

The Sign of the Covenant

The Sabbath is a sign between “Me and you” — who is “Me” and who is “you”? Yahweh and the holy nation, the twelve tribes of Israel. We’re the “you” — the corporate *you*. A sign (Ex 31:13) between “Me and you” — it’s a covenant. A *sign* signifies something very *significant*. There would be no sense of corporate identity without obeying every word of Yahweh. But the Shabbat is a very observable sign that signifies who is and who isn’t the twelve tribes of Israel, Yahweh’s very own possession and people.

The twelve tribes of Israel now, in the New Covenant, are spread abroad (Jms 1:1) in the world, because they didn’t keep the Sabbath. They were losing their lampstand, their light. They were no longer being significant as a people together, a corporate identity. Acts 26:7 says “our twelve tribes,” and Isa 49:6 says, “you will be a light to the nations.” Old Israel was in a particular locality, but now Israel is spread abroad across the world, from the rising of the sun to the setting (Mal 1:11). It will be a witness to the world when they keep the Shabbat.

It’s a sign between “Me and you” — no one else keeps it except the twelve tribes of Israel. If you’re not in the twelve tribes of Israel and try to keep the Shabbat, you’re under the law, because grace is only given to Israel, those who are members of Messiah. Mt 5:14 — “You’re the light of the world.” Mt 21:43 — “You’re going to have to produce the fruit of the kingdom, because old Israel didn’t do it; you’ll have to do it yourself, because I’m going to raise a nation up that will produce the fruit.” Mt 24:14 — “This good news of the Kingdom will be a witness in every nation; the Gospel of the Kingdom will be a witness in all the world,” and that’s when the end will come and our Master will return. He couldn’t come now if He wanted to, because He’d be breaking His word.

1 Pet 2:9 — “You’re a holy nation, a royal priesthood who will declare the excellencies of the One who brought you out of darkness into the light.” People will

observe your behavior (verse 12). It will be an observable light. Our keeping of the Shabbat will be observable. Yahweh's people keep the Shabbat in every place, from the rising of the sun to the setting (Mal 1:11).

A sign is a signal that signifies who Yahweh's people is. It is a witness, and all tribes and clans who keep it sacred keep also the rest of the Law and commandments *under grace*. They fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law through His grace given to His people who are a corporate oneness. They will be those who produce the fruit of the Kingdom, being its witness in advance of its coming. The Kingdom cannot come unless we pray for it, and then after we start praying for it, we'll produce its fruit in advance. Unless there's a people who produce the fruit of the Kingdom in advance, it will never come. We have to live as if Satan were already thrown into the abyss for a thousand years, meaning that he has no way of dividing us. We're one, just as our Master prayed for before He was crucified (Jn 17:20-23). Did our Father hear His prayer? You know He did. And will He answer His prayer? You know He will — by a people who will do it.

So the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant between "Me and you" (Ex 31:17). "Me and you" speaks of a covenant, just as marriage is a covenant — "me and you" become one. But "you" is plural in this case, speaking of a people who are in unity. When you get married, you become one. When we come into Messiah, we become one — one people, one nation. So it is a corporate "you" — a nation, no less than a nation of twelve tribes — and every single clan in each tribe, and every single person in each clan keeps the Shabbat. That's the seventh day, not the first day. First day is not the Shabbat, contrary to the practice of the apostate church.

The only nation that keeps the Shabbat is in 1 Pet 2:9, the holy nation and royal priesthood, and it's *observable* as in verse 12. If someone who is not in one of the clans of the twelve tribes of Israel tries to keep the Sabbath alone, he can only do it "under the law" — it can't be kept by the grace provided to the sons of God. Only the sons of God

can keep the Shabbat, and only as a nation to be the sign of who God's holy people are. Any individual can "keep" the Sabbath under the law for a while, but then he'll start straying, going shopping on that day to get the best deals, or start working to make money.

The Sabbath is a sign signally and signifying something significant — a signification giving meaning to life. Life loses its meaning without the Shabbat. When did our Father rest? After He made man, after He gave life to man. Then He rested, "I have man now. I can rest." That's why we remember the Shabbat, because on that day He rested after He created man, His highest creation. Man is the highest thought our Creator has ever had. He can't have another thought higher than man. It's impossible for God to do that. It's something He can't do. He expressed His highest thought when He created man, to fulfill His ultimate purpose, to rule over the whole universe, all of the galaxies. Restored Man will fill the galaxies, and Redeemed Man will rule. It will be *man* doing it.

That's why it's something very significant in Gen 2:1-3. The Shabbat is a signet, like our Father's ring with which He stamps His approval on His creation. It's the seal of God's approval of His people who honor Him and the creation by resting from their labor, as our Father did from His. He said, "If I rest, you're going to rest," whoever His people are. "If you're not My people, you won't rest. You'll live like the rest of the world." It's our high day, and it's the world's high day, in a different way.

Man is His ultimate glory. He looks at man with approval. What is man that He has such marvelous high thoughts of him? He stands in awe at His creation. He looks at us, and He stands in awe. "Look what I did! I created man! Look at him! He can think, he can smell, he can see, he has culture..." You just don't know who you are. You think you're no better than an animal sometimes. You're just breathing. But you ought to think what our Father thinks about you. And then what will we think about Him?

The Shabbat is significant, full of meaning, signifying His approval. Our Father's signature is written on our foreheads, our countenance, and His name is written upon us.

We are His signalmen, giving witness to the truth, with warning. We are His people who are responsible for displaying His reality in Gen 2:2. “The day I rested, I want you to rest. You’re My signalmen. It’s a sign between Me and you, that you’re My people.”

Both “Me and you” are signatories, the two parties of a covenant who sign a compact. That’s what we did when we died to our old life and were raised anew, sealed with the Holy Spirit, signifying that we’re His people. People are amazed sometimes at our life when we work together. They can’t understand how we can work the way we do, with joy and happiness, submitting to one another. It’s amazing.

The sign of the time in Isa 56:1 — “My salvation is about to come...” — Yahweh’s Salvation, *Yahshua*. It’s not *Jesus*. That’s some made-up erroneous term that doesn’t signify anything. “Jesus” has no meaning of its own. *Yahshua* means Yahweh’s Salvation.

What distinguishes God’s people is participation in His rest. We honor our Father by keeping the Shabbat; we dishonor Him by not keeping it. Death was the penalty of dishonoring the Sabbath in the Old Covenant; in the New Covenant it is spiritual death — being sent away from the Community. We’ve already sent someone away for seven years for breaking the Sabbath, and then restored him hoping that our Father had granted him repentance, but it remains to be seen.

We’re coming to the full knowledge of the truth, and when the Race begins, there won’t be any sending people away for seven years. It will be over and done with, just like the man in Num 15 who high-handedly gathered wood on the Sabbath when he knew to do it on Preparation Day. It was a clear breaking of the commandment to honor the day of rest. It was a sign that he was not someone who respected Yahweh, when even a stranger would. Sojourners in Israel would at least keep the Sabbath, under the law, but this Israelite went out and broke the Sabbath.

We remember the Sabbath and honor it, which gives it great public respect and regard, bonding man to the One who created all things. With this command in Ex 20:8-11, Yahweh, the Almighty, set His people Israel apart from all the other nations and

peoples. Shabbat means rest. Honor or dishonor is by how you regard the Shabbat. In Dt 5:15 it says, “Remember our slavery to the work ethic in the world, where money is #1 — first fiddle.” The Sabbath is “first fiddle” to us. Just as sure as gravity, it always goes well with those who honor authority, and it has always *not* gone well with those who don’t honor authority. If you have a problem with authority, you have a problem with God. We believe in the authority of His word, and we live by that, and that’s what makes us different from anyone else on the Earth.

Obadiah — Last week, you said there is a difference between breaking the Shabbat and profaning the Shabbat. Of course, breaking the Shabbat is an outward act, but profaning is more the inward attitude. It could be even that you’re not excited about the Shabbat. The outward act you can manage to do under the law, like the Seventh Day Adventists and others. But it’s not the sign, like you used all those words to emphasize — significant, signification, signet, signalmen, signatory.

It was really clear to me that our Father really wanted to communicate something — the sign is something so awesome that it cannot be kept naturally. It has to be kept supernaturally. It can only be kept by grace; otherwise it’s not the sign. Just being under the outward restraint, that’s not the sign; if there is still some defiling of the Shabbat going on inwardly, it’s not the sign, it’s not the spirit of the Shabbat, it doesn’t communicate. But our Father wants the sign, because it’s one of the signs of the end (Isa 56). Before our Master comes back, He wants that demonstration.

Our Father’s thoughts are deep, so deep that you can’t understand them naturally. I saw that I had a very natural understanding about the Shabbat. Through this teaching I think I understood a little bit more of the spirit of the Shabbat. I tapped a little bit more into the awesomeness that our Father is satisfied with His relationship with man. It should be that we would be totally satisfied in our relationship with Him. And that’s going to be the sign. That relationship is going to be reflected outwardly — the covenant between “Me and you.” I’m thankful to understand a little bit more about the Shabbat.

Baruch — I was thinking how so much started with Abraham. Our Father tested him, and this amazing thing happened. You think back to that story of what our Father saw in Abraham’s heart... He put Isaac on the altar, and he was responding in such obedience, but it was just our Father and

Abraham and Isaac that got to see it. There it was, one of the most amazing acts of trust and obedience, of complete and total devotion in Abraham's heart towards our Father, but it was hidden from the eyes of all the world.

But our Father always had the greater vision of a sign, and that sign would be spoken of and represented through the Shabbat. Really, the Shabbat could never be kept by a scattered people here and there, because it wouldn't be the sign. The sign is so comprehensive. It certainly is the Shabbat, but it goes beyond that. It goes into all of our traditions, because the Shabbat is a sign when it's kept by a people who are obeying all of the other signs.

Just look all around us — there are ways our houses are, ways our food is made, ways we dress, everything. All these little signs come together and express who we are. Those are the only ones who can really keep the Shabbat as part of a comprehensive whole.

We say that without the Shabbat life loses its meaning. Our life loses its meaning, because without the sign, who are we anyway? Are we meant to be anything but a sign? If we can't be Isa 49:6 — a sign, a signpost, signalmen that would cause His salvation to reach the ends of the earth — then what good are we anyway? Our life completely loses its meaning, its significance, and we might as well just go and do something else.

It's amazing that in the sign of the Sabbath all of those things come together. So we get together tonight, we put away our hammer, we open up our Bibles, we prepare our hearts for the Shabbat, and it's a response of something that is represented throughout the sinews of our entire life, down to the clothes we wear and the food we eat. The sign is who we are.

It loses its meaning, because our Father brought man to life, and that's why He rested. So life loses its meaning if we're not keeping that sign that our Father created man, brought him to life, His highest creation. Of course, man is fallen, but now he's being redeemed and brought back to how he was, and even exceeding how he was in the beginning.

Chets Barur — The reason it says, “If you turn your foot aside from seeking your own pleasure, and you call the Sabbath a delight, I'll make you ride on the heights of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob...” The reason it says that is because that sign is the complete opposite of selfishness. To seek your own pleasure is selfishness, “doing

your own thing.” There are so many people out there doing their own thing on Sunday, or Saturday, and they think they’re keeping the Sabbath. But it’s not a sign.

You all sent Hayeh and me away for a few days to spend time together, and it was wonderful, but it’s not a sign for us to sit in a cabin and enjoy ourselves. It’s not a sign to the world. It was reviving for us, but that’s not a sign. A sign is that there’s a people on the earth who are bringing about an end to selfishness, and end to doing our own will, that we’re wanting to fulfill our Father’s will on the earth. This is what has been deep in His heart — to have a people who would be a light and a witness to the earth that is so full of selfishness, everyone seeking after his own pleasure.

I’m so thankful that we’re saved from that selfish, futile existence. It gave me so much vision to hear what we heard tonight. When we were away, I couldn’t wait to get back to the purpose our Father gave us, what He sanctified us for. He called us out of the world, so that we could *do something*, so that we could raise up a standard on the earth, that we wouldn’t just be a people that chew our cud, existing, waiting to die, like so many people do, having no purpose, no reason for living.

I drove downtown to where that concert is going on, where people are just like dogs returning to their vomit, just like those who come out of the bars at three in the morning. I was moved with compassion that these people don’t know what they’re doing, they don’t know why they are on this planet. They’re just mistakes, unwanted children, but our Father wants them. He wants to take all the rejects and make them into a people, a sign, something that will startle the world, that our Father is using the ignoble to astound the wise, and make foolish the wisdom of the world. I’m thankful that He’s saved us for a great purpose, and I don’t want to slight the Sabbath.

Zayith of Shimon — I’m thankful we can keep the Sabbath, and I saw how one of the signs is that we’re delivered from the evil one, that the evil one doesn’t have any part in us. I thought how in the thousand years, when the Shabbat age comes, the evil one is going to be bound, so keeping the Shabbat is a day when there’s no place given to the evil one. That’s the sign that we are being delivered from the evil one, and we’re able to be in unity totally, with nothing coming between us.