FOOD PREPARATION:

ON THE SABBATH?

by Larry and June Acheson

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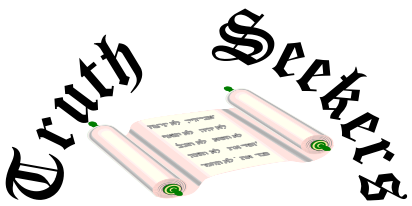
First Printing, November 28, 1996
Updated October 24, 2024



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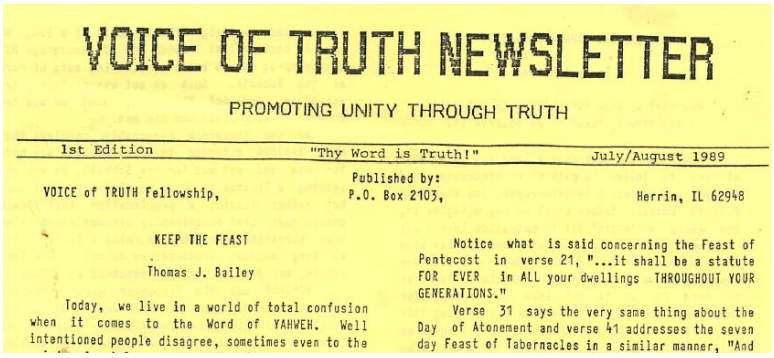
Introduction

With this October 2024 update, I've decided to completely overhaul my original introduction and replace it with this one. Although this study was originally composed in 1996, its origin actually dates to the 1980's, just prior to our transition from Sunday worship to Sabbath rest and worship. As June and I began questioning the things we had been taught, we initially thought we should treat *Sunday* as the Sabbath, including how we prepare our meals. June had been accustomed to fixing a big Sunday dinner with all the trimmings, often a pot roast with potatoes, carrots, etc., and I thought life was great. Then, as the intensity of our Bible studies strengthened, we came across the verses that I address in this study. They were pretty plain. *Very* plain. We learned that we were supposed to prepare our meals *before* the Sabbath, *not* on the same day! Not realizing that Sunday wasn't the Sabbath, June began meticulously preparing Sunday meals on Saturdays. Thankfully, that didn't last long because we soon realized which day was which, and we simply began preparing our meals on Fridays. This was all before we attended any Sabbath keeping assembly.

"We just abandoned 120 Sunday keeping friends for <u>this</u>?!"

We were stunned when, upon visiting our first-ever assembly, a Seventh-Day Adventist church, their pitch-in meal included hot foods. June and I both thought, "*We just abandoned some 120 Sunday keeping friends for <u>this</u>?!*" When we gently inquired as to why they were cooking meals that day, the answer was to the effect of, "Oh, these were all prepared *yesterday*, they've just been re-heated!" Our expected response was *supposed* to be something like, "Oh, yes, of *course*! Silly me!" That *wasn't* our response, but we chose to keep things civil. Since we were but novice Sabbathkeepers, we chose to not pursue the discussion any further.

By the late 1980's, we were fellowshipping with a family in their home. They lived over 100 miles from us, so we didn't visit them each week. On one occasion, I was asked to bring the Sabbath message, and I selected this particular topic. By that time, I really wasn't expecting much of a reaction from the head of household, Tom Bailey. That's because, up to that time, *no one* had ever expressed the slightest interest in our view regarding food preparation on the Sabbath. Having already experienced the prevailing vibes from so many others that June and I were overly eccentric, we just accepted that no one wanted to hear our perspective. Tom, however, was



VOICE OF TRUTH NEWSLETTER

PROMOTING UNITY THROUGH TRUTH

1st Edition | "Thy Word is Truth!" | July/August 1989

VOICE of TRUTH Fellowship, Published by: P.O. Box 2103, Herrin, IL 62948

KEEP THE FEAST

Thomas J. Bailey

Today, we live in a world of total confusion when it comes to the Word of YAHWEH. Well intentioned people disagree, sometimes even to the

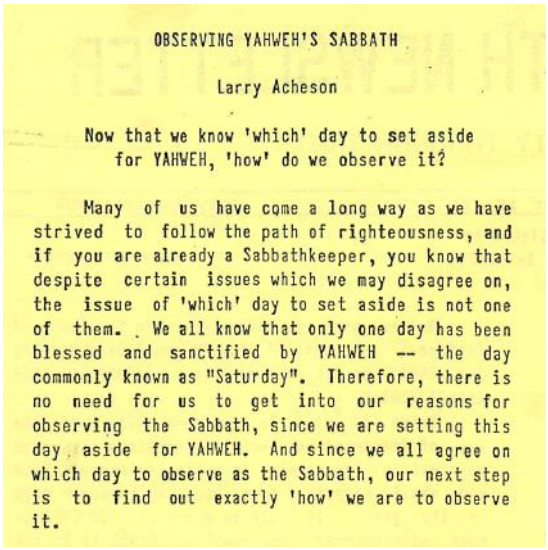
Notice what is said concerning the Feast of Pentecost in verse 21, "...it shall be a statute FOR EVER in ALL your dwellings THROUGHOUT YOUR GENERATIONS."

Verse 31 says the very same thing about the Day of Atonement and verse 41 addresses the seven day Feast of Tabernacles in a similar manner, "And

different. My message struck a chord with him, and he asked me to compose a study based on my presentation to be included in his July/August 1989 "Voice of Truth Newsletter." I still have that issue after all these years! This current study is merely an expansion of that original article.

Over the years, we've fellowshipped with many individuals and assemblies, including a Hispanic group known as Soldados de la Cruz. Besides Tom Bailey and his family, Soldados de la Cruz is the *only* assembly we have ever visited that agrees with our understanding of how Yahweh wants us to prepare for Shabbat each week. We have met a few individuals who *privately* share our understanding, but they are in fact members of assemblies that practice heating food on Shabbat.

We eventually found ourselves fellowshipping with a large Sacred Name assembly where, on the weekly Sabbath, they cook, bake, roast, fry, steam, simmer, barbecue, microwave—you name it, *they do it*. If we were stunned by the Seventh-Day Adventist's explanation, we were *floored* by this latter assembly's interpretation of Scripture. A few members there were intrigued by our understanding of whether or not Yahweh sanctions food preparation on the Sabbath, and eventually a special Bible study was held. At that meeting, the assembly spokesperson, a woman, doubled down on their assembly's position that, according to Exodus 16:23, the Israelites were given a double portion of manna on the sixth day, and were instructed to bake/seethe some on that sixth day, and whatever was left over could then be baked/seethed on the Sabbath. Her perspective was that "preparation" consisted of *grinding* the manna, *not* cooking it. I still find her reasoning to be the most liberal, far-fetched interpretation imaginable, which in turn served as the catalyst for our 1996 edition.



OBSERVING YAHWEH'S SABBATH

Larry Acheson

Now that we know 'which' day to set aside for YAHWEH, 'how' do we observe it?

Many of us have come a long way as we have strived to follow the path of righteousness, and if you are already a Sabbathkeeper, you know that despite certain issues which we may disagree on, the issue of 'which' day to set aside is not one of them. We all know that only one day has been blessed and sanctified by YAHWEH -- the day commonly known as "Saturday". Therefore, there is no need for us to get into our reasons for observing the Sabbath, since we are setting this day aside for YAHWEH. And since we all agree on which day to observe as the Sabbath, our next step is to find out exactly 'how' we are to observe it.

I realize most folks aren't interested in pursuing this topic; it's spiritually swept under the rug by most assemblies. June and I know this to be true after 39 years of striving to honor the Fourth Commandment and sharing our views with others. However, every now and then, we reach someone who catches on to this *one* particular component that's missing from most professing Sabbath keepers' practice and belief. We hope you are one of them!

1. The Purpose of the Sabbath

The Sabbath is the day that Yahweh set apart for rest from His work of Creation. It will forever remain our memorial to that special day of so long ago. To honor Him on that day, He wants ***us*** to set it apart also! His Word instructs us to use the Sabbath day for worship and fellowship. But Yahweh's Word also makes it clear that the Sabbath is a day to cease from ***all*** manner of work. For us to be able to properly enjoy the Sabbath, Yahweh specified that we are to ***prepare*** for it, so that when it comes, no work will have to be done. Appropriately, the day before the Sabbath is called the "day of preparation," as evidenced from Mark 15:42:

> 42 And now when the even was come, because it was the <u>preparation</u>, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ...

Before we proceed with how to approach the controversial obstacle of "how prepared" we are to be for the Sabbath, let's read the fourth commandment as it is found in Exodus 20:8-11:

> 8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
> 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:
> 10 But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of Yahweh thy Elohim: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:
> 11 For *in* six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

As we examine this passage, we can readily determine that Yahweh does not ***specifically prohibit*** the preparation of food on the weekly Sabbath day, at least not in this particular passage. He merely prohibits doing any <u>work</u> on that day. The obvious questions that we are now faced with are, **"How do we define 'work'?"** and **"Does the preparation of food constitute 'work'?"**

2. The Definition of "Work"

The Hebrew word translated "work" in Exodus 20:10 is word #4399 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*, and is pronounced "melakah":

> **4399. מלאכה mᵉlâ'kâh**, *mel-aw-kaw';* from the same as 4397; prop. *deputyship*, i.e. ministry; gen. *employment* (never servile) or work (abstr. Or concr.); also *property* (as the result of *labor*):—business, + cattle, + industrious, occupation, (+ -pied), + officer, thing (made), use (manner of) work ([-man], -manship).

As denoted above by *Strong's*, the word *melakah* can be used to describe *any* work in general, such as employment, business, industrious, thing (made), or workmanship. For example, when Yahweh rested from His work (*melakah*) in Genesis 2:3, He rested from His "thing made," i.e., His creation. This definition is supported by *The New Grolier Webster International Dictionary of the English Language,* volume II:

> **work,** wu̯rk, *n.* [O.E. *weorc* = D. and G. *work* = Icel. *verk*, work; akin to Goth. *waurkjan*, to work, also to Gr. *ergon*, work, *organon*, instrument, E. *organ*.] Exertion directed to produce or accomplish something; labor; toil; productive or operative activity; as, to make a machine to *work*; activity undertaken in return for payment, as in wages; employment; a job; a place where one is employed; as, not at home but at *work*; that on which exertion or labor is expended; a product of activity or labor; as, a literary *work*; needlework or embroidery; an engineering structure, as a bridge or dock; workmanship; as to do good *work*; a task or undertaking; as, one's life's *work*; a deed or act; *pl.*, *theol.* righteous deeds or acts. *Pl. but usu. sing. in constr.* a place or establishment for carrying on some form of labor or industry; as, an iron *works*; the working parts of a mechanical apparatus; as, the *works* of a clock. A froth produced during fermentation, as in making cider or vinegar; *phys.* the transfer of energy from one body or system to another.

As demonstrated by this reference, "work" can be defined as "Exertion directed to produce or accomplish something: labor; toil; productive or operative activity; activity undertaken in return for payment, as in wages; employment; a product of activity or labor, as a literary *work*...."

Equipped with the understanding that the Hebrew word *melakah* is in complete harmony with our English word for "work," we must now determine whether or not any work (labor) is involved in the preparation of food, in view of the definitions I've just listed. Some individuals insist that food preparation does not involve labor. Others are equally insistent that it does. Does Yahweh's Word resolve the matter? The answer is yes!

3. Evidence From the Holy Days

In Exodus chapter 12, Yahweh gave the Israelites instructions for observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The first and last days of this feast are "holy days," which means they are treated exactly the same as is the seventh day Sabbath **WITH ONE EXCEPTION**. Let's read what that exception is, as I display Exodus 12:15-16:

> 15 Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.
> 16 And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.

As this passage reveals, no manner of work is allowed on the holy days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread except to prepare food. Since food preparation is listed as an *exception* to the "no work" rule for holy day Sabbaths, conversely, it must of necessity be considered work that is *not* an exception for the weekly Sabbath. How do we ***know*** Yahweh defines food preparation as "work"? Because He made *that* form of work an *acceptable* form of work for holy day Sabbaths of the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Exodus 12:16! Since food preparation is made an *exception* to the rule for those Sabbaths only, then it must ***not*** be an exception to the rule for the weekly Sabbath!

Some have argued that "food preparation" isn't *specifically* mentioned in Exodus 12:16, and therefore they conclude that the expression "that which every man must eat" does not necessarily refer to food *preparation*, but rather to food *gathering*. In other words, while plainly acknowledging that the ***gathering of food*** is prohibited on the seventh day Sabbath, there are those who feel that ***food preparation*** on the Sabbath was never spoken against in Yahweh's Word. Therefore, they reason that since food preparation is not specifically mentioned in Exodus 12:16, it is not necessarily ***referred*** to. We need to examine this line of reasoning to see if this could in fact be possible. Again, let us refer to the last part of Exodus 12:16 as it appears in the *King James Version* of the Bible:

> ...no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be **done** of you.

Notice the word "done" that I emphasized in this verse. This word is word #6213 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary,* **עשׂה** pronounced "ahsah," and can be translated in various ways, such as "to do," "to make," "to prepare," and yes, it can even be rendered "to labor" (c.f. Proverbs 21:25). However, let's focus our attention on the translation "to prepare," as I display the *Revised Standard Version's* translation of the last portion of Exodus 12:16:

> ...no work shall be done on those days; but what every one must eat, that only may be **prepared** [**עשׂה**, *ahsah*] by you.

This version reveals that, indeed, this word can be properly translated "prepared." Furthermore, let's examine one more passage in which this same Hebrew word is used. Displayed below is the *King James Version's* rendering of Genesis 27:17:

> 17 And she [Rebekah] gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared [**עשׂתה**, *ahstah*][1] into the hand of her son Jacob.

Since food preparation is made an EXCEPTION to the "no work" rule for the holy day Sabbaths *only*, then it must NOT be an exception to the rule for the weekly Sabbath!

I need to emphasize that this verse does *not* make reference to food GATHERED, but to food that was PREPARED. Now that we understand the proper applications of the word "ahsah," we can ascertain that Exodus 12:16 is given as Yahweh's authorization to "prepare" [ahsah] food on the holy day sabbaths, as opposed to the regular weekly Sabbath. His allowing food preparation on the holy day sabbaths as an exception to the regular Sabbath "no work rule" clearly distinguishes those holy days from the "non-exception principle" as mandated on the weekly Sabbath. Based upon the evidence just presented, it is clear that no manner of work is allowed on the holy days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread **EXCEPT** to ***prepare food***.

I have just presented the one identifying mark that separates the holy days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread from the weekly Sabbath. Yet this same mark of separation can be applied to the other holy days as well. These include Pentecost, Trumpets and the first and "Last Great Day" of the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*).

Yahweh's instructions for the observance of His holy days are given in detail in the 23rd chapter of Leviticus. In fact, He even repeats His instructions for observing the weekly Sabbath in that chapter. In Leviticus 23:3, when referring to the seventh day Sabbath, Yahweh again instructs us that "...ye shall do ***no work*** therein...." I have already revealed the distinction made between the Feast of Unleavened Bread holy days (*"no work save that which every man must eat"*) and the weekly Sabbath (*no work*), so I will skip the mentioning of that particular feast in Leviticus for now. I will therefore move on to the ***next*** feast mentioned in Leviticus 23, which is the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost. Notice the directive given in Leviticus 23:21 for how we are to observe this feast:

> 21 And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

Notice the words "no servile work" in reference to Pentecost. These same, exact words are used in the instructions for other holy days as well, but NEVER for the weekly Sabbath. *Why not?* Just what does Yahweh mean by "no servile work" on His holy days?

[1] *Ahstah* (עשׂתה) is the preterit tense of *ahsah* (עשׂה).

4. "No Work" vs. "No Servile Work"

We have already researched the meaning of the word translated "work." It is the Hebrew word **מלאכה** (*melakah*), word #4399 in *Strong's*, and it can be used in reference to ***any*** work in general. However, the word translated "servile" is one that I have not yet covered. It is the Hebrew word **עבדה**, pronounced *abodah*, and is word #5656 in *Strong's.* Among its several related meanings are: "Work of any kind," "bondage," "labor," and "service." This same Hebrew word, for example, is translated "bond-servant" [service (of a slave)] in Leviticus 25:39. It is translated "service" (of the Levites) in Ezra 8:20, as "service" of the house of the Almighty) in I Chronicles 9:13, and as "service" (of Yahweh) in Joshua 22:27.

The translation "no servile work" is the one that readers of the *King James Version* are familiar with, but those who use the *Revised Standard Version* read "no laborious work." The *New International Version* renders the expression as "no regular work." The expression "no servile work" is easy enough to understand. Simply put, it means "the work of a servant." Therefore, we are given the green light to work on the holy day of a feast, as long as it is not the work of a servant. We perform the work of a servant when we work for other people in exchange for some type of compensation, usually in the form of money. This type of work is not allowed on holy day Sabbaths (nor on the weekly Sabbath!); however, it ***is*** permissible to perform ***other*** forms of work, such as those pertaining to our daily personal needs. Most notable of our daily needs is the chore of preparing our meals. This form of work is permitted on the holy days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as we have already observed from Exodus 12:16. Can we apply this to the other holy days as well? Yes, we can, for when we read Yahweh's instructions for the holy days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Leviticus 23:6-8, we can well note that, although He does ***not*** in that particular passage impart that we are to do "no manner of work save that which every man must eat" on those holy days (as He did in Exodus 12:16), He nevertheless ***does*** use the same expression that He uses for the other holy day Sabbaths in Leviticus 23: "No servile work."

Since Yahweh specifically allows us to prepare food on the holy day Sabbaths of Unleavened Bread in Exodus 12, is it not logical to conclude that His use of the term "no servile work" to describe the permissible work in Leviticus 23 is likewise a reference to His allowing us to prepare our food during those holy days (as opposed to preparing it on the seventh day Sabbath)? Additionally, does it not also stand to reason that if "no servile work" for ***Unleavened Bread*** holy day Sabbaths signals the freedom to prepare food on ***those*** holy days, then wouldn't "no servile work" as used in reference to other holy days of the year likewise indicate the freedom to prepare food on those days? Notice the directives given throughout Leviticus 23 for the holy day Sabbaths:

First day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (v. 7): "... ye shall do no servile work therein."
Seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (v.8): "... ye shall do no servile work therein."
Feast of Weeks (v. 21): "... ye shall do no servile work therein:"
Feast of Trumpets (v. 25): "... Ye shall do no servile work therein."
First day of the Feast of Tabernacles (v. 35): "... ye shall do no servile work therein."
Eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles (v. 36): "... ye shall do no servile work therein."

Interestingly, there ***is*** one holy day Sabbath on which *no manner* of work whatsoever is allowed! Not only is servile work not permitted, *no* work is permitted! Which day am I referring to? It is the Day of Atonement–the day of the Fast–an *obvious* occasion to not be preparing food! The fact that

only "servile work" is prohibited on the *other* holy days demonstrates that on days on which "no work" is allowed, no food preparation is allowed, either! Shown below are Yahweh's instructions for the Day of Atonement, as found in Leviticus 23:28:

> 28 And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before Yahweh your Almighty.

Notice that it is only when Yahweh specifically forbids "servile work" that He simultaneously permits food to be prepared, and the fact that ***no work at all*** is permitted on the Day of Atonement further confirms that "no servile work" is truly the line of demarcation between whether or not food preparation is allowed on a certain day. If Yahweh only prohibited *servile work* on the Day of Atonement, this would indicate His sanctioning of food preparation on that day. Since the Day of Atonement is a ***day of fasting***, it becomes clear as to "why" it is a day on which Yahweh outlaws ***all manner of work***.

Before moving on to our next section, let's have a little quiz to test your memory:

Quiz

What manner of work is prohibited on the weekly Sabbath?
A. All manner of work
B. Only servile work

For the answer, I refer you to Exodus 20:8-11.

5. Evidence From History

The history of the Jewish people reveals that the act of preparing food was without a doubt the separating factor between the weekly Sabbath and the "holy day Sabbath" days. In his book *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE - 66 CE,* page 425, E. P. Sanders makes the following notation regarding the holy days:

> During the festivals and the public fast (the Day of Atonement) there are six days that the Bible commands are to be treated like Sabbaths, with one exception: it permits the work involved in the preparation of food that would be eaten that day (Lev. 23; Ex. 12.16).

The "one exception" alluded to by Mr. Sanders is, as already mentioned, *the preparation of food*. Sanders' book merely reveals a custom that is widely recognized by all, including the Jews themselves: Food preparation was sanctioned on the holy day Sabbaths, but ***prohibited*** on the weekly Sabbath.

Confirming this same understanding is Keil and Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Volume 1, p. 333, where we read the following explanation pertaining to the first and last days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

> No work was to be done on these days, except what was necessary for the preparation of food; on the Sabbath, even this was prohibited (ch. 35:2,3).

Yahweh did not tell them to prepare one portion of manna for that sixth day and then prepare the other portion on the Sabbath; instead, He told them to prepare ALL of it on the sixth day (Exodus 16:5).

For those who remain unconvinced of this one characteristic separating the holy day Sabbaths from the weekly Sabbath, there is a verse of Scripture that removes all doubt. In Exodus 16, we read about Yahweh providing the manna for the Israelites. Let's read the preparation instructions He gave to Moses concerning this miracle as found in Exodus 16:4-5:

> 4 Then said Yahweh unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.
> 5 And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

Notice that Yahweh did ***not*** say, "On the Sabbath day they shall prepare;" no, He told them to prepare on the sixth day of the week. On that sixth day, they were to prepare a *DOUBLE PORTION*, meaning that half of that portion, already prepared, was to be saved for consumption on the Sabbath day. Yahweh, again, did ***not*** tell them to prepare one portion for that sixth day and then prepare the other portion on the Sabbath; instead, He told them to prepare ALL of it on the SIXTH DAY.

Various references support that, indeed, the Israelites understood and practiced this manner of Sabbath observance. The *New Bible Dictionary*, pages 734-735, provides the following insight:

> Usually it [the manna] did not keep overnight but became maggoty and malodorous if left over, but the manna to be kept for Sabbath use was preserved by being cooked or baked beforehand (Ex. 16:4-5, 16-30).

The International Bible Commentary, page 167, adds this analysis:

> Manna baked or boiled on the eve of Sabbath did not come under the prohibition of v. 19.

The prohibition of verse 19 was that no one was to keep any of the manna overnight for consumption the next day. This prohibition was waived on the sixth day of the week, as they were to take in the double portion on the sixth day and prepare their "Sabbath allotment" *before* the Sabbath began. Unlike the other five days of manna provision, the manna of the sixth day was preserved by Yahweh so that it could be eaten on the Sabbath day as well!

The Reader's Digest book *Jesus and His Times*, page 99, offers additional insight with regard to the importance of the sixth day of the week–"the preparation":

> Because no work was to be done on the Sabbath, Friday afternoon was an especially busy time. The men finished up their week's work and the women cleaned with special care, refilling lamps, preparing meals in advance, and laundering clothing.

As this and other historical references validate, the custom of ancient Israel was to prepare all meals ***in advance of*** the Sabbath. J. Julius Scott, Jr., in his book *Customs and Controversies*, page 253, confirms this historical fact. He writes:

> The Sabbath meal, usually on Friday evening, was a special occasion for the family and its guests; of course the meal had been prepared before the actual arrival of the Sabbath. Both Josephus and Philo note that the Sabbath was occupied with the study of the law.

The historical evidence is compelling. It is clear that the believers of Old understood that *all* food had to be prepared in advance of the Sabbath.

6. Warming up Leftovers on the Sabbath

I have already established that Yahweh's Word speaks against food preparation on the weekly Sabbath. Nevertheless, I have encountered many professing Sabbath keepers who require a specific definition of "food preparation." I have often heard, "Hey, if I just stick a leftover in the microwave for a few seconds, I'm not 'preparing' anything! I'm just warming it up!" Is it okay to apply heat to food on the Sabbath, whether it be for the first time or the second? Well, if we continue reading the account of the manna in Exodus 16, we can find the answer. Let's read Exodus 16:22-25:

> 22 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.
> 23 And he said unto them, This is that which Yahweh hath said, 'Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto Yahweh: [you] bake (Heb. תאפו, *tōphu*)[2] that which ye will bake (Heb. אפו, *ephu*)[3] and [you] seethe/boil [Heb. תבשלו, *tebashalu*][4] that ye will seethe/boil [Heb. בשלו, *bashelu*]; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.
> 24 And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein.
> 25 And Moses said, Eat that today; for today is a Sabbath unto Yahweh: today ye shall not find it in the field.

In this passage, Moses enjoins the Israelite leaders, in so many words, to prepare their double portion of manna (that they found on the sixth day) ***on that selfsame day***. The manna that was prepared, but not consumed, was to be kept until the following morning (of the Sabbath). On the morning of the Sabbath, Moses said, "Eat that today...." Notice he did ***not*** say, "Prepare that today...."!

This is the same conclusion reached by the author of *The International Bible Commentary,* page 167, as we read earlier and display once more:

> Manna baked or boiled on the eve of Sabbath did not come under the prohibition of v. 19.[5]

This same commentary, expounding on Exodus 16:5 (concerning the preparation of the double portion on the sixth day), terms the act of preparing the manna in advance "A special arrangement in recognition of the sanctity of the Sabbath."

Yes, the Sabbath ***is*** a day to be sanctified–*set apart*–from the other six days of the week. We demonstrate to Yahweh how much we value that sanctity by abstaining from all unnecessary labor on His Sabbath day.

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[2] The Hebrew form *tōphu* תאפו ("you bake") is the imperative plural of *aw-faw* ("to bake").

[3] The Hebrew form *ephu* אפו ("bake") is the same as תאפו, but pronounced differently due to the missing prefix (ת).

[4] The Hebrew form *tebashalu* תבשלו ("you boil/seethe") is the imperative plural of *bâshal* (בשל, to seethe, boil").

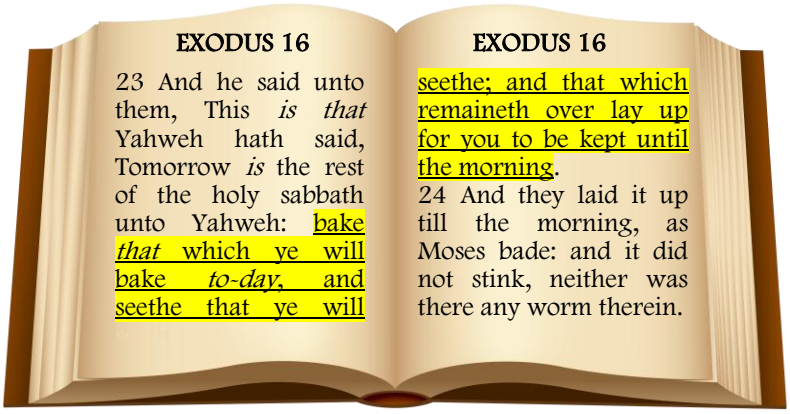
[5] Verse 19 says, "And Moses said, Let no man leave of it [manna] till the morning." Manna gathered during the six working days was to be eaten that same day and not left out for the next day. This prohibition did not apply to the double portion of manna gathered on the sixth day of the week.

Alfred Edersheim, in his book *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*, pages 179-180, offers the following information regarding the Sabbath preparation customs of the believers of Old:

> If the sun were not visible, sunset was to be reckoned from when the fowls went to roost. But long before that the preparations for the Sabbath had commenced. Accordingly, Friday is called by the Rabbis 'the eve of the Sabbath,' and in the Gospels 'the preparation.' No fresh business was then undertaken; no journey of any distance commenced; but everything purchased and made ready against the feast, the victuals being placed in a heated oven, and surrounded by dry substances to keep them warm.

Mr. Edersheim points out that the victuals were placed in a heated oven prior to the onset of the Sabbath. Notice that they were "surrounded by dry substances." *Why were they surrounded by dry substances?* Edersheim states that this was to "keep them warm." Obviously, if the victuals were being kept warm by "dry substances," they were no longer being subjected to the action of heat. Once the Sabbath began, instead of being subjected to heat, the food was kept warm by the ancients' equivalent of a thermos. We will read more about this "thermos" later in our study.

I previously asked the question, "Is it okay to apply heat to food on the Sabbath, whether it be for the first time or the second (e.g., for leftovers)?" That question has been answered by Yahweh's Word; there is to be ***no*** baking or seething (boiling) on the day of the weekly Sabbath. A common objection to this, as mentioned earlier, is for someone to comment that sticking a leftover food item in the microwave for a few seconds is so super quick and easy, plus it doesn't *really* not constitute "baking or boiling," therefore making such an act "perfectly acceptable" on the Sabbath. I have heard this line of reasoning many times over the years. It is, of course, *human reasoning*, rationalizing that the command is all about the amount of *labor* involved, while neglecting the actual *words* of the command.



As we're about to see, "baking" includes applying any heat to anything, food or otherwise, so this common defense, by very definition, is refuted by Scripture, not to mention the historical record. Moreover, the command doesn't specify not to bake or seethe "because it's too much work"; it simply says to do it on the day *before* the Sabbath because the Sabbath is the day of ***rest***. This leaves but one possible motive in seeking an alternate interpretation: *Desire*. An overpowering desire to have warm or hot food should not serve as a motive to seek loopholes, yet it obviously does.

A deeper look into the words of the command demonstrates that there is *no* justifiable "loophole." To determine whether or not Yahweh's command justifies applying a minimal amount of heat to food, as in warming up leftovers or microwaving food for a few seconds, we need to define the word "bake." This word is word #644 in *Strong's*, **אפה**, and is pronounced "*aw-faw*"; it means "to cook, espec. to bake." This definition, by itself, does not properly reveal what it means to "bake" something, so let's turn to a dictionary for help. According to *The New Grolier Webster International Dictionary of the English Language*, Volume I, page 74, the word *bake* means:

> **bake,** bāk, *v.t.—baked, baking.* [O.E. *bacan*.] To cook (food) by dry heat in a closed place, as an oven; harden bricks, pottery, etc., by heat.—*v.i.* To bake bread, etc.; to become baked.

As supplied within the above definition, the act of baking is not limited to food. It also applies to baking bricks or pottery. The question is, "When does the baking begin?" It should be obvious that the baking begins to moment the heat is applied to the object. Some might argue that "baking" and "cooking" aren't the same thing. However, since, according to the above dictionary, baking involves cooking, it's clear that the process involved is the same. Nevertheless, for those who aren't convinced, let's check out the definition of the verb "to cook" in addition to the verb "to bake." According to the same dictionary that we used to define "bake," the word "***cook***" means:

> **cook,** kụk, *v.i.* To act as cook; prepare food by the action of heat; of food, to undergo cooking.—*v.t.* To prepare (food) by the action of heat, as by boiling, baking, or roasting; subject (anything) to the action of heat. *Colloq.* to concoct or invent falsely, often with *up*; alter surreptitiously or falsify. *Slang*, to ruin or spoil.[i]

With the understanding that cooking simply involves preparing food by the action of heat, we can at once discern that whether we are baking or cooking an item, we are subjecting it to a ***heating process***. This information is further validated by the *Encyclopedia International*, Volume 5, item "Cookery," page 213, where we read: "In its simplest statement, cooking is the preparation of foods for eating with the action of heat. In its broader sense, cookery may be considered any form of preparing food for the table."

Notice that the encyclopedia article doesn't mention ***how much*** heat is involved before the cooking process begins–it simply mentions that heat is involved! It's not the *amount*; it's the *act* of applying heat. Therefore, even the slightest amount of heat used in preparing a dish can be considered "cooking." The bottom line is this: It's not about the *amount* of heat that's applied, it's the action of *any* heat being intentionally applied to food. Yahweh simply tells His children to not do it. Period.

When we bake/boil before the Sabbath begins, we do so because we understand that baking or boiling does indeed involve the preparation of food.

By carefully examining precisely what it means to "bake" or "cook," we can discern that a food item does not necessarily have to go through a heating process for the first time in order to "bake" or "cook." The Hebrew word *aw-fah* does not include either a minimum or maximum time duration, nor is that minimum temperature requirement within its definition. It's simply the *act of applying heat*, whether it's the first time or the second time. As the above-mentioned references reveal, subjecting

anything to the action of heat, including *warming it up*, can be defined as "cooking" it. Therefore, when we bake, boil or even warm up food **before** the Sabbath begins, we do so because we understand that these activities do indeed involve the preparation of food, which I have already shown as being prohibited on the day of the weekly Sabbath. Moreover, knowing that baking involves subjecting a food item to the action of heat, we can also see that "merely" tossing something into the microwave for a few seconds of "warming up" must also involve subjecting that item to the same action of heat! It is being cooked!

Interestingly, the word translated "seethe" in Exodus 16:23 can ***also*** be correctly translated "bake"! This word is the Hebrew word pronounced *bâshal* [**בּשׁל**], which is word #1310 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*. *Bâshal*, as plainly indicated by *Strong's*, can be translated "bake" *or* "boil." For proof that this word can indeed be properly rendered "bake," we need look no further than II Samuel 13:8, where we read the account of Tamar baking cakes for her brother Amnon:

> 8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded *it*, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake [בּשׁל, *bâshel*][6] the cakes.

Obviously Tamar did not "boil" cakes for her brother, so we know the Hebrew word *bâshel*, as used in the above verse, is indeed correctly translated "bake." Since the Hebrew word *bâshal* can be properly used to indicate *baking* a food item as well as *boiling* a food item, we can safely conclude that this word was included in Ex. 16:23 for ***emphasis*** purposes. In fact, as revealed by *Strong's*, *bâshal* literally means "to be **done** in cooking." Thus, whereas the Hebrew word *aw-faw* can be used to simply indicate "warming up" a food item, *bâshal* is used to indicate ***fully cooking*** a food item. To underscore Yahweh's intense desire that His people avoid *any* form of cooking on His Sabbath day, He employs ***two verbs*** that can *both* be properly translated "cook" or "bake." Yahweh fully intends for His people to understand that ***in no way*** and under ***no circumstances*** are we to apply heat to any food items on His Sabbath day.

For those interested in etymological research, the English word "bake" can be shown to have a very interesting and revealing origin. According to *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged*, page 164, the word "bake" hails from the Middle English word *baken*, which is in turn derived from the Old English word *bacan*, which is listed as being akin to the Old High German word *baen*, which means "to warm." This origin is substantiated by the *Encarta World English Dictionary*, page 129, where we read the following definition and etymology of the word "bake":

> **bake** /bayk/ *v.* (**baked, bak·ing, bakes**) **1.** *Vti.* **COOK FOOD IN OVEN** to cook something such as bread, a cake, or a pie in an oven by dry heat, or be cooked in this way **2.** *Vti.* **HARDEN BY HEAT** to become hardened, or harden sogmething, by exposing it to dry heat **3.** *Vi.* **BE VERY HOT** to be or feel very hot (*informal*) ° *You must be baking in that heavy coat.* ■ *n.* **1. AMOUNT BAKED** a number of things baked at the same time **2. PARTY WITH BAKED FOOD** a party at which baked food is served (*informal*) (*often used in combination*) ° *an oyster bake on the shore* [Old English

[6] *Bâshel* (בּשׁל) is the imperfect form of *bâshel* (בּשׁל).

> *bacan* (source of English *batch*). Ultimately from an Indo-European base meaning 'to warm,' which is also the ancestor of English *bath*.]

Many prefer to define "bake" only in the sense of applying heat to a raw food item and cooking it until completion. It is true that, colloquially-speaking, "bake" is indeed often understood this way. However, evidence that such an understanding is not the same as its original definition can be easily demonstrated by researching the meaning of the Hebrew word **אפה** (*aw-faw*), along with the original understanding of the English word "bake," as shown on the previous page. When the word "bake" began its evolutionary journey into present day English usage, it was understood as meaning "to warm." It wasn't a question of "how much" heat—*any* heat was unacceptable in terms of food preparations. The ancients thus understood that compliance with Yahweh's directive meant that all of their cooking/warming up had to be completed *before* the onset of the Sabbath.

This understanding is also reflected in the *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 780, where we read the following:

> Despite the seriousness with which the rabbis viewed the Sabbath, it was in many ways a festive occasion. Before the Sabbath began at sundown on Friday, marked by the blowing of the trumpet, lights were lit, since kindling a fire was forbidden after the Sabbath began. The celebration began with a blessing (*kiddush*). It involved synagogue services on Friday evening and on Saturday morning. On Friday, the scripture reading was from the Psalms, while in the morning service, it was from the Torah. The remainder of the day was for relaxation and enjoyment. Three meals of food, cooked before Sabbath began, were served, often with invited guests present. The day ended with a benediction.

When were the meals cooked? They were cooked before the Sabbath began. No heating of food on the Sabbath was ever associated with normative Judaism, so far as I can tell, until the Middle Ages. Matthew Henry, in his *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, echoed this very same understanding of the Israelites' custom in his commentary on Exodus 16:22-31:

> Appointing them [the Israelites] to rest on the seventh day, he took care that they should be no losers by it; and none ever will be losers by serving God. On that day they were to fetch in enough for two days, and to prepare it, *v.* 23. The law was very strict, that they must bake and seeth, the day before, and not on the Sabbath day.

How many professing Sabbathkeepers are willing to acknowledge the above information? Matthew Henry, who himself regarded this law as having been "done away" in New Testament times, at least understood that if he were to have felt compelled to observe the Sabbath Yahweh's way, he would have had to cease "baking and seething" on that day! As I have already demonstrated, "baking and seething" means "subjecting a food item to the process of heat." Unless one chooses to reject/ignore the original definitions of both of these words, this command means we are not to apply *any* heat to *any* food item on the Sabbath day.

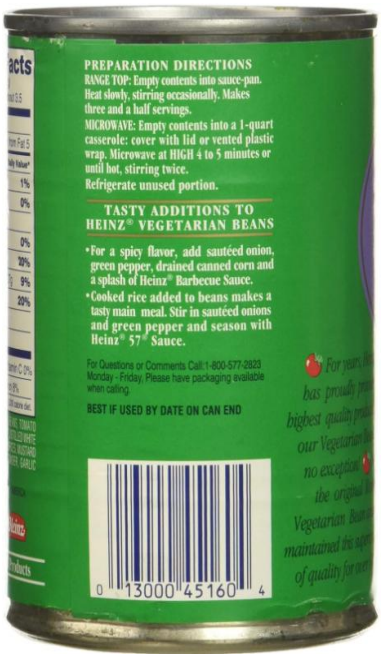
Some individuals, even after having been shown the evidence thus far presented, *still* do not consider warming up a previously cooked item to be an act of "food preparation." Apparently some

major food processing companies are not in agreement! As an example, we removed a can of Heinz Vegetarian Beans from our cupboard and read the directions. Keep in mind that these beans had already been pressure cooked during the food preservation process. Hence, they had already been "prepared." Despite this, the directions on the label read as follows:

PREPARATION DIRECTIONS

RANGE TOP: Empty contents into sauce-pan. Heat slowly, stirring occasionally. Makes three and a half servings.

According to the manufacturer's own expressed understanding, to "prepare" this previously-cooked food item requires heating it up a second time! Those who practice warming food *or drink* on the Sabbath are faced with a dilemma *if* they simultaneously believe that obedience to Yahweh's command on this subject is important. They have to be able to prove that such a practice does *not* involve "preparing"—*and* applying heat to a food or drink.



As the above direct quote from a major food processing company demonstrates, even warming up a food item involves *preparing it* for consumption. This, combined with the fact that baking food is prohibited (i.e., the Hebrew word for "bake" also means "to cook, or prepare food by the action of heat"), illustrates that such a practice does *not* have Yahweh's stamp of approval.

Finally, even ***if*** the Hebrew term *aw-faw* [cook, bake] could only be used in reference to <u>fully</u> cooking a raw food item, one has to at least wonder why Yahweh didn't specify that *warming up food* is permissible on the Sabbath. The absence of such a stipulation, along with the absence of any Scriptural examples of believers exhibiting such an understanding of Yahweh's intent, must be considered a ***glaring*** absence.

7. Defining the Word "Prepare"

Some individuals reject the food processing companies' understanding of the word "preparation" and come up with their own "user defined" understandings of this word. The danger of applying "user defined" understandings to word definitions is that we run the potential risk of arriving at conclusions that are not in harmony with ***Yahweh's intent***. When our prime directive is seeking out the Will of Yahweh, should we not seek out ***His*** intended understanding of a word? And let's say that coming up with a concrete understanding of Yahweh's intent that everyone can agree on is just not possible. If we thus risk erring in our understanding of His intent, should we err on side of caution or should we go with what's pleasing in our own eyes? In view of the fact that even the more liberal scholars concede that applying heat to food ***is*** a form of preparation, it seems to be a stretch of the imagination to conclude otherwise. For example, although *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* promotes the belief that Sunday now supersedes the seventh day Sabbath, elsewhere this same reference mentions that the ancient Israelites prepared their manna by "grinding and baking" it.[ii] Other sources confirm the understanding that "preparing food" must also include "baking" an item, which in turn means "subjecting a food item to the action of heat." The following quotation comes from *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 2, p. 402:

> On the sixth day, the people were to gather twice the daily amount (v. 5). It was not to be left or eaten in the form they gathered it; instead, it was to be prepared by milling and baking (cf. Num 11:8).

On page 403 of this same commentary we read:

> The seventh day was to be a 'day of' cessation or 'rest' (v. 23); therefore, food preparations for the morrow were to be made on the sixth day. But when some failed to obey (v. 27), the Lord groaned, 'How long ['ad-anah, v. 28; cf. Ps 13:1] will you [plural] refuse to keep my commands and my instructions?' Only then did the people 'rest' (lit., 'stop,' 'cease') on the seventh day (v. 30).

As already pointed out by *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* and *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, the act of preparing not only includes "milling" or grinding the food, but it also involves ***baking*** food. We are told in Numbers 11:8 the extent to which the children of Israel prepared the manna:

> And the people went about, and gathered *it*, and ground *it* in mills, or beat *it* in mortar, and baked *it* in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil.

Given the above information, we can discern that "food preparation" involves more than just mixing ingredients together or even applying heat to those ingredients. The act of preparing a food item can be accurately described as a ***process***. We cannot separate any of the steps listed above and claim that one particular step constitutes "the entire preparation." For example, we cannot accurately maintain that the grinding of the manna in mills served as the ***preparation process***. Instead, grinding the manna in mills was a ***part*** of that process. For us to follow only one step in the above preparation process, carry out that one particular "step" on the Sabbath while claiming that "step" as not really constituting the "preparation of a food item," would be nothing short of absurd. Yahweh Himself

forbade *any* of the above acts on the Sabbath, all the way from the gathering of the food item (cf. Ex. 16:27-30) to baking it (Ex. 16:22-23).

The book of Jeremiah clues us in to yet *another* part of the food preparation process, as it mentions *kneading dough* to make (*ahsah*) cakes. Notice what it says in Jeremiah 7:18:

> 18 The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead *their* dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other mighty ones, that they may provoke me to anger.

In order to "make" (**עשׂה**, *aw-saw*, prepare) those "cakes," it was necessary to knead the dough, yet certainly we realize that there is much more to bread-making than just kneading the dough! Again, we cannot remove any one step in the preparation process and label that step as being the actual "preparation." Applying heat to food (baking, cooking) has been shown to be a *part* of that process, and is therefore something that should ***not*** be done on the Sabbath. In Ezekiel 4:9, Yahweh commanded Ezekiel to "make [*aw-saw*, prepare] bread" out of wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet and fitches. In verse 12, we learn that a part of that preparation included ***baking*** the bread.

I have found that many seek a "cut and dried" definition of the word "prepare" that will better guide them in their attempt to serve the Almighty. For example: Does buttering a slice of bread constitute "preparing"? Is it wrong to add salad dressing to a salad on the Sabbath? Or how about peeling an orange? These are questions June and I have been asked by people who apparently seek to over-define a problematic word, and if they can take its definition to its furthest, and most ridiculous extreme, they apparently think they can justify going with their own very *liberal*, user-defined meaning of the word. We have noticed that those who ask us such questions seem to be seeking justification of their own affinity for a warm Sabbath meal. In other words, as they seem to imply, "If you're gonna say I can't warm my meat loaf in the microwave, then you can't be adding dressing to your salad!" If we fail to respond to their satisfaction, they then feel they have achieved Yahweh's blessing to do *all* manner of preparing on the Sabbath, all because we did not give them the answer they wanted to hear. On the one hand, we should all have the *general* understanding of "preparation," wherein even major food manufacturers are able to discern that warming up food constitutes its preparation. On the other hand, the loophole seekers demand a *specific* definition that condones light preparation, e.g., peeling an orange, while outright forbidding heavy preparation. We should all spend more time discerning Yahweh's clear intentions instead of seeking loopholes.

As difficult as it is to draw the line between what does and does not constitute an act of food preparation, let's at least address the issue of buttering bread and adding salad dressing to a salad. Do those acts *truly* constitute "preparation"? Well, if they are to be classified as "preparation," at *most* they would have to be considered "*final* preparation." If indeed the final act of adding condiments to a food item is construed so as to mean an act of preparation prohibited by Yahweh on His Sabbath day, then I should also address a few *other* "prohibited actions." It must be considered "preparation" when we add salt and pepper to a food item. For me personally, I am well-known in my family for mixing different food items together that are already on my plate. For example, I love mixing cold baked

beans with cottage cheese. By applying the strict/extreme definition of "prepare" as given by those who believe it "must" include adding salad dressing to a salad, my food-mixing habits would have to cease on the Sabbath. After all, what is the difference between the act of pouring dressing from a bottle and mixing it with a salad and the act of dishing out food only to mix it with another food item? What is the difference as it relates to "preparation"? *There isn't any!* Last but not least, it would even have to be considered "preparation" to add milk to a bowl of cereal. The list could go on and on, but this is what loophole seekers tend to do!

For those who wish to further define food preparation in its strictest possible sense, by including the addition of condiments, or even mixing the food already found on one's plate, that is their prerogative. Yahweh didn't leave us with such a "strictest possible definition" to go by.

Hopefully, all can see the absurdity of those who venture to seek the *strictest*, most radical definition of a word, then throw up their hands, concluding that anything goes. Such has been the case with the word "prepare." Over the course of our nearly 40 years of Sabbath observance, June and I have encountered people encompassing nearly every spectrum in the realm of defining the word "prepare." We have heard from those who believe only the act of slicing and dicing, as well as heating a food item for the first time, constitutes "food preparation," whereas warming up a previously heated item is ***not*** preparation. We have visited with those who outright bake, boil, fry, roast, steam, microwave and barbecue on the Sabbath (it turns out they don't believe food preparation is inclusive of applying heat). We have come across a few believers who, like us, believe that applying heat to ***any*** food item, whether it be for the first time or for the third time, constitutes food preparation.

For those who wish to further define food preparation in its strictest possible sense, by including the addition of condiments, or even mixing the food already found on one's plate, that is their prerogative. Yahweh didn't leave us with such a "strictest possible definition" to go by. The only "definition" He *specifically* left us with involves applying heat to food (baking), as well as grinding, beating (crushing), and kneading dough. Each of these acts constitutes part of the preparation process as defined by Yahweh. Anything beyond those parameters, such as adding milk to cereal or peeling an orange, is best left up to an individual's own conscience, guided by prayer and study.

As I conclude this section pertaining to the definition of *prepare*, it is fitting that I add a brief commentary on this word as it relates to *cooking*. I have already shown that the word *bake*, in its original sense, simply meant "to warm." Curiously, it can be demonstrated that the word *cook* is not <u>always</u> used to mean "subjecting a food item to the action of heat." According to the *Encarta World English Dictionary*, page 398, the first definition listed for the word *cook* is "**PREPARE FOOD:** to prepare food for a meal." This definition falls in line with the one mentioned earlier as taken from the *Encyclopedia International*: "In its broader sense, cookery may be considered <u>any</u> form of preparing food for the table." Given this definition, and equipped with the understanding that Yahweh's directive clearly established that *all food preparation* for the Sabbath is to be done on the sixth day of the week, we are left with no room to doubt that applying heat to food is indisputably an act of food preparation that Yahweh forbids on His Sabbath day.

8. Does 21st Century Technology Override Yahweh's Word?

Many professing Sabbatarians, it seems, ignore the meaning of the word "bake," focusing instead on how 21st century technology has made it possible to produce a warm food item in only a matter of seconds, thus significantly reducing the amount of time and labor involved in its prep-aration. As stated previously, their focus is on the "*why*" of the command instead of just doing what it says. They rea-son that *surely* the ease with which food can be heated in this day and age supersedes any expressed intentions to the contrary that Yahweh may have given His people in times past. It is true that today all we have to do is pull something out of the fridge, pop it in the microwave, push a few buttons, and in seconds we have a nice, warm meal with virtually no labor involved. Does this ease of preparation exonerate us from certain precepts of the fourth command-ment? Since our modern appliances save us so much time and effort, does this mean 21st century technology makes the requirement to obey the fourth commandment as it relates to preparing food *obsolete*? Is it now permissible to cook or warm up food on the Sabbath, since it is so much more convenient in these modern times? Should we be allowed more freedom on the Sabbath than the children of Israel were given, since it has become so much easier to prepare food today than it was back then?

"I was going to make a seven course gourmet dinner, but the microwave is broken."

Those who support the belief that it is indeed permissible to warm up food on the Sabbath are virtually unanimous in answering "yes" to all of the above questions. The children of Israel did not have controls on their stoves or ovens to keep the temperature at a constant level. They did not have timers to alert them when "time was up," nor did they have "automatic shut off" controls for when the temperature reached a certain level. In short, they were required to closely monitor *any* food that was subjected to heat.

As I have already pointed out, warming up food on the Sabbath because "it is so much more convenient today than it was back then" ignores the actual commandment. In my attempt to rationalize why anyone would choose to warm up food in a microwave oven, as opposed to a conventional oven, the only answer I come up with is "convenience." A microwave oven is so quick and easy that virtually no labor is involved in preparing the food. At first glance, this form of Sabbath food preparation might not seem wrong.

However, on the basis of our having already defined the words "bake" and "cook," our first problem with the above scenario is justifying the application of heat to food. Some may contend that "technically speaking," one does not apply heat to food while using a microwave oven. It is true that, unlike conventional ovens, a microwave oven heats food without actually applying external heat. This, according to some, proves that one is not actually "applying heat" to food while using this type of oven. However, by definition, microwaves *are* a source of heat energy, just like gas and electricity. All

three produce cooking in the food itself.[iii] Thus, regardless of how quick and easy microwave cooking is to do, the fact of the matter is this: heat-producing energy is applied to the food item.

I also need to establish the fact that microwave ovens are a *luxury item* that many Americans take for granted. While the microwave oven has seemingly become a staple in the United States, millions living in third world countries are barely even aware of its *existence*, let alone wealthy enough to own one. Untold millions of impoverished people living in these countries not only lack the means to own a microwave oven, they lack the *electricity*! If applying a small amount of heat to a food item were permitted on the Sabbath, these people would have to resort to the primitive method of carefully watching their pots to make certain they don't boil! In view of their not being able to afford the luxury of owning a microwave oven, it would only be fair to allow them such an accommodation! However, as the saying goes, "Two wrongs don't make a right."

As it turns out, June and I have personally witnessed people carefully monitoring their food as it cooked over an open flame on Shabbat. While attending a feast with a group that permitted the "warming up" of food as opposed to "baking and boiling" on the Sabbath, we observed individuals who, on the Sabbath, would place a pan of water over an open pit fire, and then meticulously watch the pan to ensure its removal *before* the water reached its boiling point. Those same individuals, the following day, would again place their pan over the fire, but then go off and visit with friends, as the water slowly, but surely, began to bubble before vigorously foaming out over the top of the pan. They did not monitor the water ***that day*** because it didn't matter ***that day*** whether or not the water boiled! The obvious question is this: "On which day was the most work performed while heating the water?" Clearly, it was on the Sabbath. Although scrupulously watching a pan may not be as labor-intensive as other work activities, it is nevertheless an activity that detracts from the spirit of the Sabbath (see section 16, "The Spirit of the Sabbath: Yahweh's Intention"). The individuals we observed were so caught up in making certain their water didn't boil on the Sabbath that they didn't stop to think of how they were actually laboring more over the water ***that day*** than they did during the other days of the week, much less of how it detracted from our fellowship that day. We don't believe those individuals properly grasped the spirit in which Yahweh's Sabbath directives were given; He commands His children not to cook on the Sabbath because He wants us to focus our attention on *other* things.

We can thus discern that those who cannot afford to own a microwave oven or crock pot, and *especially* those without electricity, would have to resort to <u>scrupulously</u> monitoring their food and water <u>if</u> it were true that a small amount of heat application is permissible on the Sabbath. However, since this act *does involve a certain amount of labor*, passive though it may be, … <u>and</u> since *Yahweh forbids labor on the Sabbath*, … <u>and</u> since this type of monitoring does not fall within any parameters listed as "acceptable exceptions" anywhere in Scripture, we can only conclude that one is better off abandoning the notion of warming up food on the Sabbath! And, lest we forget, all this is *assuming* Scripture permits us to apply heat to food or drink on Shabbat!

I cannot leave this potential scenario without further reflecting on the plight of those who do not have electricity in their homes. Under the circumstances mentioned above, those who live without electricity would have no choice but to abandon all hope of having a warm meal on the Sabbath. However, here we are, in a place where we ***can*** just press a few buttons and in seconds a warm meal is ready. In pondering such a situation, I can only wonder how fair it would be. Does it seem fair that a group of people, just because they are blessed with better living conditions and modern conveniences, should have it granted to them that their reward for having those heating devices is that ***they*** get to enjoy a warm Sabbath meal, whereas the impoverished Sabbathkeeper is denied that privilege simply because he is not as well off? If Yahweh is not a respecter of persons, why would He grant those with the luxury of owning a microwave oven the freedom to heat their meals on the Sabbath while simultaneously denying that privilege to a poor family with no such resources?

Of course, the situation just described is purely hypothetical and even serves to detract from the position I have already established: *Yahweh clearly prohibits applying heat to food on His Sabbath day*. However, our point is this: ***If*** He were to allow any heat so long as it did not reach a certain temperature, those not possessing the modern technological ovens with temperature controls would be at a definite disadvantage.

Electricity and the "Red Herring Fallacy"

Before leaving the subject of modern technology, I would like to address yet *another* piece of logic advanced by one Sabbathkeeping organization. From the booklet *The Sabbath: A Memorial and Promise*, page 42, we read the following:

> Today, most houses have electricity, with food kept in a refrigerator. There is little difference between using electricity to keep food cool on the Sabbath and using electricity to warm it. Again, if someone does not wish to heat food on the Sabbath, preferring cold sandwiches or cold food, that is strictly his prerogative. However, he should not condemn another who sees nothing wrong with pushing a button to heat his food for the Sabbath, for which there is no specific scriptural restriction.[iv]

I agree with the author of the above commentary in that we should not condemn those who warm their food on the Sabbath. My purpose here is not to condemn, but to share my perspective of what I believe is the will of Yahweh in this matter. I do not condemn those who do not share my position on this or any belief. Strongly advocating one's position should *never* be so misconstrued as to mean "condemnation." However, this having been said, I must express sharp disagreement with other comments as expressed above by the author. Contrary to his conclusion, I believe there ***is*** a specific Scriptural injunction against heating up food on the Sabbath.

While it is true that there is little difference between using electricity to keep food warm versus using electricity to keep it cool, the fact of the matter is that keeping food cool is *completely irrelevant* to this topic. Yahweh's directive specifically deals with applying ***heat*** to food on the Sabbath. Scripture does not deal with the subject of keeping food cold on the Sabbath. Furthermore, under normal circumstances, the refrigerator is not used to ***prepare*** food. Instead, it is used to ***preserve*** food. As I have shown, this issue is all about abstaining from ***work*** on the Sabbath. I have demonstrated that ***preparation*** , regardless of how easy or fun it may seem, can be properly classified as ***work***, which is forbidden by Yahweh on that one day of the week. Yahweh's Word goes even <u>further</u>, classifying the

application of heat to food as inclusive of ***preparation*** (Num. 11:8, Ex. 16:23). Any attempt to introduce the electricity-powered refrigerator as an excuse to warm up food on the Sabbath is a clear case of confusing the facts and missing the point. For those who are familiar with the "red herring fallacy," arguing that there's no difference between using electricity to keep food cold and using it to warm food is a classic red herring fallacy.

I experienced yet *another* "red herring fallacy" at the 2001 Unity Conference in Cisco, Texas, where I delivered a presentation on this very topic. At the end, during the question/answer portion, a detractor asked me if I shut off our electricity on the Sabbath. I answered that I do not, and the man asking the question immediately chuckled and expressed the opinion that my response to his question essentially wiped out all of the arguments I had presented. At that moment, it didn't occur to me that he had just thrown me a "red herring fallacy" argument, so I'm sure I didn't give him the best answer. Being prepared for red herring arguments is a real challenge, and I admittedly wasn't mentally prepared. Having since collected my thoughts, I can *now* firmly state that this discussion *isn't* about whether or not it's okay to use electricity on the Sabbath! This discussion *is* about whether or not it's okay to prepare food on the Sabbath and *specifically*, if it's okay to apply heat to food on that day, whether the heat source is flame *or* electricity. So I *should* have answered him, "Sir, this presentation *wasn't* about whether or not it's okay to use electricity to power your home on Shabbat; my presentation *was* about whether or not it's okay to *use* that electricity to apply heat to your *food* on Shabbat." Sadly, I know he had already made up his mind anyway, but at least I would have given him a much better answer if I had been prepared for his question.

9. Preparation of the Temple Shewbread

We have thus far produced corroborative information from reputable sources that the manna was baked/boiled on the ***eve*** of Sabbath, not ***on*** the Sabbath itself. This, quite frankly, is how the ancients understood the directive from Yahweh as found in Exodus 16:23. This same tradition carried over in the preparation of the temple shewbread by the priests. The following insight into this function of the priesthood comes from the book *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services,* by Alfred Edersheim, page 181:

> The first of these [priestly] functions, immediately on the commencement of the Sabbath, was the renewal of the 'shewbread.' It had been prepared by the incoming course [of priests] before the Sabbath itself, and–we might almost say, invariably–in one of the chambers of the Temple....

The author later adds:

> For although it was a principle that 'there is no Sabbath in the sanctuary,' yet no work was allowed which might have been done on any other day.

The shewbread, therefore, was prepared ***not*** on the Sabbath, but the day ***before***! Edersheim did not make up his information. Josephus, the Jewish historian who lived between the years 38 CE and 100 CE, provides historical evidence substantiating Edersheim's book. In his work entitled *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book III, chapter 10, section 7, Josephus informs his readers about the provision of the temple shewbread:

> However, out of the common charges, baked bread was set on the table of shew-bread, without leaven, of twenty-four tenth deals of flour, for so much is spent upon this bread; two heaps of these were baked; they were baked the day before the Sabbath, but were brought into the holy place on the morning of the Sabbath, and set upon the holy table, six in a heap, one loaf still standing over-against another; where two golden cups full of frankincense were also set upon them, and there they remained till another Sabbath, and then other loaves were brought in their stead, ...

Since it was the practice in the temple to prepare the shewbread in advance of the Sabbath, then certainly we can expect the same manner of preparation from the general populace as well.

It stands to reason that the custom of preparing the shewbread ***before*** the Sabbath stemmed from honoring Yahweh's directive to do no work on the Sabbath, i.e., *all food preparation was done on the sixth day of the week*. Furthermore, since it was the custom in the temple to prepare the shewbread in advance of the Sabbath, then certainly we can expect the same manner of preparation from the general populace as well.

The preceding information concerning the temple shewbread, though coming from authoritative sources, including a historian who was *there*, carries no weight if it cannot be supported by Scripture. As it turns out, there is indeed a problematical text of Scripture that at first glance *might* seem to contradict the information just given. According to a certain verse found in the *King James Version's*

rendering of I Chronicles, the shewbread was ***prepared on the Sabbath***! We are definitely confronted with an enigma, for on the one hand, we have data from reliable sources that the shewbread was prepared ***before*** the Sabbath, and on the other hand, Scripture itself *seems* to refute that information. Let's examine the Scripture passage in question. It is found in I Chronicles 9:32, where we are enlightened with regard to the temple responsibilities delegated to the various clans of the Levites, in this case the clan of Kohath:

> 32 And other of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, were over the shewbread, to prepare it every Sabbath.

If this *King James Version* reading is correct, we have just run across a Scriptural example authorizing food preparation on the weekly Sabbath. However, before jumping to conclusions, we need to make note of the fact that there are several Hebrew words which can be translated "prepare." We have already dealt with one, the Hebrew word **עשׂה** (*aw-saw*), which is word #6213 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary.* As you may recall, this word can mean "to do," "to make," "to labor," and of course "to prepare." However, the Hebrew word translated "prepare" in I Chronicles 9:32 is a *different* Hebrew word. This word can indeed be used to mean "to prepare" as used in that verse, so we are not about to label that verse a "mistranslation." Nevertheless, it is interesting to note the *other* meanings that this Hebrew word can have. The Hebrew word in question here is word #3559 in *Strong's*, **כּוּן**, and is pronounced "koon."

This word "koon," besides having its meaning of "to prepare," can ***also*** be translated "to set up," "to be erect," "to set forth," "make provision," and "to make ready." This word can be found, among other places, in Psalms 141:2, which we display below:

> Let my prayer be set forth (*koon*) before thee as incense and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

King David mentions the "setting forth" (*koon*) of his prayer—that it be "set forth as incense." Could it be that just as incense can be "set forth," that the translator of I Chronicles 9:32 ***could have (accurately) translated it so as to read*** "...the sons of the Kohathites, were over the shewbread, to set it forth every Sabbath"? The answer, obviously, is YES! This same Hebrew word can also be found in Ezra 3:3, where we read about the altar being "set upon" (*koon*) its foundation.

It is always interesting to compare Bible translations in order to see if any further light can be shed on the intended meaning of a particular verse. I have already displayed the *King James Version's* rendering of 1 Chronicles 9:32, and most versions, such as the *Revised Standard Version*, support that translation. However, note the translation given by the *New International Version:*

> 32 Some of their Kohathite brothers were in charge of preparing for every Sabbath the bread set out on the table.

While I am not necessarily in agreement with the *NIV*'s translation, it is nonetheless an interesting one, as it implies that the shewbread was prepared ***in advance of*** the Sabbath, not on the Sabbath day itself. This particular translation of I Chronicles 9:32 agrees with the Jewish *Tanakh*. There is a Spanish version of the Bible (*La Santa Biblia*) that claims to be an "ancient version of Casiodoro de Reina (1569), revised by Cipriano de Valera (1602)." This version provides amazing support of the translation that I suggest as being the most accurate. Shown below is I Chronicles 9:32 as it appears in this Spanish version, followed by its translation:

> 32 Y algunos de los hijos de Coat, y de sus hermanos tenían a su cargo los panes de la proposición, los cuales ponían por orden cada día de reposo.
>
> **English Translation:** And some of Kohath's sons, and their brothers, were in charge of the bread of proposal [shewbread], which they set in order each Sabbath day.

This Spanish version definitely supports rendering the word "koon" in such a way as to indicate that the priests did ***not*** prepare the shewbread on the Sabbath; rather, they set it in order, as in they arranged it. Finally on this subject, there is a verse that certainly indicates and in fact *confirms* that the shewbread was ***NOT*** prepared on the Sabbath, but rather ***SET FORTH*** on the Sabbath. This verse is found in Leviticus 24:8, where we read the following:

> 8 Every Sabbath he shall set it [the shewbread] in order before Yahweh continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.

Curiously, the words translated "set in order" in this verse come from yet ***another*** Hebrew word (#6186 in *Strong's*). It is **עָרַךְ** (literally translated "he shall arrange it"), pronounced *aw'rak* in Hebrew, and has the general meaning of "to set in a row, i.e. to arrange, put in order." Leviticus 24:8, therefore, is translated properly in the *King James Version*, and all versions are in agreement with this translation. Thus, we see that although the shewbread was set in order (set out on the table) each Sabbath, it was ***prepared*** the day before.

Finally, I think the New American Standard version offers the most logical translation of 1 Chronicles 9:32, as it includes the previous verse, verse 31:

> 31 Mattithiah, one of the Levites, the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, was entrusted with **preparing** the cakes.
> 32 Benaiah the Kohathite, one of their brothers, was in charge of **setting out** the showbread each sabbath.

If this translation is correct, it indicates that a Levite named Mattithiah was entrusted with the *preparing* of the shewbread, which would *not* have been on the Sabbath, and Benaiah the Kohathite was entrusted with *setting it out* each Sabbath. This translation is accurate and agrees with the understanding as expressed by the Jewish historian, Josephus.

I haven't mentioned the Septuagint translation of 1 Chronicles 9:32. It definitely uses a Greek word that can be translated "prepare." If it is true that the priests prepared the temple shewbread on the weekly Sabbath, this still would not give us non-priests authorization to bake that day. As Yeshua

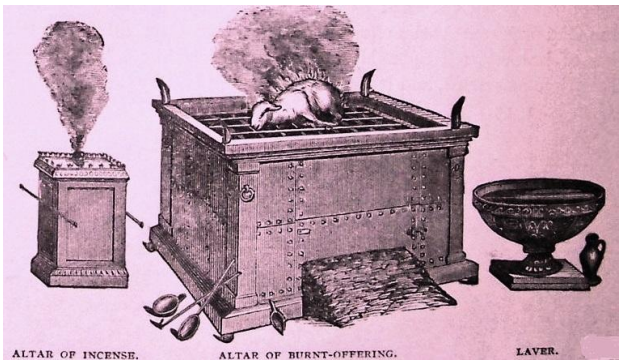
pointed out in Matthew 12:5, “Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?” Just because the priests were authorized to do certain things on the Sabbath does not give us license to do the same. I will address Matthew 12:5 further in my next chapter.

10. Burnt Offerings on the Sabbath?

In His Word, Yahweh made a clear distinction between the function of the priesthood and the role of the other children of Israel. Although He gave Israel specific instructions regarding the proper observance of the Sabbath, nevertheless the general populace was given certain restrictions that did not apply to the priesthood. The Temple services required that certain functions be carried out on a daily basis, including the Sabbath, and those functions were to be carried out by the priests. As mentioned earlier by Edersheim, there was an understood principle that "there is no Sabbath in the sanctuary." Yeshua, in Matthew 12:5, brought forth this same principle:

> 5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

Without a doubt, Yahweh recognized a demarcation between the general populace and the priesthood. Some might argue, "If the priests could do it back then, then ***we*** can do it now!" This attempt to blur the distinction that Yahweh made, in addition to being without merit, is also an exercise in futility. One man, for example, suggested that, in light of the fact that the priests offered up ***burnt offerings*** before Yahweh on the Sabbath, this suggests that we, too, may apply heat (fire) to our food on that day. This is an example of how far man will go to justify preparing a warm meal on Shabbat. Is his logic justified?



The Altar of Incense, Altar of Burnt-Offering, and Laver from the Biblical Tabernacle; illustration from the 1890 *Holman Bible*.

To answer such a claim, we need to examine the offerings presented to Yahweh on the Sabbath day, as outlined in Numbers 28:9-10:

> 9 On the Sabbath day, present two unblemished year-old male lambs, accompanied by a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, as well as a drink offering.
> 10 This is the burnt offering for every Sabbath, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering. (*Berean Standard Version*)

This, then, was the requirement for the priests to carry out each Sabbath day—presenting the burnt offerings to Yahweh. The law pertaining to the burnt offerings, as outlined in Leviticus 1:10-13, obligated the priests to ***completely burn*** each lamb by fire until it was totally consumed. Thus, instead of burning meat for <u>human</u> consumption, the meat was wholly consumed by the <u>fire</u>.

If, as some propose, we can today lay claim to the priesthood, there are those who might also lay claim to the right of roasting meat by fire on the Sabbath day. If so, I can only suggest that such people ***completely roast*** the meat, as in ***total consumption by fire***!

11. More Historical Validation

Earlier, in our section pertaining to the preparation of the Temple shewbread, I quoted from the first-century Jewish historian, Josephus. Josephus' writings demonstrate that, just as the priesthood prepared the shewbread *before* the onset of the Sabbath, so the rest of the people would have followed that same procedure with regard to the preparation of their meals. But Josephus provides further documentation concerning this custom, that not only was this method practiced by the temple priests, but it was *also* practiced by a sect of the Jews known as the Essenes. In his work entitled *The Wars of the Jews,* Book II, chapter 8, section 9, he records the following:

> Moreover, they [the Essenes] are stricter than any other of the Jews in resting from their labors on the seventh day; for they not only get their food ready the day before, that they may not be obliged to kindle a fire on that day, but they will not remove any vessel out of its place, nor go to stool thereon.

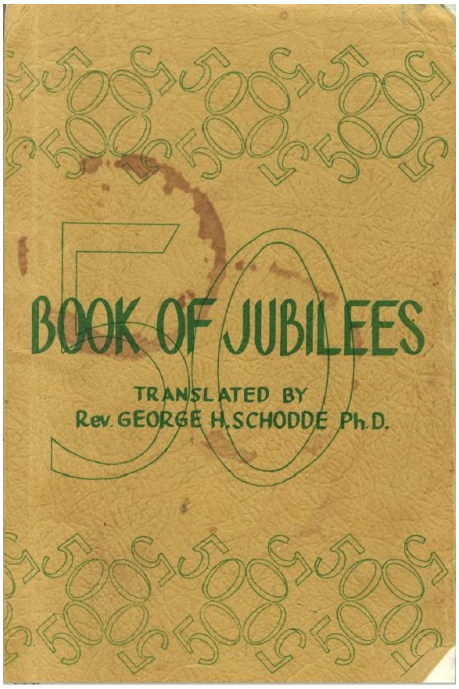
The Essenes were obviously a very strict sect of the Jews, as Josephus explained above. They not only prepared their food **before** the Sabbath began, in accordance with Scripture, but they also implemented practices that are not necessarily found in the Torah. It appears that their prohibition against removing vessels out of their places on the Sabbath, however, might stem from the likes of Jeremiah 17:21-22, where we are told not to bear any burdens on the Sabbath day. If such is the case, it appears likely that they, like the Pharisees of Yeshua's day, had so ritualized the Sabbath that it had been robbed of the joy Yahweh intends for His children to experience. They, like some Sabbath observers of today, were apparently unable to separate the line between not doing "their own pleasure" on the Sabbath and still being able to truly call it a "delight" (Isaiah 58:13). On the other hand, if we take into consideration the possibility that the "vessels" in question were of considerable weight, it becomes easier to understand and accept the rationale employed by the Essenes. Moving such vessels around could very well have involved intensive labor.

Without exception, each historical reference which I have been able to locate bears out that food preparation was done before the Sabbath began, *not* on the Sabbath itself.

The Book of Jubilees, in the opinion of some researchers, was written by forerunners of the Essenes before the birth of the Messiah Yeshua. According to the *New Bible Dictionary,* page 626, *Jubilees* was "probably written in the late 2nd century BC in (proto-) Essene circles shortly before the Qumran sect came into existence." It was originally written in Hebrew, and fragments of it were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Notice the specific instructions *The Book of Jubilees* gives pertaining to food preparation on the Sabbath. What follows is taken from *Jubilees* 50:7:

> Ye shall not do any work on the Sabbath which ye have not prepared for yourselves on the sixth day, to eat or to drink or to rest or to keep Sabbath from all your work on that day, and to bless Yahweh your mighty one, who has given it to you as a festival day; and a holy day it shall be, and a day of the holy kingdom, for all Israel this day, among your days, in all the days.

In response to the above quote, many will point out that *Jubilees* is not a part of what is known as the "canonized Scripture." I'm not about to make any claims to the contrary, but regardless of whether or not it was written under inspiration from Yahweh, the fact is, it *at the very least* represents historical understanding of how those ancient believers understood food preparation on the Sabbath. What is particularly worthy of note at this point is the fact that, ***without exception***, each historical reference from which I have quoted bears out that food preparation was done ***before the Sabbath began***, not on the Sabbath itself. Furthermore, I have not been able to locate ***any*** historical references refuting this claim. This is significant, for not only do I have persuasive passages of Scripture on which to base my conclusion, but I *also* have historical evidence that, unless I can be shown otherwise, seals the matter. Only in modern times have believers made the claim that Scripture upholds cooking or otherwise heating up food on Shabbat.



Other historical references further confirm the fact that ancient Judaism did not apply heat to their food on the Sabbath. In his book *The Jewish Festivals: History and Observance*, page 14, Hayyim Schauss addresses the ancient Jewish practice of removing all pots from their stoves prior to the onset of the Sabbath. In the following historical narrative, Schauss describes normative Jewish understanding regarding Sabbath observance up through the "first two centuries of the Common Era":

> In order to assure against profanation of the Sabbath the Jews added the late Friday afternoon hours to the Sabbath. In Jerusalem a priest, standing on a high tower of the Temple, blew a trumpet as a signal to put away all work and to begin the Sabbath rest. In all other cities and towns of Palestine the sexton of the community ascended the roof of an elevated house, usually the synagogue, at the required time, and blew six blasts on the trumpet at intervals. At the first blow of the trumpet the Jews in the fields about the town put down their work; those who worked closer to town did not rush from the fields, but waited for those who worked further out, and all marched into town together. The shops, however, were still open; they closed at the second trumpet call. The third blast was the signal at which the pots were taken from the stoves and wrapped in various materials to preserve their warmth. The third blast was also the signal for kindling the Sabbath lights.

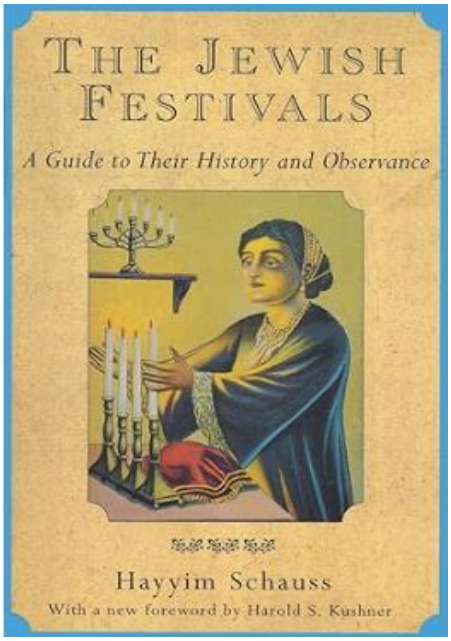
As pointed out by Schauss, the pots were taken from the stoves and wrapped in insulating materials to "***preserve their warmth***." This was ancient Judaism's equivalent to the modern-day thermos. Of course, there is a big difference between *applying heat* to food and *preserving heat*. The Jews of that particular time period recognized and honored Yahweh's directive against applying heat to food. Sadly, as I will demonstrate in my section titled "(Inadvertent) Jewish Admissions," many of today's Jews ignore that directive.

More Historical Validation

In his book *The Jewish Festivals: History and Observance*, Mr. Schauss goes into further detail regarding the "ancient thermos." On page 22, he describes the typical Friday afternoon bustling to prepare for the oncoming Sabbath. He writes:

> Later in the afternoon there is quiet and peace. The food for the Sabbath is already cooked. The *cholent* [a traditional Jewish stew] is put into the oven and the stove is sealed with clay to keep the heat in. A jar of hot water is set in a recess in the stove, built especially for this purpose, for warm foods and drinks on the Sabbath.

Jews of ancient time went to a lot of trouble to ensure their food and drink was kept as warm as possible, yet they took care in *not* applying heat to that food once the Sabbath began. Think of the time and effort involved when, each Friday afternoon, they prepared the clay for sealing their stoves. How much easier it would have been to have simply set a pot of Friday's leftovers over an already-burning fire, watch it for a few minutes, and then remove it when it became warm! For them, however, this act wasn't even *considered* an option. The only "option" they recognized for warm food on the Sabbath was transforming their stoves into "thermoses." How do today's modern-day professing Sabbathkeepers compare to those believers of Old?



Mr. Schauss goes into more detail regarding this "sealed stove" on page 32 of his book:

> The main feature of the Sabbath midday meal is the *cholent*, with its adjunct, the *kugel*, cooked food kept warm overnight in a sealed stove. As far back as the time of the second Temple it was the custom for Jews to keep the Sabbath food in materials that retained heat. Adding heat on the Sabbath is forbidden, not the retaining of it.

As clearly stated by the author, adding heat to food on the Sabbath is prohibited. When we intentionally expose food to a flame or *any* heat source, we are adding heat to it, which I have already defined as *cooking*. Mr. Schauss continues with his historical narrative on page 23:

> One by one the stores close, in rapid succession. The houses are spic and span. The pots and pans have been removed from the stoves, the fires no longer flame. Father, mother, and children are busy washing, combing, and dressing for the Sabbath.

The "fires" that no longer flame, of course, are the fires from the stoves. The author, as quoted earlier, has already mentioned the "Sabbath lights" that were kindled before the Sabbath began.

Schauss, on page 25 of his book, points out that by the time the third Sabbath meal is eaten, the "sealed stove" has lost its effect:

> After *Minchoh* (afternoon prayers) the third Sabbath meal is eaten, generally a dairy meal, kept for warmth in the recess of the stove, but by this time of day it is cold, or, at best, lukewarm.

Schauss goes on to describe other Jewish practices that demonstrated great reverence for the sanctity of the Sabbath, such as the Jewish custom of baking bread on Friday for the entire week … thus providing the freshest loaves for the Sabbath. His testimony offers persuasive evidence that ancient Jewish thought and practice was to do absolutely ***no cooking or warming of food on the Sabbath***.

12. Fasting on the Sabbath?

I have just demonstrated that ancient Jewish custom was to completely extinguish all stove fires prior to onset of the Sabbath. What we are about to read is how this practice led to a complete misunderstanding and misinterpretation of that Jewish lifestyle by the heathens living amongst the Jews.

Of historical interest is a little-known remark made by the Jewish historian Josephus in *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XIV, chapter iv, section 3. In relating the account of Pompey's siege against Jerusalem (63 BCE), Josephus mentions that Pompey stormed the Temple on the "fast day." At once, we tend to think this must mean that Pompey entered the temple on Yom Kippur. However, we are also told that this occurred during the third month of the year, Sivan. Since Yom Kippur occurs during the *seventh* month, we know the "fast day" is not a reference to this holy day. What, then, does "the fast day" refer to? While no one is certain, the following potential scenario as presented in *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, page 1,030, leaves us with an interesting possibility to consider:

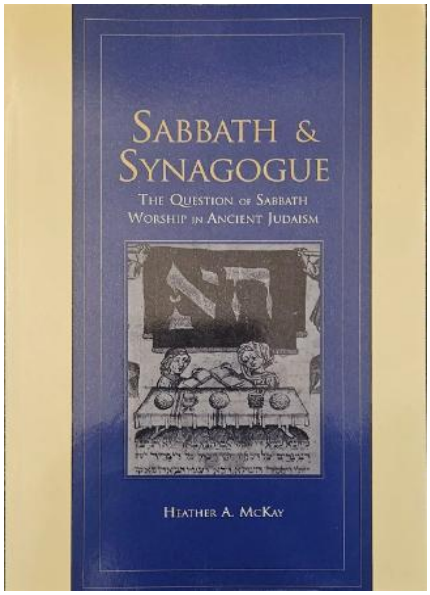
> Josephus ascribes also to Strabo Nicolaus' statement about the Jews' continuing to practice their rites while Pompey's troops were storming into the Temple, mentioning that the city was captured 'on the fast day.' Whether this refers to Yom Kippur, which cannot possibly be the day the city was captured, since other evidence indicates that the date was much too early in the year, or on the Sabbath, which many pagans thought was a fast day, perhaps because of the prohibition against cooking, is a matter of dispute.

Regardless of whether or not "the fast day" was used as a reference to the Sabbath as being the day on which Pompey captured Jerusalem, the fact remains that pagans *did* believe the Sabbath was observed by Jews as a *fast day*, apparently due to them ***not cooking on that day***. The information above is validated by other sources, such as a book titled *Sabbath and Synagogue*, pages 95-96, by Heather A. McKay, where we read the following:

> Pompeius Trogus [1st century BCE historian], contributing to a recurring misunderstanding of Jewish habits, describes Moses as having consecrated the sabbath as a perpetual fast day, hallowed for all time.
>
> Preserved in Justinus, *Historiae Philippicae, Epitoma 36, 2.14-16*
> '... he (Moyses), for all time, consecrated the seventh day, which used to be called Sabbath by the custom of the nation, for a fast day ... [T]hey took care, in order that they might not become odious, from the same cause [fear of spreading infection], to their neighbors, to have no communication with strangers: a rule which, from having been adopted on that particular occasion, gradually became a religious institution … and ever afterwards it was a custom among the Jews to have the same persons both for kings and priests; and by their justice combined with religion, it is almost incredible how powerful they became.'

The confusion of the ban on cooking with a requirement to fast is common in many of the writings of the time. But Pompeius Trogus does conceive of the day as being held sacred.

The author of the above book, Heather A. McKay, not only identifies a mistaken heathen perception of Jews as fasting on the Sabbath in the first century BCE, but she also addresses the teachings of *Ignatius*, a second century CE Christian, who was known for his anti-Jewish stance. As demonstrated in McKay's book, pages 181-182, Ignatius earmarks sabbath-keeping as defining Jewish practice, specifically with regard to *food preparation*:

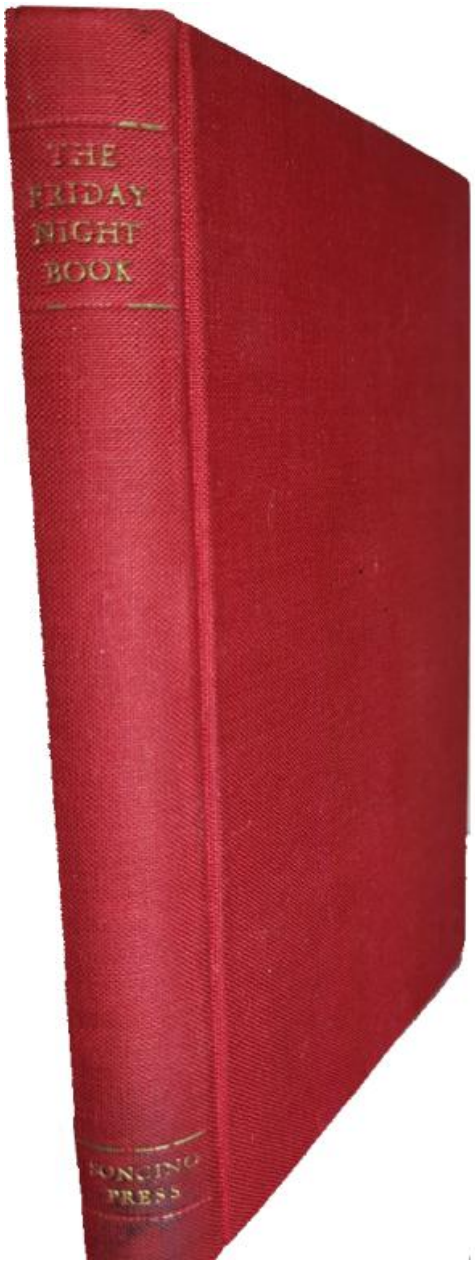


> "More detailed information about the Jewish sabbath can be found in the longer recension of the Epistle to the Magnesians, usually regarded as later than the recension of middle length quoted above. In it the writer [Ignatius] retreats from the completely anti-sabbath stance expressed in the middle recension. In it a modified form of sabbath-keeping is permitted, although it is to be as different as possible from the caricature of Jewish sabbath-keeping described in the text. It is this somewhat polemic summary of Jewish sabbath activities that is of most interest to us. The writer says:
>
> > Let us therefore no longer keep the Sabbath in the Jewish manner, and rejoice in idleness; for 'he that does not work, let him not eat.' For say the [holy] oracles, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread.' But let everyone of you keep the Sabbath after a spiritual manner, rejoicing in meditation on the law, not in relaxation of the body, admiring the workmanship of God, and not eating things prepared the day before, nor using lukewarm drinks, and walking within a prescribed space, nor finding delight in dancing and plaudits which have no sense in them. And after the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days [of the week].
>
> "Apparently, on the sabbath Jews eat food prepared on Fridays, drink tepid drinks and walk only short distances. The Jews portrayed 'rejoice in idleness' and enjoy 'dancing and plaudits.' The Christians are directed to a new, 'better' form of sabbath-keeping, which for them does include 'meditation on the law'—begging the question of whether Jews meditate on the law on the sabbath.
>
> "Instead of following Jewish habits and practices, Christians are to work at their normal sweat-producing labours, and should eat freshly cooked meals and drink freshly prepared drinks, whether still piping hot, or cool and fresh from the well—not having stood in a jar overnight. They are to celebrate the sabbath in the mind and in the spirit, enjoying the wonders of creation and admiring God's handiwork. And they are to follow that sabbath with a Christian day of celebration on Sunday."

As clearly presented in McKay's book, ancient Christians understood that Jews did *not* prepare their meals on the Sabbath—because they were prepared the day *before*. This even included their drinks, i.e., no hot tea! Ancient Christians, as a means of outwardly distancing themselves from anything "Jewish," encouraged their members to do the opposite. Historically, in ancient times, it was indeed common knowledge within Judaism that *no* manner of heating process was applied to food on the Sabbath day. Many sources confirm this fact, such as the Jewish publication *The Friday Night Book*:

> It was a common belief among the ancient Romans that the Jews fasted on the Sabbath, because no smoke was seen from their houses on that day.

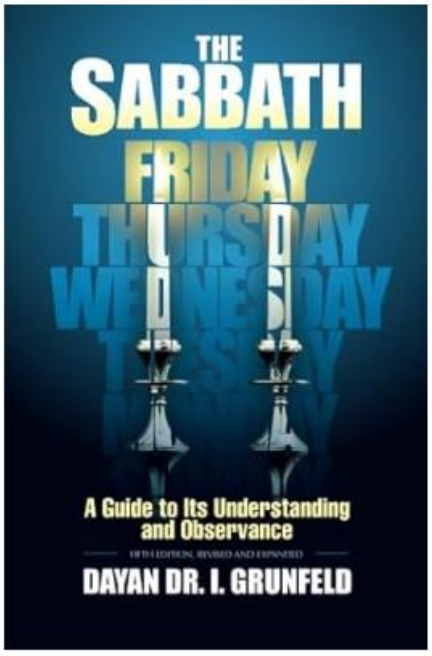
As described above, we can discern that while ancient heathens were baking and boiling their Saturday meals, the smoke from their fires filled the air. The cooking fires of torah-observant Jews, however, had been extinguished well before the Sabbath began. ***Surely***, since those Jews had no fires burning, they must have been ***fasting***, or so the heathens thought!



I have displayed overwhelming evidence that ancient Judaism did *not* practice "warming up" food on the Sabbath day, nor are they approved Scriptural examples of them exhibiting otherwise. Equipped with the additional knowledge that ancient pagans misinterpreted this Jewish custom as meaning they fasted on the Sabbath, there is no room to doubt that ancient Judaism well understood and ***practiced*** the prohibition outlined in Exodus 16:23. The next question is, "Would any non-Jew come away with that same impression today?" If we were to observe modern Jews' homes, would we, like the ancient heathens, come away with the impression that they fast on Shabbat? The answer is no, we would not. At some point in time, quite possibly at the time when a Jewish sect known as the ***Karaites*** began to emerge, most of Judaism began the unscriptural practice of maintaining a fire to keep their food warm on the Sabbath. Karaite Jews do not apply heat to food on the Sabbath. In fact, if you check out the reason given by normative Judaism for why they practice maintaining a fire in order to keep food warm on the Sabbath, they admit that it comes from the *Talmud*, a Jewish writing known as their *Oral Tradition*, which I believe is without Scriptural support and is devoid of inspiration from our Heavenly Father. Karaite Jews reject the authority attributed to the Talmud by normative Judaism.

13. (Inadvertent) Jewish Admissions

Sadly, much of modern Judaism circumvents the law as it pertains to applying heat to food on the weekly Sabbath. By means of a contrivance termed the "Sabbath stove," certain Jews teach that this appliance allows "observant Jews" to enjoy a hot meal on the Sabbath. The following information comes from the book *The Sabbath* by Dayan Dr. I. Grunfeld, page 47:



> *The "Sabbath Stove"*: The prohibition of cooking does not mean that we may eat only cold food on the Sabbath. On the contrary, no Sabbath is considered complete without some hot food.
>
> How is this result achieved? —by the "Sabbath-Stove":
>
> This means that one arranges the stove before Sabbath in such a way that the actual burners are covered, and it is also impossible to regulate the heat on Sabbath. (This is usually done by means of a sheet of tin placed on top of the cooker with the edges bent down to cover the controls.) Hot cooked food and an urn of hot water can then be placed on the stove before the commencement of the Sabbath, with the heat adjusted to keep them hot during Sabbath until needed.

Please notice the author's comment, "no Sabbath is considered complete without some hot food." Curiously, nothing even *vaguely* resembling his remark can be found in the Torah, nor is there an example of any precedent supporting his conclusion found anywhere in Scripture.

The fallacy of the "Sabbath Stove" is actually exposed in the above author's own book, as he elsewhere attempts to explain the Creator's rationale in prohibiting "cooking" on the Sabbath. In chapter two, author Grunfeld explains the "Table of the Thirty-Nine Categories of *Melakhah*." The act of "baking" is covered as item #11 on that list, and on page 31 he explains it as follows:

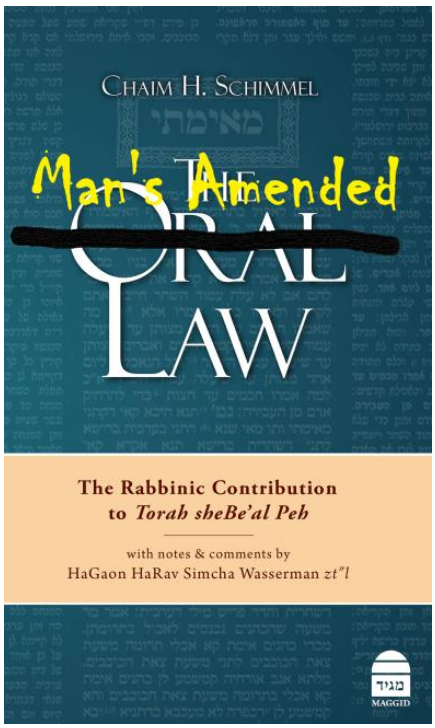
> To take another example, the eleventh category (see Table) includes not only boiling, baking, frying, etc., but also industrial activities such as smelting iron, tempering steel, etc. <u>The general principle in this case is: changing the physical or chemical state of a substance by means of heat</u>.

Grunfeld explains that the principle to be avoided by Torah observant individuals is that of changing the physical or chemical state of a substance by means of heat. By using the "Sabbath Stove," one is able to avoid changing the physical or chemical state of a substance, even though heat is applied to the food item! How do they accomplish this? By virtue of the fact that the food item was *already* in its "hot" (cooked) state when the Sabbath began. Thus, the "Sabbath Stove" is, in the minds of some, a means of enjoying a warm Sabbath meal without having altered the physical or chemical state of the food. However, an obvious dilemma is not resolved by virtue of the "Sabbath Stove": *Subjecting food to the action of heat*.

Yahweh plainly expressed His intentions regarding the application of heat to food on the Sabbath in Exodus 16:23, and there are no approved Scriptural examples of believers practicing otherwise. Those who abide by His principle outlined in Torah recognize that ***no food is to be subjected to heat on the Sabbath***. Curiously, today's Jews acknowledge this fact, as they admit that their reasoning for keeping food hot on the Sabbath stems, *not* from Scripture, but from ***oral tradition***! The following information is taken from a website managed by the Orthodox Union, which hails itself as "the largest and most dynamic Jewish movement of its kind in the world; the central address and national spokesman for 1,000 synagogues; a not-for-profit educational, outreach and social service organization which serves the burgeoning North American Jewish community":

> The Talmud tells us that some Jews (ca. 250 BCE - 70 CE) did not accept the Oral Law, and interpreted the Torah literally. They founded a sect called Tzedukim (named after their leader, Tzadok; also known as the Sadducees) and often acted in a way foreign to Jewish tradition. For example, the Tzedukim prohibited a Jew from leaving a fire burning in his home on the day of Shabbat. To the Rabbis' great chagrin, they would sit in cold and darkness, and eat cold food on Shabbat.
>
> Because of the foolishness of this small group of Jews, the Rabbis decided to take action. In an effort to demonstrate that these Jews were wrong, the Rabbis encouraged the people to have hot food on Shabbat. This would certainly enhance the Shabbat meal, but more importantly, it would demonstrate our loyalty to the Oral Law and Jewish Tradition.[v]

While I am not about to suggest that the Sadducees had all the answers to Scriptural questions, I ***am*** stating that the Orthodox Jewish community *only* sanctions the warming of food on the Sabbath because ***their Oral Tradition says it's okay***! In their own words, Orthodox Jewry admits that the Sadducees chose to avoid keeping their food warm on the Sabbath because they rejected the "Oral Law and Jewish Tradition"! As quoted above, the Orthodox Jews admit this, and to show their disdain for the Sadducees' interpretation of the Torah, they enjoin ***everyone*** to have hot meals on the Sabbath, not for the sake of *obedience*, but ***out of spite***! Notice from the above quote that the rabbis were compelled to encourage the people to have hot food on the Sabbath. This approach, in and of itself, implies that the people at that time had not yet fully grasped the Oral Tradition's apparent contradiction (and supersession) of the Torah. If the "Oral Tradition" was so widely known and accepted, why did the rabbis have to encourage the people to change their Sabbath eating habits?



I realize that, to some, it may come as a shock to believe that the Jews' only justifiable defense of their "Sabbath stove" practice comes from their Oral Tradition. Nevertheless, this is the truth. In other words, the Jews admit that there is absolutely ***nothing*** in the Torah sanctioning the warming up of any food item on the Sabbath. Therefore, in order to justify their craving for warm food on the Sabbath, they are only able to turn to their ***Oral Tradition***. Please keep in mind that no one in Scripture mentioned an "Oral Tradition" that served to supersede or otherwise interpret the

Torah. The Oral Tradition is clearly an ***uninspired*** "writing of man," and in some cases one must wonder if it might in fact be inspired by the adversary, especially in those places where we are taught such things as a whining dog indicating that the Angel of Death has entered the city.[vi] Again, the Rabbis admit that their only justification for keeping their food warm on the Sabbath stems from their Oral Tradition.

For those who might remain unpersuaded of this fact, I'm displaying yet *another* Jewish admission. The following is an excerpt from a web-based article entitled "Cholent[vii]: A Historical Perspective," by Rabbi Yisrael Rutman, published by jewishworldreview.com on March 2, 2001:

> Traditional as cholent is, however, not all Jews have been cholent-eaters. The schism is not just a matter of culinary preference, either; it touches on one of the most fiercely debated issues in Jewish history. For in the eighth century, a sect arose called the Karaites.[viii] These were Jews who rejected the teachings of the Talmud, also known as the Oral Law. They believed that only the Written Law, the Five Books of Moses, was authoritative. The name Karaites is Hebrew for 'Scripturalists,' since the literal reading of the Torah text was their guiding principle. Needless to say, their ideological stance had vast ramifications.
>
> Without an Oral Tradition to complement the Written Torah, it is a closed book, since so many of the basic terms and concepts are presented without explanation in the text of the Torah itself. Such terms as *lulav, tefilin*, and *shechita* are complete mysteries without some outside tradition to explain them. The laws of Shabbes, too, are given clear definition only by the Talmud and its commentaries.
>
>
>
> Having cut themselves off from the Oral Tradition, the Karaites had to make it up as they went along, and their interpretations often resulted in bizarre perversions of authentic Judaism. For example, since they took literally the verse that 'you shall kindle no fires...on the Sabbath day,' they spent the Seventh Day eating cold food in cold, unlit dwellings. Mainstream Judaism, on the other hand, always permitted the use of fire on Shabbes, as long as it is kindled before Shabbes begins, thus allowing for such all-time favorites as hot cholent on cold winter days. (Actually, the *halacha*, or Jewish Law, requires that one have something on the fire on Shabbes during the summer, as well, as an ongoing refutation to the fundamentalist way of the Karaites.)[ix]

My point, once again, is this: The Sadducees and the Karaites bucked the uninspired "Oral Tradition" of mainstream Judaism, suffering interminable ridicule and persecution for their determination to abide only by the Torah. A part of the Oral Tradition they rejected involves its sanctioning the act of keeping food warm on the Sabbath. We thus see from history that ***not all Jews accepted the teaching that it is okay to keep food warm on the Sabbath***! Those who ***do*** accept that teaching base their authority, not on Scripture, but on the ***Talmud***!

According to the quote we just read, mainstream Judaism has "always permitted" the use of fire for cooking on the Sabbath. *Says who?* We read of no such sanction in Scripture, nor are there any approved Scriptural examples supportive of this rabbinical claim. Moreover, as we have already learned from historical references, Mr. Rutman's remark is not accurate. By now, it's fairly clear the "Oral Law" was compiled as a means of loosening those things that the men found overly burdensome within the context of the written law. Calling it "**Oral** Law" seems much more benign than the more accurate "**Man's Amended** Law."

Notice that both the Sadducees and the Karaites cite Exodus 35:3 (regarding the prohibition of kindling a fire on the Sabbath) as their proof text explaining why they do not warm up food on the Sabbath. I do not personally recognize Exodus 35:3 as even being relevant to this topic, yet in answer to those who *do* cite that passage, I will deal specifically with Exodus 35:3 later in this study.

I have shown from history that at a certain point in time a certain sect of Jews introduced the teaching that the Almighty sanctions food warming on the Sabbath. I have successfully demonstrated that at this same time, at least one other sect(s) of Jews ***rejected*** that teaching. Complementing this knowledge is the fact that throughout history, certain Jews, apart from the Karaites and the Sadducees, have been known by their custom of eating only cold food on the Sabbath. For example, from *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, page 295, we read of a traditional story involving a Jewish rabbi and an emperor:

> The Midrash relates that once the Roman emperor Antoninus was dining on the Sabbath at the home of the patriarch Judah Hanasi. Cold viands [victuals] were set before him, and they pleased him very much. When warm viands were set before him on another occasion on a weekday, he declared vigorously that the former viands were preferable. The patriarch remarked that the warm food lacked a spice, and when the emperor asked its name, Judah Hanasi replied: the Sabbath.

Additional evidence that certain Jews enjoyed cold food as a regular part of the Sabbath comes from various sources, including a Jewish cookbook. The following information is a review of the Jewish cookbook *Cucina Ebraica: Flavors of the Italian Jewish Kitchen* by Joyce Esersky Goldstein, and is taken from the website My Cookbook.net:

> Jews have lived in Italy since Roman times, always part of the cultural landscape, always living in isolation of one kind or another. The word we know as ghetto comes to us from 16th-century Venice. Within the world of Jews in Italy, there are several smaller worlds: those of the native Jews, of the Sephardim driven out of Spain, and of the Ashkenazim moving down from Germany and Eastern Europe. Take all those food traditions and dietary laws, squeeze them in one overarching food sensibility, and you have a very unusual way to view culture and history. Joyce Goldstein, in Cucina Ebraica, demonstrates that culture and history are edible, if not downright delicious.
>
> Take Livornese with Meatballs, White Beans, and Greens. Couscous came to Livorno with North Jews in the 1270s. It was a Friday-night meal, and the leftovers were served cold the next day on the Sabbath. Goldstein gives the first honest recipe for Carciofi alla Giudia (crispy fried artichokes in the Roman style) yet printed. Not all artichokes are alike, she demonstrates, and then shows you a way

> around the problems no one else ever manages to address to successfully cook this classic.

The above information clearly identifies a cultural understanding of certain Jewish people who were apparently known for eating cold food on the Sabbath. This characteristic, however, goes *beyond* being a cultural identification mark: It reflects a people bent on obedience to Yahweh's Torah.

14. A Jewish Double Standard

Now that I have established the existence of historical *proof* that the ancients understood the mandate of Exodus 16:23 as being a prohibition against the warming of food, we can turn our attention to current Jewish practice and belief here in the 21st century. In a news item published in the *Athens* (Georgia) *Banner-Herald* on September 12, 2001, a Jewish woman openly, albeit unintentionally, admits to a Jewish double standard. On the one hand, she states that Jews aren't allowed to cook on the Sabbath; in her next breath, though, she explains how her meal cooks overnight so it's ready for Sabbath lunch! Observe her comment regarding her recipe for Cholent:

> "This is a standard Jewish dish, because we're not allowed to cook on the Sabbath," said Rusti Klein. "This cooks overnight on a very low flame, and by Saturday when we're ready to eat lunch after services, it's ready."[x]

Ms. Klein clearly explains that her dish cooks overnight in order to be complete in time for her family's return from Sabbath services ... even though she had just explained that Jews are "not allowed to cook on the Sabbath"! One has to wonder if and when the word "cook" ***really*** means "cook"! If you have read the scholarly definition of cook (see chapter 6), you already know cooking involves preparing food with the action of heat, *regardless* of how minimal or how long! Clearly, our definition of the word "cook" does not match the present-day Jewish understanding of the word. Redefining words may succeed in persuading naïve believers, but that technique will *not* impress the Almighty, who changes not.

Just to demonstrate that Ms. Klein is not the only Jew who "doesn't cook" on the Sabbath (even though her food does), I found another article on the Internet in which yet another Jewish woman makes practically the same remark. The following excerpt is taken from the Web site *Jewish Holiday Online*, wherein we are once more given instructions for making Cholent:

> Be sure to allow enough time before starting this recipe. To comply with Jewish law, the Cholent should be at least 2/3 cooked before sundown on Friday, so no attempt is made to somehow aid the cooking on the Sabbath itself. Though there are no techniques here that require great skill or concentration, there are many separate steps. The beans require at least a one-hour soak before proceeding, as noted below, and the simmering time is two hours or more. There is some slight preparation time required as well, so leave another hour for all of those procedures.[xi]

Okay, let's do the math here: If a dish is 2/3 cooked before sundown, but it has to be ***fully cooked*** before it can be eaten, then how much cooking must that dish be subjected to after sundown? This is a question that is so simple it could just as well be posed in an elementary school math book. Any dish that is 2/3 cooked before Sabbath, yet is not removed from the heat, will be subjected to *another* 1/3 amount of cooking time *after* the Sabbath has begun! The woman quoted above stated the obvious fact about what happens *before* the Sabbath begins; what she conveniently left out is the fact that her dish ***is indeed*** subjected to the cooking / preparation process *after* the Sabbath begins.

Furthermore, the woman I quoted earlier (Ms. Klein) has already explained that Jews are "not allowed to cook on the Sabbath." The general understanding promoted by normative Judaism, then, is that no cooking should be done after sunset on Friday. Nevertheless, Ms. Klein has no problem with allowing her dish to "cook overnight" on Friday night and well into Saturday. Finally, another Jewish woman explains that "to comply with Jewish law" the dish can be allowed to complete the final 1/3 stage of its cooking process on the Sabbath! Is it any wonder the expression "double standard" comes to mind?

While it is certainly obvious that the two women quoted above exhibit double standards with regard to the fact that they on the one hand admit to cooking food on the Sabbath while on the other hand explaining they aren't allowed to cook on the Sabbath, the truth is, both women are merely expressing that which they have been taught by their religious superiors. They are living examples of the double standard promoted by Orthodox Judaism. According to Orthodox Judaism, "Cooking is not allowed on the Sabbath."[xii] Yet according to *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, the traditional dish *cholent* "... is placed in a well-heated oven on Friday afternoon and allowed to cook slowly or simmer overnight until ready for the Sabbath meal."[xiii]

I'm persuaded a major portion of the difficulty in resolving this issue lies in coming to grips with Yahweh's intended meaning of the words "cook," "bake," and "boil," which I feel is overlooked not only by Orthodox Judaism, but by all who apply heat to food on the Sabbath. Once we fully accept ***Yahweh's definition*** of these words, whose definition is also found in any good dictionary (i.e., "to prepare food by the action of heat"), it should become obvious that His desire is that we "don't do that" on His Sabbath day!

15. The (Very) Liberal Interpretation of Exodus 16:23

Although the consensus of every scholarly reference I have consulted, combined with the evidence from history, is that Exodus 16:23 specifically signals Yahweh's denunciation of baking or boiling food on the Sabbath, some dissenting individuals cultivate the belief that since this verse does not expressly state, "Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil TODAY ONLY," (i.e., the sixth day as opposed to the Sabbath day), therefore no such interpretation is required. In other words, as they would paraphrase this verse, "Bake and boil what you need for your needs on the sixth day, then keep whatever is left over for baking and boiling the following morning (of the Sabbath)." Hence, in their estimation, baking and boiling is permitted on *any* day of the week, including the Sabbath.

This belief is promoted by Rich Lobert in his online study "Can We Cook on Sabbaths?" Lobert writes, "There are no actual, clear statements in Scripture that say one cannot cook on any Sabbath (day of ceasing)." He adds:

> Notice it doesn't say bake ALL of it so you do not have to bake tomorrow. It says bake what you will and boil (seethe) what you will, and what is left (what you have not cooked) keep for tomorrow. They were being allowed to keep extra for tomorrow, whereas on other days of the week they were not to do that or it would spoil.
>
> > Exod 16:19 (KJS) And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning.
> > 20 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.
>
> So, they were not to gather it on the Sabbath, but get twice as much on the sixth day (kind of like, today; get enough on Friday so that it is not necessary to buy food on the Sabbath); but it really doesn't say that you can't cook it on the Sabbath.

I might possibly be able to go along with Lobert's interpretation if it weren't for the fact that it fails the "two witnesses" test. Whenever a controversy over how to interpret various texts of Scripture arises, I do my best to go with **(a)** what makes the most sense in terms of what the Bible says and **(b)** how the ancients historically understood the passage in question. Those are my "two witnesses." I might add that I also look to see if there are any approved Scriptural examples that might negate the record of history. In this particular situation, as I have repeatedly pointed out in this study, the record of history validates the understanding that all baking/cooking was done *prior to* the Sabbath, never *on* the Sabbath.

I will here reinforce the fact that no authority I'm aware of (*and I've been looking for over 35 years*) has ever supported Rich Lobert's interpretation of how ancient Judaism observed the Sabbath, including the Jews themselves. Especially vocal in expressing the understanding that Yahweh's intent in Exodus 16:23 is that *no food preparation, including cooking, be done on the Sabbath* is the book *A Handbook on Exodus*, page 401, by Noel D. Osborn and Howard A. Hatton:

> **Bake what you will bake** is literally 'what you [plural] will bake, bake,' and **boil what you will boil** is literally 'what you will boil, boil.' This should be understood as a command that allows two options, either **bake** or **boil**. The difference between the two is the same as is understood in English. The manna could evidently be cooked with dry heat or with water. TEV's[xiv] 'Bake today what you want to bake' may weaken the idea of a command. TOT[xv] is clear: 'Cook the food today, either baking it or boiling it.' 'Today' is not in the text, but it is clearly implied, since they were not to work at preparing food on the Sabbath.
> "**All that is left over** refers to 'all that remains uneaten' (TOT), not to what is not cooked. The implication is that all of the manna collected on the sixth day was to be cooked so that it would not spoil and would be ready to eat the next day.

The authors of the above quotation frankly express that which every scholarly work I have read establishes: All cooking in preparation for the Sabbath day was to be carried out on the sixth day of the week.

Exodus 16:23 Complements Exodus 16:5

Earlier I mentioned that even Judaism recognizes the proper interpretation of Exodus 16:23 as including the understanding that all cooking required in preparation for Sabbath meals must be completed on the sixth day of the week. In spite of their present-day customs, Jews have always recognized and understood the prohibition against preparing food on the Sabbath. Note the following, as taken from page 387 of the Jewish book *The Chumash*, Rabbi Nosson Scherman and Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz:

> **23. אֶשׁר־תֹּאפוּ אֹפוּ** – *Bake what you wish to bake. Rashi*, as understood by *Ramban*, explains the verse as follows: Moses said that since it is forbidden to cook and bake on the Sabbath, the people must make any necessary preparations on Friday. By saying that they should set aside *whatever is left over*—and not specifying that a complete *omer* must be left for the Sabbath—Moses implied that they could feast as much as they wished on Friday, and that the leftovers would be blessed, so that they would be satisfied even with less than an *omer*. Although they had expressly been permitted to leave manna overnight on the Sabbath, they would not eat it until Moses instructed them to; apparently they thought it might be permitted to eat it only on the day it was gathered.

This Jewish publication and reference clearly establishes their long-recognized teaching that cooking, baking and boiling have always been forbidden on the Sabbath. *The Chumash*, by the way, is a Jewish compilation of commentaries on the five books of the Torah dating back to the Middle Ages. Rashi, the rabbi cited above, lived from 1040 to 1105 CE.

This same understanding is also summarized in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, page 598, where we read:

> From the account of the prohibition against gathering the manna on the Sabbath, it appears that cooking and baking were understood to be included under the heading of work (*ib.* xvi. 22-27).

As clearly presented above, Judaism has always understood Exodus 16:23 as representing Yahweh's prohibition against any food preparation on His Sabbath day. Regardless of how "fun" or otherwise enjoyable it may be to bake and roast on Shabbat (as some have actually explained it to me), Yahweh's Word presents it as "work." The authorities all agree with regard to Yahweh's directive in Exodus 16:23, as expressed through His servant Moses: **Do no food preparation on the Sabbath day**.

Please keep in mind that perhaps the most significant focus of the Sabbath, as presented in Exodus chapter 16, is the dual issue of food gathering *and* preparation. This, in fact, was the test that Yahweh gave the Israelites when He reinstituted Sabbath observance (Exodus 16:4). As I previously covered in this study, Yahweh *tested* Israel to see whether or not they would walk in His law. In giving the details about this test, Yahweh stated, "It shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily" (Ex. 16:5). When did Yahweh instruct His people to prepare their double portion of manna? Was it on the sixth day? The seventh day? *Both* days? Clearly, Rich Lobert, in his "Can We Cook on Sabbaths?" article, believes the manna could be prepared on *both* days. Based on how Exodus 16:23 *complements* Exodus 16:5, I'm persuaded the answer is quite obvious: *The double portion was to be prepared on the sixth day* ***only***! "Preparing that which they bring in" on the sixth day cannot rightly be construed as meaning "preparing *a portion of* that which they bring in" or "preparing *half of* that which they bring in." The correct understanding is that they were instructed to prepare *all of it* on the sixth day so that *no preparation* was needed on the seventh day.

The Literal Interpretation of Exodus 16:23

Since I have already demonstrated that warming up food is a form of food preparation, this effectively proves that Yahweh does not sanction warming up food on the Sabbath. In fact, this point is brought out even more clearly in Exodus 16:23. Although we have previously examined this verse (chapter 6), let's take another look at it:

> [23]And he said unto them, This is *that* which Yahweh hath said, Tomorrow *is* the rest of the holy sabbath unto Yahweh: bake *that* which ye will bake *today*, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.

As plainly instructed in the above verse (in conjunction with the instructions given in verse five), the Israelites were to prepare everything on the sixth day; they were to bake and seethe, and whatever was left over was to be kept until the morning. As they later discovered, to their surprise, this manna that they kept overnight did not breed worms, unlike the manna kept over on the other nights of the week. The main thing to remember here, though, is the fact that the manna that was kept overnight had been prepared (baked, seethed, etc.) on the *sixth* day of the week.

Furthermore, if we carefully examine the meanings of the Hebrew words "bake" (*aw-faw*) and "seethe" (*bashal*), we will notice that the Hebrew word *aw-faw* literally means "to bake," which in turn means "to apply heat to any object." This means it could be properly translated as "warm up" (food). The Hebrew word *bashal* literally means "to be done in cooking." It cannot be limited to boiling, as might be indicated by some Bible translations, for in 2 Samuel 13:8 we read that Tamar baked (*bashal)*

cakes for her brother Amnon, who was feigning an illness. Certainly we would not be expected to believe that Tamar *boiled* the cakes, yet it is this same Hebrew word that is employed in Exodus 16:23.

If both the Hebrew *aw-faw* and *bashal* can be properly translated "bake," then why do they appear together in Exodus 16:23? The solution is this: *Aw-faw* means "bake" as in "apply *any* heat to an object"; *bashal* means "bake" as in "*completely* cook" an item. Moses made it clear in Exodus 16:23 that Yahweh's people were to do all their "warming up" (*aw-faw*) and their "complete cooking" (*bashal*) in advance of the Sabbath. A common Hebrew linguistic device is to minimize a first clause in order to emphasize the second one. The command to "apply any heat at all" and "completely cook" on the sixth day serves as a classic example of this device.

16. The Spirit of the Sabbath: Yahweh's Intention

As we seek to harmonize ***our will*** with the will of Yahweh, we need to prioritize the importance of considering the spirit in which the Sabbath was and ***is*** intended to be observed. What does Yahweh ***mean*** when He says, "On the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in..."? Did He inspire this to be written with the understanding that He wants us to work *extra hard* on the sixth day of the week, ***or*** could it be that He wants us to take it *extra easy* on His Sabbath day? Those Israelites were to bring in ***twice as much manna*** on the sixth day of the week as they did on the other days. What were they told to do with it on that same day? ***PREPARE IT!*** On which day of the week were they to do this? The ***SIXTH DAY***, not the seventh!

Yeshua taught that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:12). He *did not* teach that it is lawful to do as we please on that day!

Yahweh's clear intention is for us to do ***all*** of our food preparation the day *before* the Sabbath, so that we may conduct ourselves properly on the seventh day, focusing on those things that best reflect His purpose in designing it for us: resting, worshipping, and fellowshipping. We need to take Yahweh at His Word if we claim to use His Word as our instruction manual, and we simply cannot go wrong by doing what He says. When He directed us to prepare on the sixth day, to bake and seethe on the sixth day, did He intend for us to think that, "Well, it's okay if we just warm up our food or drink on the Sabbath"? No, the ***spirit*** of His command is for us to refrain from ***all*** forms of food preparation on the Sabbath, most notably that of applying heat to food. Without getting into specifics, let it suffice to say that one need not apply heat to a food item in order to prepare it! If we truly want a sensible "rule of thumb" to go by with regard to food preparation on the Sabbath, the principle I quoted earlier from Alfred Edersheim on page 181 of his book *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services* is a tough one to argue against: "...no work was allowed [on the Sabbath] which might have been done on any other day." And naturally, this rule has the support of Scripture: "...thou shalt not do ANY work, ..."

Some would have us believe that Yeshua "lightened the load" of the Sabbath, verbally attacking those who were overly strict in its observance and opening the door for all manner of work to be performed on that day. Yet Yeshua never once told the Pharisees, "Ye are too strict in your manner of observing the Sabbath!" Instead, He told them, "Ye ... have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel!" (Matthew 23:23-24). Obviously, the Pharisees were concentrating on matters of the law that ***they*** felt were important, but leaving out the rest! Yeshua didn't lambaste the Pharisees for any overly strict interpretations that they may have extrapolated from Yahweh's law; instead He focused on their **TRADITIONS** which were ADDED to Yahweh's law! In Matthew 15:9, He summed up the Pharisees' undoing when He said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the COMMANDMENTS OF MEN." Notice that these were ***NOT*** the commandments of *Yahweh* that they were teaching! They were teaching the commandments of *men*, which led to a vain form of worship. What type of worship would you call it when the commandments of ***YAHWEH*** are being taught? [Answer: **Pure** worship]

Yeshua taught that it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:12); He did ***not*** teach that it is lawful to do as we please on that day! It is ***our responsibility*** to diligently strive to ensure that our thoughts and actions are pleasing to our Creator.

It is also our responsibility to diligently teach our children of the blessings that we can reap by seeking out and doing Yahweh's will, whether it be for how we live during the first five days of the week, the sixth day, or the seventh day. When we use the sixth day to **prepare** for the Sabbath, we are effectively setting ourselves up for success! Our Sabbath will be more restful and the spirit of worship will be more prevalent! If Yahweh truly sanctions food preparation on the Sabbath, He would have so stated. Since He did not, we simply cannot go wrong by abstaining from all forms of food preparation on that day. We can't go wrong if we make certain that we do things ***exactly*** as Yahweh says, as He tells us to do in Deuteronomy 5:32-33:

> 32 Ye shall observe to do therefore as Yahweh your Mighty One hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left!
> 33 Ye shall walk in all the ways which Yahweh your Mighty One hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.

As this passage reveals, we need to be very careful that we be found living in accordance with Yahweh's will. We should also bear in mind that there are *no* approved examples in Scripture of righteous believers cooking or otherwise applying heat to their food on Shabbat. Did they know something that today's modern professing Sabbathkeepers don't? We need to be cautious with our approach to interpreting Yahweh's Word; otherwise, we only demonstrate how lightly we take His Word. Yahweh has given us some rules to live by. We can either choose to *abide* by them or *ignore* them by forcing an interpretation that isn't there. Will He mind that much if we choose the latter? Notice the counsel of the Apostle Paul, as found in Ephesians 5:17:

> Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of Yahweh is.

What is Yahweh's will for us regarding Sabbath observance? Is it pleasing in His sight for us to prepare food on that day? It is our responsibility to discern what His will is, and then to ***live accordingly***.

17. Does it Really Matter?

Some may ask, "Does it really matter ***how*** we observe the Sabbath, so long as we set that day aside for worship, rest, and fellowship?" Or maybe they believe the instructions pertaining to food preparation on the Sabbath ceased at the same time that the manna ceased—when the children of Israel entered into the Promised Land. They may refer you to Mark 2:27, where Yeshua says, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Thus, as they may abruptly conclude, so long as you attend a weekly Sabbath worship service, then whatever else you may choose to do on that day is not governed by the precepts of the fourth commandment. We must be careful, however, not to overlook Yeshua's ***reason*** for uttering that statement in Mark chapter two.

You see, the Pharisees had just criticized Yeshua's disciples for plucking grain from a field on the Sabbath. In response to their criticism, Yeshua reminded them of how King David and his men, when they were hungry, entered into the Temple and ate the shewbread, which was only lawful for the priests to eat. In other words, as Yeshua pointed out, ***human need superseded a law of Yahweh***. King David did not make a habit of eating the temple shewbread, but in an isolated incident in which he and his men were starved, they did so. In the same way, Yeshua's disciples, on that Sabbath day of long ago, plucked grain, *not* because they were intent on gathering or scrounging for food on the Sabbath, but to satisfy a human need.

Yeshua did not deny that His disciples were doing "that which is unlawful on the Sabbath"! We can be certain, however, that He did not encourage His disciples to make a habit of plucking ears of grain on the Sabbath. Such an act was certainly the ***exception***, and not the norm, just as was the example of King David and his men.

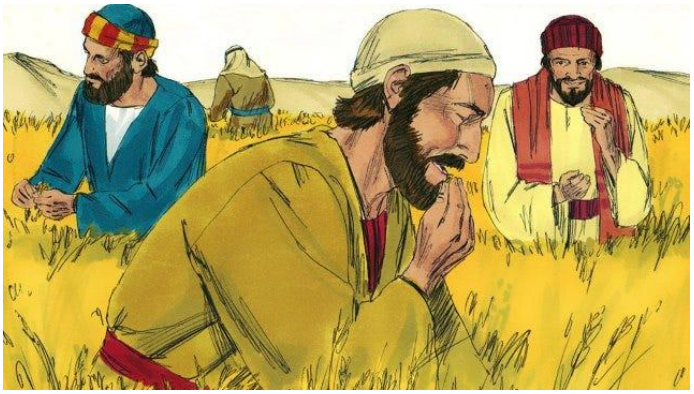
This understanding of the events surrounding Yeshua's encounter with the Pharisees is shared by the authors of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Volume 8, pages 637-638, where we read the following notation:

> **25-26** Jesus meets the accusation of the Pharisees with a counterquestion (v. 25). The incident he refers to is recorded in I Samuel 21:1-6. David and his companions were hungry and ate the consecrated bread—the twelve loaves baked of fine flour, arranged in two rows or piles on the table in the Holy Place. Fresh loaves were brought into the sanctuary each Sabbath to replace the old ones that were then eaten by the priests (cf. Exod 25:30; 35:13; 39:36; Lev 24:5-9; cf. Jos. Antiq. III, 255-56, [x.7]). Although the action of David was contrary to the law, he was not condemned for it. Jesus does not claim that the Sabbath law has not been technically broken but that such violations under certain conditions are warranted. 'Human need is a higher law than religious ritualism' (Earle, p. 49).

Again, many believers use Yeshua's comments in Mark chapter two as a justification/excuse for routinely violating Yahweh's law. As the author of the above notation points out, this was not Yeshua's intent, nor was it the intent of Mark when he penned the words. If Yeshua's disciples had been innocent of breaking the law, He would have plainly enlightened the Pharisees regarding their erroneous conclusion. Instead, He provided them the example of King David, and of how he was not condemned for breaking a law out of human need.

Upon reading the account of the giving of the manna in Exodus 16:26-30, we learn that Yahweh forbade the children of Israel from gathering *or even searching* for manna on the Sabbath. In fact, there was ***no manna*** to be found outside that day! Any Israelite wishing to go outside to find a meal on the Sabbath would have been sorely disappointed! It therefore stands to reason that Yeshua's disciples should have done their "plucking" the day ***before*** the Sabbath. Nevertheless, we do not know the circumstances involved here, and for whatever reason, Yeshua's disciples were hungry, and the only food in sight was in a grain field. Yeshua did not deny that His disciples were doing "that which is unlawful on the Sabbath," but human need, as He so vividly illustrated, outweighs the precepts of a law.

There are those who attempt to point out that Yeshua's disciples were ***not*** violating any laws in plucking and eating the grain on the Sabbath, as the law, in their opinion, only forbids "gathering" on the Sabbath. However, technically speaking, "plucking" *is* a form of gathering.[xvi] If there was truly nothing wrong with "plucking," then Yeshua had a perfect opportunity to point this out to the Pharisees on that Sabbath day of long ago. But instead of defending His disciples from the accusation of lawbreaking, He chose to provide the Pharisees an example of how the "man after Yahweh's own heart" ***also*** broke a law out of human need and was not punished for doing so. It was clearly a violation of the law for His disciples to be found plucking and eating the grain on the Sabbath, and again, Yeshua did not deny that His disciples were doing "that which is unlawful on the Sabbath"! We can be certain, however, that He did not encourage His disciples to make a ***habit*** of plucking grain on the Sabbath. Such an act was certainly the ***exception***, and not the norm, just as was the example of King David and his men.



We can therefore reasonably conclude that when Yeshua defended that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, He was not issuing a license to do as we please on that day, but rather issuing a declaration of how Yahweh understands that occasionally circumstances arise that require bending the rules a little. So long as such circumstances do not evolve into habits, our actions are not condemned by Yahweh.

Personally-speaking, I have a very difficult time believing there is ever a true "human need" for warm or hot food, regardless of which day of the week such a "need" is experienced.

Yeshua and His disciples were under the constant surveillance of the Jews, and as the incident of His disciples plucking grain on the Sabbath implies, the Jews were intent on catching them doing something wrong, such as violating the precepts of the Fourth Commandment. As we know, Yeshua was without sin. Just as all eyes were upon Him and His disciples, in the same way, ***we***, as servants of Yahweh, can expect to be scrutinized for every move ***we*** make. We are like bugs in a jar: People are going to be "eyeballing" us! They will either look at us and see obedient servants of Yahweh, or they will see us just going through the motions. If they catch us doing anything contrary to the clear instructions in Yahweh's Word, whether it be in ignorance or in actual defiance of Yahweh's will, the results can be ***devastating***. For an unbeliever to witness a believer breaking the Sabbath could result in

that person judging ***all*** believers in Yahweh as hypocrites, and thus deciding to **never** serve Yahweh. It is likewise possible that an individual who is spiritually weak might say, "Well, if ***this*** guy does ***that*** on the Sabbath, then it must be okay if ***I*** do it also!"—without investigating the matter first. The only problem is, if it is ***not*** okay, then we have just contributed to someone's sin. Therefore, it is very important that we set righteous examples in everything we do, *including* the observance of the Sabbath day.

One final note on this topic: When the Pharisees questioned Yeshua's disciples' Sabbath behavior by asking, "Why do your disciples do that which is not lawful on the Sabbath day?", upon which "law" were they basing their inquiry? The only law ever given that forbade going out to search for food on the Sabbath is found in the same account that I have addressed so often in this study: the account of the giving of the manna. Thus, the Pharisees and Yeshua, ***together***, recognized that the account of the manna in the wilderness was not an isolated test aimed at a certain generation of Israelites. It is a test of obedience that will endure until Yahweh's people celebrate eternal life in the New Jerusalem!

18. Other Scriptures Considered: Kindling a Fire on the Sabbath

Earlier, we read excerpts from modern-day Jewish writings in which they admit that certain Jews in antiquity did not recognize the validity of the Oral Traditions as found in the Talmud. According to the authors of those articles, these "rebel Jews" (the Karaites) cite Exodus 35:3 in support of their stand against keeping food warm on the Sabbath. If this is true ... if certain Jews explain their position against keeping food warm on the Sabbath by citing Exodus 35:3, then I am inclined to express disagreement with their proof text. In fact, I do not consider Exodus 35:3 as even being relevant to this topic! Please allow me to explain why I believe as I do:

We are told in Exodus 35:3 that we are not to *kindle* a fire on the Sabbath day. This verse has obviously been used by some to justify their rationale for not cooking or even keeping their food warm on the Sabbath. We have already seen that Yahweh does not sanction cooking food on His Sabbath day on the basis of such passages as Exodus 16:5; 23, but it is *not* justifiable to cite Exodus 35:3 as a proof text discouraging the cooking of food on the weekly Sabbath. As we explore why not, let's begin by reading Exodus 35:2-3:

> 2 Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a Sabbath of rest to Yahweh: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death.
> 3 **Ye shall kindle no fire** throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day.

Once we learn what the word "kindle" means, we can understand that it is not wrong to have a fire burning on the Sabbath; instead, we are commanded not to start a fire on that day.

As mandated in Exodus 35:3, no fires are to be kindled "throughout your habitations" on the Sabbath. It should be obvious from the word "habitations" that at the very least, Yahweh forbids the kindling of fires in an individual's dwelling on the Sabbath. Some mistake the word "kindle" to mean "to have a fire." However, this word "kindle" is word #1197 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* (**בער**). It is pronounced "baw-ar′" and literally means "to light a fire," or "to set on fire," ***not*** "to have a fire." This definition is supported by *The New Grolier Webster International Dictionary of the English Language,* Volume I, where "kindle" is defined as "To set on fire; to light; to inflame; to take fire; to begin burning; to become aglow." In Leviticus 6:13 we read of a fire that was to continually *burn* on the Sabbath, yet it certainly was ***not*** kindled on the Sabbath.

With all this in mind, we can understand that it is not wrong to have a fire burning on the Sabbath; instead, we are commanded not to ***start*** a fire on that day. Therefore, despite the fact that I have already shown what I feel is conclusive evidence that Yahweh prohibits food preparation on the weekly Sabbath, I do not consider Exodus 35:3 to be a verse that serves to further substantiate our conclusion. There is nothing wrong with having a fire to continuously burn before and during the Sabbath, but that doesn't mean we are permitted to use that fire to prepare a meal on the Sabbath day!

19. Conclusion

In this study I have shown Scriptural evidence bearing out the fact that Yahweh expects us to fully prepare for His Sabbath day, and applying heat to food is inclusive of preparing it. Additionally, historical evidence confirms that those who faithfully obeyed Yahweh's laws prepared their meals before the Sabbath began, not to mention the Temple priesthood that consistently prepared the shewbread ***before*** sundown on Friday. I have even researched Hebrew words to further confirm their original, intended meanings, which in turn further confirms the evidence that, indeed, Yahweh expects His children to prepare all food *prior* to the start of His weekly Sabbath day. Finally, I'm unable to find any approved Scriptural examples of believers who applied heat to their food. Only in recent modern times have various groups arisen that sanction warming up or cooking food on Shabbat.

Those of us familiar with the fourth commandment know that it begins with the words, "***Remember*** the Sabbath day ...." **Remember**? Remember *what*? And just as importantly, remember *how*, as in how it's to be observed.

The commandment to not work on the weekly Sabbath is found in Exodus 20, just four short chapters following the incident pertaining to the giving/preparing of the manna in the wilderness. In Exodus 16:4, Yahweh plainly expressed that He was about to rain down "bread from heaven" in order to ***test*** the children of Israel, "... that I may ***prove them***, whether they will walk in My law, or no." The question is, "What was the test?"

What, indeed, ***was*** that test? It was two-fold: **1)** It was to see if they would consume all the manna they gathered on that same day (except the sixth day), not leaving any till morning (Ex. 16:19). **2)** It was to see if they would honor Yahweh's Sabbath day by not gathering or preparing their food on that day. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, page 402, makes it clear that Yahweh's "test" was connected to His Sabbath day:

> God would graciously answer the Israelites' grumbling by raining down on them 'bread from heaven.' But there was to be a 'test' to see whether Israel would obey and trust God by faith.
> Already prior to the giving of the Ten Commandments, the seventh day was to be set apart to the Lord because of its establishment in the Creation ordinances in Genesis 2:2-3. On the sixth day, the people were to gather twice the daily amount (v. 5). It was not to be left or eaten in the form they gathered it; instead, it was to be prepared by milling and baking (cf. Num 11:8).

Elsewhere, this same commentary (page 403) establishes that this "milling and baking" preparation took place, *not* on the Sabbath, but on the sixth day of the week:

> The seventh day was to be a 'day of' cessation or 'rest' (v. 23); therefore food preparations for the morrow were to be made on the sixth day.

This, then, was part of Yahweh's "test": That His people prepare all their food *in advance of* the Sabbath. Did Israel pass Yahweh's "test"? Sadly, the answer is no. Later, when the ten commandments were given, Yahweh said, "***Remember the Sabbath day ....***" He enjoined them to remember what He had just taught them with regard to the special sanctity of the seventh day! Those

of us who understand that the ten commandments are still in effect must similarly understand what Yahweh means when He tells us to "remember." It is not only a call for us to memorialize His creative acts and imitate His Sabbath rest, but it is ***also*** a directive for us to learn the lesson He gave to His people in the wilderness, a lesson involving *complete* rest, ***not*** coming up with our own definitions of "rest." Many, like those wandering in the wilderness, ignore Yahweh's call for us to "remember." It is up to us to decide whether or not we will heed that call.

I understand that many disagree with my conclusion. Not everyone agrees that we should even ***observe*** the Sabbath, let alone be prepared for it. How should we respond to those who do not see things our way? The easy way is to ridicule and belittle the other guy's beliefs. That is how many react to such disagreements. Is this how *Yahweh* would have us to react? Well, in I Peter 3:15-17, we are told to always be ready to answer anyone who questions our beliefs, but to do so with "meekness and reverence," ***not*** with bitterness and ridicule, looking for opportunities to slam their views. Too often we are confronted with the "Either see things my way or be deceived" mentality. But Paul tells us to, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Romans 12:18). In Galatians 6:1, moreover, Paul admonishes the believers that if they catch someone in a "fault," to restore that person ***in a spirit of meekness***, not in a spirit of condemnation. This having been mentioned, I feel the need to stress that this study is not designed or intended to publicly scorn anyone who practices food preparation on the Sabbath, for if it is a sin, then certainly the authors of this article are no less sinners than those who read it (Romans 3:23). "We're in this together," as the expression goes. Hopefully, we're ***all*** striving to please the Heavenly Father, so if this article serves to broaden the understanding of others, and especially if it serves to deepen our commitment to serve our Creator, I will have accomplished my goal, for we must always remember that we are ***all*** children of the Creator of the universe! ***He*** is our Father, and ***He*** is the One whom we must serve. May Yahweh be magnified in our lives, and may we always rejoice in the hope that He has given us through His Son Yeshua the Messiah.

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Scriptural evidence + Historical evidence = SOLID EVIDENCE!

End Notes

[i] From *The New Grolier Webster International Dictionary of the English Language*, Volume 1, Grolier Incorporated, New York, NY, 1972, item "cook," p. 224.

[ii] From *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, by Merrill F. Unger, R. K. Harrison, Editor, Moody Press, Chicago, IL, 1988, item "Manna," p. 813. The exact wording is as follows: "It was prepared for food by grinding and baking, it tasted like wafers made with honey, equally agreeable to all palates."

[iii] This information was taken from the article "Microwave Ovens: Questions & Answers" (Basic Microwave Oven Information, Safety Issues and Principles of Operation), from the following Web address: http://www.gallawa.com/microtech/microwaveQA.html, © 1997-2000 by J. Carlton Gallawa . All Rights Reserved Worldwide; Last updated 1/30/2000.

[iv] From the booklet *The Sabbath: A Memorial and Promise*, March 1984, page 42. I prefer to keep the name of the organization responsible for publishing the booklet anonymous.

[v] This excerpt was taken from "Remember the Day of Shabbat To Keep it Holy," at the following Web address: http://www.ou.org/chagim/shabbat/remember.htm.

[vi] From *Everyman's Talmud*, by A. Cohen, Schocken Books, New York, NY, 1975 (orig. pub. in 1949), page 196. Numerous other talmudic superstitions are cited, such as the following: "If one wants to know whether he will live out the year or not, let him light a lamp during the ten days between the New Year and the Day of Atonement in a room where there is no draught. Should the light continue to burn (as long as there is oil in the lamp), he will live through the year."

[vii] "Cholent," according to the article, is "Traditionally, a stew made of beans, potatoes, onions, and kasha (groats); it may also include pieces of meat, chicken, hot dogs, and anything else you may want to throw in."

[viii] This statement is contested by the Karaites, who claim it was the *Pharisees* (or "Rabbanites") who created the separation by requiring adherence to their "Oral Tradition" as published in the 6th century CE. According to William Harris Rule in *History of the Karaite Jews*, p. 79, "So far as I can ascertain, the name of Karaite does not yet occur in history, but first comes to view about the middle of the eighth century, in connection with the Chozars, a rude but powerful nation north of the Caucasus, among whom the Karaite Jews must have been for a long time previously well known." Rule elsewhere refutes the tradition that the Karaites were founded by the Davidite Anan (c. 760 CE).

[ix] The article "Cholent: A Historical Perspective" by Rabbi Yisrael Rutman was found at the following Web address: http://www.jewishworldreview.com/0301/cholent.asp

[x] This excerpt was taken from a news item entitled "Culinary homage to heritage: Jewish community getting ready for High Holy Days," by Marci Fierman. It was taken from the following Web address: http://www.onlineathens.com/stories/091201/foo_0912010017.shtml.

[xi] From *Jewish Holiday Online* article "Delicious Memories," by Judith Segal, as taken from her 1999 book *The Kosher Gourmet*. Her article can be accessed at the following URL: http://www.jewish-holiday.com/cholentrecipes.html.

[xii] Quoted from *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, Editors in Chief R. J. Zwi Werblowsky and Geoffrey Wigoder, p. 257, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1997.

[xiii] Quoted from *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Volume 6, item "Food," p. 1,422, Encyclopaedia Judaica Jerusalem, The MacMillan Company, Keter Publishing House Ltd., Jerusalem, Israel, 1971.

[xiv] TEV is the abbreviation of *Today's English Version*.

[xv] TOT is the abbreviation of *Translator's Old Testament*.

[xvi] This comes from the note on Mark 2:24 as found in The NIV Study Bible, 1985, by The Zondervan Corporation: "According to Jewish tradition (in the Mishnah), harvesting, (which is what Jesus' disciples technically were doing) was forbidden on the Sabbath. See Ex 34:21."