

Sabbath on Trial  
Or  
“To Fast or Not To Fast”  
(A closer look at Romans 14:5-6)

Many churchmen use Romans 14:5-6 as proof that New Testament believers no longer have an obligation to keep the 7<sup>th</sup> day holy. So let us examine those two verses, just as a judge would consider evidence in his courtroom, and then decide whether or not they testify against Sabbath keeping. Sha’ul wrote:

*“One man esteems one day above another: another esteems every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regards (observes) the day regards it unto YHWH; and he that doesn’t regard the day, to YHWH he doesn’t regard it. He that eats, eats to YHWH, for he gives Him thanks; and he that doesn’t eat, to YHWH he doesn’t eat, and gives Him thanks.”*

The judge would ask: “Where is the Sabbath mentioned in those verses?” The Sabbath is not mentioned there, nor in the entire book of Romans! No court in the land would allow verses that do not mention the Sabbath to be used as evidence in an argument against the Sabbath- so why should we?

You see, Sha’ul could not have been talking about keeping the Sabbath day holy because obedience to Yah’s law is not optional. It is ludicrous to suggest that any of the Ten Commandments can be disobeyed “unto YHWH.” Think of the absurdity of saying, “He that steals, to YHWH he steals; and he that doesn’t steal, to YHWH he doesn’t steal.”

What then was Sha’ul talking about? He was talking about fast days. The whole 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans is about **food** and how people’s beliefs about fasting should not be interfered with. The fast days could be observed according to each believer’s conscience. A man could eat or not eat, keep the day or not keep it. It is as simple as this: Each man could observe FAST DAYS, or not observe them, according to his own convictions.

*“He that doesn’t eat, regards the day.  
He that eats, doesn’t regard the day.”*

The “days” that Sha’ul was referring to were the traditional fast days mentioned in Zech. 7:5-6. The non-Hebrew believers in Rome did not keep them because they had no cultural interest in the anniversary fasts that were observed during the Hebrews captivity in Babylon.

These are the four traditional fasts mentioned in ZechariYah:

1. The fast of the 4<sup>th</sup> month, in remembrance of the breaking of the wall in Yerushalayim.
2. The fast of the 5<sup>th</sup> month, in remembrance of the burning of the Temple.

3. The fast of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, in remembrance of the killing of GedaliYah, which completed the dispersion.

4. The fast of the 10<sup>th</sup> month in remembrance of the beginning of the siege of Yerushalayim. (See Jer. 52:6 & 12-13; 2 Ki. 25:1&25)

It is of interest to note that those dates commemorate the judgments of Yah upon a people who refused to keep the Sabbath day holy. (See Jer. 17:19-27)

Even the Hebrews themselves had different convictions about the observance of those days - ***because those fasts were never commanded by Yah.***

After the Captivity (when the Temple was being rebuilt) the men of Bethel also wondered if they should observe these fasts unto YHWH. For example, they asked ZechariYah: “Shall I weep in the 5<sup>th</sup> month and abstain, as I have done these many years?” (Zech. 7:2f) When you read ZechariYah’s answer, notice the striking similarity of his words to those of Sha’ul to the believers at Rome:

COMPARE Zech.7:5-6:

*“When you FASTED and mourned in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> month those seventy years, did you at all fast UNTO ME [YHWH speaking]? And when you ate and drank, did you not eat and drink for yourselves?”*

WITH Romans 14:6-7:

*“He that regards the [fast] day regards it UNTO YHWH; and he that doesn’t regard the day, to YHWH he doesn’t regard it. He that eats, eats to YHWH, for he gives Him thanks; and he that doesn’t eat, to YHWH he doesn’t eat, and gives Him thanks. For none of us LIVES TO HIMSELF, and no man dies to himself.”*

If you were the judge in the case of this “Sabbath on Trial,” would you be willing to say that Sha’ul had cancelled one of the commandments of Yah based on the evidence you find in the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans?

The evidence from Romans and ZechariYah demands a verdict for Sabbath observance. Today’s believer MUST obey the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment, and that is the only reasonable conclusion that will continue to uphold the Law of Yah.

***CASE CLOSED!***