



We have thus far covered all of G-d's festivals found in Leviticus 23 except the first, the Sabbath. It is seemingly the most important, not only because it is listed first, but also because it occurs weekly, 52 times per year, whereas the other festivals only occur once per year. But, in addition, the Sabbath, *Shabbat* in Hebrew, is the only *moed*, the only holy convocation, which can be observed according to G-d's instructions. The Scripture says: 2 *"Speak to Bnei-Yisrael, and tell them: These are the appointed moadim of Adonai, which you are to proclaim to be holy convocations—My moadim.* 3 *"Work may be done for six days, but the seventh day is a Shabbat of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You are to do no work—it is a Shabbat to Adonai in all your dwellings"* (Leviticus 23:2-3 TLV). Whereas, the other festivals can only be fully observed in Israel in the presence of the Temple, *Shabbat* is to be observed everywhere we dwell. It is the day in which we corporately gather before Him to worship our Creator.

In Genesis 1, it says: 5 *God called the light "day," and the darkness He called "night."* So there was evening and there was morning—one day (Genesis 1:5 TLV). Evening and morning together make up one day which begins in the evening. The seventh day Sabbath begins at sundown at the end of the sixth day, Friday, and ends at sundown on the seventh day, Saturday. In Genesis chapter 2 it says: 2 *God completed—on the seventh day—His work that He made, and He ceased—on the seventh day—from all His work that He made.* 3 *Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, for on it He ceased from all His work that God created for the purpose of preparing"* (Genesis 2:2-3 TLV). Because ADONAI completed His work and rested on the seventh day, He made the seventh day a holy day for us, a day set apart from the rest of the week for our rest.

As we rest on the seventh day of the week, we are not only honoring and obeying G-d, but what we are observing is also a picture of our future Sabbath rest, eternity with ADONAI and our Messiah. The number seven is significant and because of what G-d did on the seventh day, we understand the number seven to mean completion. In the Book of Hebrews it says: 9 *"So there remains a Shabbat rest for the people of God"* (Hebrews 4:9 TLV). This is the Sabbath rest of eternity for those who die having trusted in Messiah Yeshua, the reward for the completion of our labor on the earth. Hebrews continues: 10 *"For the one who has entered God's rest has also ceased from his own work, just as God did from His"* (Hebrews 4:10 TLV). The weekly Sabbath is a powerful picture of G-d's provision for us, a life of peace with Him while we are in our earthly bodies, but also a picture of the eternal peace which we can have through Yeshua.

That we understand and celebrate the seventh day is in no way a condemnation of the Sabbath worship of others. We wish to be in love and unity of faith with all of Yeshua's followers. G-d has given us free will to interpret and to choose how we will worship Him. Yeshua, Himself, gave us the authority to make decisions regarding how we interpret Scripture. In Matthew 16 after telling Peter that He, Yeshua, would build His *Ekklesia*, His community of faith, upon the rock foundation that He is the Messiah, the Son of the Living G-d, He said this: 9 ... *"Whatever you forbid on earth will have been forbidden in heaven and*

*what you permit on earth will have been permitted in heaven*" (Matthew 16:9:b TLV). Forbidding and permitting or binding and loosing, *asar* and *hitir* in Hebrew, was a leadership principle in use in Yeshua's day and even before. In this, He has given us the authority to make decisions about how we will worship G-d. But, while grace abounds, obedience remains necessary and we are responsible to Him for our decisions.

We must each seek G-d regarding the Sabbath and also the other interpretations of Scripture which we make. Paul said: *12 "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known"* (1Corinthians 13:12 TLV). Even as we make different decisions regarding how we worship G-d, Paul reminds us that of faith, hope and love, love is the greatest. *Shalom aleichem!* Peace be upon you, G-d's peace!