

Lesson THREE

WHAT CAN WE DO ON THE SABBATH?

introduction

The Jews developed so many rules about the Sabbath to keep the people from breaking the Sabbath that Yahshua ended up pointing out that they put more importance on the commandments of men (the rules they had made) than on the original law.

Matthew 15:7-9

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Therefore, we will first look at what the original commandments required on the Sabbath and then how those commandments were applied later. Finally, we'll look at what Yahshua did on the Sabbath.

The example of manna

When Yahweh led the Israelites out of Egypt, He decided to feed them using manna. However, He also used the manna to teach the Israelites of the Sabbath that they had long forgotten.

Exodus 16:11-31

Now, we have this first instance of the commandments related to the Sabbath. Notice that they gathered twice as much on Friday and cooked it to keep over through the Sabbath.

However, some people use this passage to show that cooking was not permitted on the Sabbath.

Discussion Questions:

1. Exactly what does this passage say to NOT do on the Sabbath?
2. Why did Yahweh tell them to cook all the manna into bread for Friday and the Sabbath?

Written in the law

Later, the importance of the Sabbath is reiterated a few times within the law that the Israelites had promised to obey at Mount Sinai.

Exodus 20:8-11

8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:
10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of Yahweh thy Elohim: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger

that is within thy gates:

11 For in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Yahweh blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Discussion Questions:

1. Exactly what does this passage say to NOT do on the Sabbath?
2. If you consider all of the people listed in verse 10, just who was left in the land of Israel who could work on the Sabbath?

Exodus 31:12-17

12 And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying,
13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am Yahweh that doth sanctify you.
14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to Yahweh whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.
16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.
17 It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

Discussion Questions:

1. Since the scripture does not mention waiting until the day after the Sabbath, do you think that the man who broke the Sabbath was put to death on the Sabbath? Would that be considered "work"?
2. What does it mean for the Sabbath to be a sign?

Exodus 35:1-3

- 1 And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, These are the words which Yahweh hath commanded, that ye should do them.
- 2 Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to Yahweh: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death.
- 3 Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.

Discussion Questions:

1. Exactly what does this passage say to NOT do on the Sabbath?
2. If you were to observe the Passover when it happened to fall on the Sabbath, how might this passage conflict with what is required for the Passover?

Applying the law

The important part of the law is not just knowing what the commandments are, but how judgments were made when the commandments were broken. The following passage is the first example of someone being caught breaking the Sabbath. However, it is important to note the scriptures that precede this example because it explains the mindset of the individual punished.

Numbers 15:22-36

Discussion Questions:

1. Based on the punishment ruled here, did the man break the Sabbath out of ignorance or on purpose?
2. If he did it on purpose, then how was he breaking the Sabbath? How could he intentionally be breaking the Sabbath by gathering sticks?

Later on, when the Israelites who were in Babylon returned to Israel, some were put in charge of the people and it was discovered they were once again breaking the Sabbath. Nehemiah puts some rules in place.

Nehemiah 13:15-22

15 In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day; and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals.

16 There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

17 Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?

18 Did not your fathers thus, and did not our Elohim bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.

19 And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.

20 So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.

21 Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.

22 And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my Elohim, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

Discussion Questions:

1. What was Nehemiah preventing the people from doing?
2. Did his own rules cause the Sabbath to be broken in some way? What were the Levites required to do?

What Yahshua DID do

With all these rules and commandments telling us what we cannot do on the Sabbath, just what is it we CAN do? Well, let's look at what Yahshua did on the Sabbath that many Jews **thought** was breaking the Sabbath.

Matthew 12:1-8

1 At that time Yahshua went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful

to do upon the sabbath day.

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the house of Yahweh, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?

5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

6 But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple.

7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is Master even of the sabbath day.

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you think the Jews thought the disciples were doing that was unlawful?
2. How is it that the priests in the temple "profane the sabbath"?

Matthew 12:9-13

9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:

10 And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine

hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

Luke 13:10-17

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

12 And when Yahshua saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified Yahweh.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Yahshua had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

15 The Messiah then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

John 5:1-15

Discussion Questions:

1. In a more generic sense, what did Yahshua say we could do on the Sabbath? What kind of things might that include?
2. Did it appear as if the Pharisees has a double-standard when it came to observance of the Sabbath?