



ONE TORAH FOR ALL

One Torah shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.
Exodus 12:49

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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Master of the Shabbat

Matithyah [Matthew] 12:1-13

1 At that season Yeshua went on the Shabbat day through the grain fields; and His disciples were hungry and began to pluck ears and to eat.

2 But the Pharisees, when they saw it, said to him, "Behold, Your disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the Shabbat."

3 But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and they that were with him;

4 how he entered into the house of Elohim, and ate the showbread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests?

5 Or have you not read in the Torah, that on the Shabbat day the priests in the temple profane the Shabbat, and are guiltless?

6 But I say to you, that One greater than the temple is here.

7 But if you had known what this means,

'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,'
you would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is Master of the Shabbat."

9 And He departed there, and went into their synagogue;

10 and behold, a man having a withered hand. And they asked him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Shabbat day?" That they might accuse him.

11 And He said to them, "What man shall there be of you, that shall have one sheep, and if this fall into a pit on the Shabbat day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?"

12 How much then is a man of more value than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Shabbat day."

13 Then He says to the man, "Stretch forth your hand." And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, as the other.

The Pharisees were upset because Yeshua and His disciples were taking grain and rubbing the kernels of grain out in their hands and then eating the grain, all upon the Shabbat. The problem the Pharisees had with this according to their interpretation and teaching of the Shabbat, was that Yeshua's disciples were breaking the Shabbat by harvesting grain, by threshing grain, and by winnowing grain, and perhaps other actions that should not be engaged in during the Shabbat.

However, what they did not understand was the basic principle of Shabbat. This basic principle is stated above in verse eight. It is also recorded in the following passage.

Marqa [Mark] 2:27-28

***27 And He said to them, "The Shabbat was made for man, and not man for the Shabbat;
28 so that the Son of man is Master even of the Shabbat.***

We all know that the Shabbat was made for man and not man for the Shabbat, but just exactly what does that mean?

We know that man was created on the sixth day and that the Shabbat was created on the seventh day. This shows us that man has preeminence over the Shabbat. Elohim gives man the following commandment.

B'reshit [Genesis] 1:28

And Elohim blessed them; and Elohim said to them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

Part of the purpose in giving this commandment was, since all these creatures were created before man, Elohim wanted to make certain that man understood that, even though these creatures were created before man, they do not have dominion or preeminence over man.

Since man was created before the Shabbat and then given the Shabbat as a gift, YHWH expects man to use that gift to his betterment. YHWH does not expect man to serve the Shabbat. If man attempts to serve the Shabbat, then the Shabbat becomes a burden and detrimental to one's spiritual well-being.

Before we discuss this further let us consider the following passage.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 5:15

"And you shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and YHWH your Elohim brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore YHWH your Elohim commanded you to make the Shabbat day."

Here is the gist of what the above verse is teaching. YHWH has commanded His people to take the seventh day and “make” it set-apart as a Shabbat. You see, every single person in this world gets a seventh day of the week, every single week! But do all make that seventh day a Shabbat? No, of course they don’t. So, do you see the difference between the seventh day and the Shabbat?

YHWH created all that we know in seven days. He finished His creation on the seventh day.

B’reshit [Genesis] 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.

And what was the work that He completed on the seventh day?

B’reshit [Genesis] 2:3

And Elohim blessed the seventh day, and set it apart; because that in it He rested from all His work which Elohim had created and made.

Elohim finished His work on the seventh day by blessing that day and setting it apart from all the other days and making it a day of rest. The passage quoted above from Devarim 5:15 teaches that YHWH asks His people to do the same thing that He did in taking the seventh day of the week and setting it apart and making it a day of rest, a Shabbat.

In B’reshit 2:2 above, the Hebrew word that is translated as “made” is *אָסַח* (*`a-sah*), which means “to make” or “to do”. This is the very same word that is used in Devarim 5:15 in which YHWH asks us to do as He did in setting the seventh day apart from the other six.

Elohim, as the Creator, made the seven days and set the seventh day apart. While we cannot create any more new days, YHWH does ask those willing to do it to take that seventh day He created and set it apart just as He did. The thing to see here is that Elohim did not create the seventh day as a Shabbat. What He did was to take the seventh day that He had created and “made” (*asah*) it into a Shabbat for Himself. Likewise, He asks His people to take that same day (the seventh day) that He set apart and set it apart for themselves as a day of rest just as He did.

What this should teach is that the Shabbat was made for man and not the other way around. Let us consider what it would mean if one were to make the Shabbat supreme over man.

Romans 6:16

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves as servants to obedience, the one whom you obey you are servants to; whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness?

We all know that the one whom a person obeys is the one whom he serves. In this present discussion of the Shabbat, if one obeys the Shabbat, that is, the laws governing the Shabbat, then it follows according to Scripture, the one obeying or serving the Shabbat laws is a slave to those Shabbat laws.

Now before you get out your ropes to hang me, let me assure you that I am not advocating that the Torah has been done away with. I am not advocating that one should not honor His Shabbat. In no way am I saying such things! So, keeping this in mind, let us proceed so that we can walk in an upright manner before Him in all things!

We do not want the Shabbat to be our master. Rather we want YHWH to be our Master. “Now preacher, YHWH made the Shabbat and commanded His people to make it set-apart, and to do no work on that day, so what is the difference in following YHWH and following the laws of Shabbat He gave?”

As we demonstrated above, YHWH made the Shabbat day and asks us to do the same. So here is the thing we need to see and understand. The Shabbat is created. He gave it to us as a gift. We are to serve YHWH and YHWH alone. If we do not serve YHWH then we are serving an idol, which carries the death penalty.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 8:19

“And it shall be, if you shall forget YHWH your Elohim, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish.”

You see, here is what we need to understand: YHWH is the only One who is worthy of our worship and service. If we serve and/or worship anything that is created, that is idolatry. And since the Shabbat is created, then serving the Shabbat is, in fact, an act of idolatry. And when a person or group of people act as if man were created for the Shabbat, thereby giving the Shabbat preeminence over man, those doing this are involved in idolatry, for this in effect makes man to serve the Shabbat.

If a person’s focus is upon keeping a set of rules concerning the Shabbat, then the focus is all wrong. The focus actually is not upon YHWH where it should be, but upon something that is created. And idolatry does not depend only upon something being created by man, it can equally be created by YHWH as well. If it is created, then it is not to be worshipped or served.

So here is the question: is the Shabbat our master? Or, is YHWH our Master?

Yeshua taught that He is the Master of the Shabbat. But what does this mean in one’s daily walk?

Romans 8:9

But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of Elohim dwells in you. But if any man has not the Spirit of Mashiach, he does not belong to Him.

When a person comes to Mashiach and He fills him with His Spirit, then it is somewhat like giving title deed of himself over to YHWH. This is important because His joy needs to be realized in one's daily living and this only happens with the indwelling presence of His Spirit. And that only happens if one makes Him his owner and Master.

Yochanan [John] 15:11

"These things have I spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made complete."

The fullness of this can only be realized when one walks in the Spirit.

Galatians 5:25

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

When a person walks in the Spirit, this means that he will be listening for His Voice and obeying His every commandment. If a person is not doing this, then he is walking after the lusts of the flesh.

Romans 8:4

that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

In order to walk after the Spirit, one needs to be careful not to quench the Spirit. And how does one not quench the Spirit? First and foremost, it is by living in obedience to the guidance of the Spirit. Please consider the following passage.

1st Thessalonians 5:19-22

19 Quench not the Spirit;

20 do not despise prophesy;

21 prove all things; hold fast that which is good;

22 abstain from every form of evil.

If a person works and does those things mentioned in the above passage, then he will not be very likely to quench the Spirit. However, the converse is also true: if a person prohibits prophecy, does not prove all things according to Scripture, holds fast that which is evil, and abstains from good, then that person is most assuredly quenching the Spirit. And if this behavior is left unchecked and not repented of, then His Spirit will leave such a person. The quenching of the Spirit is the spirit of idolatry. One cannot afford to be involved in that type of behavior!

Let us walk in the fullness of His Spirit, knowing His joy and peace in our lives daily.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 4:6

Seeing therefore it remains that some should enter into it; and they to whom the good tidings were before preached failed to enter in because of disobedience,

The above passage teaches that, when man is living in disobedience to YHWH, he cannot enter into His rest. It is important to really allow that truth to sink into the depths of one's being, because each person needs to enter into His rest in order to have eternal life. The primary cause for one not to enter into eternal life is his own disobedience. The basic premise of Mashiach being the Master of the Shabbat is that, if one is going to enter into that Shabbat rest, then he is going to have to submit to the Master of that Shabbat rest, Yeshua our Mashiach.

Here is the thing that one needs to realize about His Shabbat. He has given His Torah to live by and obey so that one can meet with Him during this appointed time set by YHWH Himself. However, there is much more to living Torah than following a set of rules. If a person thinks that Torah is only a set of rules to be obeyed, then he has completely missed it!

Galatians 3:24-25

24 So that the law is become our tutor to bring us to Mashiach, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor.

The Torah was given as a tutor. But what does that mean? It means that the Torah introduces a person to His Voice and teaches him to begin to hear His Voice that he might obey Him in the Spirit and not just in the letter of the Law (Torah).

Many of you reading this are parents. If you have been a parent for any length of time at all then I am sure that you have experienced one of your children obeying your exact instructions, but at the same time disobeying the spirit and intention of those instructions. And being a parent, you know very well that the child who has done this, did so with intent and purpose of heart to follow the letter while still doing as he pleased, even though he knew that what he was doing was not going to be pleasing to you.

I brought this example up today to say this; it is not possible to put into writing every possible contingency that might come about in life. If this were possible, then we would not need lawmakers today who continually write new laws faster than we can obey them, for they would have long ago set down in writing all the laws necessary for our existence. But why do they continually write new laws? Because people ignore the spirit of the law in order to disobey the law. Furthermore, YHWH could have given us a much more explicit set of instructions had His only desire been for us to simply obey a set of rules. But that is not what YHWH desired from His people; He desired to have communion with us which cannot be gained by following a set of rules.

This is no less true with YHWH's Torah (Law). In Mashiach's day the Pharisees had added to the Torah because they missed the intent of the Torah. And what is the intent of the Torah? It is to teach us to hear and obey His Voice. In short, the Torah is a record of His Voice to teach us to be familiar with what He would say and what He would not say. The Torah then teaches us to walk in the Spirit if it is rightly applied and followed.

Bringing this into our discussion of His Shabbat, then, we need to see that, while it is good to know what His Torah instructions to us concerning the Shabbat consist of, what He truly desires is for us to keep His Shabbat with the fullness of joy. Here are some questions to ponder. When Shabbat comes, is it a joy or a burden? Do you get all tense and uptight? Are you harsh and judgmental towards others who do not keep and observe Shabbat in the exact same fashion as you do? Do you do your very best to keep all the Torah instructions concerning Shabbat, but miss the Spirit of Shabbat?

Marqa [Mark] 2:27-28

27 And He said to them,

“The Shabbat was made for man, and not man for the Shabbat;

28 so that the Son of man is Master even of the Shabbat.”

Let us enter into His Shabbat by walking in His Spirit!

Here is a question for us to ponder. If I was on the way to synagogue on Shabbat and saw a man in need of help, would I stop and help him?

I remember one Shabbat I was sitting on my front porch reading Scripture and meditating upon His word. I was just having a wonderful time. At that time, I lived out in the backwoods of Missouri. As I sat there, my attention was drawn to the activities of my neighbor across the road who was down in the hollow doing something. He was far enough away that I could not quite see what he was doing. He was often working in his field on Shabbat because he did not observe Shabbat. As I studied his actions, I came to see that he was working with a cow that was down. As I watched, I could see that he may need help. So I put on my boots and headed out the door. I crossed the fence and headed down into the hollow. As I approached, I called out a greeting and asked if he needed help. So he stopped what he was doing and explained the situation.

The cow was having trouble giving birth to her calf; she was weak and if something was not done very soon, both the cow and the calf would be lost. I stayed with my neighbor the rest of the day (Shabbat) helping him with his cow as if it were my own cow. We finally did get the calf delivered. The cow died later that day. But the calf was doing well. However, without help, it is doubtful that he would have gotten the calf delivered in time.

So why did I go help my neighbor on Shabbat? I helped my neighbor because His Spirit moved me to go and help him. Here is a question: which would have been a greater witness: sitting on my porch studying Scripture (my neighbor knew that I kept Shabbat on the seventh day) while he was struggling; or, getting my hands dirty on Shabbat by helping my neighbor with his beast?

While I knew that Torah taught that I should help my neighbor with his beast even on Shabbat, that day YHWH turned that head knowledge into heart knowledge. After that I had a better appreciation of what it meant in Scripture that Mashiach was the Master of the Shabbat and that the Shabbat was made for man and not the other way around.

ABBA YHWH, thank you so very much for giving us the privilege of entering into Your Shabbat rest. We ask that You would teach us to truly abide in Your rest not only on Shabbat, but every single day of our lives; in the Name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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