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MINISTRIES

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The Divine Test: Proving Our Faith through God's Commandments

In our walk with YHWH, obeying his commandments serves as a measure of our devotion and loyalty and ultimately contributes to our rewards in the Messianic kingdom. Observing the Sabbath, keeping the appointed times, and adhering to the dietary instructions were not just given for our benefit but serve as divine mandates designed to test our faithfulness. While all of God’s commandments are important, these particular commandments are woven into the fabric of the Torah, forming the foundation of a lifestyle that reflects God’s holiness and righteousness.

Throughout the Scriptures, we see that YHWH places a high value on obedience, using it as a means to reveal the hearts of his people. By faithfully observing the Sabbath, we set apart a sacred time dedicated to rest and worship, acknowledging God’s sovereignty over our lives and creation.

The “*mo’edim*,” that is the appointed times established by God, provide a rhythm to our spiritual journey, allowing us to commemorate significant events in salvation history and anticipate future fulfillment in his prophetic messianic plan (Leviticus 23).

Dietary instructions, though often overlooked or misunderstood, call us to a daily practice of holiness, distinguishing us from the surrounding cultures and reminding us of our unique identity as God’s people (Leviticus 11:45).

Moreover, obedience to these commandments not only reflects our faithfulness but also contributes to our position in eternity. Jesus, his Hebrew name being Yeshua, emphasized the importance of keeping even the least of the commandments.

Matthew 5:19

Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Our adherence to God's laws is a testament to our commitment to his ways and a demonstration of our desire to be great in his Kingdom.

God, in his infinite wisdom, foresaw that his people would sometimes stray from his commands, but he continually calls on a faithful remnant to live a set-apart lifestyle. This remnant's dedication to obedience serves as a powerful witness to God's enduring standards of righteousness and the blessings that flow from living in harmony with his will.

This teaching will explore how these elements of God's Law, or in Hebrew, his Torah, serve as a test to discern whether we follow YHWH or succumb to the traditions and doctrines of men. We will cover the importance of the Sabbath as a sign of our covenant with God, the Feasts as appointments that reveal his prophetic plan, and dietary instructions as a call to holiness.

Each section will demonstrate how these commandments distinguish those who follow God's ways from those who follow the ways of the world. By examining these divine mandates, we aim to deepen our understanding and commitment to living a life that honors YHWH in every aspect.

The Sabbath: A Sign of the Covenant

The Sabbath is one of the most significant commandments given by God, serving as a perpetual sign of our covenant with him. It is a day set apart for rest and worship, a weekly reminder of our Creator and his creation. Observing the Sabbath is an act of obedience that honors God and distinguishes his people from the rest of the world. In this section, we will explore the biblical foundation of the Sabbath, its significance in our spiritual lives, and how it serves as a test of our allegiance to God.

Biblical Foundation of the Sabbath

The commandment to observe the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments, directly given by God.

Exodus 20:8-11

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD [YHWH] your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD [YHWH] made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

This commandment is rooted in the creation account, where God himself rested on the seventh day, setting an example for us to follow.

Genesis 2:2-3

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.

Furthermore, the Sabbath serves as a sign of the covenant between God and his people.

Exodus 31:16-17

Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD [YHWH] made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.

Significance in Our Spiritual Lives

The Sabbath is not just a day of physical rest but a time for spiritual renewal and connection with God. It is a reminder that our worth and identity are not found in our work or achievements but in our relationship with the Creator. By setting aside our own pursuits and focusing on YHWH, we align ourselves with his purposes and receive his blessings. In the book of Isaiah, God speaks to the blessings of honoring the Sabbath:

Isaiah 58:13-14

If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD [YHWH] honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the LORD [YHWH], and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD [YHWH] has spoken.

The Sabbath also points forward to the ultimate rest we will find in the Messianic Kingdom, serving as a weekly preview of the eternal peace and joy that await us.

Hebrews 4:9-10

So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

A Test of Allegiance

Observing the Sabbath often means departing from societal norms and expectations. It challenges us to prioritize God's commands over cultural pressures and personal convenience. In a world that values constant productivity and self-sufficiency, choosing to rest and worship on the Sabbath is a profound declaration of faith and trust in God's provision.

It is a test that reveals whether we are truly committed to following God's ways or if we are swayed by the demands and values of the world around us.

In Ezekiel 20:12, YHWH states, “Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD [YHWH] who sanctifies them.” This underscores that the Sabbath is a sign of our sanctification, setting us apart as God's holy people. By observing the Sabbath, we demonstrate our loyalty to God, affirming that his ways are higher than our own and that our ultimate trust is in him.

By faithfully keeping the Sabbath, we not only honor God but also strengthen our relationship with him, deepen our spiritual walk, and set an example for others. It is a tangible expression of our commitment to living according to his Word, showing that we are a people set apart, dedicated to following his commandments above all else.

For more on this, we recommend our teaching “[*The Sabbath Day*](#).”

Choosing God's Holy Days Over Man's Holidays

The *mo'edim*—or appointed times—of YHWH are essential components of God's Torah, serving as both commemorations of historical events and prophetic revelations of his redemptive plan.

Outlined in Leviticus 23, these appointed times are significant not only for the ancient Israelites but also for believers today. By observing these days, we align ourselves with God's timeline and demonstrate our readiness to follow his lead rather than the traditions of man.

Each appointed time carries layers of significance, teaching lessons about God's character, his covenant with his people, and the fulfillment of prophecy through Yeshua the Messiah. By returning to these biblically mandated celebrations, believers can experience a more profound connection to the Father, and a clearer reflection of God's intentions for his people.

God's Feasts vs. Traditional Christian Holidays

The Bible offers us specific annual appointed times that God's people are to observe, including Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles (Leviticus 23).

These *mo'edim* commemorate significant events in salvation history and have prophetic implications for the future. They are God's appointments, set by him for his people to honor and observe.

In contrast, there is considerable evidence suggesting that traditional Christian holidays like Christmas and Easter may have roots in worshipping God through pagan traditions, potentially violating Deuteronomy 12:30-31. These holidays share various customs with ancient pagan practices. For instance, Christmas, celebrated on December 25th, coincides with several winter solstice festivals from various cultures, which often involved feasting and gift-giving. Easter,

with its symbols of eggs and rabbits, reflects themes of fertility and renewal found in many springtime celebrations of ancient societies.

While many believers celebrate these holidays with sincere hearts, intending to honor the birth and resurrection of Messiah, these holidays lack the biblical foundation that the Feasts of YHWH possess. The *mo'edim* outlined in Scripture are not only commemorations but also rich with symbolism and meaning directly connected to God's plan for humanity. They provide a deeper understanding of God's work throughout history and his promises for the future.

A Call to Distinctiveness

Observing God's appointed times rather than traditional holidays sets us apart from the surrounding culture. It is a deliberate choice to honor God's calendar instead of following secular or traditional religious holidays that dominate society. This distinctiveness serves as a testimony to our faith in God's Word and his sovereignty over time. As Paul instructs:

Romans 12:2

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

The Test of Allegiance

Choosing to observe God's appointed times often means going against societal norms and expectations. This choice challenges us to prioritize God's commands over cultural pressures and personal convenience. During major holidays like Christmas and Easter, societal and familial expectations can be particularly strong, making it difficult to stand firm in our commitment to God's holy days.

Dealing with Loneliness and Peer Pressure

One of the significant challenges in choosing God's holy days over traditional holidays is dealing with the loneliness and isolation that can accompany this path. Not participating in widely celebrated holidays can lead to feelings of being left out, especially when friends and family do not share the same convictions. This is a test of our resolve and faithfulness to God's commandments.

However, it's important to remember that we are not alone in this journey. Yeshua himself faced loneliness and rejection for standing firm in God's truth. Hebrews 4:15 reminds us that he is able to sympathize with our weaknesses, having been tested in every way, just as we are, yet without sin. Additionally, being part of a community that shares our commitment to God's commandments can provide much-needed support and encouragement.

Overcoming with Faith

Choosing God's holy days over traditional holidays is a test of our faith and obedience. It requires courage and perseverance. As we walk this path, we are called to be a light to those around us, demonstrating through our actions that our ultimate allegiance is to God and his Word. By observing the *mo'edim*, we align our lives with his divine timeline and distinguish ourselves as his people, dedicated to following his ways and eagerly awaiting the fulfillment of his promises.

Embracing God's holy days instead of traditional holidays is a profound declaration of faith. It signifies our commitment to God's commandments and our willingness to be set apart from the world. As we choose his appointed times, we proclaim our loyalty to God and affirm our identity as his people. May we find strength in his Spirit and encouragement in our faith community as we walk this path together

For more on YHWH's appointed times, we would recommend "[*The Mo'edim Series*](#)" by 119 Ministries.

Dietary Instructions: A Call to Holiness

In addition to the Sabbath and the rest of the appointed times, God's dietary instructions play a vital role in distinguishing his people. These guidelines, found primarily in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, are not arbitrary but serve a specific purpose in setting us apart as holy. By adhering to these dietary laws, we align ourselves with God's standards of purity and obedience, demonstrating our commitment to follow his ways rather than the customs of the world.

Biblical Foundation of Dietary Instructions

The dietary instructions given in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 categorize animals into clean and unclean. YHWH commands his people to abstain from consuming unclean animals, such as pork and shellfish, and to eat only those that are considered clean. Leviticus 11:44-45 states:

Leviticus 11:44-45

For I am the LORD [YHWH] your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy... For I am the LORD [YHWH] who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

These dietary instructions are directly tied to our calling to be a holy people, set apart for God's purposes.

In Deuteronomy 14:3-20, YHWH provides a detailed list of clean and unclean animals:

Deuteronomy 14:3-20

You shall not eat any abomination. These are the animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. Every animal that parts the hoof and has the hoof cloven in two and

chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat. Yet of those that chew the cud or have the hoof cloven you shall not eat these: the camel, the hare, and the rock badger, because they chew the cud but do not part the hoof, are unclean for you. And the pig, because it parts the hoof but does not chew the cud, is unclean for you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch.

Health and Holiness

While modern science has revealed certain health benefits associated with following these dietary guidelines, the primary purpose is spiritual. God's instructions regarding what we eat are meant to cultivate a lifestyle of holiness and obedience.

By following his dietary instructions, we are reminded daily of our distinctiveness as God's people and our commitment to live according to his standards. This practice reinforces our identity and serves as a constant exercise in discipline and devotion to God's Word.

Paul emphasizes the importance of maintaining holiness:

2 Corinthians 7:1:

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

Although Paul does not specifically mention the dietary instructions, his call to cleanse ourselves from defilement supports the principle of living a holy life, which includes adhering to God's instructions outlined in Leviticus 11.

Furthermore, in Daniel, we see an example of faithfulness to God's law.

Daniel 1:8

But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.

The cultural significance of eating the king's food was that it violated God's law because the meat was offered up to Babylonian gods. By eating it, Daniel would have been perceived as associated with idolatry.

God blessed Daniel for his obedience, granting him and his friends knowledge, skill in all literature, and wisdom, and Daniel himself received the special ability to understand visions and dreams. This blessing highlights the rewards of staying faithful to God's commands.

A Test of Obedience

Adhering to biblical dietary instructions can often place believers at odds with societal norms and cultural expectations. In many cases, it may require making difficult choices, such as foregoing certain foods or social gatherings that do not align with God's commandments. This is

a test of our obedience and faithfulness. Will we choose to follow God's instructions, even when it is inconvenient or unpopular? Observing these dietary laws is a tangible way to demonstrate our commitment to God, showing that we prioritize his Word above all else.

The apostles addressed the importance of abstaining from things polluted by idols in Acts 15 when they decided on the preliminary requirements for Gentile believers:

Acts 15:19-20

Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.

While the focus here is on avoiding idolatry and immorality, the emphasis on dietary restrictions highlights the continuing relevance of God's instructions for holiness.

Peter reiterates the call to holiness:

1 Peter 1:14-16:

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

This echoes Leviticus 11:44-45 and underscores the timeless nature of God's command to be holy.

The Call to Holiness

By following the dietary instructions, we not only honor God but also visibly set ourselves apart as his people. This obedience is a testament to our faith and a declaration that we choose to follow God's ways over the traditions of men. In doing so, we align our lives with his holiness, reflecting his character to the world around us.

In Romans 12, Paul urges believers to live lives set apart for God:

Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Following God's dietary instructions is one way we can present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to him. It is a daily practice that keeps us mindful of our calling and our commitment to YHWH's standards, ensuring that we remain distinct from the world and dedicated to his purposes.

For more on this, we would recommend our teaching “[*Life in Exile: Be Holy*](#)”

Conclusion

The commandments of God serve as vital markers of our allegiance and commitment to him. The Sabbath, the appointed times, and dietary instructions are divinely appointed tests of our obedience and dedication.

By observing the Sabbath, we honor the covenant between YHWH and his people, setting aside time for rest and worship that aligns us with his creative order.

The appointed times or *mo'edim* provide us with opportunities to remember God's past acts of salvation and anticipate his future promises, reinforcing our place in his redemptive plan.

The dietary instructions call us to a lifestyle of holiness, distinguishing us from the world and reminding us daily of our commitment to God's standards.

God, in his infinite wisdom, knew that his people would struggle with obedience and be tempted to stray from his commands. Yet, he has always called for a faithful remnant to rise up and live a set-apart lifestyle. YHWH states:

Deuteronomy 30:1-3

And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, and return to the LORD [YHWH] your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, then the LORD [YHWH] your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD [YHWH] your God has scattered you.

This passage highlights God's expectation and hope that his people will return to him in full obedience, even after periods of disobedience.

Each of these commandments requires us to make choices that often go against societal norms and cultural expectations. They challenge us to prioritize God's Word over convenience, tradition, and peer pressure. By choosing to observe the Sabbath, keep the Feasts, and follow dietary instructions, we declare our loyalty to God and demonstrate a willingness to follow him no matter the cost. These practices are a testament to our faith, a visible declaration that we belong to God and live according to his ways.

As we mentioned earlier, Yeshua emphasized the importance of obedience to God's commandments.

Matthew 5:19

Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

This verse underscores the eternal significance of our obedience. By keeping God's commands, we are not only living out our faith but also securing our reward in his Kingdom.

As we strive to walk in obedience to God's commandments, let us remember that we are not alone. God has given us his Spirit to guide and strengthen us. His Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105).

When we align our lives with his instructions, we experience the fullness of his blessings and the richness of a life lived in harmony with his will. Let us embrace the Sabbath, the appointed times and his dietary instructions with joy, knowing that they are gifts from a loving Father who desires the best for his children.

In John 14:15-16, Yeshua reassures us of the support we have: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever." This Helper, the Holy Spirit, empowers us to live in accordance with God's commands.

May we continue to seek his truth, test everything, and walk in the whole Word of God. In doing so, we reflect his character and bring glory to his name. Remember, our obedience is not about earning salvation but about expressing our love and gratitude for the salvation we have already received through Yeshua. John sums this up beautifully:

1 John 5:3

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

Our obedience is a natural response to the love and grace we have received.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching.

Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom!

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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