



Beit Din Judgment

Question: Can a Church Leader continue advertising, promoting and actually conducting Sunday Services, and not calling the "holy convocation" for Shabbat according to Lev 23:3, be accepted as fully Torah-observant? What is the real meaning of the "sign" of Ezek 20:12 meaning to be set apart?

Ruling of the Beit Din

The following response was written primarily by Moreh Paul Gasser and Rosh Rabbi Mordecai Silver, Ph.D. with additional input from Rabbi Daniel Klutstein, Moreh Rico Cortes and Rabbi Philip Hammond:

*The LORD spoke again to Moses, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD'S appointed times which you shall proclaim as **holy convocations**-- My appointed times are these: 'For six days work may be done, but on the **seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation.** You shall not do any work; it is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings. (Lev 23:1-3 NAU)*

The Lord is very straight forward in declaring the seventh day as the Sabbath **NOT** Sunday. Many times over the course of ministry, leaders are encountered who say they are meeting the people where they are when the people are coming out of the church. However, the problem is they do not move them to Saturday, the Sabbath day. The Sabbath is a Moed-Appointed time of the Lord and is the first in the list of the Festivals called for by the Lord. It leads the way and the Lord takes its observance very seriously. A leader sets the tone for their group and is an example for others and if they are disobeying Torah what does this say?

There is no problem worshipping YHVH every day of the week, nor meeting people where they are. But there is only one Sabbath. If a leader is not leading people to Shabbat, then they are failing to set the Shabbat apart. Furthermore, if the leaders themselves are not setting the Shabbat apart from the rest of the week and holding a set-apart gathering of 'believers', then not only are they failing to set the day apart, but they are teaching others not to honour the Shabbat and set it apart. Now the leader becomes liable for what happens to those whom they lead astray.

Historically speaking, most people who have entered the Messianic lifestyle have come from the Christian/Catholic church. They bring with them their doctrine and believe it is ok to keep such understanding of Scripture. They push their leaders into following the 'Christian' understanding of the "way it is to be done", and the leader crumbles to the influence of his 'flock' in a desire for acceptance or numbers in their congregation.



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When this occurs, compromise and concession has occurred and the leader has gone back to where they once were: ***For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the set-apart command delivered unto them. For them the proverb has proved true, A dog returns to his own vomit, and, A washed sow returns to her rolling in the mud.*** (2 Peter 2:21-21 ISR98)

Shabbat is our 'wedding ring', or sign of the covenant. This is how you know you are a chosen person of YHVH. If a 'leader' gives up the wedding ring, then he is going after another bride and committing adultery against Elohim, just like Hosea's wife.

The Shabbat is the most talked about festival in Scripture. It is one of the 10 "words" or what is known as the Commandments. YHVH even sets it apart from the others in Leviticus chapter 23. Furthermore, with the destruction of the Temple, there are still several Biblical requirements for the Shabbat. Rest (Exod 23:12), Do no work (Exod 20:10), Do no plowing or harvesting (Exod 34:21), Do not light a fire (Exod 35:3), Do not buy and sell (Neh 10:31), **HOLD A HOLY CONVOCATION** (Lev, 23:3), etc. There are over 1,200 Rabbinical regulations for the Shabbat, however, Shabbat was made for man, not man for the Shabbat. People will discuss these requirements and find ways to either 'uphold' them, or dismiss them, for we are truly a rebellious and stubborn people. But the truth remains, leaders must hold a holy convocation on Shabbat for Shabbat is holy in YHVH's understanding.

*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the **seventh day God finished his work** that he had done, and **he rested on the seventh day** from all his work that he had done. So **God blessed the seventh day and made it holy**, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. (Gen 2:1-3 ESV)*

This was the final act of creation on the part of the Lord. He set apart the seventh day as the Sabbath. Now, some say they are resting on the Sabbath day. But that is only part of what we are instructed to do on the Sabbath day. We are to **gather together in a holy convocation, an assembly**, and honour the Holy One of Israel. Now you can worship on any day of the week you choose to, **BUT** there is only one Sabbath day and it is not Sunday. Some will point to the Apostle Paul as an example of one who gathered on the first day of the week but when you read about what happened there, a young man fell asleep and fell out of the window. It is obvious it was evening and most likely the Sabbath had ended and they were still gathered together and Paul was teaching in a Havdallah type service.

The Shabbat is indeed the first of YHVH's Moedim. YHVH's Moedim are the "mile markers" or "road signs" for the "highway of holiness". (Isaiah 40:3, 49:11, Jer 31:21, Psalm 68:4) If the leader misses the first road sign, how can the assembly find their way? They can't, and this is where things become perverted: ***And I shall cause all her rejoicing, her festivals,***



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her New Moons, and her Sabbaths, even all her appointed times, to cease (Hosea 2:13 ISR98). YHVH will terminate the 'whoring leader's' so called 'Shabbat', if they are YHVH's leaders. Why? The leaders messed everything up by not honouring the Shabbat: ***I have hated, I have despised your festivals, and I am not pleased with your assemblies. Though you offer Me ascending offerings and your grain offerings, I do not accept them, nor do I look on your fattened peace offerings. Take away from Me the noise of your songs, for I do not hear the sound of your stringed instruments.*** (Amos 5:21-23 ISR98)

"Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them. "Yet the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness; they did not walk in My statutes; they despised My judgments, 'which, if a man does, he shall live by them'; and they greatly defiled My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them in the wilderness, to consume them. "But I acted for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned before the Gentiles, in whose sight I had brought them out. "So I also raised My hand in an oath to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, 'flowing with milk and honey,' the glory of all lands, "because they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. "Nevertheless My eye spared them from destruction. I did not make an end of them in the wilderness. "But I said to their children in the wilderness, 'Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. 'I am the LORD your God: Walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and do them; 'hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God.' (Ezek 20:12-20 NKJ)

0226 אֵימָת {oth}: **Meaning:** sign, signal, a distinguishing mark, banner, remembrance, miraculous sign, omen, warning, token, ensign, standard, miracle, proof.

Heb 13:8 ***Yeshua the Messiah is the same yesterday, today and forever.*** (CJB)

If Messiah is the same as He has always been and if He was there with the Father at Creation and if it was through Him and for Him the Father created all there is and if the seventh day Sabbath was set apart as part of creation then it has never changed no matter what man may say. Those who are keeping Sunday as the Sabbath may be doing it because they do not know better and in time they may change if taught about it as well as the rest of Torah (Acts 15:21). But a leader who *claims* to be Torah-observant should know better and the example they are setting is you can disobey Torah if you want to. Basically, **the leader is teaching the congregation to rebel against the King** and we know in Scriptures that we as leaders



should not allow that to happen for the holiness of the camp. That leader will be held accountable for their actions before God in the Day of Judgment.

The word “holy” in Hebrew is Kadosh. This word means ‘set-apart’. The Shabbat is to be set apart from the other days of the week.

Thus said YHVH, “Guard yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Yerushalayim, nor take a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, nor do any work. And you shall set apart the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. But they did not obey, or incline their ear, and they made their neck stiff not to hear and not to receive instruction. And it shall be, if you diligently obey Me, declares YHVH, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, and set apart the Sabbath day, to do no work in it, then sovereigns and heads sitting on the throne of David shall enter in through the gates of this city, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their heads – the men of Yehudah and the inhabitants of Yerushalayim. And this city shall be inhabited forever. And they shall come from the cities of Yehudah and from the places around Yerushalayim, and from the land of Binyamin and from the low country, from the mountains and from the South, bringing ascending offerings and slaughterings, grain offerings and incense, bringing offerings of praise to the House of YHVH. But if you do not obey Me to set apart the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden when entering the gates of Yerushalayim on the Sabbath day, then I shall kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall consume the palaces of Yerushalayim, and not be quenched. (Jer 17:21-27 ISR98)

Here we see how important it is to make Shabbat holy especially for the leaders of a congregation. ***And they are to teach My people the difference between the set-apart and the profane, and make them know what is unclean and clean. And they are to stand as judges in a dispute, and judge it according to My right-rulings. And they are to guard My Torot and My laws in all My appointed festivals, and set apart My Sabbaths. (Ezek 44:23-24 ISR98)***

Here we again see the leaders of God’s people being held to a certain standard. People make the excuse that they are not priests, but call themselves ministers, pastors, doctors or even Rabbis. Yet Scripture tells us that we are a royal priesthood, a holy nation set apart unto YHVH. We are all priests (1 Peter 2:9, Deut 10:15, Isaiah 61:6, Exod 19:6, Isaiah 43:21).

A leader who claims to be “**Torah-observant**” **MUST** honour the Shabbat and hold a **set-apart convocation** on Shabbat. Otherwise, that leader might as well call himself/herself a pastor or minister, a bishop or any other “Christian/Catholic” title, but not a Rabbi or God’s appointed leader “who claims to be Torah-observant.”



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One last point to share on the topic about a leader following Shabbat is Yeshua followed the Shabbat: ***And Yeshua returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read*** (Luke 4:14-16 ESV). ***On a Sabbath Yeshua was teaching in one of the synagogues*** (Luke 13:1).

In addition Yeshua valued the Sabbath so much that in the time of tribulation He asked us to pray that it does not fall on the Sabbath so we don't have to break it even to save our lives (Matt 24:20). Also the women waited for the Sabbath to be over before coming to the tomb in Mark 16:1 (NIV). As a leader, should they not do what Yeshua did?

Furthermore, the person whom the Christian church looks at in all their dealings, the Apostle Paul, also went to the synagogue on the Shabbat and was part of a holy convocation: ***And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures*** (Acts 17:2 ESV). ***Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks*** (Acts 18:4 NIV). Paul did not have to go to the Christian church to reason with Greeks: ***On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down*** (Acts 13:14 NIV). If Paul also gathered together on Shabbat as Yeshua did, leaders should with unrestrained effort as well.

Finally, Shabbat is for us. It is a day of rest, a day to meet with like-minded people and rejoice as we worship the One who created us. We are energized, strengthened, healed and many other positive reactions when we honor this day. Why would we teach people to not enter into that rest? ***So there remains a Sabbath-keeping for the people of Elohim*** (Heb. 4:9 ISR98). Those claiming to be in Torah **MUST** honour the Shabbat. There are no exceptions, in fact it is outright rebellion against YHWH if you don't and rebellion is witchcraft, the complete opposite than to be Torah-observant:

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king. (1 Samuel 15:23 WBT)