

Common Sense in Keeping the Sabbath

Yeshua did not follow or teach the Jew's man-made rules, *halacha*, on the Sabbath. "And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?...And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath," (Mar. 2:23-24,27-28). Yeshua taught the Sabbath served man, not that man was to serve the Sabbath, and that He was the Lord of the Sabbath. If stripping a few handfuls of grain was breaking the Sabbath Yeshua would have taught them so. Gleaning some to eat was permissible. "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn," (Deu. 23:25).

We are told not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath day. "Ye shall **kindle** no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day," (Exo. 35:3).

Today some orthodox Jews will not turn on or off an electric light on the Sabbath because of the filament burning in the light. They also will not turn a car off or on, because of the gas that is constantly being ignited to drive the pistons.

When God said to kindle no fire He was referring to gathering materials, and building a fire of wood or coal, which required a good deal of work. The command is not to 'kindle', *ba'ar* in Hebrew, meaning burn, in the sense of 'to seek out, collect, glean', from Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon. Here the focus is put on the gathering of the materials for the fire as well as starting it.

The example we are given is for gathering materials on the Sabbath. "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And Yehovah said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as Yehovah commanded Moses," (Num. 15:32-36).

There is no work in flipping a switch, certainly less work than stripping some grain off a stalk, which Yeshua approved of.

When Israel was in the wilderness for forty years God feed them with manna, bits of dough that appeared like dew. No new manna would be given to be collected on the Sabbath, but twice the amount would be given on the sixth day, and God instructed that part of it was to be cooked so they would have food for the Sabbath. This was because manna would not last overnight. "And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them. And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted. And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which Yehovah hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto Yehovah: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning," (Exo. 16:19-23).

This is not a command against heating food or bringing coffee to boil on the Sabbath, but telling them that they had to cook the manna in order to have it last for the Sabbath day.

The prophet Nehemiah forbid commercial deliveries to Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. "and if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of

them on the sabbath, or on the holy day,” (Neh. 10:31a). “In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath. And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day. So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath,” (Neh. 13:15-21).

And while of course shopping is a type of work, no where in scripture does it say you can not purchase something needful on the Sabbath, such as food, medicine, etc..

If you have running water, electricity, gas, cable tv, or the internet, you are being charged for those things, for usage on the Sabbath as well. And all of those services have people working on the sabbath, to keep those services running. It is no different to use the services of a restaurant or hotel that is already open on the Sabbath.

It is lawful to take care of emergencies on the Sabbath day. “And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days,” Mat. 12:11-12). “And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; 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 day?” (Luk. 14:3-5).