

He Who Keeps Israel

(We sang, "I will lift my eyes unto the mountains, where does my help come from.")

I'm thankful we have a God who keeps Israel or else what would we do? Everything we could do wouldn't keep Israel with all the things we are trying to establish. I'm thankful He neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Lev 19:3 – *"Everyone of you (Israel, the Edah, the congregation) shall be holy, for God is holy. And everyone shall revere his mother and father and keep My Sabbaths, for I am YHWH your Elohim."* It lumps these two things together – to honor your mother and father *and* to keep the Sabbath.

The Shabbat is one of the busiest days of the week and people think we should keep our stores open because everyone comes to town to shop and we could make a lot of money, but He keeps Israel. It is a time for families to spend together and for relationships between one another. It also represents the seventh day of rest that will come in the next age that we look forward to. The Shabbat is to give us rest and to strengthen us. We rest from the regular labor we do during the week. Right now we could work on the Shabbat if we wanted to and get out of debt, but we rest.

ha-emeq – When Yoneq was reading from Lev 19:3, I was thinking that if those were the only words we had from our Father it would be enough, they are so powerful. Our Father is building a nation on us because we think that way about His word. In chapter 2 it says, *"Tell the children of Israel and say to them, be holy as YHWH is holy."* Then in chapter 3 it says *imma* first and then *abba*, and then *"keep the Shabbat holy."* We are so flawed (the abbas and immas), but to honor them shows they are amazing people.

When we keep the Shabbat we don't get a lot done, but we have a relationship with the one who keeps Israel.

Mk 2:23 – 3:5 — According to some people our Master was breaking the Shabbat, according to the Law. But He was doing good. He wasn't healing people for money. He picked some fruit and ate it and people said, *"You should not work on the Shabbat!"* The Shabbat was made for man, not man for the Shabbat. If we honor our Father in keeping the Shabbat, then He will keep us. Our Master came to teach us by His example. The learned elders of Israel were under the law. They couldn't see by the spirit.

ha-emeq – They think you have to do 4700 steps on the Sabbath and "then you'll be holy!" It was because of the hardness of their hearts. And we can be that way, too. We had a sewing seminar not too long ago and some people thought we should *"be modest as I am modest."* *"Our collars should be 37 centimeters, then we'll be holy."* There was a lot of discussion about our clothing and everyone was trying to fit in. But the "37 centimeter" collar doesn't fit for every person. If we try to legislate it, we're not going by the Spirit. That's not what the Spirit is telling us. It's not *"to be modest,"* but *"to be holy."* Trying to put numbers on spiritual facts doesn't change the heart of a person. It makes people want to give up because they aren't a "37-centimeter" person.

Bakhirah – This Sabbath because of the sidewalk event happening in town we'll have our store doors open. We're not under the law when there are opportunities for evangelism. We can't just make laws, but we have to see what's in people's hearts, not just living by a list of laws.

Abigail Yowceph – When you have a person's heart then it causes them to want to do whatever they can – like having modesty. I'm thankful our Father is trying to capture our hearts. We are being set free.

He will take care of us. We could keep our shoe store open in Island Pond on Saturday and rake in the money. I'm thankful we can obey our Father and be an example to the world. Of course, sometimes we might have an ox in the ditch. Sometimes on the Sabbath we have worked, helping out at Plymouth Plantation. And our working together has been an example to them. They couldn't get enough local people to support them and we had so many people working together, and now they have respect for us. We have to be led by the Spirit. We have to be led at the moment, but not for gain or self or greed.

Sometimes we set up our mobile café at a designated place and time to meet people. We have to find out what's pleasing to Him. Our Master was there with us in Washington and we weren't breaking the

Sabbath. We have to judge everything. Also in Lev 19:3 it says to honor your mother and father in the same way. We have to have greater understanding about this – why they put those two things together.

Israel (of Asher) – Everything has to be from the heart, then it's not oppressive. We don't put our children under the law, but we capture their hearts. It makes me sad that people don't honor Him. There's no honor if something is forced. I'm thankful our Master wants to save people who are under the law and people who aren't making it. But the law can be a good thing (why would we want to eat shellfish?)

The Torah was our Father's instruction and we need this. Christians say, "He came to do away with the law; we're not under the law." But I'm thankful for what our Master said, *"Be holy because I am holy, set apart for Me because I am set apart for you."* Unless we become like little children we won't enter the kingdom.