

# The Sabbath

Teaching Notes by Stephen Pidgeon

**Sabbath** (שַׁבָּת shabbath')

## Vayiqra (Leviticus) 23:2-3

Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation (מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ qodesh miqra); ye shall do no work (מְלָאכָה mela'kah)<sup>1</sup>: it is the Sabbath of *Yahuah* in all your dwellings.

Dvar el'ben Yisrael, amar el moedi Yahuah asher kawraw eth miqra kodesh elileh hem moedi; shish'shah yomiym asah melakah, yom shebi'iy shabbath shabbathon, miqra kodesh, kole melakah lo asah shabbath hoo Yahuah kole moshab.

The word of the son of Israel, say at the appointed time of Yahuah, do call it a divine and holy meeting, these they are appointed times; six days do work; day seven is a Sabbath of rest, a holy meeting, all work do not do, for it is Yahuah's Sabbath for all dwellings (abodes).

## Marcus (Mark) 1:21

**21** And they went into Kapharnachum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

## Marcus 2:23-28

**23** And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath'); and his Talmidiym began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. **24** And the Parashiym said to him, Behold, why on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath') do they do that which is not lawful? **25** And he said to them: Have you never read what David did, when he had need and was hungry; he, and they that were with him? **26** How he went into the house of *Elohiym* in the days of Evyathar the high priest, and they ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and also gave to them which were with him? **27** And he said to them: The Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath') was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath'): **28** Therefore the *Son of Man* (בֶּן אָדָם ben Adam) is *Adonai* also of the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath').

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<sup>1</sup> מְלָאכָה *mel-aw-kaw'* properly, deputyship, i.e. ministry; generally, employment (never servile) or work (abstractly or concretely); also property (as the result of labor):--business, + cattle, + industrious, occupation, (+ -pied), + officer, thing (made), use, (manner of) work((-man), -manship). From the same as מַלְאָךְ *mal'ak mal-awk'* meaning to despatch as a deputy; a messenger; specifically, of God, i.e. an angel (also a prophet, priest or teacher):--ambassador, angel, king, messenger.

## Lucas (Luke) 6:1-12

**AND** it came to pass on the second Sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his Talmidiym plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in *their* hands. **2** And certain of the Parashiym said unto them, Why do ye that  $\text{אס}$  which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath days? **3** And YAHUSHA answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did,  $\text{אס}$  when himself was hungry, and they which were with him; **4** How he went into the house of ELOHIYM, and did take and eat the showbread, and gave also to them that were with him;  $\text{אס}$  which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone? **5** And he said unto them, That the Son of Adam is ADONAI also of the Sabbath. **6** And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered. **7** And the scribes and Parashiym watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. **8** But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. **9** Then said YAHUSHA unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy *it*? **10** And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth your hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other. **11** And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to YAHUSHA. **12** And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to ELOHIYM.

## Lucas 13:10- 17

**10** And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath ( $\text{שַׁבָּת}$  shabbath'). **11** And, behold, there was a woman who had a spirit ( $\text{רוּחַ}$  ruach)<sup>2</sup> of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. **12** And when *Yahushua* saw her, he called her to him, and said to her, Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity. **13** And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight ( $\text{יָשָׁר}$  yashar)<sup>3</sup>, and glorified *Elohiym*. **14** And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that *Yahushua* had healed on the Sabbath ( $\text{שַׁבָּת}$  shabbath'), and said to the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath ( $\text{שַׁבָּת}$  shabbath'). **15** *Adonai* then answered him, and said, You hypocrite, do not each one of you on the Sabbath ( $\text{שַׁבָּת}$  shabbath') loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him

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<sup>2</sup>  $\text{רוּחַ}$  **ruach** - wind; by resemblance breath, i.e. a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; figuratively, life, anger, unsubstantiality; by extension, a region of the sky; by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being (including its expression and functions):--air, anger, blast, breath, X cool, courage, mind, X quarter, X side, spirit((-ual)), tempest, X vain, ((whirl-))wind(-y).

<sup>3</sup>  $\text{יָשָׁר}$  **yashar** - a primitive root; to be straight or even; figuratively, to be (causatively, to make) right, pleasant, prosperous:--direct, fit, seem good (meet), + please (will), be (esteem, go) right (on), bring (look, make, take the) straight (way), be upright(-ly).

away to watering? **16** And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Avraham, whom Satan<sup>4</sup> has bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath')? **17** And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious (הוֹדֵה hode)<sup>5</sup> things that were done by him.

### Lucas 14:1, 3, 5

And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Parashiym to eat bread on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath'), that they watched him. **2** And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. **3** And *Yahushua* answering spoke to the lawyers and Parashiym, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath')? **4** And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; **5** And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath')? **6** And they could not answer him again to these things.

### Mattithyah (Matthew) 12:1-21

At that time *Yahushua* went on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath') through the corn; and his Talmidiym were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. **2** But when the Parashiym saw *it*, they said to him, Behold, your Talmidiym do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath'). **3** But he said to them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; **4** How he entered into the house of *Elohiym*, and did eat the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? **5** Or have ye not read in the Torah, how that on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath') the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath'), and are blameless? **6** But I say to you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. **7** But if ye had known what this means,

I will have mercy<sup>6</sup> , and not sacrifice,<sup>7</sup>

כי חסד ורחמים

KEE CHESED CHAPETS LO ZEBACH

ye would not have condemned the guiltless. **8** For the *Son of Man* (בֶּן אָדָם ben Adam) is *Adonai* even of the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath'). **9** And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:

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<sup>4</sup> שַׁטָּן *satan* - an opponent; especially (with the article prefixed) Satan, the arch-enemy of good:--adversary, Satan, withstand.

<sup>5</sup> הוֹדֵה *hode* - from an unused root; grandeur (i.e. an imposing form and appearance):--beauty, comeliness, excellency, glorious, glory, goodly, honour, majesty.

<sup>6</sup> חֶסֶד *che'ced* - kindness; by implication (towards God) piety: rarely (by opposition) reproof, or (subject.) beauty:--favour, good deed(-liness, -ness), kindly, (loving-)kindness, merciful (kindness), mercy, pity, reproach, wicked thing.

<sup>7</sup> **Hosea 6:6** For I desired חֶסֶד *mercy* חֶסֶד, and not sacrifice זֶבַח; and the knowledge דַעַת of God אֱלֹהִים more than burnt offerings עֹלֶה.

**10** And, behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath')? that they might accuse him. **11** And he said to them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath'), will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? **12** How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath (שַׁבָּת shabbath'). **13** Then says he to the man, Stretch forth your hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

**14** Then the Parashiyim went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. **15** But when *Yahushua* knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; **16** And charged them that they should not make him known: **17** That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by *Yesha`yahu* the prophet, saying, **18** Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my *Ruach* upon him, and he shall show judgment (מִשְׁפָּט mishpat')<sup>8</sup> to the other people. **19** He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. **20** A bruised reed he shall not break, and smoking flax he shall not quench, till he send forth judgment (מִשְׁפָּט mishpat') to victory (נֶצֶחַ netsach)<sup>9</sup>. **21** And in his name shall the other people trust.

**Yochanan 5:9, 10, 16, 18**

**Yochanan 7:22, 23**

**Yochanan 9:14, 16**

**Yochanan 19:31**

**Yochanan 20:1**

**Matsah** (Unleavened Bread)

**Vayiqra 23:6-8**

And on the fifteenth day עֶשְׂרֵת הַיּוֹם of the same month חֹדֶשׁ is the feast הַגָּדֹל of Matsah מִצֵּה (unleavened bread) to *Yahuah* יְהוָה: seven שִׁבְעָה days יוֹם ye must eat אֶכְלֵם Matsah מִצֵּה (unleavened bread). In the first day יוֹם ye shall have an holy convocation (מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ)

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<sup>8</sup> מִשְׁפָּט **mishpat'** - properly, a verdict (favorable or unfavorable) pronounced judicially, especially a sentence or formal decree (human or (participant's) divine law, individual or collective), including the act, the place, the suit, the crime, and the penalty; abstractly, justice, including a participant's right or privilege (statutory or customary), or even a style:--+ adversary, ceremony, charge, X crime, custom, desert, determination, discretion, disposing, due, fashion, form, to be judged, judgment, just(-ice, -ly), (manner of) law(-ful), manner, measure, (due) order, ordinance, right, sentence, usest, X worthy, + wrong.

<sup>9</sup> נֶצֶחַ **netsach** - or netsach {nay'-tsakh}; properly, a goal, i.e. the bright object at a distance travelled towards; hence (figuratively), splendor, or (subjectively) truthfulness, or (objectively) confidence; but usually (adverbially), continually (i.e. to the most distant point of view); --alway(-s), constantly, end, (+ n-)ever(more), perpetual, strength, victory.

qodesh miqra): ye shall do עֲשֶׂה no servile עֲבֹדָה<sup>10</sup> work מְלָאכָה<sup>11</sup> therein. But ye shall offer קָרַב an offering made by fire אֵשׁ to Yahuah יהוה seven שִׁבְעַת יָמִים days יוֹם: in the seventh יוֹם שְׁבִיעִי day יוֹם is an holy convocation (מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ qodesh miqra): ye shall do עֲשֶׂה no servile work (מְלָאכָה עֲבֹדָה abodah melakah) therein.

**Marcus 14:1, 12**

**Lucas 22:1, 7**

**Mattithyahu 26:17**

**עֲבֹדָה מְלָאכָה עֲבֹדָה Lo `abodah' melakah'**

**עֲבָד `ebed eh'-bed**

from 5647; a servant:--X bondage, bondman, (bond-)servant, (man-)servant.

ע - Ayn; Nothing; the eye (the evil eye);

ב - Beit; the house

ד - Dalet; the doorway

ה - Heh; the window (behold)

Behold, the door to the house of nothing.

**עֲבָדֵיהֶוּ `Obadyah o-bad-yahu**

{o-bad-yaw'-hoo}; active participle of 5647 and 3050; servant of Yahuah; Obadyahu, the name of thirteen Israelites:--Obadiah.

**מְלָאכָה melakah – work**

מ - mem; mother/ water and blood

ל - lamed; shepherd's staff

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<sup>10</sup> עֲבֹדָה `abodah' or mabowdah {ab-o-daw'}; work of any kind:--act, bondage, + bondservant, effect, labour, ministering(-try), office, service(-ile, -itude), tillage, use, work, X wrought.

<sup>11</sup> מְלָאכָה *mel-aw-kaw'* properly, deputyship, i.e. ministry; generally, employment (never servile) or work (abstractly or concretely); also property (as the result of labor):--business, + cattle, + industrious, occupation, (+ -pied), + officer, thing (made), use, (manner of) work((-man), -manship). From the same as מְלָאֲכָר *mal'ak mal-awk'* meaning to despatch as a deputy; a messenger; specifically, of God, i.e. an angel (also a prophet, priest or teacher):--ambassador, angel, king, messenger.

א – aleph; crown of authority

כ – kaph; the palm of the hand (to push)

ח – heh; the open window

**Behold! The push of the oxhead, the shepherd's staff, the water and the blood**

The Hebrew word *mitzvah* (מצוה) means "divine commandment" (*mitzvot* is the plural form). Although the word is sometimes used broadly to refer to Rabbinic (Talmudic) law or simply a good deed (e.g., "it would be a *mitzvah* to visit your sick cousin"), in its strictest sense the term refers to a divine commandment given by the LORD in the Torah. In Exodus 24:12 the Ten Commandments are collectively referred to as *mitzvot*.

Commandment(s) ..... מצוה / מצוות

## Types of Mitzvot

The Torah is filled with various imperatives of one kind or another. The term *mitzvot* (מצוות) is a *general term* used to refer to any commandment given by God. Mitzvot can be further divided into the subcategories of *chukkim u'mishpatim* (Deut. 4:5):

- **Chukkim (חקים)** are statutes given without a reason (i.e., fiat or divine decrees). As such they are sometimes called "supra-rational" decrees. The classic example is the *chok* (sing.) regarding the Red Heifer, which, legend has it, defied even the wisdom of King Solomon. Other examples include dietary law (*kashrut*), the prohibition of mixing seeds or fabrics (*kilayim*), or the laws concerning family purity (*niddah*). These laws can seem irrational to human reason.

*Zot chukat haTorah (זאת חקת התורה)* - "this is the Torah's decree...." which we therefore accept as a commandment that transcends our abilities to rationally fathom. That is, when asked *why* we would do what is here commanded, we can only appeal to the fact that the LORD has commanded such - and that settles the issue.

- **Mishpatim (משפטים)** are laws given for a clearly specified reason (i.e., logical laws). An example would be the commandment to give charity or the prohibitions against theft and murder. These mitzvot are inherently rational and appeal to the need for ethical unity (civil and moral life) within the community.
- **Note:** *eidot (עדות)* are testimonials (from the root 'ed, "witness") that commemorate or represent something -- e.g., the commandments to observe Shabbat and the holidays, to put on tefillin, wear tzitzit, eat matzah on Passover, blow a shofar, etc. Since they commemorate or symbolically represent something, the *eidot* occupy a sort of middle ground between the rationally understandable *mishpatim* and the supra-rational *chukkim*.

Divine Decree(s) ..... חק / חקים  
 Judgment(s) ..... משפט / משפטים  
 Testimonial(s) ..... עדה / עדות

The phrase *chukkim u'mishpatim (חקים ומשפטים)* is a synonym for the more general term "mitzvah," as can be seen in *parashat Mishpatim*, which lists over 50 mitzvot that are indeed logical laws (i.e., *mishpatim*), but also include a number of *eidot* and at least one *chok*, or supra-rational "decree."

Some Jewish scholars have attempted to count the various *mitzvot* (commandments) listed in the Torah. For example, the Jewish Aristotelian philosopher Maimonides (i.e., "Rambam") listed a total of 613 commandments in his book *Sefer Ha-mitzvot* ("Book of Commandments") and divided them into two basic groups: 248 positive ("Thou shalt...") and 365 negative ("Thou shalt not...") commandments. In Jewish theological tradition, positive commandments (obligations) are called *mitzvot 'aseh (מצות עשה)*, whereas the prohibitions are called *mitzvot lo-ta'aseh (מצות לא תעשה)*. Some of the sages rather fancifully claim that the positive commandments equal the number of bones and significant organs of the body, whereas the negative commandments correspond to the number of days in the solar year.

The 248 positive commandments ..... מצות עשה  
 The 365 negative commandments ..... מצות לא תעשה

With the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, many of the enumerated mitzvot that concern ritual and ceremony within the establishment of the Aaronic priesthood can no longer be obeyed (it has been estimated that only about 270 of them - less than 50 percent - are still applicable today). That is, ever since the Diaspora of the Jewish people, it has been literally impossible to fulfill all of the Torah's righteous demands. Nonetheless, the Rabbinic tradition has assumed the role of interpreting the applicability of Jewish law for the individual Jew, and certain qualifications in the idea of the mitzvot are therefore made.

## Rabbinical Legal Ruminations: Halakhah

In addition to Taryag mitzvot (see the listing of the 613 commandments below), Rabbinical law has added a large body of rulings that are claimed to be just as binding as the divine mitzvot. Such rabbinical *halakhah* (from *halakh*: הלך, "to walk") refers to the various rules and regulations that are said to mark the Jew's 'walk' through life. Halakhah includes three (related) groups: *gezeirah*, *takkanah*, and *minhag*:

- **Gezeirah** ("fence") -- a rule instituted by the rabbis to prevent inadvertent violation of a mitzvah. For instance, it is a mitzvah to refrain from work on the Sabbath, but it's a gezeirah to avoid even the handling of any work instruments on the Sabbath.
- **Takkanah** ("case law ordinance") -- a law instituted by rabbis that does not directly derive from the Torah (but is inferred from its interpretation). An example would be the lighting of candles on erev Shabbat. The ritual of public Torah recitation every Monday and Thursday is a takkanah instituted by Ezra the Scribe. Takkanot (pl.) can vary by region, based on the prevailing rabbinical authority. Ashkenazic Jews accept takkanot that Sephardic Jews might not recognize as binding.
- **Minhag** ("custom") are rabbinically approved conventions for a Jewish community (plural minhagim). An example of a minhag would be eating apples with honey on Rosh Hashanah. Like the takkanot, minhagim can vary by region, based on the prevailing rabbinical authority.