

In All Your Dwelling Places

Ex 31:13 — *Surely, above all* — above all the other commandments. The commandment to keep the Sabbath is the sign of a whole nation that they belong to Yahweh. If we were working at our jobs and keeping our businesses open on the Sabbath it wouldn't be a sign whatsoever. It's not that we should not keep all of the other commandments, but keeping the Sabbath is the sign that shows who we are. It's a national concern. It's a sign "between Me and you [the "you" is plural] throughout your generations, that you may know that I, Yahweh, have set you apart for My own purpose, in order to be purified as a people."

If Israel was just scattered in the world, as independent individuals, there would be no set-apartness, and the work of the Holy Spirit wouldn't be able to be done in them.

Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. (Ex 31:16)

The word *forever* means lasting for an age. "*Forever and ever*" means lasting for this age and the next age, and even the eternal age. So Israel has to keep the Sabbath for this entire age. It's a covenant and a sign *forever*. Of course, the natural Israelites didn't do it, so it's given to a nation who will bear the fruit of the Kingdom. So here we are, coming in at the very end, and we have to restore it in order to bring about the promise. We have to make it significant. A *sign* is something that *signifies* something that is very *significant*. So it's something to be remembered "above all" the other commandments.

Keli — If anyone is *not* keeping this sign, then it's a sign that they're *not* His people.

That's right. In Lev 23:3 it says, "It is a Sabbath to Yahweh in all your dwelling places," so it's where we *dwell* that we keep the Sabbath as a sign to the surrounding secular community that we're dwelling in the midst of.

To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Yahshua ha Mashiyach, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Yahshua ha Mashiyach our Sovereign, both theirs and ours... (1 Cor 1:2)

There are three places in the New Testament that define the word *church*, what the church is, and that is Col 1:18 and 24, and Eph 1:22-23. The church is the Body of Messiah, a community “of God,” that is, belonging to Elohim. It’s sacred. You don’t want to destroy the community, but only build it up. Whoever destroys the community will be destroyed, whether on the outside or the inside (1 Cor 3:16-17). Inadvertently we may do things that destroy or tear down, but our inadvertence has to be done away with. We have to grow up in every aspect, outgrowing our inadvertence, or we won’t enter the Kingdom.

“The church of God that is in Corinth” — there is an expression of the Body of Messiah, which belongs to God, the Father, that is in Corinth, which is a locality, a *place*. Mal 1:11 — “In every *place* incense will be offered up,” that is praise and thanksgiving, “where He has caused His name to dwell” (Dt 12:5). “You shall seek the *place* that Yahweh your God shall choose from out of all your tribes, to put His name and make it His habitation, and there you shall go...” Of course, this was speaking of old Israel, but now it applies to every locality where God has caused His name to dwell *outside the borders of natural Israel* (Mal 1:5). Those are the only places now where He can be served (Mal 1:11; Dt 12:11), not just anywhere you choose, doing what seems right in your own eyes (Dt 12:8; Jdg 21:25).

Mal 1:11 — This is prophecy which must be fulfilled, that His name would be made great among the nations, but it’s *not* great among the nations now. And it won’t be just anywhere, but in *every place* where our Father causes His name to dwell, as it says in 1 Tim 2:8. It’s not *everywhere*, but *in every place*, in reference to Dt 12:5-11 and Mal 1:5,11.

1 Cor 1:2 — “... to those who are set apart in Messiah’s Body...” You have to leave one place and go to another where you *can* be sanctified. You have to be set apart from the world in order to be purified. You’re called to be saints — holy ones, holy in every aspect of your personality, to be comparable to, compatible with, worthy of

Messiah. It's the called, chosen, and faithful who will be taken up to be with Him — not just the called and chosen, but the *faithful*. He's looking for the end product — "... together with all those in every place who call upon the name of our Master Yahshua."

Sanctified means separated from secular involvement. We're not involved independently in our own jobs. You might say, "Well, we're involved in this project here in Fort Myers," but this is for the whole Body; it's not an independent action of any one person. We're persuaded that we're being directed together by the Holy Spirit to see what He has in store for His people. But it's going to take a lot of counsel to keep us on the right path. It's very precarious. We have to walk a fine line.

2 Tim 2:4 — The word *soldier* means *warrior*, those who are involved in warfare, on the battlefield. They're not involved in anything else. We're on the battlefield; we're in a war, with everything at stake, and we can't be distracted with our own pursuits and pleasures. Heb 10:13 — We have to put all of our Master's enemies under His feet. That means warfare (Eph 6:10-18). We're in a great battle against spiritual principalities and powers, and we have to put on our armor.

1 Cor 1:2 — "... who in every place call upon the name of our Master Yahshua..." We have to appeal to the highest authority (which is our Master, according to Mt 28:18) for the pressing needs of our nation (1 Tim 2:1-8).

We have to execute Satan. He's been judged and sentenced, but not executed yet. 2 Tim 2:4 is in reference to the association of armies engaged in warfare, just as we are soldiers dedicated to the overthrow of Satan's kingdom by the power of our Master Yahshua, by calling on His name. As an army, we're under authority, under the direction of the apostles, wherever we are, in every place. Unless we're allied together under God's authority, we'll never execute Satan. We are in a great war,¹ engaged through apostles (sent-out ones who are co-workers with Messiah) with their army of soldiers who are

¹ *War* is an activity undertaken by a political unit or nation to destroy an enemy.

servicing together under authority in a military campaign. Every person has to function in his gifts. Our Father has given each one of us natural abilities that must be employed by the measure of grace and faith we have been given by the Holy Spirit.

According to Eph 2:10 every one of us has been saved for a purpose, saved by grace through faith to do the good works that were prepared for him to do, which brings about the whole purpose of our Father in Eph 4:11-16, when all the gifts are working together by the grace and faith we've been given. That's what we're called to do in every place to bring about victory. Every place has got to be victorious. In every place there is a battle going on. The enemy is at work in every place, so therefore we have to be doing battle in every place. If one place doesn't do what they're supposed to be doing, then their lampstand is taken away. They've left their first love, so they're no longer engaged in warfare, but in doing their own thing in their own strength. There's no longer any community; there's no longer any light or salt.

If we don't have vision, we perish, or some translations say we go unrestrained, which amounts to the same thing.

ha-êmeq — It's so amazing what it said about saints, called to be saints, set-apart ones. Just think of what it takes in the Catholic Church to become a saint. If there was one saint on the whole planet at this time, it might have been the pope, but they haven't really said for sure whether he's a saint yet, but they're kind of thinking he might be. So they have this one human being on the whole planet who they *might* say is a saint, but they're not quite ready to give out that title. And below the pope there are the cardinals, and they're not saints, and then there are the bishops, and the priests, and none of them are saints. Then you get down to the pews, almost two billion people, and they're not saints. None of them would ever dare to think they might be a saint, that they would ever rise to that level.

But Paul said that every single one of us is called to be a saint. The calling we have is to be set apart. When you read that in Exodus about "above all, keep the Shabbat because it's a sign of the covenant between you and Me forever..." I know about signs, like road signs, but it doesn't seem like that kind of sign, but when you said those other words, like *signature*, I thought of how it says, "Sign here." So you take the pen and

you sign your name. It's like our signature on a contract. A covenant is like a contract. A contract is no good unless both parties sign it. So it says the Sabbath is a sign between "you and Me," so obviously we're both signing a contract that endures forever.

He's setting apart a whole people for the contract to see whether we'll sign or not. You'll see on Shabbat whether we sign. Everything will drastically change for us if we sign. You can see why it says "above all" — the signature is the most important thing on a contract.

So it's the saints and Yahweh who are on the contract forever. And we say there's a whole nation of saints. That must be so offensive to the billions of people who call themselves Catholics, that we say we're called to be saints, and we are, if we're wise virgins. I want to sign the contract. When I see the sun going down, I want to sign.

Zakariah — I was in a group that had some kind of Sabbath observance, but I've realized more recently that for each group that has some kind of Sabbath there is a sign that they're set apart for something, and you can tell a lot about them by what they do on that day. For us, one of the visible signs outwardly is hospitality, because our Father is hospitable, and our Master is hospitable, and Abraham was hospitable. If we're at our place of business, we're there with our doors open inviting people in to relax and have a cup of tea and get to know us. And that is such a sign of what our Father is like.

So when I think about signs, I consider what signs have I had that point in the right direction. There have been times when I've burned the candle at both ends all week and when the Shabbat comes all I want to do is sleep all day. Is that a sign of our Father? And there was a time when I took such a long walk on Shabbat that I was worried about getting back, and my knees and shins were sore from walking so far, and I thought, "This is way off. This is not the sign of our Father. This is just seeking my own pleasure."

How we live has to be a sign of how our Father is, by how the Body of Messiah is. If we really participate in His life, it will be. I want to take that to heart.

Keli — When ha-êmeq was talking about the signature, I was thinking about the contract, and how the signature is no good if there's nothing written in the contract. But the contract is something written for a purpose. We have a contract with our Father to undo the works of the evil one, to bring an end to this age. That's what we're signing our name to, and then we're in a covenant with our Father to bring that about.

When we keep the Sabbath every week we're going back to that signature that reminds us that we signed that contract. We did it. If you sign a contract to buy a piece of property, and then a week later you wonder, did I really agree to that? So you take that piece of paper out and look at it, and there's your signature. When I signed it, I was agreeing to everything in that contract, and it's binding. That was my word.

So when we keep the Sabbath as a sign, it's like that signature that everyone can see. "They're in a contract with the Creator. Something's going to happen. They're together and they're going to do something." But if we don't, then we forgot that we even made a contract, that we have a purpose, that we even know His plan or want anything to do with it.

Zahav — The only reason you sign a contract is because someone else has something that you need, that you can't get on your own, and so you enter into a contract with them. If you think you have everything you need, and you don't need anything else, then you won't enter into a contract.

It made me thankful that our Father has created a place where that need can be fulfilled, because man has a need to be attached to his Creator. And when we were talking about that, it reminded me of a story I was reading in the Intertribal News about a man who got saved in Spain, and how he traveled all over the world. At one point he was in the Virginia area and it was during one of our DC events, and he received a freepaper from someone, though he didn't even stop to talk to whoever the disciple was who gave him the paper.

But somehow he read the paper and what he got out of it was that he needed to start keeping the Sabbath. He hadn't known anything better before than that the Sabbath was Sunday. But he didn't get connected to our people then, so all he was left with was an empty contract that he put his signature on. So all he did was start getting fired from every job that he tried to keep because he refused to work on the Sabbath. He actually had decent jobs because he was a skilled man, and he'd get offered managerial positions, but it wasn't going well with him because he was under this false empty contract.

I'm thankful that our Father has created a place where we can come and enter into that contract with Him, and it's not false or empty. I'm thankful that the other signature on the contract we've signed is our Father's. We've given up our life, but we're going to get the other end of the bargain, which is that we're reconnected to our Father. And I'm thankful that that man ended up getting saved, because finally he met our Father in Shimon, who has the authority to nullify false contracts.

ha-êmeq — It could only happen in one of the places where our Father lives in His people.

Natan — The place is made up of disciples. That’s what makes a place. When the lampstand leaves, it’s not a place anymore. It’s not just some physical location. It’s only called “a place” if there’s love there. I’m just thankful to be a part of that. I’m sure a lot of churches would say, “I agree. We have a place, and we meet there...” But the place is a daily living...

“I want all the men in every place to hold up holy hands without any division...”

So all the denominations in that township are in perfect unity, without any divisions, right?

Natan — Right. “No divisions” is not possible without living with each other. A child can understand that. If we live together, we can maintain harmony and unity together. If we’re all in separate homes, well, there’s a reason why people are separated.

Neshef bat Keli — I want to sign the contract so I can be connected to my Creator.

Amen! And you will be, too!