

“Me and You” — A Covenant Relationship

[On the next day would be a tour through the historical district of Dean Park, in which several of our houses here are located. We had committed ourselves to this event by opening up one of our homes for the many visitors that would participate in this historical tour. A lot of restoration work had been going on the weeks prior to this date, to transform this run down property and its extensive yard into something that would witness our Father's character and be pleasing to the observer. Needless to say, that work continued right up until it was time to gather for the Shabbat...]

This is our day of rest. Finally we come to rest, although today there might be an exception because of tomorrow. This is the day of rest. After our Father was totally satisfied because He had made man, He could rest. Man is His highest creation. Our Father set the seventh day apart for man to rest on that day. Of course man fell. I doubt that they kept the Shabbat. It was not kept until Abraham came. Then it was put into the Ten Commandments. We come to the end of the week, and rest and celebrate.

Only redeemed and restored man can and will restore all things. Israel will be restored to their former *glory*. Our Father said, “The Shabbat is a sign between Me and you.” Ex 31:12-13 — “Me and you” indicates a covenant relationship. *You* means My people, a holy nation. He is looking for that nation that would keep the Shabbat. *Me* — YHWH, and *you* — corporate identity. *You* means a nation and not just individuals. It's all the individuals in that nation “...throughout your generations.”

Things happened. Israel fell. They gave into idolatry, etc. Our Master came and said that the kingdom would be taken away from them and be given to a nation that would produce the fruit of it. Once again, the Shabbat got restored. But then the insurgency of necessity took over. “We have to do this and that...”

The Sabbath is a sign of who belongs to Him, and who doesn't. It's a sign of who actually belongs to Him, and not just who *say* that they belong to Him. It's not talking about individuals, but of a nation. Even Peter said that we are a holy nation.

The Shabbat is a sign. It signifies something very significant (Ex 31:13). It's an observable sign that signifies something. It shows who is the holy nation. We all keep the Shabbat under grace and not under the law. We fulfill the law by the Spirit, with grace and faith. It's an observable sign of who is and who is not Israel, the holy nation. The Shabbat will be kept in every place, in every tribe, clan, and household. It's a witness. It's a signal (same word as *sign*). It's something we want to do with all of our heart. It's done by a people, a plural corporate *you*. There is no sense of corporate identity without obeying every word that proceeds from our Father's mouth. We can do it by His grace and the faith He's given us.

I want to be part of that — His people (Ex 31:13). The people who didn't keep the Shabbat showed that they weren't His people. Even aliens that would stay with Israel would keep the Shabbat. If Israel didn't keep it they'd be cut off, they'd be destroyed. Keeping the Shabbat is giving meaning to our Father's work, that He finally made man in His own image and likeness, and a ruling class that'll rule with our Master. It's like a signet ring, a seal of our Father's approval. It distinguishes our Father's people.

Some honor the Shabbat; some dishonor it. We have to keep it a sign of who His people actually are. Israel didn't do it, and they didn't keep the other commandments either. They didn't produce the fruit of the kingdom. Therefore, our Master said, “I will take the kingdom away from you. There is no sign that you are God's people.” Our Master said this right before His crucifixion. Then after He ascended, a nation began. The community that started in Jerusalem at Pentecost was the nucleus of that nation. After 50 years, they left their first love, and their lampstand was taken away. The bishopric system came in. They made Sunday the day of rest. There is no place in the bible that mentions anything to that effect. This was decreed by the big popes and bishops.

There has to be a restoration of all things in order to distinguish who His people are and who aren't (Mal 3:18). I am thankful I can be a part of this restoration.

There’ll be extenuating circumstances that override the commandment of resting on the Shabbat. Our Master said that healing is an exception, or pulling an ox out of the ditch. But we have to judge these things rightly, lest we wouldn’t keep the Shabbat from selfish reasons.

Keli — On the first Shabbat, our Father was satisfied, because, He. created man. Something was fulfilled in our Father’s heart. We want our Father to be in that place all the time, that He always would have a Shabbat. We have to have a connection with our Father. It’s His Shabbat. He is the One who sanctifies us, who is doing a work inside of us, bringing us back to the ways we were, when He created us. Of course, His people keep the Shabbat. Those who aren’t sanctified won’t keep it. Keeping the Shabbat is just another rule to them. I am thankful we can have that connection with our Father.

James said if you break one commandment you break all. We went to church on Sunday and got out at 12 o’clock to seek our own pleasure, and watch the ballgame, or anything else (Isa 58:13-14). It is impossible to keep the Shabbat like this. I am thankful our Father is restoring all things back to how it was in the first century. All those who believed in the Son had all things in common. The only way the Way can be the Way is if it is the way it was when it was the Way.

Exodus 31 talks about profaning and breaking the Shabbat. These are two different things. With both you, were cut off, executed in old Israel, especially if you deliberately did these things (Num 15:30). To profane it is to be lax about the Shabbat, not preparing, not looking forward to it, working right up to darkness. Num 15:29-30 — It’s difficult to get kindling out in the desert. It wasn’t light work. This was a deliberate act. That man had no identity in Israel.

Maybe we should have cleaned the road on Preparation Day. It has to be cleaned before this event tomorrow — otherwise it’s not a witness to the people who will be coming. I’m not making a judgment. I know we were pretty busy, and we had reasons. Probably a lot of times, we have broken the Shabbat or profaned it. People often come

home really late. We need the preparation time before the Shabbat. If we profane the Shabbat, it'll be only a matter of time before we break it.

Once back in the early days in Chattanooga, we got a ride from somebody. That person drove like a madman. He said, “I have to get home before the Shabbat.” It scared you to death how he drove. He was a Seventh Day Adventist. We can laugh at it and do the same thing. Of course, the Seventh Day Adventists are not forming a nation, but at least they see the Shabbat in the Bible.

David Zerubbabel — Our Master always got into trouble with the Pharisees and scribes. Ex 31:17 — It is refreshing to our Father when His highest creation has “Shalom.” Our Master wanted to bring that shalom, that peace. It's almost like He'd look for opportunities to help people on the Shabbat. That's the spirit of Shabbat. It's not to carry a load of animosity, the pointing of the finger, etc., the things it talks about in Isa 58. How much is our Father going to be refreshed if we have “Shalom”?

I like that it says, “Me and you.” That's personal.

ha-êmeq — It's so wonderful. It just stands out. “Me and you. I really want you to hear this. Something is going to happen. It's us two.” I can just see Him looking down on the yard, where we were working, like on an anthill. “Me and you.” It's talking about a nation. We all said, “Ok, at sundown it's ‘Me and you.’ We're meeting our Father. The sign is coming over the horizon.” And our Father is saying, “It's time to remember Me. You all are really busy down there, moving rocks and dirt, have a backhoe going, planting... Now it's time to rest, to stop and remember Me — Me and you.”

“Me and you” — this is signatory. It speaks about two parties in a covenant.

Chets Barur — If we profane the Shabbat we won't know what's an ox in the ditch and what's not. We're frequent in profaning the Shabbat. There is a difference between breaking and profaning. Breaking is high-handed. I want that the Shabbat would be a delight. It's a day to rest from our labors. If we're racing until the last minute, there'll be no *shalom*. “Me and you” — our Father can say this if we prepare. I don't want the Shabbat to be a hypocritical ritual. We get our Bibles and come here and start the rote.

Our Father gives us time to come to the knowledge of the truth. The act in Num 15:30 was presumptuous. The man had no respect, no regard for the Shabbat. Our

Father teaches us over and over again. When the Race begins we're responsible. Some already are responsible right now. Some things we hear go right over our head. We don't really appreciate this day. We still profane it in our heart.

All kinds of things come up on that day. It would be the best day to make money if we had a café. It's a wonderful test for us. Nehemiah pulled the beards out of his fellow Israelites for breaking and profaning the Shabbat.

Almah — One of our neighbors came by and asked how it is that we all work together. He said, “Just the fact that there are a lot of people doesn't mean that they can work together. How do you do it? Who is behind all of this?” I told him that it's the Son of God. He said, “Now wait a minute. He is up there, and you are down here.” I told him that it's Luke over there. He is organizing the yard work.

This man had been married, but his marriage didn't work out. His mother is 84. She was 42 when her husband died. Her son asked her, “Why don't you remarry and have fun?” She told him, “I married the best man there ever was. I never want to marry again. It would be a step backwards.” The man said, “I realized then that there are relationships on earth that work.”

That's exactly how we need to be with our neighbors. We cannot be prejudiced. The day will come when they'll ask for the hope that's in us.

I met Paul (*a guest who's been coming around for Erev Shabbat*) two months ago downtown. Then I saw him again a month later. (*Every first Saturday of the month, a Christian street ministry group has a little event downtown to reach out to the homeless. Paul is not a homeless, but he likes to go to this event. He told us that the mayor of Fort Myers wants to drive out the homeless as they are an eyesore to some.*)

Anyone can come and work along with us. In the beginning in Chattanooga, many homeless people came to us. People even sent them to us. But pretty soon, the news got out that we weren't just giving a handout. They didn't want to work. We have some people among us that used to be like that. Our Father loves everyone.