

Torah Tips

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Shabbat, Shabbat

The Bible institutes special Sabbaths throughout the year. The weekly Shabbat is a great way to practice for these especially Shabbastic Sabbaths. These are the Feasts of Israel because they are the Feasts of God.¹ It's important to seal the deal of the covenant, and Shabbat is the sign. Like any good earthly Father, the Heavenly Father prepares His children for difficult times by teaching and rehearsing them in the things that equip them and take away fear of the future.

The Father in Heaven has signed, sealed, and delivered our marriage agreement prior to Messiah's return. Now it's up to us to *sign, seal, and deliver* on our agreement with Him!

Step One: Sign On to the Sabbaths



The first step to celebrating the additional sabbaths of Israel is to whole-heartedly *sign on* and agree with the commandment even before understanding it all. When Israel heard the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, they responded, "We will do and we will hear."ⁱⁱⁱ The families would spend the next forty years with Moses learning how, and they would make many mistakes, but what is important is that they were a saved people and they had committed to learn and do.

Although saved, Israel needed a process of sanctification. The sign that the Holy One selected was the "sabbaths agreement." The signing instructions are in Exodus 31:12-14:

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, "You shall surely observe My **sabbaths**; for **this is a sign** between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. Therefore you are to observe **the sabbath**, for it is holy to you.

The Sabbath is both singular and plural in the instructions. There's more than one Sabbath? Well, yes and no. Man is not permitted to make just any day the weekly Sabbath. On the other hand, there are special sabbaths during the feasts of Israel. The plural of Sabbath used in the passage is *shabtotai*, translated "My Sabbaths."ⁱⁱⁱ The text

mixes the singular "sign" with multiple sabbaths.^{iv} Rabbi Cardozo offers an insightful interpretation. He asks,

...why do they constitute only one sign between them? It is called 'Shabtotai' because every Shabbat contains two elements that coalesce to turn every Shabbat into a single sign.

There are practical aspects to every Shabbat, such as ceasing commerce, not kindling a fire, etc., yet these rules that protect our rest on Shabbat are only part of the experience. "The other aspect of Shabbat is the spiritual Shabbat. Together they form one unified sign of God's love for us."^v The letter and the Spirit of all Sabbaths are a package deal for sanctification. Shabbat, Shabbat. Ready to sign?



Step Two: Seal the Shabbastic Sabbaths in the Coming Year

In the early church, the apostles knew that special sabbaths "sealed" the household door against end-time destruction. Even today, disciples of Yeshua who seek the Lamb's protection can *seal the door*. An early apostolic group called the Quartodecimans "...conform to everything which has been handed down to the church by the apostles."^{vi}

Melito was an early church father and a Quartodeciman. Melito's Passover *seder*, the Exodus story told in verse on Passover night, leaves clues to the apocalyptic themes that early Jewish believers applied to their Passover Shabbat. Melito writes:

Then Moses, having slaughtered the sheep
 and performed the mystery at night with the sons of Israel,
sealed the doors of the houses to protect the people and to avert the angel.
 But while the sheep is being slaughtered,
 And the Pascha is being eaten
 And the mystery completed,
 And the people is rejoicing,
And Israel is being sealed: ←
 Then came the angel to strike Egypt,
 Those uninitiated in the mystery,
 Those with no part in the Pascha,
Those not sealed by the blood, ←
 Those not guarded by the spirit
 The hostile, the faithless;
 In one night he struck them and made them childless.
 For the angel had passed by Israel,
and seen him sealed with the blood of the sheep...^{vii} ←

The sealing of the redeemed at Passover continues, echoing the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation. John parallels the seven seals to his appeals for repentance to the seven assemblies,ⁱ so while “signing on” to these special sealing Shabbats is the first step, one must seal the deal by actually doing what Scripture advises for each of these feasts.

While it may be overwhelming for a newcomer, don’t be discouraged. The first Passover consisted of nothing more than killing a lamb, putting blood on the doorpost, and shutting the door. The Spirit of God did the rest.

Israel Sealed from Destruction

Egypt Not Sealed from Destruction

Slaughtered sheep (Yeshua the Lamb)
 Eating the Passover
 Rejoicing and faithful
 Protected with sons
 Averted the Death Angel
 Guarded by the Holy Spirit

No Lamb
 No part in Passover
 Hostile and faithless
 Childless
 Struck by the Death Angel
 Not guarded by the Spirit



Sealing the doors on special sabbaths requires advance planning. If you are new to the special sabbaths of Israel, then obtain a Jewish calendar for the coming year. The Jewish calendar will have the Hebrew months along with the Gregorian months of the modern calendar. The Jewish calendar will highlight the special sabbaths.^{viii} Sit down with your personal calendar, and start blocking out the special sabbaths:

- First and last days of the Passover week or [Pesach and Chag HaMatzah]
- Pentecost [Shavuot]
- Feast of Trumpets [Rosh HaShanah]
- Day of Atonement [Yom Kippur]
- First and last days of Tabernacles [Sukkot]

ⁱ See [Creation Gospel Workbook One](#) for a discussion of the Seven Churches as the Seven Feasts



Look at the family calendar for the coming year, and start solving the challenges of how to take off work or schedule the family vacations around the celebrations.

As you learn the significant prophecies and practices associated with each feast, you will have a better idea of how to celebrate. The first of every Biblical month is even a special day.^{ix} The starting point, however, is to adjust one's secular calendar with the holy one. The Holy One of Israel has written you an invitation to join Him on special shabbats each year, and it is sealed in Yeshua's blood. Isn't it time to make the arrangements to meet Him? Write those vacation requests, sign, and seal them.



Step Three: Deliver it Personally

The final step is to *deliver* your family and any who join with you on these special sabbaths. There is a lot to learn, so don't be discouraged when you find books about the "high Sabbaths" and all the activities and procedures. If it took the Israelites

forty years in the wilderness, then a beginner can relax like the Israelites in Egypt and focus on a few basics:

- Rest from work
- Gather for a special meal (except for Yom Kippur)^x
- Light candles

Shabbat Shabbat celebrations are like a weekly Sabbath. An enduring tradition of Shabbat is lighting candles, figuratively giving light in the dwellings of all Israel while Egypt remained in darkness. Egyptians were cut off from the sealing rest of Messiah Yeshua, Shabbat peace. There are three important things about Shabbat candle-lighting.



- It HONORS the day and sets it apart. From ancient times when there was no electricity, candles or lamps on a table were a sign of celebration.
- SEEING the food is part of the enjoyment of eating it. Again, from ancient times the lights allow the family to SEE the food that they are enjoying so that they give thanks to the One Who provided it.
- Because of the lights, there is PEACE IN THE HOME, known in Hebrew by the phrase "Shalom HaBayit." If there were no lights, the family would stumble over one another and run into things. Adonai sometimes judges not with fire and brimstone, but with confusion. The lights of Shabbat drive away the confusion and bring PEACE. The Israelites had light in all their dwellings.

In a Jewish home on Shabbat, any visitor is considered a member of the family. What's a good way to introduce friends and family to Shabbat? Invite them over. Plant the seed of peace: "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."^{xi} Spiritual fruit can grow from a peaceful home.

Shabbat is the time of the week that chaos should cease. The running, doing, competing, and acquiring fade into the darkness, and the light of the Torah illuminates that which brings peace.

The faces of those participating in the Shabbat meal illuminate the home. This is the blessing of the High Priest: "May He make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May He lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace."^{xii}

Adonai prepares a table before His children in the presence of enemies by meeting with the family who prepares a table for Him on Shabbat. It's our sign. It's our seal. It's our deliverance. When the nations look for God, and they see the peaceful lights on the table of obedience, they know how to return to Him. The Father in turn HONORS His children with a PEACEFUL Shabbat table that even her enemies cannot apprehend, for they stumble in confusion and darkness. Like Pharaoh's chariot wheels, they become confused and mired in the clay of earthly pursuits. Shabbastic Shabbats are a taste of eternity's PEACE.

On Shabbat, the food tastes better, the beverages are richer, the fellowship is sweeter, and the music more healing. The grass is softer and greener, and the water is like glass. Sleep is more restful. Some

may scoff and say, "How can that be? It's the exact same food, beverage, grass, and people!"

Oh, but that is not the point. The point is that I am transformed by the Holy Spirit on shabbats, and therefore my perception of everything changes. I can better HONOR and SEE the work of Creation. I can once again stand PEACEABLY among the living creatures on the Seventh Day of Creation and refresh myself with my Creator. This transformation in the individual joins with the transformation of the family, community, and nation, and now it is possible to be a light to the world that cannot be hidden. Deliver on the Shabbastic Shabbats, and you will experience deliverance from the chains of a world uninterested in God's calendar and times of rejoicing.



Peace With the World



Helpful Resources List:

- Jewish calendar with Scriptural and Gregorian dates
- Personal planning calendar with family vacation and work vacation dates
- Reference books on the Biblical feasts
- Family, friends, and neighbors

Helpful BEKY Books:

[*Growing in Holiness: the Hebrew Calendar Day by Day \(BEKY Book 10\)*](#)

[*The Biblical New Moon: A Beginner's Guide for Celebrating \(BEKY Book 5\)*](#)

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ⁱ See BEKY Booklet [The Sabbath: His Day of Delight](#) for full Scripture references

ⁱⁱ Dt. 5:27

ⁱⁱⁱ Shabbatot is the plural of Sabbath

^{iv} Cardozo, N. (2005), p. 76).

^v Ibid., p. 77

^{vi} Stewart-Sykes, quoting Hippolytus in *Refutation of all the Heresies*, 8.18, p. 83

^{vii} Melito of Sardis' "On Pascha," verses 15-17.

^{viii} For detailed help with the calendar, see BEKY Books [Growing in Holiness: the Hebrew Calendar Day by Day](#) and [The Biblical New Moon in Scripture: A Beginner's Guide for Celebrating](#)

^{ix} See BEKY Booklet [The Biblical New Moon in Scripture: A Beginner's Guide for Celebrating](#)

^x In general, Yom Kippur requires fasting from food, water, and marital relations in addition to resting from work. If a person is underage, ill, or requires medication, then exercise common sense. The commandments are not given to kill us, but for us to LIVE in them (Le 18:5). Children too young to fast could select something like desserts or a favorite toy.

^{xi} Ja 3:18

^{xii} Nu 6:24-27

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