

Did Abraham Observe The Sabbath? An Answer:



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1. A law that is created for temporary use cannot be eternal/forever, so to obedience in truth and uprightness cannot be a temporary thing, but must be forever. Ps. 11:7,8.
2. All God's Commandments are truth, and truth is never temporary for they existed eternally; that is, before man and will survive forever. Ps. 119:151,142,144.
3. The law of God is the Moral Law, and morality does not become morality at a particular time, and then lose its morality in the future. Ps. 119:127,128.
4. Anyone or thing that turns our ears from hearing the law of God, it is abominable, because it makes your prayer abomination, hence sin itself. (Isa. 30:9; Pr. 28:9; Ps. 109:7).
5. The duty of all men is to keep God's commandments, because they determine what is good and evil in an eternal unchanging way. Eccl. 12:13,14.
6. We are now going to investigate an evangelical document named "Did Abraham Observe the Sabbath?" by Ernest L. Martin (1975) and edited by David Sielaff (2010). The document rejects seventh day Sabbath keeping for a number of reasons, by showing that Abraham never kept it since there is no such record of him doing so in the book of Genesis. Other reasons are also given to show that the Sabbath commandment is not an eternal and universal commandment of God, and hence it is not necessary for Christians to keep it. The document presents anti-sabbatarian concepts that existed in the 1970s, many of which have since been abandoned by Evangelicals since they have been proven to be untrue with the passage of time. The document is an attempt to recycle some of these already disproven flawed arguments, with the aim of proving that Christians in the New Testament do not have to keep the seventh day Sabbath. How does a day become at a later date a sign of being sanctified by God, or a sign of the true God YHWH? These meanings cannot be arbitrarily imposed upon the day; they have to be signs based upon the content of the day that always inhered in the meaning of the day from the beginning. (Eze. 20:12,20; Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Ex. 31:13-17).
7. The document can be divided into ten parts and each part given some summaries. Here are the summaries that can be drawn from the document.
 - a. God only rested on that one seventh day and no others after, thus it had no relation to a seventh day Sabbath.

- b. Jesus answered to show that the Father did not rest because He was tired; He showed that the Father works on the seventh day after the first seventh day He kept; therefore He does not keep the seventh day Sabbaths.
- c. Nowhere in the book of Genesis did God relate a charge or utter a commandment or statute, or legislate a law that each seventh day must be kept.
- d. The seventh day was not an example for all to duplicate, or else one must duplicate creating on the other six days also, since this would also be examples to follow.
- e. God was married to two persons (Israel and Judah) at the same time, this was polygamy. This does not mean we should follow this practice of God (by way of example).
- f. Since no punishment was showed for Sabbath breaking in the book of Genesis, it means that the Sabbath is not to be kept.
- g. Genesis is a book of law; hence it was called “the Torah” which means “the law”. Thus the statements in Genesis must be considered law, yet no commandment about the Sabbath is given. We do not therefore have to keep the Sabbath.
- h. There is no distinct command, no force of law about the seventh day Sabbath in Genesis.
- i. Don’t try to read Exodus back into the book of Genesis, it is like saying a certain president’s birthday was celebrated before a previous president was born.
- j. Nowhere does the book of Genesis show a law to keep the seventh day Sabbath, or a penalty for if it is broken.
- k. There is no proof that Israel stopped work and kept every seventh day while in Egyptian bondage.
- l. Israel only knew of the seventh day Sabbath from Exodus, so the “remember” in the Sabbath clause in the tables of stone was for the three weeks later when the tables of stone were codified and given.
- m. Before Moses, the Sabbath was not a law.
- n. Genesis shows that the Sabbath was just a rest period for God.
- o. The “Sabbath was made for man” means Israel.
- p. Genesis had no directions from God that the seventh day had to be observed.

- q. When in the book of Genesis we are told that Abraham kept God's voice, charge, commands, statutes and laws, they were not the Ten Commandments code given to Israel in the time of Moses.
 - r. Abraham had to obey only what God had specifically commanded, and the Sabbath was not demanded in that period on Genesis.
 - s. The observance or non-observance of the Sabbath has nothing to do with the salvation offered by Christ.
 - t. We can follow in the footsteps of Abraham and have the same type of faith for salvation without keeping the Mosaic Sabbath.
8. We will now deal with two arguments from the document.
- a. God only rested on that one seventh day and no other after, thus it had no relation to a seventh day Sabbath.
 - b. Genesis shows that the Sabbath was just a rest period for God.
9. These concepts only exist because of darkness produced from struggling against Scripture.
- a. If God rested on that one seventh day and no others after, thus it had no relation to a seventh day Sabbath, and was just a rest period for God, why did He bless the day and hallowed (sanctified or set it apart) after He had finished resting. It does not make sense to bless a day and set it aside if its usefulness ends when rest is finished. Gen. 2:1-3.
 - i. Sanctifying the day or setting it apart when it was made shows that it was prepared for holy use. But for; whose holy use? Why, man, the Sabbath was made for man (not Israel, one nation) but mankind. Mk. 2:27.
 - ii. In the Exodus Commandments God Gives the reason for keeping the Sabbath because He (a) created (b) rested on the seventh day (c) blessed the day (d) Hallowed or sanctified it. This connects God keeping of the seventh day with the seventh day Sabbath showing continuity between the first Sabbath and all others after that. Ex. 20:8-11.
 - iii. God also connects the first seventh day Sabbath with others after it, and uses His example of keeping it, this means that He must have kept the others after the first. This is why He commands to keep His Sabbaths (plural), that is, one successive Sabbath after another.

- iv. The Sabbath is identified as “holy unto the Lord (YHWH)”. This holiness did not come in Exodus chapters 16,19, or 20 where the Sabbath is mentioned, its holiness is referred to as going back to the day God rested on it and sanctified it. This connects each successive Sabbath with the very first one showing that God kept all. (Why should He break the holy day?). Ex. 31:15-17.
 - v. The Sabbath as the seventh day will have its continuity even in heaven forever and in the new earth because God and “all flesh” will keep it. Thus those that reject it on earth cannot be part of that “all flesh” that shall forever keep it, but will be lost. Isa. 66:23.
 - vi. Also the Scriptures do tell us that those who believe the Gospel must enter into God’s rest even though the creation of the world was finished from the foundation of the world, this is the seventh day Sabbath rest spoken about. We are told we must cease from our works as God did from His. This tells us that that day (the seventh day) is for believers even from the foundation of the world. This connects the seventh day Sabbath from the very first one down to all others, and shows that it was made for mankind from Genesis chapter one to forever. Heb. 4:2-4,9,10.
- b. We can now summarize what the above Scriptures have shown.
- i. We are never to trivialize the seventh day at the beginning of creation as a simple ordinary common resting time as any other day this day was blessed and sanctified or set apart for holy use. It is not a common rest day.
 - ii. The Seventh day Sabbath at the beginning of creation was never a rest period for God alone; it was made and blessed for all men.
 - iii. The seventh day Sabbath at the beginning had a connection to every successive Sabbath since all had the same blessing and sanctification as the very first one.
10. This next claim is that Jesus answered to show that the Father did not rest because He was tired; He showed that the Father works on the seventh day after the first seventh day that He kept, therefore He does not keep the seventh day Sabbaths. The text being referred to is John 5:16,17.
- a. Let us now read the text to see if Jesus was saying that the Father no longer keeps any seventh day Sabbath after the very first one but now works on that day. A reading of the relevant Scriptures does not yield such excessive stretch of errors. Jn. 5:1-18.

- i. First, the Jews did not believe that God was breaking the successive Sabbath after the first one, thus they could break it. For if God did break it, why tell Israel to keep it on pain of death? Ex. 31:13-17.
 - ii. This was not Jesus' belief also, since He taught that the Sabbath was made for man; and that He was YHWH of that day (that is, the YHWH that day exalts). Mk. 2:27,28.
 - iii. Jesus kept the Sabbath as was His custom, this means that He kept every successive seventh day; surely God on earth (Jesus) could not be in obedience while God in heaven has always been a Sabbath breaker from the foundation of the world?! Since Jesus was doing His Father's will only, and Jesus is God, then the will of God was that God should keep the seventh day Sabbaths always. (Lu. 4:16,31; Jn. 8:24,58; Jn. 5:30; Jn. 6:38).
 - iv. What did Jesus mean when He said that His Father works so He works? We must remember God works of creating creation out of nothing was finished from the foundation of the world. (Heb. 4:3; Gen. 2:1-3).
 - v. Also, when God had finished creating the world it was very good. Gen. 1:31.
 - v. However, after creation, everything is held together (consisted) or maintained by the work of God even the very day He rested on the very first Sabbath and forever. This is what Jesus meant by saying His Father works so He works. (Col. 1:16,17; Jn. 5:17).
- b. A summary of the points just looked at shows us the following.
- i. The Father does not work on the seventh day Sabbath with works of creating as He did in the beginning, He does not break the Sabbath.
 - ii. Jesus and the Father who is one God, could not be divided in the Father (God) breaking the Sabbath, while Jesus (God) kept the Sabbath as it was His custom to do.
 - iii. The works that the Father finished doing was works of creating creation out of nothing. When He finished all of them they were very good.
 - iv. However He (God) must hold together (consist or maintain) all of creation. This work happened from the very first seventh day Sabbath to even now. It does not break the Sabbath, for it is lawful (within the keeping of the Law) to do good on the Sabbath day. Matt. 12:10-12.

11. The next claims needed to destroy are the following:

- a. Nowhere in the book of Genesis did God relate a charge or utter a commandment or statute, or legislate a law that each seventh day must be kept.
 - b. Since no punishment was showed for Sabbath breaking in the book of Genesis, it means that the Sabbath is not to be kept.
 - c. Genesis is a book of law; hence it was called “the Torah” which means “the Law”. Thus the statements in Genesis must be considered law, yet no commandment about the Sabbath is given. We do not therefore have to keep the Sabbath.
 - d. There is no distinct command, no force of law about the seventh day Sabbath in Genesis.
 - e. Nowhere does the book of Genesis shows; a law to keep the seventh day Sabbath, or a penalty for if it is broken.
 - f. Genesis had no directions from God that the seventh day had to be observed.
12. All these six points we have just read are all summed up in a few points, that is:
- a. The book of genesis does not command the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath, no such commandment is uttered in that book.
 - b. The book has no penalty for Sabbath breaking.
 - c. Therefore we do not have to keep the Sabbath.
13. This is an argument so stupid that it can be answered many ways.
- a. Once Genesis does not command it, or has no commandment about it, it should not be kept.
 - i. Where is the commandment not to have other gods before God in Genesis? None exist.
 - ii. Where is the commandment not to make graven images or to serve them in Genesis? None exist.
 - iii. Where is the commandment not to take God’s name in vain in Genesis? None exist.
 - iv. Where in Genesis is the commandment to honour our Father and Mother? None exist.
 - v. Where in Genesis is the commandment not to commit adultery? None exist.

- vi. Where in Genesis are we told the commandment not to steal? None exist.
 - vii. Where in Genesis are we told or commanded the commandment not to bear false witness? None exist.
 - viii. Where in Genesis are we commanded the commandment not to covet? None exist.
 - ix. Where in Genesis are we commanded the commandment to love God and love our fellowman? None exist.
- b. Following the logic of the writer of the tract, this means that we do not have to keep those commandments until Exodus chapter twenty (Ex. 20).
- i. We do not have to keep those commandments because no penalty exist or has been stipulated by God for them.
 - ii. We do not even have to love God or our fellowmen in the period of the book of Genesis. This is the folly of such teachings.
- c. However, in Genesis, we see that there is a universal acceptance of certain wrongs; that reveal, a knowledge of Law from God that was generally known, but was being ignored, lost and transgressed.
- i. We see that to be covetous is wrong because Eve coveted the fruit that was forbidden. Gen. 3:6.
 - ii. We see that murder was sin in Genesis thus a moral law existed for where there is no law, no sin exists. Gen. 4:6-8.
 - iii. We see that to honour one's parents was also a recognized moral behaviour. Gen. 9:20-25.
 - iv. We also see that the concept of lying or bearing false witness was a moral consciousness as well in the book of Genesis. Gen. 12:10-13.
 - v. So also was adultery a sin revealing that some form of moral law existed; in the substructure. Gen. 12:14-20.
 - vi. Also hating the opposite of love reveals that the moral principle of love existed in Genesis. Gen. 27:41.
 - vii. Making graven images and even having other gods before God were all in the awareness of the moral consciousness of man in the period covered by Genesis. Gen. 35:1-4.

- viii. Even taking God's name in vain which is hypocrisy and insincerity in serving God; was a moral value existing in the period covered by Genesis. Gen. 38:13-19,24-26.
 - d. Thus we see that the essence or morals of the commandment existed as a substrata in the period of Genesis, although there is no written account of the Commandments of God. But it does not mean that they did not exist, nor they should not be kept, the proof that they existed and should have been kept is seen in the moral behaviour of the people in the accusing and excusing of their behaviour. This explains how all men will be judged by the Law of God, even those in Genesis. Eccl. 12:13,14; Jam. 2:8-12.
 - e. Even the seventh day Sabbath falls into the same category. Even though it is not seen as part of a code like the other nine clauses of the Law, the fact that it exist in Genesis as a blessed day that is hallowed (sanctified, dedicated to holy use), and was made for man (humanity) as Jesus said, then it too exists as a substrata moral from the very beginning of the world in Genesis. (Gen. 2:1-3; Mk. 2:27).
 - f. That all the Commandments of God is one unit can be seen in Scripture. (Deut. 4:13; Deut. 5:22; Jam. 2:8-12).
 - g. Until the law came at Mt. Sinai sin was in the world and sin is the transgression of the Law, because if the Law did not exist there would be no sin existent. (Rom. 5:13; 1 Jn. 3:4).
 - h. So the law of God did exist in Genesis although there is no account of it being written in a coded form and handed to man in Genesis. It is this law that everyone will be judged by, even those that cover the period of Genesis. Eccl. 12:13,14.
14. This next criticism of the seventh day Sabbath is evidently erroneous, because when a person fights against the truth with wresting the Scriptures, they present evident erroneous positions like the following points.
- a. We are told: The seventh day was not an example for all to duplicate, or else one must duplicate creating on the other six days also, since this would also be examples to follow.
 - i. It is a fact that man cannot create like God, so the question of duplicating creating like God does not arise. Yet God does tell us to rest on the seventh day (which is His rest) just as He rested. He expects obedience to seventh day Sabbath keeping just as He did, whether in the period covered by Genesis or any other time thereafter. (Gen. 3:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Heb. 4:3-5,9,10).

15. Again we are erroneously told the false concept of God and marriage.
- a. God was married to two persons (Israel and Judah) at the same time, this is polygamy. This does not mean we should follow this practice of God (by way of example). We are referred to Ezekiel 23:1-49; Jeremiah 3:6-10.
 - b. This type of marriage with God and the children of Israel, who had now split into two nations, cannot be termed a polygamous marriage because it is not like a man being married to two women. God's marriage to the church is a washing it to make it pure, and sanctifying it. (Eph. 5:22-28; Tit. 3:5-7).

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