



TNT Restoration Class
4. Remembering the Sabbath
May 26, 2015

I. FROM THE READING

(Quotes from Thomas Lancaster's *Restoration* Chapters 8)

Chapter 8: The Sabbath of Torah

A. Much to Unite Christians and Messianics

1. Christians Have Reflexive Hebraic Foundations

75-His disciples were one described as many myriads, "all zealous for the Law [Torah]." Acts 21:20

-Just by living the Christian life, you are keeping most of Torah.

-Things like honoring one's father and mother, marital fidelity and basic honesty are all commandments of torah. The commands to love your neighbor as yourself, care for the orphan and widow, look after the poor and extend a helping hand to a brother in need—those are all precepts of Torah. Prohibitions on violence, injustice, theft, homicide, sexual deviancy and occult practices are all examples of the basic moral statutes that comprise the laws of Torah. Faith, grace, repentance, confession, prayer and baptism are all found in the Torah too. The things that define Christian life are Torah-based. For the most part, the Christian life is one of Torah lived out.

2. Both Groups Obediently Avoid Certain Presently Inappropriate Bible Commands

76-It would be a sin to offer animal sacrifices today. The Bible says so. Therefore, every time we do not offer up burnt offerings in our backyard, we are keeping a commandment of the Torah: the commandment not to offer a sacrifice outside of the Temple in Jerusalem. Similarly, the strict measures of Torah justice—stoning and the like—are not applicable unless one is in the land of Israel under the authority of a duly ordained Torah court of law like the Sanhedrin...As much as we might sometimes like to stone someone, the Torah forbids us from vigilante justice of the sort. Most of the laws of Torah that Christians do not keep are laws that do not apply to us in the modern world. This is not to say that those laws are irrelevant or done away with, but under current circumstances, they cannot be practiced.

3. Christians Largely Respected & Keeping Weighty Matters of the Torah

-Meanwhile, Christians are busily keeping the weighty matter of the Torah all over the world.

77-The Church has some dark chapters in its history, and there are always a few bad eggs in the basket, but overall, Christians are respected, even if they are not appreciated. All of those things are the result of Christians doing the Torah.

B. Forgotten Areas of Torah: There are a few discrepancies that have arisen over the years—a few elements of Torah that we have forgotten. They are things that we lost in the early years of persecution.

1. Foundations of Our "Amnesia"

-The young, emerging Christian church was deeply impacted by the First and Second Jewish Revolts against Rome [70 & 135 CE]. [Resultant] heavy taxes combined with anti-Torah legislation, arrests and persecutions made it very unpopular to be identified with Torah or Judaism...At the same time, there was a concentrated effort within Judaism to push the Messianic believers out of the synagogue.

2. Yeshua's Prophecy of This

-Yeshua predicted the persecutions, and He predicted the coming time of lawlessness (Matthew 24:9-12)

78-When we began to turn away from the commandments, our love for God diminished, and as our love for God diminished, we turned from the commandments.

-We will look at a few of the things we have lost along the way. We will consider the biblical Sabbath, the biblical festivals and the biblical dietary laws.

C. Sabbath-Keeping

1. Stories of Sabbath-keeping

-As dusk settles on the neighborhood the boys are reading through the weekly Torah portion, preparing to contribute something at the Sabbath table. My wife finishes the final preparations in the kitchen. She will not need to cook again for more than twenty-four hours.

2. First to Be Set Apart As Holy

-Out of all those things in this vast and unreachable reality that we know as the creation, the Sabbath was the very first thing that God set apart as holy.

-Before there was a temple or an altar, before there was a Bible or a commandment, before there was a church or a single hymn was written, there was the Sabbath.

79-For believers who keep the Sabbath, it is our delight, the day of our joy...It is the oldest heirloom we have inherited from the family of God.

3. *Picture of Our Salvation in Yeshua*

-We delight in the Sabbath because we encounter Yeshua within it....The Sabbath is a day of peace. It is a time for setting aside the troubles of our world....In Colossians 2, Paul claims that the Sabbath is a shadow of things to come...The seventh-day Sabbath is likened to the millennial reign of Messiah...The prophets tell us that when Messiah comes, all mankind will keep the Sabbath. (Isaiah 66:23)

4. *Sabbath Resting*

80-The Hebrew word for cessation is *Shabbat*. The word Sabbath comes from *Shabbat*.

-The original context of creation makes it clear that the work God rested from on the Sabbath is the work of creation. Therefore, on the Sabbath day, we rest from the work of creating as well. We cease from the work of shaping, creating, forming, making, ordering, structuring, organizing, mixing, and molding things to produce results.

Imposing our will onto substance, and creating order from disorder, is work.

-Hebrews chapters 3 and 4 teach us that the Sabbath is a picture of the eternal life we possess through faith in Yeshua...Those without faith in Yeshua, the writer of Hebrews explains, are like those without rest.

81-When we keep the Lord's Sabbath, we rest from our work. In the same way, when we place faith in Messiah, we rest from striving to earn salvation.

-By stopping for a day, we acknowledge God...God says, "Rest. Enter My rest because the work is done. Not because you finished it; because I finished it. It is already accomplished. Now just rest."

-Sometimes it is hard to just rest in grace. We want to shape just one more thing.

82-Sabbath is the one day out of a week to remember that we serve God, not Pharaoh...It stands to reason that if Yeshua is the Lord of the Sabbath, and if the substance of the Sabbath is Messiah, then the Sabbath is for the followers of Yeshua.

-Deuteronomy instructs us to keep the Sabbath as a remembrance of the exodus from Egypt. (5:15)

5. *Yeshua's Sabbath-Keeping*

-The same allegation is still being lodged against Yeshua nearly 2000 years later. "Jesus broke the Sabbath!" But this time it is His followers, not His enemies, who accuse Him of Sabbath-breaking.

83-According to Jewish law, the Sabbath can and must be broken if necessary to save life. Yeshua extended that ethic to include any alleviation of human suffering.

-Nowhere in the Bible does it say, or even imply, that Yeshua or His followers met and worshipped on Sunday.

-If Messiah or the Apostles meant to change the Sabbath, they would have made the change explicit, and they would have provided compelling teaching to explain why this frequently repeated commandment of the law no longer applies. They did not.

-The move to Sunday happened after the days of the Apostles.

-This passage (Acts 20:7) is a reference to a Sabbath-end (Saturday) meal, such as it still practiced in Judaism today. In Jewish reckoning, the first of the week begins on Saturday night, not Sunday morning.

-The rest of the story bears this out. That's why Paul spoke all night, not all day, and that's why Eutychus fell asleep and out of the window.

84-It is not wrong to worship and assemble on Sunday, but Sunday is not the Sabbath, and we should not suppose that it was Yeshua's idea.

-The Gospels tell us that it was Yeshua's custom to go to the synagogue every Sabbath. (Luke 4:16)

-To Yeshua, the Sabbath was the day of rest, the day of redemption and healing and the day of His Father. The only work He did on Sabbath was the work of redemption.

-Yeshua was concerned with restoring a balanced perspective regarding Sabbath observance.

85-Far from dismissing the Sabbath or telling His disciples to disregard it, He was concerned that the Sabbath be kept according to the spirit in which God gave it.

86-To the disciples of Yeshua, the Sabbath was so holy they would not even violate it for the sake of attending to His body.

-After His death and resurrection, the community of His disciples continued in His ways, and they kept the Sabbath.

-According to the Bible, the Sabbath is meant for all Israel; for the Jew, the stranger, the foreigner and all flesh alike. (Ex. 20:8-10; Isaiah 56:3-6; 66:23).

-Paul's non-Jewish converts met in the synagogues.

If Yeshua was a Sabbath-breaker, then His enemies among the Pharisees were correct. He was a sinner, and He could not be the Messiah. Our faith is in vain.