

Sabbath Keeper: Why Not Keep ALL the Commandments?

Many acknowledge the Bible as the Book of books, which contains the very words of our great Creator. But a few fully pursue the deeper truth of His Word. Many are like the puzzling, would-be treasure hunter who was satisfied with just knowing which mountain contained the gold vein, but would not dig down to get the precious mineral it held.

Just as difficult to understand are those who are satisfied to stop short of digging out of Scripture the great treasure of salvation truths, believing that somehow these truths will all be given to them eventually, without any effort on their part. Yet the Bible tells us in Ephesians 4 that each of us is personally responsible to develop into a “perfect” (meaning complete and full-grown) individual in truth.

The Savior forewarned us in Luke 13:24: “Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able” (Luke 13:24).

Stopping short of less than a sincere, complete effort is unacceptable to our Heavenly Father. He tells the lukewarm person, “I will spue you out of My mouth” (Rev. 3:16).

When it comes to the Ten Commandments, many will acknowledge a complete obedience. Pressing the issue, we discover otherwise.

Accepting the Fourth Commandment and Saturday as the Bible’s true seventh day Sabbath brings us into deeper Bible truth. Beyond that, though, how many understand, let alone take to heart the commands of the preceding Third Commandment? This Commandment deals with our Creator’s personal, revealed Name:

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Yahweh your Elohim in vain: for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain” (Ex. 20:7).

The most common interpretation of the Third Commandment is that one must not curse using the Father’s Name. That is part of what the commandment enjoins, but it’s the lesser part. If we examine the Hebrew for the word “take” in this commandment, we find the word *nasa*, meaning to “lift” or “bring to.”

So we are not to bring His Name to something. What is that something? The Hebrew for “vain” is *shoah*, which means to rush over (as a storm rushes past) and brings to devastation or ruin, waste, uselessness,

Simply put, we are told not to bring the Name Yahweh to a condition of worthlessness or destruction by refusing to use it, breaking the Third Commandment.

Heard That One Before?

If you are already a Sabbath keeper, wonderful! You have taken a big step toward the True Worship of the Mighty One of the Scriptures. You are keeping the same day the Creator did at creation – the seventh day. Now its time that you went on to perfection.

If you have grown up keeping the seventh day Sabbath, you are likely familiar with the many arguments used against Sabbath keeping. You yourself may at one time have used the same arguments against keeping the seventh day.

Not only did you come to the truth of accepting Sabbath, but you also had to change your life-style to prove your acceptance. There is not one Bible command to keep any other day than our Saturday as the Sabbath. And as you discovered, the arguments against the true Sabbath are quite flimsy; the support for Sunday worship being virtually nonexistent in the Scriptures.

Interestingly, the same line of reasoning often used against true Sabbath-keeping has also been used to discount Yahweh's Name and "prove" that it is unnecessary. As you have found with the usual polemics against the Sabbath, such circumlocutions repeatedly deny plain Biblical statements.

Let's see how the reasoning is much the same, whether employed against the Sabbath or in opposition to the revealed, personal sacred Names.

'But I Don't Speak Hebrew'

The argument, "I do not speak Hebrew," which is often used against the Name parallels the common argument against the Sabbath: "I am not Jewish." Probably the most popular objection to using the sacred Name is that Yahweh's Name was given to Jews and is for them only. The Jews speak Hebrew and because one does not speak Hebrew and is not a Jew, one is not expected to call upon the Name Yahweh, which is assumed to be a Jewish Name.

Whether or not we speak Hebrew is not germane to using the one Name "which is above every name," Philippians 2:9. His Name is the same in all tongues, allowing, of course, for the accents of the various languages. Names do not change from one language to another. Rather, names are transliterated (sound for sound) from one language to another. It makes little difference what the language of the Bible might be. His Name would still be Yahweh.

Note: The familiar word "Halleluyah" is a Hebrew imperative meaning "praise you Yah," and is the same in any language. If the argument is legitimate that we speak English and should not use any Hebrew words, like the sacred Name, then "halleluyah" is forbidden and so are hundreds of other Biblical words and names coming directly from the Hebrew into our English text.

The fact is, the names of many Hebrew Bible patriarchs are easily recognizable in English. Abraham and Sarah are pronounced almost the same in the Hebrew as in English. The Hebrew names Rebecca and Deborah are pronounced the same in English. Other names include: Adam, Benjamin, Dan, Daniel, David, Joseph, Reuben, Saul, and Solomon. Even the name of the adversary, Satan, sounds almost the same in Hebrew. (Satan sounds more like Saw-tawn, in Hebrew, but is still recognized.)

Because names are transliterated (the sound brought across) from one language to another, we can know that Schaffer is German, Kawasaki is Japanese, Renault is French, Andropov is Russian, Mussolini is Italian, and Kowalski is Polish. Curiously, names do not change from one language to another. If they did, then we would need to come up with an English version of these and thousands of other foreign names!

In our culture we employ many foreign names every day without any problem or objection. Names such as Toyota, Nikon, Saab, Sony, Stihl, Volvo, Bosch, and Volkswagen present no difficulty. Your picture on your passport does not change with the language of the country in which you might be traveling. You would sign your name the same on your check or credit card whether you are in Germany, Jordan, China or Brazil. The ethnic accent may differ, but there is very little difference from country to country in pronouncing your given name. The same is true of Biblical names.

By refusing to keep the Sabbath, one rejects it, denying its importance. Refusing to call upon Yahweh's Name is denying His Name (Rev. 2:8), treating it with no reverence or value.

When we observe the Sabbath we acknowledge that this day belongs to Yahweh, and by it we remember His creative power and look forward to redemption in His Son. The Sabbath, like His Name, is His exclusive property. When we call on His Name we enter into a close relationship with Him, showing Him respect and honor that are due Him.

When Yahweh spoke to Moses He said His Name "Yahweh" was His memorial to all generations, Exodus 3:15. His Name is the verb of existence and means "He exists because He wills to exist: or "He brings into being whatever He wishes" or "He is, was and will be." The Name Yahweh has a depth of meaning that cannot be derived by calling Him "G-d." Just as we are to keep His Sabbath forever – throughout eternity – we also are to call upon His true Name, Yahweh (Mal. 2:2).

Keepers of Sabbath, Name

A frequent argument posed against calling upon Yahweh's Name, which also is often applied to the Sabbath, is that His Name was given to the Jews. The implication is that because these commands were given to Jews no one else need to be concerned about them.

Romans 3:1-2, however, tells a much different story: “What advantage then has the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of Yahweh.” The word oracle means “sacred pronouncements” of Yahweh, His Bible.

The Jews continue as preservers of Yahweh’s oracles, safeguarding them for us. It was from the Old Testament that our Savior, His disciples, and Paul himself preached in the New Testament. He told Timothy that the Old Testament was able to make him wise unto salvation through faith in Yahshua the Messiah: “And that from a child you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Messiah Yahshua” (2Tim. 3:15).

In His foresight, Yahweh gave custody of the Sabbath and the Name to the Jews so that neither would be lost, as general worship soon became paganized.

Examining Other Arguments

What follows are other common polemics used by those who reject calling upon their Heavenly Father by His personal, revealed Name Yahweh. These are very similar to arguments against keeping the Sabbath, and they reflect the same misguided and erroneous reasoning.

Sabbath keepers have come to grips with such excuses, yet how many of them employ the same rationalization against calling on Yahweh’s Name?

“Every day is the Sabbath” or “We keep every day holy.” These statements are often made by well meaning people who reject the seventh day, giving them the opportunity to observe the first day of the week with their friends and relatives on Sunday. But Yahweh blessed only the Saturday Sabbath and nowhere does the Bible change the seventh day. We are specifically commanded to work six days and rest the seventh, Exodus 23:12, which is impossible if we are keeping every day a sanctified Sabbath.

“Yahweh has many names.” This allows one to call Yahweh whatever one wishes. Including the title God. Many people confuse titles with names. He has only one Name. The Bible refers to “His Name” 108 times; “Thy Name” 109 times; “My Name” 97 times—always in the singular. He has but one Name, Yahweh, YHWH, which is referred to as being holy more than anything else in the Bible (Ps. 83:18, Phil. 2:9).

“The Sabbath was given to Moses at Sinai.” The implication is that until Sinai the Sabbath was unknown to Yahweh’s people. Further, the Ten Commandments are allegedly done away in the Messiah. But the Sabbath was a part of creation, Genesis 1:14, and is first mentioned in Genesis 2:2 – long before Moses. And Yahshua observed it and taught it as well.

“Moses was first given Yahweh’s Name at the burning bush.” The belief is that because His Name was unknown before Moses, it is unimportant and just another “law of Moses.” The fact is, Yahweh’s Name appears in the Hebrew in Genesis 2:4; Eve called

on the Name “Yahweh” in Genesis 4:1; Yahweh emphasized His Name to Abraham (Gen. 15:7) and to Jacob (Gen. 28:13), both long before Moses. Furthermore, Moses’ mother was Jochebed (correctly Yahkebed), meaning, “Yah is glory.”

“The Sabbath was given to the Jews only.” This implies that only Jews are responsible for keeping Yahweh’s law. To keep the Saturday Sabbath is to be under bondage, goes the reasoning. Others can keep any day they wish, it is alleged. Yet, Scripture says all flesh will keep the same Sabbath, Isaiah 66:23.

“The Name was given to Jew only.” It is assumed that only the Jewish people are to use His “Jewish” Name, Yahweh. Others may call Him whatever they wish. But the argument is groundless. First, His Name was revealed to patriarchs before there ever was a Jewish nation. Second, He is the Almighty of both Jew and Gentile, Romans 3:29. We can change neither His Sabbath nor His Name. Third, His Name Yahweh is for ALL generations, Exodus 3:15-16.

“The Sabbath was changed to Sunday.” Man changed it. Yahweh never changed the Saturday Sabbath to Sunday as His day of worship. It is still the Sabbath and will be so in the Millennium. Isaiah 66:23 tells us so. Man’s rebellion caused him to change his day of worship, as well as the name of the One worshiped.

“Names change from language to language.” Not so. Names remain the same, and are merely transliterated from one language to another. That is, the same sounds are brought across from one tongue to another. Man has rebelled against Yahweh’s Name, calling Him God, Lord, Deos, Theos, Pan, Bog, Gott, and Baal – names and titles used for pagan deities!

“Time has been lost and no one knows which day is the Sabbath.” Napoleon ended France’s short-lived attempt to have a 10-day week and France rejoined the world calendar. Other than this experiment, history proves that we are keeping the same week as did Messiah and before. The days of the week were not changed at all. It can be proved that the sequence of days that gives us the Saturday Sabbath is the same from antiquity. The Savior knew which day was the Sabbath for He kept it, Luke 4:16. It was the same day the Jews of His time were observing, as He was constantly criticized by the Pharisees and Sadducees for doing various things on the Sabbath. They never attacked Him for keeping the wrong day. And the Jews have kept the same day in the weekly sequence ever since. They would never change their day of worship.

“The True Pronunciation of the Name has been lost.” Under “Yahweh,” the Encyclopedia Britannica says, “Early Christian writers, such as Clement of Alexandria in the 2nd century, had used the form Yahweh, thus this pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton was never really lost. Greek transcriptions also indicated that YHWH should be pronounced Yahweh” (Micropedia, 15th ed., Vol. X, p. 786). The Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 7, p. 680, 1971, admits, “The true pronunciation of the Name YHWH was never lost. Several early Greek writers of the Christian church testify that the name was pronounced YAHWEH.”

“Time was lost in the Old Testament and so was the true Sabbath.” There is Joshua’s long day (Joshua 10:12-14) when the sun stood still in the heaven. Then there’s Hezekiah’s time when the sun went back 10 degrees, 2 Kings 20. Still, the day ends when the sun sets. We need only to go as far as Yahshua the Savior who kept the Sabbath properly, and history from His time can be easily traced.

“The Name was lost at the Tower of Babel.” Yahshua declared Yahweh’s Name in the New Testament, Hebrews 2:12. The confusion of tongues was upon those building the tower. The Hebrew Shemites who kept His Name were not involved in building. Yahweh dwelt with them, Genesis 9:27. “Shem” means name or renown and they have brought Yahweh’s Name down to us today. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were Shemites.

“The Sabbath is not commanded in the New Testament.” There is no statement in either the Old or New Testament doing away with the Saturday Sabbath. The Savior and His disciples based their teachings upon the Old Testament, as the New had not yet been written. Both Testaments teach the keeping of the Sabbath. Paul met with both Jews and Gentiles on the Sabbath, Acts 13:14; 17:2; 18:4.

“The Name Yahweh is not found in the New Testament.” English Bibles erroneously substitute “Lord” for Yahweh’s Name in the New Testament, eliminating His Name in direct quotations from the Old. This substitution has engendered confusion in verses like Matthew 22:44: “The Lord said to my Lord,” or in 1 Corinthians 1:31 where it is uncertain whether Yahweh or Yahshua, is meant. In Luke 4:18-19 the Messiah Himself quoted directly from Isaiah 61, where Yahweh’s Name appears. He even declared Yahweh’s Name to His brethren, John 17:26; Hebrews 2:14. The translations themselves are at fault.

“You teach salvation comes by keeping a special 24-hour day.” All Sabbath keepers know that we are saved by the grace of Yahweh through faith in His Son. We show that we are His children by obedience to His commandments out of love for His great sacrifice, Ephesians 2:8-10. By obedience we are sanctified, set apart.

“You teach that salvation depends upon the proper vocalization of the Name.” We in effect rebel against Yahweh when once we know His Name we refuse to revere or hallow the Name by which He reveals Himself, Matthew 6:9. When we call upon His Name we acknowledge that His Name is bound up in His promise of everlasting life, as says the Psalmist: “Pour out your wrath upon the heathen that have not known you, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon Your Name” (Ps. 79:6).

“We rest in the Messiah – He is our Sabbath.” The Bible teaches spiritual truth through physical acts. Our actions spring from our beliefs, Romans 12:2. As we ourselves learn of His ways, we become prepared to teach others of the Sabbath in the future Millennium. There remains a keeping of the Sabbath for His people now, Hebrews 4:9 says, and in the Kingdom, Isaiah 66:23.

“Faith alone is all we need because He knows who we mean whatever we call Him.” Is He also satisfied with any day we choose to worship Him? When we keep His Sabbaths and call upon His Name, Yahweh brings us into a closer walk with Him. When we desire to follow Him in ALL truth we will call on His true Name. In the Millennium all will call on Yahweh and serve Him in one accord, Zephaniah 3:9. Notice also, “Then they that feared Yahweh spake often one to another: and Yahweh hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared Yahweh and that thought upon His name,” Malachi 3:16.

“We will learn of the Sabbath when the Savior returns.” The purpose of this life is to learn of His ways to be worthy of the Kingdom by our actions, Luke 20:35. We should be able to teach others about the Sabbath and His holy days, which will also be kept in the Kingdom, Ezekiel 45:25.

“When we get to the Kingdom we will learn His Name.” In this life, His people are called by His Name, 2Chronicles 7:14. Isaiah 52:6 says His people SHALL know His Name. Yahshua prayed that we be kept (preserved) through His Name, John 17:11.

“The world observes Sunday and the world’s great Bible teachers teach Sunday. How do you know that Saturday is the Sabbath?” Satan deceives the whole world, Revelation 12:9. We are not to follow the broad way of the world. Only a few will find the strait gate and the narrow way, Matthew 7:13-14.

“The world’s great Bible teachers all use the title ‘God,’ and the world in general call Him ‘God.’” History records that the majority is usually wrong. Yahshua called His people a “little flock,” Luke 12:32. Psalm 79:6 tells about the “majority”: “Pour out your wrath upon the heathen that they have not known you, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon your Name.”

“We have fewer problems if we go along with keeping Sunday.” No one said that keeping the Sabbath would be easy. To follow the truth promises to be a trial, 1Peter 1:6-7. By overcoming obstacles we show Yahweh our true hearts and prove our willingness to forsake all for Him. Yahweh says His day of rest was the seventh day. Observing Sabbaths is a sign between Yahweh and His people, Ezekiel 20:12, 20.

“No one knows the Name Yahweh; it makes for confusion.” Psalm 22:22 is a command to declare His Name as did Yahshua, and praise Him in the assembly. Yahshua had proclaimed Yahweh’s Name to His disciples. We also are to “Teach all nations,” Matthew 28:19. If we don’t, how will they learn? (Write for the booklet, Our Savior Spoke the Sacred Name.)

“We are now under grace, not the letter of the law, and can observe any day we choose.” The correct understanding of grace is found in justification: as we repent of breaking the law, we come under grace and are forgiven. Grace does not mean we are at liberty to break any or all commandments.

“Our salvation is in a person, not the sound of a name.” No matter how some try to get around it, they cannot separate Him from the one true Name that identifies Him. The Name is part of His person. Salvation is bound up in the holy Name Yahweh is and the most powerful Name on earth or in heaven. Yahshua (Yah-Hoshea) means, “Yahweh is salvation”! “For whosoever shall call upon the name of Yahweh shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13). “There is no other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,” Acts 4:12.

“We are a New Testament Assembly; No Jewish Sabbath for us.” The implication is that the New Testament did away with the Seventh-day Sabbath. Yet, we know that the Messiah, His disciples, and Paul all kept Yahweh’s seventh day Sabbath. This holy time is not the Jewish Sabbath, but Yahweh’s Sabbath. The New Testament did not do away with the Fourth Commandment, nor did it change the Third (“Thou shalt not take the Name of Yahweh your Elohim in vain...”)

“We all speak English: no Jewish name for us.” Names are transliterated; that is, carried across phonetically to other languages. If you traveled to a foreign country your name would remain the same in the local papers, just as the names of statesmen are the same in our newspapers. Yahshua was of the tribe of Judah, having a Jewish mother who spoke Hebrew and worshiped Yahweh, the Mighty One of the Hebrews.

“The Sabbath was nailed to the tree when the Messiah died, and therefore it was done away.” The Book of Acts has many examples in which the disciples continued keeping the Sabbath long after the Savior’s resurrection (Acts 13:42-44; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4). Revelation speaks of keeping Yahweh’s commandments; 12:17, 14:12.

“At the time the Messiah died the world spoke Greek and we call Him by His Greek name, Jesus, no longer calling Him a Hebrew Name.” Actually, Jesus is not even a Greek name, for there is no “J” sound in the Greek (or in the Hebrew). His Name was spelled “Iasua” in Greek letters because both the I and the y have the “ee” sound. Greek has no “sh” sound as does Hebrew, German, and English. “Jesus” is a Greek-Latin hybrid of the Hebrew Yahshua and has no etymological meaning in ANY language, let alone Hebrew or Greek.

“To keep the seventh day would be to observe ‘Saturn’s day’ (Saturday), which stem from paganism.” Man has changed the Biblical method of numbering days of the week by ascribing pagan names to them. Yet this in no way changes the holiness of the seventh day Sabbath that our Creator has ordained. He calls the seventh day the “Sabbath,” the only day of the week named in Scripture. (All others are simply numbered.) This tells us how important His Sabbath is.

“The Name Yahweh stems from pagan Egypt.” Not so! Hebrew was the first language spoken by Yahweh to Adam and Eve in the garden as well as the patriarchs. Yahweh’s Name is first found in Genesis 2:4. In every one of the first five commandments, Yahweh uses His personal Name. The Third Commandment is a direct proscription against falsifying His Name.

“The Bible does not tell us the Sabbath is our Saturday. It could be on Tuesday or Thursday.” The sequence of the days of the week has remained the same all down through history to this day. The Catholic church has maintained records from Yahshua’s time and before, showing that they have changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday.

“The Tetragrammaton (hwhy) has no vowels, so how are we to pronounce His name? Maybe it is something else.” The Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi 4:6 is written primarily in Hebrew without vowels, yet scholars are able to read and bring it into English thanks to the diacritical marks placed above, below and with certain letters. Nearly all-reputable scholars agree that the best English spelling is Yahweh. Jews, like the first century historian Josephus, tell us that the sacred Name was made up of vowels. Many encyclopedias say the pronunciation was never lost. (See our booklet, The Mistaken J.)

“The early believers worshiped on Sunday instead of Saturday.” Reliable historians agree that the weekly Sabbath was the recognized day of worship of all True Believers until pagan converts became the majority. In the Council of Nicea Constantine passed legislation in 354 CE that the day of worship be changed to Sunday.

“The early believers called on Jehovah and Jesus.” There is no letter J in either the Hebrew or Greek alphabets to this day. Not until Christopher Columbus’ time was there a J in the English. Because there was no J in the English until 500 years ago, what name was used before that? Certainly not one with a J.

The Sign

The Bible reveals that the Sabbath is a sign between Yahweh and His people: “Hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you that you may know that I am Yahweh your Elohim,” Ezekiel 20:20 (see also Ex. 31:13-17; Ezek. 20:12). Keeping His Sabbaths is a witness or a sign to the world that we are His people. He will bring things about so that we will know that Yahweh is our Elohim.

The Seal

We are also told that His people shall be called by His Name, 2Chronicles 7:14. We learn that at the end of the age His people will be “sealed with His name.” Revelation 7:2-4. In Revelation 14:1 we learn that the saints are sealed with “His name and His Father’s Name” in their foreheads.

Yahweh’s people are those who keep His Commandments and have the faith of Yahshua, Revelation 14:12. Paul says we are not to grieve or act contrary to the promptings of Yahweh’s Spirit, for by the power of the Holy Spirit we are sealed and kept: “And grieve not the holy Spirit of Yahweh, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30).

Thus, the Sign of Yahweh's people is keeping the Sabbath, and the Seal is His Name in the forefront of our thinking. Both of these truths are critical for True Worship. Yahweh says He will accept the son of the stranger providing he will "serve Him and love the Name of Yahweh, to be His servants, every one that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and takes hold of My covenant," Isaiah 56:6. Notice that Yahweh simultaneously speaks of those who serve Him, love His Name, keep His Sabbath, and take hold of His covenant.

Name in 5 Commandments

Are you one of those Sabbath-keepers who delight in the increased knowledge our Creator has given you in the keeping of His Sabbath? Yet are you neglecting the Third Commandment? All of the first five commandments either concern His Name Yahweh or contain it.

Surely you know that if you offend His commands in one point you are guilty of breaking all (James 2:10). By calling upon His Name Yahweh, you keep the First Commandment. Was it just happenstance that the first of the Ten Commandments introduces Yahweh by His Name? His majesty is in His Name, which is above every name in heaven or earth.

His glory He will not give to another nor His praise to graven images, Isaiah 42:8. Thus we keep the Second Commandment when we acknowledge the Mighty One of the heavens as the Highest over all the earth.

We bring the great Creator to degradation by referring to Him by a mere title such as "god." The title god is used for Satan and his demons, 1 Corinthians 4:4, as in the title lord, 1 Corinthians 8:5. Revelation 14:1 says that His 144,000 will be sealed with His Name in their foreheads.

Up Close and Personal

What about you? Are you keeping ALL the Commandments? Do you hang back and try to circumvent any of the Commandments? Recognize that His Name Yahweh means, "I will become what I will, or I choose to be." The Name Yahweh means more than self-inherent life. It signifies a close relationship with His people.

To those with whom the great Heavenly Father is in covenant relationship, He promises to be whatever His people need at that time. He will be their Provider, Comforter, Strengthened, Healer, Shepherd, Restorer – whatever His people need. His Name Yahweh thus brings Him much closer to us as He fulfills our needs on a personal level.

The titles Eternal, God, and Lord lack this personal intimate relationship; instead they connote a far-off being who has no personal concern for His people. The pagans felt that way with their deities. The true One we worship is close and personal – because He has a Name!

As you set aside the seventh day for rest and spiritual renewal, draw closer to the Creator by calling on His revealed, personal Name Yahweh. He will draw near to you. How can you keep the Sabbath holy unless you observe it? How can you hallow His Name unless you use it?

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