **4** For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS"[Genesis 2:2, Exodus 20:11, 31:17].

The importance of the Shabbat to God should not and cannot be lost on us. God takes His Shabbat very seriously and it is only the Lord who can change the Shabbat because only He can alter the course of human history and His own creation. It seems the significance of the Shabbat has been lost on us because we seem to take it for granted that we can do whatever we like to on the Shabbat and if we choose to change the Shabbat we can change it and expect that God will accept it.

There is an old story from the Jewish sages of old that once there was a discussion among the Rabbis of interpretation of a point in God's Torah. The majority of the Rabbis took one position while one, solitary rabbi took another. The story goes on to share that the voice of God spoke and took the side of the solitary Rabbi. The other Rabbis, in essence, told God to keep out of it as He had given the Torah to man and it was up to man to determine how to keep it.

I realize that some will take this story as showing the arrogance of Judaism but at the same time we can all learn from this story as the attitude of the Rabbis is very similar to the attitude of Christians

who reject the Torah of God and try to remove the “*Jewishness*” of our Messiah. In truth many do worship “*another Jesus*” as the Word of God talks about.

2 Corinthians 11:4 For if he who comes preaches another Yeshua whom we have not preached, or *if* you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted -- you may well put up with it!

We must be constantly on our guard against those who would try to lead us away from our Messiah. Had the emerging Church been on its guard 1700 years ago perhaps they would not have ventured off course the way they did? This is musing on my part and perhaps God allowed it to happen because He already knew the hearts of men? I can't tell you what the future will bring except for what is spelled out in the Word of God. I will not get into the details of prophecy as, to me that is a pit-fall to everyone who tries to meddle in it. I find that there are more important fundamental things to our faith that we are lacking that we need to focus on. There are so many things going on in our lives and in the world today that we must be ready for what happens. I have no idea if the Messiah will return in our generation or in the next one but I do know the stage is being set for what is to come.

Matthew 24:4 And Yeshua answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. **5** "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. **6** "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. **7** "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. **8** "All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

The events that Matthew speaks about, as well as Mark, have been taking place for thousands of years. Yeshua did not say His return would take place in any particular generation but that we were to be aware of the sign of the times and be prepared. I would venture a guess that for Him being ready was the most important part of this. Because if we are not ready we will not be part of the bride, though to me, and this is just my opinion, there will be three parts to God's people. There will be the bride, the guests, and the servants. All will be in God's Kingdom but each has a different place and a different role to play. I do not know all of the details or for that matter any of them. I am just speculating here.

I tend to try to be pragmatic about the future and end-time scenarios. To me it is all about being prepared because if we are not prepared then all of the speculation, arguing, thinking, posturing, and whatever, will be for naught anyway because we will not have a place in God's Kingdom at all.

Matthew 8:12 "But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 22:13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Matthew 24:51 "and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:30 'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Luke 13:28 "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.

These are the words of reality people! We spend so much time and effort speculating about what might be that we have lost sight of what is happening right before our very noses.

Matthew 7:22 "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' **23** "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice Torahlessness!' **24** "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: **25** "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. **26** "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: **27** "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." **28** And so it was, when Yeshua had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching.

Stand on the Rock of your salvation and be grounded in your faith in Messiah and Torah.

Because all humanity can claim a single parent, no one can say that his/her heritage is more distinguished than someone else's...from the book Essential Torah

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