



How Keeping Sabbath Changed Our Lives

The Starting Point

What a shocker it was when we discovered in the Word that we are still to “keep” the Sabbath on the 7th day of the week! We shared that truth-journey in our Lesson 16, “Sabbath or Sunday?” so we won’t repeat that here.

What we didn’t have space to do in that Lesson was to share with you the radical changes this brought into our lives, (spiritually & in the natural too)...really wonderful, amazing changes! So we’re eager to reveal that part of the story with you now. We had no idea how much we were missing!

Change 1: A Mental Adjustment with more Light

But HOW were we to “keep the Sabbath”? I must admit that we were pretty much at a loss as to HOW we were to keep the Sabbath. ¹ Our study of scripture didn’t give a lot of detail, ² but they were however, clear on the basic guidelines:

1. It was to begin on the 7th day of the week, which scripturally begins at sundown with the evening meal and ends with sunset the following day. That equates to Friday evening until Saturday evening on our more familiar Gregorian calendar. ³
2. It was to be a set-apart day for rest, along with focus on our Creator. ⁴
3. It was to be a special time to both learn & teach the Torah (Word), God’s instructions for the way of life. As we learn individually & as families, we are then commanded to teach them to the children. ⁵ We soon came to love the mental adjustment.

1 We asked a few Sabbath-keeping friends, plus researched in books & online. All of that was helpful, but was also confusing. Many things did not witness to us as there seemed to be a huge mixture of scripture with either Judaic religious traditions, or with those of Christianity. In the end we decided to merge into this new lifestyle gradually, based first & foremost on scripture as His Spirit led us.

2. We soon learned that this is God’s way, so that we will individually be guided by His Spirit within us for each situation as it arises. His Spirit (now residing in us), teaches & leads us into all truth.

3. That’s the scriptural period of a day (and still is today on Hebrew calendars); commonly used by Jews & Messianics globally. Scripture defines the day this way in Genesis 1:5 & Leviticus 23:32, etc.

4. ”Rest” is defined as “ceasing from our own works.” A time to not do our regular work, our jobs, our ordinary chores. Isaiah 58:13 in both The Living Bible, and in The Amplified Bible give the sense of not doing our business & our normal self-centered ways. It brings to mind things to avoid that easily distract us, such as: hobbies, pets, sports, buying & selling, extensive travel, big cooking projects, etc.

5. See Deuteronomy 6:4-9 for context, including putting up scripture in our homes & foremost in our minds, so it becomes a part of our daily conversation. Foundational to the Covenant/Renewed Covenant is to have the Torah written on our hearts & in our minds. Meals, walks, & reading together are a great setting for this. It is key to show ways to apply the Word, reinforcing this with praise & love when noticing displays of His Spirit & His Fruit in the children. Speaking blessings upon other family members is powerful as well.

Change 2: A Purposeful Shifting of Weekly Focus

From this first point of “*WHEN*” there developed another major change in mindset. It was a paradigm-shift in orientation that brought a cascading effect, beginning with the week’s approach to the Sabbath.

At first, we found we had to plan for the “Holy” day. We recalled that a more descriptive meaning of the Hebrew word translated as “holy” is “set-apart.” Whereas “holy” gives us a religious connotation, “set-apart” tells us exactly what it is to be. The command to keep the Sabbath Holy is the command to distinguish it as a special, set-apart day. So, we planned to set it apart like we would for a special date. We would start the Sabbath off with our most special meal of the week, by candlelight with special music and the best table setting. The day was to be wonderfully distinct from all of the others.

We didn’t want the quality time interrupted, so we did ordinary chores ahead of the day. Shopping ahead, paperwork, errands, gardening, and cleaning projects were all completed ahead of time. The unique sunset meal was planned & prepared in advance, (along with its’ associated clean-up). The phones were taken off the hook before Sabbath began. These preparations became a lifestyle, much like gathering twice as much manna the day before so there would be no need to go out to labor to gather any on the Sabbath.

The exact timing of when to start is just defined scripturally as “sunset” which varies at different times of the year, and from location to location according to hills, trees, etc. The gist however, is flexibility according to His Spirit’s leading. Sometimes we begin early and other times later. If we start later, then we end later at the end of the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for man, not to be degraded into legalism. We soon came to not want to be robbed of any of this wonderful, remarkable Sabbath time.

At first, we too often entered the Sabbath late & exhausted. It seemed like unexpected phone calls, visitors, UPS packages, etc. all landed on the prep day, crowding our precious time to get ready. But this too was Yah, teaching us that it was much easier to start dealing with preparing as much as we could earlier in the week, so that we would not be so rushed coming into the Sabbath. The day leading up to the Sabbath is rightfully tagged scripturally as, “the Preparation Day.” We began the Preparation Day cheerfully as a team, especially in the kitchen. This sense of teamwork & purpose spread to all 6-days leading up to the Sabbath.

Scripturally, the 7th day is the only one set apart with a name. The other six are just numbered, such as “the first day of the Sabbath Week,” “the second day of the Sabbath Week,” etc. This shortens to “the first day,” “the second day.” etc. To help guard both the Sabbath & the preparation day, we discreetly in love, alerted family, friends & workers that our Sabbath began Friday night (“date night”), and ran into late Saturday night.

The point here was that short of an emergency, it would be best if they could call on the other six days. We would be sleeping late, out for walks, and having special meals as our special day. Our Amish neighbors understand this perfectly since they keep the first day of the week as “church & family.”

Now WE were getting labeled as “set-apart” in the sense of “different”! The Word became clearer to us where it declares that keeping the Sabbath is a sign of being of the Covenant with our Creator. We were “marked” for sure, but not with the mark of what was acceptable to the world. We later learned that Empires tortured, killed & jailed Sabbath-keepers, (or who were circumcised, spoke the name of God (“Yahovah”), or ate “Kosher.”).⁶

But, as I was saying, soon, each day of the week was aimed toward the conclusion of the week with the set-apart day. We worked more diligently, productively, and efficiently, so that the 7th day could truly be set-apart. Priorities shifted. His Spirit within us continued to teach us how to plan, organize, & work so that more was accomplished in less time, and with less stress too!

This brought to mind doing repairs, re-organization, cleaning & renovations of bigger projects that would eliminate “short-term crisis,” thereby freeing up more time long-term. Deep transformation (along with his peace), settled into our property, home, & hearts.

Change 3: A Heightened Sense of “Clean” vs. “Unclean”

“Clean vs. Unclean” is a repeating scriptural concept to train us to discern all things. This is so vital living in a world filled with the mixture of “Good & Evil” in contrast to the “Tree of Life.” The concept, along with how to deal with the unclean, is applied to more than animals & food. Other examples include: health, homes, property, situations, thoughts, hearts, minds, motives, actions, and relationships/intimacy. Even clean food becomes unclean when it is too old, or is tainted with chemicals or other ingredients that sneak in, get added on, or certain preparation procedures done, resulting in robbing us of the fullness of life.

The special cleaning for the Sabbath uncovered unclean things that had long been hidden, much to our disgust. This brought an awakening to put us into aggressive mode in cleaning. That in turn made us realize that clutter leads not just to “unclean” but also confusion, a welcome mat as a potential nest-bed for demonic activity.

6. All are signs of those in Covenant. “Kosher” is a term used to mean eating according to Leviticus 11... no pork, shellfish, etc. See our Mistranslations study number 14 to learn that Leviticus 11 still applies.

Thus began a waiting upon Yahovah's Spirit within us as we sought out what He'd have us deal with, when, and how. Items began to be thrown out, recycled, repaired, given away, sold, & the remainder reorganized. When not hearing what to do with a certain thing, then we simply set it aside, waiting upon Him until He directed it's destiny, which He always did in time. This worked patience in us, with delights of blessings to others & us too. We would have missed out had we not waited first upon His Spirit & timing.

The dealing with the unclean was not limited to kitchen, office, or home. It meant the vehicles, equipment, workshop, & property would also be renewed as unto Yah. Trees were pruned, flowers & gardens brought to life, landscaping too as He directed, bringing the property to full potential & fruitfulness. Invasive plants began to be eradicated. Our two old apple trees bore wonderful fruit after a few years of diligence with mulching, organic spraying, pruning & thinning. This all is an on-going project, becoming easier each year as basics get established. A way of Sabbath life is a lifestyle that reshapes who we are, who we are meant to be, and even is evidenced by viewing the fruit of what is placed under our care. It is all Kingdom calling. It all begins with hearing & obeying. The keeping of the Sabbath is a key starting point.

Even while we walked on our road, we picked up litter as we covered the neighborhood in prayer & blessing. The neighborhood transformed. Within 2-years other neighbors, joggers & hikers caught on and did their portion. It has become such a scenic walk! Spiritual changes emerged at the same time. Wonderful people of Light moved into the neighborhood. A drug-lord moved on to a Federal jail after turning down opportunities to come into the Life of Messiah. His property sold to the Amish, and became radically revamped. from darkness to light.

Sorting the unclean from the clean carries over into discerning the Word. Translations are now known to be filled with mixture of truth leavened with religious traditions of translators. A prime example is Jerome's Latin Vulgate.⁷

7. Most all modern English translations have roots traced to early English translations, which were rooted in the Latin Vulgate, starting with Wycliffe, who actually used many Latin words copied directly from the Vulgate. There is no perfect translation today, just by its definition of being a translation from another language & culture.

You might wonder what our favorites are? The present work by Miles Jones leads them all, but his translation team has only released one book so far, "The Book of James/Ya'akov." Then we like Michael Rood's, "The Chronological Gospels." He is despised by the religious world just as Yahshua was. Both dropped truth bombs that disrupted the religious system. But Rood's translation is limited to the Gospels, Acts, & Revelation. Another gem is "The Passion Translation", but that is limited to the Renewed Covenant, Psalms, & Proverbs. "The Complete Jewish Bible" is a great resource, but is older, so is not current with new manuscripts & newly-revealed-truths. "The Scriptures" is top notch. So is the "Aleph-Tav Cephher", which also includes many books left out by the Catholic Church, plus has the long-missed Acts 29, and Psalms 151 through 155. Cephher.net also has many great articles by the translator, Stephen Pidgeon. There are other great translations too, each with their unique flair.

Change 4: New Life in Hearing His Spirit & in Understanding His Word

We began to hear His Spirit like never before. We noticed also a shifting of gears in our relationship with our Messiah. He started quickening us in ways to become more efficient, & also to prioritize better. We were able to get far more done in less time, all peacefully & with excellence. We have learned to wait until hearing from His Spirit before moving. This caused us to become more productive & fruitful.

It dawned on us that we had aligned with His Word in a way that pleased Him. Keeping Sabbath is a sign of covenant with Yahovah, repeated from Genesis through Revelation. We honored Him when we came into obedience. Truly, if we love Him, then we seek to please Him. We love to express our love for Him by obeying Him, doing what is most important to Him.

Then it clicked! We connected two dots: “...those who wait upon Yahovah...” with the phrase “...walk in the Spirit, by the Spirit...” We cannot walk in the Spirit if we are not first submitted to wait upon the Spirit for direction. Our hearing & obeying relationship with Yah leaped to a whole new level as we moved in Him like never before. We began to hear & see in the Spirit & Word in new ways. Those that wait upon Him are the ones that rise up to new heights, (both in the earthly realm & in the spiritual realm). The more we flow in the Spirit in Torah-compliance (Word-compliance), the stronger our wings become.

Change 5: Eagerly Reading the Torah

The rewards of keeping the Sabbath were so many that we sought to see what else we had been missing in the Torah. The Torah is the foundation for the Prophets, the Writings, & the Renewed Covenant. We found that the people were to hear the Torah once a year. This was detailed both by Moses, and later by Ezra. This scriptural pattern of reading the Torah through once per Hebrew Calendar year (12 or 13 lunar cycles) continues today globally. But how is it done? The core of the Torah (first 5-books of the Bible), was divided into portions,⁸ with a certain portion to be read aloud each Sabbath.

The Torah portion that is read each Sabbath is the same one read in synagogues & home groups (both Jewish & Messianic), throughout the world. This helps the whole family to become familiar with Yah’s instructions of life for man. We usually read this after the Sabbath meal, finishing up on the Sabbath day if we don’t finish then. We look forward to it. Each year we read the Torah portion out loud in a different translation.

8. This division into sections to be read every Sabbath can be traced back to Ezra. The Hebrew word for portion can be transliterated as “parshat,” (singular) or “parashot.” (plural). The cycle begins with Genesis 1 on the “Last Great Day.” This is the 8th day of the Feast of Succoth, (Tabernacles). It is the last of the 8 set-apart assemblies that get tagged as “Feasts of Yahovah.” It is a day of new beginnings. The Parshat list can be found in the back of nearly every Bible that is both based on Hebrew manuscripts and translated with an understanding of the Hebrew culture & language.

We began our new adventure by carefully reading from the 10-commandments in both **Exodus 20 & Deuteronomy 5**. There we saw that keeping the 7th-day weekly Sabbath is the 4th-commandment listed, but is actually 2-commandments rolled together. The other one? We are also exhorted to “work” for 6-days. This brought insight into “a time to work & a time to rest”. And being fully engaged for 6-days brings a heightened appreciation for the 7th-day of rest! It truly is refreshing to body & soul.

Change 6: New Friends along with an Explosion of Truth

Our Sabbath-keeping friends were so delighted when we told them that we were “keeping Sabbath.” We asked them to share books on the Sabbath, Kosher-eating, and the sources of truth on the Word that they had. Wow! We began devouring, as a whole new realm of truth exploded before us! We tapped into many great Bible teachers, Bible translations, charts, & resources. Soon I began to learn Hebrew so that I could go right to the original manuscripts and check out the words in Hebrew Lexicons.

Our more current writings share many of these major paradigm shifting truths. Not just Sabbath, but Feast Days (which are also special Sabbaths), and Kosher, and the name of God (which most believers don’t even know). We often sang to praise His name without knowing it (Yahovah), although we did sing “Allelujah” which is a combination of 2-Hebrew words, “Allelu Yah” meaning “Praise Yah” (Yahovah’s poetic nickname). Also, we sang to praise the name of “Jesus”, when that is not even the correct name of our Messiah, (Yahshua).

Beyond that, we started reading from the new Hebrew-based Bible translations, those that were more accurately anchored in the ancient Hebrew manuscripts language & culture. These exposed some serious Bible mistranslations. We were startled at first, but checked it out ourselves in Hebrew source manuscripts.⁹ Yes, many very widely-upheld religious teachings were indeed in gross error! For example, the ministry of Yahshua was not 3.5 years, but rather 70-weeks, (exactly 490-days from His baptism until the apostles were baptized in His Spirit!)¹⁰ We came to understand the Hebrew calendar, (God’s time of reckoning), which then, along with understanding the Feast Days illuminated Bible prophecy with great clarity & more in this convergence of light!

9. The Leningrad Codex can be purchased as the “A Reader’s Hebrew Bible.” It is all in Hebrew, but has an English Glossary for all words used more than 100 times. Those that are used fewer than 100 times are numbered, with the English definition in the footnote. This makes it so that a non-Hebrew reader can find the original meaning if they want to go beyond using Strong’s Concordance with its attached, numbered Hebrew dictionary. When in doubt of a word’s meaning, we can find the Hebrew word in a Hebrew-English Lexicon for the etymology (origin, intent, history & use), of the word.

10. The change to a 3.5 year ministry only came due to Eusebius in the 4th century, who had to change & add several key scriptures to try to make this work. Those changes & additions are not found in Hebrew or Greek manuscripts that pre-date Eusebius. Rood gives a more detailed explanation on page 3 in his, “The Chronological Gospels.”

Change 7: Learning Hebrew Language & Culture

So much of this truth pointed to not only the Sabbath, but also the Feast Days, New Moons, God's Calendar, Tabernacle, Temple, Israel, and the Torah. Understanding these basics led us into a far greater understanding of Biblical prophecies, timelines, types, & patterns. It's true meaning was all anchored in the Hebrew culture & language. This led me to start learning the Hebrew & culture of when the Torah was written. Wow! What a mountain for a non-foreign-language guy to climb! But His Spirit led me to learn the language, taking me into it one step at a time. ¹¹

A special feature of the Hebrew language is that its 22-letters each has a number value. Therefore words can also be seen as a combination of numbers, linking those totals to compare with other words of similar number totals. ¹²

And the Hebrew language is unique in that each letter is a picture-symbol. This makes each word a series of picture-symbols that can be seen as a description, for instance, "Eden" can be seen as "see the gateway to life." ¹³ This also opens up a whole new realm of truth when reading scriptures.

Eventually all the earth will have one language, and it will be Hebrew. At least that is what **Zephaniah 3:9** seems to indicate. It also seems to mark something very special about the way Yahovah created this language. And the verse comes with the promise that Yah's true name will be both restored and proclaimed throughout the earth, (echoed in **Jeremiah 16:19-21** which we see happening now). Well, in learning the language & culture, we've found that it is indeed very special, opening doors of light on Yah.

11. Miles Jones has now proven that Hebrew was the original language, (not Phoenician). Look to his book, "The Writing of God," and also Tim Mahoney's 4-part DVD series, starting with "Patterns of Evidence." Miles Jones displays how Yahovah gave Israel the alphabet and commanded all of the men & women to learn the language, and to teach it to their children. This is a fundamental Torah teaching, ongoing to today, (ever since given at Mt. Sinai along with the 10 commandments & Torah). This launched the Torah-compliant people to become the most literate in society. As a result, they were among the most knowledgeable & best communicators. And this catapulted them into top positions of society, in every area. This is why Israel at it's 70th anniversary (2017) as a nation, had become a space-age nation with leading technology, economy, agriculture, and military.

12. This is also true of Greek. Some books we've gathered & explored on this are "Theomatics," "Theomatics II," "The Secret of Hebrew Words," "More Secrets of Hebrew Words," and of course all of the books and many writings by Bonnie Gaunt. We have her studies on our website, (www.bibleconcepts.com), plus a list of her books. It is so revealing to see words & phrases that add up to "153" or "276" or other mysterious scriptural numbers!

13. Todd Bennett's 12 books of his "Walk In the Light" series have many examples that are real gems.

Change 8: Grasping Time, Seasons & Signs from the Sun, Moon, & Stars

The Hebrew culture developed from being a people who kept the Sabbaths, including special ones, even when they don't land on the 7th-day of the week. The major Scriptural extra-Sabbaths include the New Moons, and the Feast Days, whose dates are all determined by the scriptural lunar-cycle calendar. This Sabbath-keeping all stems from a foundation of Torah-compliance. The scriptures were written predominately in the Hebrew language and with the perspective of the Hebrew culture, so let's look at that.

A big part of the Hebrew culture comes from keeping the scriptural Feast Days, (the set-apart days to assemble). All of the scriptural Feast Days occur on set days of lunar months, which are the basis of the scriptural calendar year. But 12 lunar cycles come short of a full solar year by about 11-days. Over time the months would not align with the seasons. Why is this important? Passover must occur in the first month of the year and that must coincide with the spring when lambs are born. Spring begins with the spring-equinox. There will always be sure to have some Passover lambs born in time for the spring Passover if the 15th of the month lands on or after the spring equinox. So if the 15th would land before the spring equinox, then a 13th-month is added to extend the previous year. We found that recognizing such things helped us in the flow of the Word.

And since a month always begins with a new lunar cycle, starting with the New Moon, then it's also important to know when a New Moon (Hebrew month), begins.¹⁴ When you take the dark moon as the beginning of the New Moon cycle, then the full moon is always on the 15th! That is how Yah wound His heavenly clock, so that there was lots of light at night for fleeing Egypt on the 15th, and also lots of light for the Feast of Succoth (Tabernacles), not to mention easier traveling for those two most important Feast Days, (times of former & latter rains). One can also gauge about what day of the month it is by looking at the moon. It is fun to become very aware of God's heavenly timepieces!

We won't digress here to go into the stars, but the constellations form a message in the sky of the coming of the Promised Seed and His triumph over evil. This story is called the Mazzoroth in the Bible.¹⁵ It is where Yahovah first wrote the Covenant/ Gospel.

14. This is sometimes hotly debated by some who say that it begins with the sighting of the first crescent of the moon, and others who say that it begins 1-second after the full conjunction of the sun, earth & moon. This second view is called "the dark moon." Stephen Pidgeon found this to be the only scriptural way to determine the New Moon. He examined the commonly contradictory way in which Psalms 81:3 is translated. He went to the Hebrew source, and convinced me that "dark moon" is the correct translation. You'll find his explanation at Cepher.net under his "Teaching Notes."

15. Rav Sha'ul's first book in his 16-book (& growing), series is focused on this, drawing often from the Book of Enoch, history, and many prophetic scriptures. Although he's a very controversial guy, much of that comes from his constantly dropping truth-bombs that can make believers uncomfortable or even angry to suggest such radically new ideas.

Change 9: Relationships with God & Family Reinforced

Meaningful relationships grow when special time is spent together, as we see in **Proverbs 8:34-36 & verse 17**. Keeping the Sabbath sets apart that noteworthy time. It is where communication blossoms. It becomes the nurturing ground for the fruit of love to ripen. It is an exceptional time to hear another's heart...to read into each other's soul, and to pour out one's own heart. Just the setting aside of quality time with someone displays how important they are to you. It is an expression of valuing, honoring, & priority.

Now, when whole families keep the Sabbath, then the whole family bonds. When those families have some Sabbath time together, they build treasured memories. When a culture keeps the Sabbath, then the whole community is quiet & peaceful, (except for some joyous singing, merriment, & laughter).

The Renewed Covenant people are the ones that have the Torah written on their hearts & in their minds, walking it out by first waiting on His Spirit within. And the heart of the Torah? Yahshua summed it up as love Yah, & love our neighbor, (**Matthew 22:36-40**). He was quoting the Torah from **Deuteronomy 6:5 & Leviticus 19:18**. These verses along with verse 4 of **Deuteronomy 6** have been a bedtime prayer of children for centuries. It is so famous that it is called "The Shema," which is Hebrew for "Hear! Pay attention! Listen to this!"

Families who keep Sabbath have learned what a delightful gift from Yahovah it is. Mary Elizabeth would not give it up for anything. It's our special time together with Him.

We've just scratched the surface, but we will conclude with a summary list of changes, including a few other things as well. We put that on the next page to keep it all together.

Summary: Some of the Changes from Keeping the Sabbath

1. Deepened relationship with Yahovah.
2. Boost in family bonding.
3. Truly entering into rest. With it comes restoration, laughter, optimism, & renewal.
4. Heightened hearing of His Spirit within, more often & with greater clarity.
5. Quality time to joyously take a deep dive into the Scriptures.
6. Annual Torah reading together bring more focus in general on the Word.
7. Connecting with other Sabbath-keeping believers.
8. Experiencing an avalanche of truth.
9. Seeing the signs of the sun, moon & stars in the heavens in new light.
10. Grasping “the big picture” on all issues faster, with greater definition than ever before.
11. Sharpened discernment. Keener sense of clean vs. unclean. Sorting tradition from scripture like cutting a worm out of an apple.
12. Keener sense of priorities. Easier to be firm when we need to say “No” to things that we are not called to.
13. Time-wasters identified and eliminated. What we spent time watching & reading shifted to become more purposely prioritized & focused.
14. Daily life filled with His peace, direction, purpose, quality, fruitfulness & love. Feeling stressed became a rarity.

And it all started with keeping the Sabbath!

by Eric J Ellis with editorial review by Mary Elizabeth Ellis

This writing may be copied/distributed when not for sale or profit.

Eric & Mary Elizabeth Ellis
PO Box 400
Easton, ME 04740
ericjellis@protonmail.com
<https://www.bibleconcepts.com>

