

THE MEANING OF THE SABBATH

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Taken From *Your Heritage*

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Plus Critical Note

Despite some difference of opinion as to which day of the week should be kept, all Christian denominations agree on the need to observe one day each week as a sabbath of rest. Like the other features of our religion, this has its roots in the Old Testament. I have taught many times that there is just as much Christianity in the Old Testament as in the New Testament, we shall find this true of the sabbath also. Of course you are grateful for that day of rest, but have you ever thought about its real meaning? How did it originate, what does it symbolize, how will it be fulfilled?

Yahweh intended the sabbath as a great monument of hope for His people Israel. This was a symbol of a mightier deliverance than any which had yet occurred. First, we must go back to Adam. There had been other races of man on earth, thousands of years before Adam. As I explained in my lesson titled, "Adam Was Not The First Man", these pre Adamic races were created, but had no closer relationship to their creator.

However Luke 3:38 tells us, "Adam was the son of Yahweh." The garden of Eden was not just an lot of ordinary trees and shrubs. The trees in it were the family trees of the various races. Satan had been the governor of this planet, until he forfeited his right to this power by rebellion against Yahweh. Adam was sent to replace him. Unfortunately, Adam was as well meaning and gullible as we, his descendant, are.

When Satan proposed peaceful coexistence between them, instead of the vigorous warfare of good against evil, which Yahweh had commanded, Adam fell for it. Thereby Adam lost the power and glory with which he had come. To buy what he thought would be peace, he sold his power and immortality.

One of the penalties of Adam's fall was the sentence to a life of toil. We are always meeting people who cheerfully assure us that the necessity for constant work, is really a great blessing. Confidentially, I don't find this any more convincing than you do! The Bible expressly calls it a curse in Genesis 3:17, 19. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life ... In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground ..." A life sentence at hard labor, just what we give to some criminals today. There are no platitudes about what a favor we are doing for them.

Nevertheless, **this penalty would not last forever**. Yahweh anticipated Adam's fall and made provision to redeem Adam and all his descendants. Remember, Revelation 13:8 tells us Yahshua is, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Yahweh didn't stop with a remedy to come thousands of years in the future. The Adamic race would have perished of despair in the meantime, unless comforted with knowledge of this day of rest. Yahweh gave them hope, from early times we find the sabbath of rest a symbol of this.

This curse became a terrible power in Israel's bondage in Egypt, as Yahweh had prophesied to Abraham in Genesis 15:13. But Yahweh redeemed them from the curse in the exodus, as a symbol of the eventful great redemption, and commanded observance of the sabbath for this reason. In Deuteronomy 5:15 Yahweh said, "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that Yahweh thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: **therefore Yahweh thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.**" So Yahweh's people were always to have this symbol of hope. One day in every seven the curse was to be lifted, as a reminder that some day it would be lifted forever.

Neither did it stop there, for Yahweh commanded the year of release every seven years. In Leviticus 25:3-4 it is recorded, "Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for Yahweh."

So the hope was reinforced. First one day of rest in seven, then one year of rest in seven years, when the curse of hard labor was lifted. To further emphasize the symbolism of eventual complete redemption, this seventh year brought also **the forgiveness and release of all debts**. Deuteronomy 15:1-3 gives the rule. "At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. ... Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbor shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbor, or of his brother: because it is called Yahweh's release. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release." This was accompanied by the promise that the creditor would not lose thereby, for Yahweh would so bless him for keeping this law that he would prosper greatly, Yahweh would pay his debts.

Do you see what this symbolized? The curse is still upon us, but we look forward to our release from it every seventh day, lest we feel too greatly crushed, then on a far greater scale every seventh year. In this sabbath year, Yahweh pays our debts for us. This symbolizes the time when Yahshua, on the cross, paid the awful debts of every sinner.

To still emphasize this promise, after seven Sabbaths of 49 years, the 50th year was the jubilee. This was another year of rest and freedom from the curse. It was even more than that, it was the year of restitution. Through all the centuries, most people have been poor. In every generation many people have gone through periods of hard times when they have lost their pitifully few possessions. In their distress they had been compelled to mortgage or to sell their homesteads. In their poverty, they were not able to redeem them. However, in the year of jubilee, Yahweh redeemed it all for them.

Leviticus 25:8, 10 gives us this instruction. "And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years ... And ye shall hallow the fiftieth

year and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and **ye shall return every man unto his possessions, and ye shall return every man unto his family.**” This is where we got the words written on the rim of our Liberty Bell. “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof.” Being Yahweh’s people, we took this from Yahweh’s law. All that a man had lost, under the curse of labor and poverty, Yahweh restored to him without cost.

We find in the Old Testament the Christian symbolism. Adam was placed in this world as a son of Yahweh, with the power, glory and immortality that went with that position. By his disobedience, his failure to live up to the responsibilities of his position, he lost these things and the curse came upon him, and upon all his descendants.

However, Yahweh paid the debt for us in the year of release. Yahweh lifted the curse in the weekly and yearly Sabbaths. In the jubilee year, **Yahweh restored to us all that we have lost.** This is the complete redemption given to us by Yahshua, it is all prophesied in symbol, in the Old Testament. The apostle Peter knew this. In Acts 3:20-21 Peter speaks of “Yahshua whom the heavens must receive until **the times of restitution of all things**, which Yahweh hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”

The sabbath and its greater cycles, the year of release and the year of jubilee, are not only a commemoration of something in the past, they are the memorials of Yahweh’s great promise of redemption to be given to us in the future. The apostle Paul understood this, for in Colossians 2:16-17 he says, “Let no man therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the **sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come.**”

It is most unfortunate that zealous, but ignorant men, have been able to seize upon some one verse in the Bible and found church doctrines on it. A verse taken out of context by someone ignorant of its true meaning, and therefore misapplied, creates confusion and error in the church.

Never believe those who tell you there is conflict between the Old and New Testaments, that the New Testament did away with the Old Testament. Yahshua explained their proper relationship in Matthew 5:17, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

Critical note by Clifton A. Emahiser: While I have a lot of appreciation for Bertrand L. Comparet and his teachings, I cannot entirely agree with everything he has presented in this paper. While it is true that our annual Sabbaths are Old Testament shadows of things to come, the weekly Sabbath can hardly fall into that category. By the way, there is still one shadow yet to come to fruition. The shadows for Passover, Pentecost and the Feast of Trumps have already been fulfilled, but the Feast of Tabernacles has not. Tabernacles will be fulfilled at the Second Advent of Yahshua Christ. I have never found that the weekly Sabbath is a shadow for anything except the original creation which was not made up of 24 hour days.

Personally, I refuse to keep Sunday as a Sabbath, for its origin is from Mithraism rather than Christianity! Pentecost would be the only exception, but that only happens once a year, and is always on the first day of the week every year. Others can do as

they please, but I will not conform to such a pagan tenet. Before I knew better, I kept Sunday, but no more. I will now attempt to give some historical background of how a Sunday sabbath came about:

The teaching of these so-called “churches” can be traced back to the Baal worship that Jezebel introduced into Israel. That makes the ministers and priests of these so-called “churches” the same as soothsayers! To understand this connection with the Baal religion, let’s go to a book entitled *Freemasonry, An Interpretation* by Martin L. Wagner. On page 200 he says:

“The **Mithraic** mysteries were the institutions in which the worship of the sun in its Persian aspect, became concrete. The worship of this god can be traced back to a very early period, when it presents itself as a pure monotheism. It came in contact with other faiths and by assimilation of other elements degenerated into a sensual and debasing nature worship. It became very popular, and employed a very elaborate ritual and expressed its ideas of the divine nature in an extensive symbolism. The worship was very probably conducted according to elaborate ritualistic prescriptions.

“The rites of Mithras were celebrated in a cave. Mithras proper was the generative principle in the sun, and always conceived of as distinct from the sun, but clothed in the light of the sun. The God was conceived as always performing the mystic sacrifices through which the good will finally triumph. The human soul was viewed as separated from the divine nature, to which it can only re-ascend through a series of probationary degrees of penance, scourgings and fastings. The first of these was the lowest and admitted those who passed it as soldiers fighting for Mithras. The second and third degrees were that of the Bull and the Lion. Other grades could be passed which if accomplished the soul became pure fire, and reunited with the divine nature. **This cult spread over the Roman world during the second and third centuries after Christ, and its influence was felt for a long period throughout Europe.**”

What I am trying to do here is show you how this Baal religion of Mithras made its way into the Roman Church and most of it is practiced both by Catholic and Protestant today. The next quote will be from a book entitled *The Worship of Augustus Caesar* by Alexander Del Mar on page 193:

“**A. D. 220, Rome.** - Establishment of sun-worship, or Mithrasism, as the official religion of Rome, under Elagabalus. See ‘Middle Ages Revisited,’ Appendix R. See also B.C. 389 for dated coins of Elagabalus.”

From the 1894 *Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 16, page 554, under the topic “Mithras” we read: “The worship of Mithras became known to the Romans through the Cilician pirates captured by Pompey about 70 B.C. It gained a footing in Rome under Domitian, was regularly established by Trajan about 100 A.D., and by Commodus about 190. Finally the mysteries were prohibited and the holy cave destroyed in 378. Dedicatory inscriptions to *Deo Soli Invicto Mithroe*, and votive reliefs of Roman work, are very common. The usual representation shows Mithras in the mystic cave performing the mystic sacrifice; a young man in Oriental costume kneels with one knee on a prostrate bull, grasping the head and pulling it back with the left hand, while with the right he plunges his sword into its neck. A dog, a snake, and a scorpion drink the

blood that flows from the bull; a crow sits on the rock behind Mithras; the figures of the sun and of the moon occupy the two sides of the relief.”

From *An Encyclopedic Outline Of Masonic, Hermetic, Qabbalistic & Rosicrucian Philosophy* by Manly P. Hall, page 24, we read: “There are many points of resemblance between Christianity and the cult of Mithras. One of the reasons for this probably is that the Persian mystics invaded Italy during the first century after Christ and the early history of both cults [Mithraism and Christianity] were closely interwoven. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* makes the following statement concerning the Mithraic and Christian Mysteries:

“The fraternal and democratic spirit of the first communities, and their humble origin; the identification of the object of adoration with light and the sun; the legends of the shepherds with their gifts and adoration, the flood, and the ark; the representation in art of the fiery chariot, the drawing of water from the rock; the use of bell and candle, holy water and the communion; the sanctification of Sunday and of the 25th of December; the insistence on moral conduct, the emphasis placed on abstinence and self-control; the doctrine of heaven and hell, of primitive revelation, of the mediation of the Logos emanating from the divine, the atoning sacrifice, the constant warfare between good and evil and the final triumph of the former, the immortality of the soul, the last judgment, the resurrection of the flesh and the fiery destruction of the universe – [these] are some of the resemblances which, whether real or only apparent, enabled Mithraism to prolong its resistance to Christianity.’

“The rites of Mithras were performed in caves. Porphyry, in his *Cave of the Nymphs*, states that Zarathustra (Zoroaster) was the first to consecrate a cave to the worship of God, because a cavern was symbolic of the earth, or the lower world of darkness. John P. Lundy, in his *Monumental Christianity*, describes the cave of Mithras as follows:

“But this cave was adorned with the signs of the zodiac, Cancer and Capricorn. The summer and winter solstices were chiefly conspicuous, as the gates of souls descending into this life, or passing out of it in their ascent to the Gods; Cancer being the gate of descent, and Capricorn of ascent. These are the two avenues of the immortals passing up and down from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth.’

“The so-called chair of St. Peter, in Rome, was believed to have been used in one of the pagan Mysteries, possibly that of Mithras, in whose subterranean grottoes the votaries of the Christian Mysteries met in the early days of their faith.”

Ibid., page 23: “THE RITES OF MITHRAS: When the Persian Mysteries immigrated into Southern Europe, they were quickly assimilated by the Latin mind. The cult grew rapidly, especially among the Roman soldiery, and during the Roman wars of conquest the teachings were carried by the legionaries to nearly all parts of Europe. So powerful did the cult of Mithras become that at least one Roman Emperor was initiated into the order, which met in caverns under the city of Rome. Concerning the spread of this Mystery school through different parts of Europe, C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Remains*, says:

“Mithraic bas-reliefs cut on the faces of rocks or on stone tablets still abound in the countries formerly the western provinces of the Roman Empire; many exist in

Germany, still more in France, and in this island (Britain) they have often been discovered on the line of the Picts' Wall and the noted one at Bath.'

"Alexander Wilder, in his *Philosophy and Ethics of the Zoroasters*, states that *Mithras* is the Zend title for the sun, and he is supposed to dwell within that shining orb. *Mithras* has a male and a female aspect, though not himself androgynous. As *Mithras*, he is the lord of the sun, powerful and radiant, and most magnificent of the *Yazatas* (Izads, or Genii, of the sun). As *Mithra*, this deity represents the feminine principle; the mundane universe is recognized as her symbol. She represents Nature as receptive and terrestrial, and as fruitful only when bathed in the glory of the solar orb. The Mithraic cult is a simplification of the more elaborate teachings of Zarathustra (Zoroaster), the Persian fire magician."

During the period of the Caesars there was an orderly succession of emperors taking the throne, but later it came to the point where it depended on which military leader could assassinate another military leader that gained that status. By the time of Constantine, he had several contenders he had to defeat to gain the purple. He needed all the help he could get! He realized that if he could get both the Mithraic worshipping soldiers and the Christians fighting for him, he could defeat all of his opponents. And because of the various similarities of Mithraism and Christianity, Constantine decided to have a vision of a flaming cross in the sky at the Mulvian Bridge with the motto "In This Sign Conquer". Because the cross was a symbol for both Mithraism and Christianity, Constantine gained the military backing he needed from both parties and won his battles and the throne. After doing this, he owed both parties, so he conveniently merged the two religions, and that hybrid religion is still with us to this very day!