

7th Day Rest E4 Final

Sacred Time & The Feast of Flight

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Jon: On page one of the Bible God creates. He creates in six days, and on the seventh day, He stops, and He enters His creation like a king entering his throne room to rest and rule. God does this to rest and rule with humanity. This is seventh-day rest, the ideal, the thing God created but was lost, the thing we still hope for. And so to remember, seventh-day rest and to anticipate it coming again, God told Israel to stop on the seventh-day and rest from work. In a way, we are mimicking the way God created the cosmos.

Now we want to take another step forward and look at another way God wants Israel to celebrate rest. There are seven sacred annual feasts that are built into the calendar year, and the role of the sun, moon, and stars on the fourth day of creation is to mark those.

Tim: The whole symbolic ritual calendar of Israel that you'll meet in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy is already baked into creation in the first, fourth and seventh days of Genesis 1. Sacred time.

Jon: Sacred time. Life shouldn't be just one day bleeding into the next. Life shouldn't be a long, grudging march of endless toil. We're meant for so much more. And to help us remember that God gave Israel these feasts.

Tim: There is no sacred calendar rhythm more influential than the one that begins Israel's sacred calendar year, which is Passover.

Jon: Today on the show, we're going to discuss one of the most famous stories in the Bible, how an oppressed people toiling as slaves to an ancient empire were miraculously liberated and brought to a land of rest. And the Passover is a feast to remember that story.

Tim: The liberation from Egypt is a cosmic event. That's why it's using the cosmic language of Genesis 1 to tell the story. This event makes now the month where this happens to be the beginning month of Israel's ritual calendar.

Jon: I'm Jon Collins. This is The Bible Project podcast. Thanks for joining us. Here we go.

Good morning, Tim.

Tim: Good morning, Jon. There was evening and there was morning.

Jon: It's morning again.

Tim: It's a new day.

Jon: A new day. Coffee still kicking in?

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- Tim: Yeah. We're going to keep exploring the theme of the seventh-day in the storyline of the Bible.
- Jon: The complete day.
- Tim: Yeah, the complete day.
- Jon: The day of completeness.
- Tim: Yes.
- Jon: Summary. Give me a little where we have been.
- Tim: Page 1 of the Bible begins with a seven-word sentence that opens up on to a seven-day literary design. And then the seventh-day culminates with three lines of seven words that are all about the seventh-day.
- Jon: There's something seven.
- Tim: Sevens are woven into every part of Genesis 1, which is a literary way of communicating the core theme. That the seventh-day is the day of completion, perfection, wholeness, which is associated with the number seven in many Semitic languages and ancient cultures.
- Jon: Now, you've stayed away from the word "perfection" before.
- Tim: Oh, yeah. I might want to retract that. I'll take another sip of coffee. I'll take that edge off. That's right. You're right. "Perfection" is the English word loaded with things we don't want. Completion. Whole or complete. Which is, there's a what linguists call a homonym.
- Jon: Homonym.
- Tim: Oh, we're just talking about a homonym yesterday. Oh, tear.
- Jon: The word ruin?
- Tim: No, tear.
- Jon: Oh, to tear?
- Tim: The English letters T-E-A-R. They can spell tear.
- Jon: Like comes out of your eye ducts.
- Tim: It can also spell the word "tear" where you rip something. But then that second word "tear" can mean different things.
- Jon: Oh, my goodness.

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- Tim: So you can tear a piece of paper. But then she was asking me- she wanted to use the phrase - she was texting a friend - she wanted to say "I've been on a tear recently doing a house project."
- Jon: Like a streak?
- Tim: Yes. I've been on a tear.
- Jon: That's a very modern idiom.
- Tim: I think so. Maybe you're interested?
- Jon: Yeah, but we should move on.
- Tim: The point is, is even there the same word can mean completely different things once you put it into a figure of speech. So you have a homonym T-E-A-R, that can mean tear or tear, and then tear can have more Multiple distinct meanings based on figures of speech. In the same way, the word "seven" in Hebrew, sheva is spelled with the same letters as the verb "saba," which means "to be complete or full."
- Jon: So they look identical on the page?
- Tim: Correct? Yeah, they look similar-ish, depending on word formation. That homonym wordplay gets activated as we're going to see actually in a story we're going to look at in this conversation, "The story of the manner in the wilderness."
- Jon: And that's different than ruakh can mean spirit, breath, wind?
- Tim: Whoa, yeah. That's one word that has different nuances of meaning heading on the context.
- Jon: This is the same spelling of a word that actually is two different words. Like tear or tear?
- Tim: Yeah. One term for it that's familiar is wordplay. But as a friend of mine, another fellow Hebrew Bible nerd has helped me see for the biblical authors this is anything but play. For them, it's these wordplays are doing theological connecting and work. The technical term is paronomasia.
- Jon: Wow. It sounds like a medical condition.
- Tim: Which means using words that have similar letters to connect and link ideas.
- Jon: Remind me again, though, because you said word formation. I'm just not very familiar with Hebrew.

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Tim: Oh, yeah.

Jon: You don't see vowels?

Tim: In the oldest form of Hebrew writing, yeah, it's a consonantal language.

Jon: So when you say it's got the same letters, you mean the same consonants?

Tim: The same three consonants. The same consonants. Then Hebrew words are formed off of a three-letter root base. So you can add other letters in the middle at the beginning or at the end of those three routes, and that makes them into verbs or participles, or nouns and this kind of thing. But you always see those three letters in there. The three letters of seven for full or complete are shin or shin - there's an interplay there - bet and ayin. So you'll be in the story of the manor and you'll see the word "he will make you satisfied" or "make you full," and the word on the seventh-day "don't collect any manner." It's the same letters in Hebrew. It's very common.

Even though the full or complete route isn't used in Genesis 1, it's actually giving you the idea of completeness by means of the seven. But that's one of the main meanings is that when something has happened in a period of seven, that's a way of talking about a full or complete reality.

Jon: And God created in six days, and on the seventh day He Shabbat, which is three letters that's also for the word "complete." I was getting confused.

Tim: It's okay. That just means "to cease."

Jon: That means to cease. But how's it connected to that word?

Tim: There's a synonym "nuakh" that also means to stop but particularly "to rest."

Jon: But connected to the complete "saba."

Tim: Oh, well the Shabbat is on the seventh day. That's it. Shabbat is the thing that you do on the seventh day.

Jon: Stop on the seventh-day.

Tim: The seventh-day, the word "seven" is paronomasia with the word "complete."

Jon: I see.

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Tim: So "Shabbat," "seven" and "complete" are all wrapped together on the seventh-day.

Jon: You stop on the seventh day, seven is paronomasia of complete. Got it.

Tim: Genesis 1 is God organizing, forming and filling the cosmos out of a dark night time watery chaos, wasteland into a beautiful garden, overflowing with food that He provides on the sixth day. The implication being on the seventh-day God will fill the world with his presence. He'll Shabbat and nuakh. Nuakh means to settle in. And remember that the Ten Commandments retell Genesis 1. In six days, God made the world and on the seventh-day He nuakhed, therefore observed the Shabbat. Did I say ruakh? I meant nuakh.

You wrap all this together and in Genesis 1 we're meant to see God creating within a complete cycle of time, seven, creating the cosmos as a place for God's presence to fill and to dwell filling it on the seventh-day. That's also the place where humanity has been appointed as God's image and co-rulers. He's provided them food on the sixth day so that on all the days leading forward you have God, these is human images, plenty of food, that on the seventh-day everybody just chills and rules and does the garden work.

Jon: And the idea is the seventh-day has no end. There's no evening and morning.

Tim: Correct. Yes, the formula of there was evening and those morning does not conclude the seventh-day. As Robert Lowery says, "it's as if the sun never sets on the ultimate Sabbath," which is the first Sabbath of Genesis 1.

The second nuance of Sabbath in Genesis 1 is that it's the culmination. God has, so to speak, liberated the cosmos out of darkness and water and chaos, and brought about creation out of the watery darkness into its complete and whole state. And so seventh is the culmination, is the thing we're waiting for. It's all of Genesis 1, is building up to the climactic seven where God and humans rule together and there's just plenty of food. That's the same.

Jon: There's plenty of food but Adam was told to work and serve in the garden. So it's not like you just sit around and there was some, I don't know, other people coming and serving you the food.

Tim: That's right. But the narrative makes the difference between there's work in the Sabbath world, which is a kind of work that's different than the post-exile from Eden work, which is where you have to work the ground until it kills you from the hard labor and the sweat. It says if the Sabbath

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world creation is friendly and works with you and multiplies your labor exponentially versus post-exile from Eden where...

Jon: Where you're just fighting the second law through dynamics.

Tim: As He says to Cain, "The ground will only with difficulty give you its strength." Two kinds of work.

[00:12:30]

Tim: So humans are exiled because of their foolish rebellion - exiled to the land of...

Jon: And now we live outside the seventh-day in a way.

Tim: Yeah, yeah. In terms of completeness or wholeness, what the seventh-day represents is creation complete. And the seventh-day ideal in Genesis 1 is lost, forfeited. And so now we're like, "Oh, we got to get back there. How do we get humans back there to the Sabbath ideal?"

Jon: How do we get back to the Sabbath ideal? That's the question that drives this conversation.

Tim: That's one way of thinking about the biblical story is how do we get humans to exist in creation in the Sabbath world? Or the seventh day. We haven't decided which one we're going to?

Jon: A world of completeness and abundance.

Tim: That's right. Another layer of Genesis 1, there's always more layers, is remember, of the seven days, the first, the middle, and the last day are all about God creating structures of time. The first day is the cycle of day and night. And all of that is designed to give you the categories for when you walk into the tabernacle in Exodus and the temple later. And those are little miniature Edens that will symbolic micro Edens.

Jon: God's temple.

Tim: A tabernacle and temple. Therefore, in the tabernacle and temple, you've got a symbolic tree of life called the menorah, and it's got seven lights on it. And those lights on the menorah are meant to be cared for every evening and morning according to Leviticus 24 and Numbers 8. Also, there's the daily sacrifices and the daily praying of the Shema. That's all by the timing of the first day. The timing of the middle of fourth day is God appoints the sun, moon, and stars to rule over day and night, and they are to mark the Moadim the sacred feasts Those refer to the annual sacred feast. So you've got...

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Jon: When do you know when it's time for the feasts? You look up at the sky and the sun, moon, and stars are going to tell you.

Tim: As we're going to see in this conversation about the Exodus, the ritual calendar starts with Passover, which is immediately followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread which is seven days. Look, this is good. Passover begins in the evening and then you follow it by a seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread. Then after that, you count seven times seven weeks until you get to the next Moadim, which is Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks.

Then the next main feast is the first day of the seventh month Rosh Hashanah. Then the next feast is the 10th day of the seventh month, which is the Day of Atonement. Then the next feast is also in the seventh month, which is the seven day Feast of Tabernacles. In other words, all the feasts referred to in the middle day of Genesis 1 are all in connection with seven-day feasts, and they're all about celebrating God's provision of food or rescue or provision of bread or provision of forgiveness.

Jon: So the ritual calendar year starts with Passover. And when is that?

Tim: Passover?

Jon: When is it in our calendar?

Tim: Our Western calendar it's usually April. April or March depending.

Jon: I see. And then you wait seven times seven weeks, and then you get into...

Tim: The Feast of Weeks.

Jon: The Feast of Weeks. Which is the seventh month?

Tim: It's on the 50th...You wait a cycle of 49 days, seven weeks, and then you get the 50th day.

Jon: And then you're somewhere in...

Tim: Usually late spring, early summer. It's early harvest.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And then the seventh month is usually in the West in the fall. October, November of the western calendar.

Jon: The seventh ritual.

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Tim: The seventh ritual month. We'll talk about this later. But his point is, is the middle of day four in Genesis 1...

Jon: Yeah, it's talking about all the feasts. The Moadim.

Tim: ...it's giving you all the categories for the Moadim, which are the Israel sacred feasts. And all those feasts are span out of the number seven in the calendar. The last day of Genesis 1 gives you the weekly Shabbat, the seventh day, but then also prepares you for every seventh year (the year of release) and then that every seven times seven year, which is the Jubilee. The whole symbolic ritual calendar of Israel that you'll meet in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy is already baked into creation in the first fourth and seventh days of Genesis 1. Sacred time.

Jon: It's baked into the creation account, and it's all anticipating and hoping for new creation.

Tim: That's right. As Israel is in the wilderness and in the promised land, all these ritual times are meant to both make them look backwards to Genesis 1 to see the ideal for which God made creation. We're not in that ideal. So all those feasts become anticipation of future hope of when God will bring about a new creation that is truly a perpetual of seventh-day.

Jon: Maybe I'm jumping the gun on here, but are we supposed to be thinking then in the sense of like we live in the sixth day, and we're waiting for the seventh day in a metaphorical way?

Tim: Yeah. There is yet a more complete seventh day that has not taken place yet. And so if you live by the Israel's calendar, every seventh day is just a little foretaste of that future ultimate seventh day, and then every seven years foretastes every seven times seven years with the Jubilee.

Jon: And every feast.

Tim: And every feast - tabernacles. They're all different ways of remembering our past story that points us forward to our future hope. That's the dynamic of the seventh day.

Jon: Cool.

[00:19:24]

Tim: God's ultimate response to humanity exiled from the seventh day land in Eden is to set in motion a plan to call a new Adam and Eve into existence - Abraham and Sarah. He speaks, remember, a seven-line poem to Abraham, talking about how the blessings of Eden are going to be

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restored to all the nations through him and his family. We just talked about I think one story in Abraham...

Jon: The well.

Tim: Yeah, the story of the well of seven.

Jon: The well of seven, yeah.

Tim: But it's a story of how Abraham has this territorial dispute over wells with a king called Abimelech. Normally, this is what people start killing each other over.

Jon: Water.

Tim: Water.

Jon: Water rights and land rights really.

Tim: Yeah, that's right. Totally. But what Abraham does is offer up seven lambs and says, "Enter into a covenant with me." In that story, the king Abimelech shows up with his army commander named Phicol.

Jon: Oh, yeah, Phicol.

Tim: That's the scene. Like a king approaches you with his general...

Jon: Be intimidated.

Tim: Totally. Abraham's like, "No, let's peace. Let's make a covenant. Here's a gift." He offers him a gift of seven. And they make peace with each other. And the king says, "Oh, God is with you, isn't He?" And they have peace. Abraham can dwell in his land. And what does Abraham do? He goes and sits down by this well of seven and he plants a tree. Then the end of the story is "and he sat under the tree at the well of seven at peace with God and man." And you're like, "Oh, that's a little picture of Eden right there." That's how the Abraham narratives work. That's just one example of many, many in Genesis.

Jon: It's cool. To make that really applicable it's like if you in your life have contention with a neighbor or something...Actually, we have a friend who's building what's called an auxiliary dwelling unit above his garage.

Tim: A little mini house on top of his garage.

Jon: Yeah. And one of his neighbors came over and was bummed because it's like overlooking that guy's backyard. And it was just this contention, like strife. I'm sure if he had a military general he would have brought him

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too. They're making peace about it. Maybe they should plant a tree in commemoration. But it's just that there can be peace in mini Eden.

Tim: Yeah, that's right. This is Sermon on the Mount. It's the kingdom of God. Think of the seventh-day as the kingdom of God coming on Earth as in heaven. And so if Jesus his whole point is it's arrived now. What you thought was only for the future is in the person of Jesus and in the spirit as the broken into the present. It's come backwards in time to invade the present.

The Sermon on the Mount is living as if we behave like we will in the new creation. So you make peace with your enemies, you give them gifts like Abraham did with Abimelech. Instead of fighting over scarce resources, you trust that that well will produce enough water for all of us. And so you give your enemy a gift. This is what Abraham is doing at his best in the future is he's making peace with his neighbors. And when he does, there's food and water enough for everybody. He becomes a blessing to the nations.

Jon: The way you phrase that about the Beatitudes, living as if...How did you phrase that?

Tim: Living in the present world of exiled from Eden but trusting that the seventh-day has invaded the present. The future seventh-day...

Jon: Has come from the future invaded the present.

Tim: Yeah, it's time traveled back to invade...Yeah.

Jon: Isn't that also the point of Sabbath and the feasts is to have that same moment?

Tim: Totally. The whole point of the resting on the seventh-day is you take one day out of your week to inconvenience your life of struggle and survival and toil and pretend...

Jon: Like the seventh day has arrived.

Tim: ...ultimate seventh day has arrived. It's a little foretaste.

Jon: It's play-acting.

Tim: Yeah, it's symbolic behavior. That's what rituals are. They are symbolic behavior. Just like I think for Jesus loving your enemy is treating your enemy in the present like you will treat him in the new creation when there's no reason for you to fight anymore. Don't you think that's the logic?

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- Jon: It is the logic. It's cool. Pragmatically it's kind of the best way to get to that future state.
- Tim: Yes. You end up actually creating it. Not just pretending but you end up tasting it.
- Jon: The play acting becomes real.
- Tim: Becomes reality. It's an alternative script. It's an alternative story. You live by an alternative story, and surprisingly, find that it starts to bring it about.
- Jon: Unless evil is strong enough to stamp it out. Which I think is everyone's fear, right? That's the fear. "Okay, I love my enemy. Or rest. But the problem is if I do that, I'm going to be taking advantage of. Evil will win. Maybe I'll do that every once in a while. I'll hedge my bets a little bit though. Because no one else is going to do it, I mean, consistently. And then I'm going to get the short end of the stick on a personal level and then honest national level."
- Tim: That's right. I mean what else is the cross except Jesus saying, "It's okay if you get taken advantage of and killed? Because of the hope of the resurrection and the ultimate seventh-day, you trust that this isn't the whole story."
- Jon: It's okay to get taken advantage of.
- Tim: It's okay if you get killed.
- Jon: Even killed. Ohh.
- Tim: Actually, it's not okay but you trust that God has the power to bring about new creation maybe even through my loss and suffering and death. If you just watch how the Apostle Paul, for example, or Peter in their letters how they process what it means to live with the crucified and risen Messiah as your master, that's exactly where they go. He says, "Consider your suffering light to the glory that is to be revealed." That's Paul in 2 Corinthians. For our listeners, please don't mistake John and I for people who actually live it. Just because we can talk about it doesn't mean we actually live it. It's very difficult. Like when I think about my life, I don't very often live consistently by that narrative. And maybe that's the whole point of...
- Jon: Is it a spiritual discipline of sorts?
- Tim: I was just going to go there.

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Jon: I mean, it's not one that you find in Foster's book of like, "Don't let yourself be taken advantage of."

Tim: Oh, I see.

Jon: Is that a discipline of like, "I'm going to discipline myself to make peace even though it's scary today?"

Tim: Yeah, that's right. You can consider baby steps are every seven days severely inconveniencing myself to symbolically act out my hope in the future seventh-day completion of creation. You could also say the Jewish and Christian practices of fasting are very similar. I think you symbolically deprive yourself of food as a way of interacting and symbolizing your real situation in the world, which is that your life doesn't depend on your ability to provide for yourself. My life comes as a gift from God. It's another form of inconvenience to symbolize the truth about my existence in the world - just I'm an independent being who lives by God's generosity.

Jon: Those are basic spiritual disciplines.

Tim: Fasting and at least some kind of rhythm of rest - inconvenient rest. I think the idea is through these practices, if I've built into my life the habit of being inconvenienced when I do it to myself, when somebody else wrongs or inconveniences me, it doesn't hurt quite as bad.

Jon: You're used to it. You've built the muscle memory for it.

Tim: That's it. That's right.

Jon: Or when you've practice fasting, and now you're in a situation where you don't have enough, it feels like you might not get enough, you're like, "I know what this feels like. Yeah, I know. I can get through it."

Tim: This is a great conversation by the way. Real-time this is March 2019. We just began the season of Lent, which many Christian and Jewish traditions practice, the 40 days leading up to Resurrection Sunday.

In most traditions, many Christian traditions, it's a season where you symbolically reenact Jesus 40 day testing Israel's 40 year wandering in the wilderness. So you symbolically deprive yourself of something for lots of reasons. It's come to me in lots of things in different traditions. That's another example.

Jon: It's a type of fasting.

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- Tim: It's another type of fasting. And I think the most historic practices are actually some kind of food.
- Jon: It makes sense. I've never done that. The only time I've ever fasted from food was in junior high or something. There was this thing called the 48-hour fast or something. It was just like a youth group type of it and you hang out 48 hours and you just drink smoothies or juice. I think there was a juice. I think it's like the longest I went without eating.
- Jon: There's a guy I know who does like a 40 day fast every year. It's incredible.
- Tim: Yeah, it is. Yeah, it is. I have not had any consistent rhythms of fasting. Which if I were living in the black second century in Asia Minor in Ephesus, or Laodicea who was part of the House Church Network there, it would be unthinkable that I didn't fast. It's the norm. It's for Christians to fast every Thursday, and then to fast during Lent and all these other events.
- Jon: Every Thursday you fast?
- Tim: Every Thursday, yeah. The earliest traditions of Christian fasting go back to...they're mentioned in a Second Century work called the Didakhé, which was a distillation of early Christian catechism. And one of the practices is weekly fasting on Thursday.
- Jon: No, food Thursday. Wow. You know what, man? We can start a new diet craze. The Early Christian diet sell million bucks.
- Tim: This also was from a time period in history where people relate to food in a radically different way than...
- Jon: Than having a fridge full of it.
- Tim: ...modernized Western, where some people, middle-upper class have full fridges and ready access to grocery stores and markets. That's an oddity in human history.
- Jon: Man, you were telling me that story about the winter in the Midwest or something where...
- [crosstalk 00:31:24]
- Tim: Oh, yeah. This is the Little House on the Prairie - A Long winter. We just listened to that again in a car ride recently with the boys.
- Jon: What were they eating?

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- Tim: Well, it's The Long Winter: Little House on the Prairie. They were in South Dakota I think by that point, and it ends up being essentially a seven-month winter, and the trains can't get through. Supply trains are just impossible to move. And so pretty much from like February to April, they're eating rationed bits of brown bread.
- Jon: But they're like putting straw on it or something, right?
- Tim: Oh, no, they're twisting straw for fuel for their fire. They're making straw bricks. Their daily ritual is basically just to huddle around the fire twisting the straw for the next day's fire and Ma making the little bit of bread that they can have twice a day. And they're just buried in their houses. It's so gnarly. Anyway.
- Jon: I don't think anyone in my family is emotionally prepared to ever deal with something like that.
- Tim: No, no. Once again, we're back to it. The rituals of sacred time are about this muscle memory, developing muscle memory to humble us, make us recognize our frailty and...
- Jon: When that happens, when you get to a time when maybe there isn't food or a time when you're being taken advantage of, and it feels like there's not enough and it feels like death is going to win, you have this muscle memory of "I can trust that there's something more powerful than death and I can get through this." Christianity in the Hebrew Scriptures. It's a very optimistic view of the world.
- Tim: Optimistic?
- Jon: Yeah. I mean, to say I can love my enemy, you have to have an incredible amount of optimism.
- Tim: Well, this might just be different meanings of the same word. When I think optimism, I think, "It'll all work out."
- Jon: Yeah, it'll all work out.
- Tim: But that's not the biblical view. The biblical view is this is hell. We've created hell. You're in exile and things are bad. In fact, they're more bad than any of us probably realize. But there's hope.
- Jon: That's what I'm talking about the hope.
- Tim: It's just different definitions. For me, hope is we don't have a prayer except for one who can do what we cannot do. To me, optimism is things will probably work out okay.

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Jon: That's hope.

Tim: Turn that frown upside down.

Jon: What's the difference between that and hope?

Tim: Oh, we made a video about this.

Jon: That's right.

Tim: Hope is about a person. I trust that a person will come through. Optimism is about things will work out okay. I see.

Tim: Things will work out.

Jon: So the word "optimism" for you is about circumstances on their own inertia working out.

Tim: Correct.

Jon: Versus we need someone to come in and make it work.

Tim: Actually the first one...This is a long time ago. There's a theologian, and activist, his name's Cornel West. He's a professor at a school in Princeton? Anyway. He wrote this article in a really popular culture magazine. It was like Rolling Stone or something like that. There's an interview with him and he talked about the difference between optimism and Christian hope. To be honest, that's what gave me that category many years ago. And I thought it was helpful. Because the Biblical story...

Jon: What's his name?

Tim: Cornel West with one w.

Jon: Google knows what's up. I started typing "Cornel West opt" and it finished it for me.

Tim: I mean, he's definitely a...

Jon: Prisoner of Hope is the magazine? No.

Tim: He's a provocative figure definitely.

Jon: Prisoner of Hope. That's a cool term.

Tim: He's a really interesting person. This article was helpful. Optimism versus Christian hope. That optimism is trusting that circumstances will work

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out. History will just inevitably work out okay for everyone. For him, that's just a radical naivety in how things work.

Jon: But hope is a type of optimism. Circumstances workout because...

Tim: Because of the character of this person that I trust. I mean there I guess then becomes semantics. I think the core distinction is helpful though. Especially in the book of Psalms, the word "hope" is attached to the person of Yahweh whose covenant loyalty compels him to rescue creation, because humans and circumstances they follow a very predictable pattern. That's the Genesis 3 pattern throughout the Hebrew Bible.

[00:37:12]

Tim: We've been talking about how rhythms of sacred time are like a form of developing muscle memory in God's people. There is no sacred calendar rhythm more influential than the one that begins Israel's sacred calendar year, which is Passover, which begins on the first month of Israel sacred calendar every year on the 10th day of that month. They are to select a blameless, spotless lamb. That's just a young lamb, like a year old.

Jon: A complete lamb?

Tim: Yeah. They take care of that lamb for four days and then on the 14th day of the month, they slaughter and roast the lamb in the evening. In the evening - at night. The sun sets, you slaughter and roast the lamb, take the blood, put it on the doorframes of the house. That night you eat this big meal at night. And you eat it with your bags packed, coats on, ready to go - acting like you're leaving on a trip. That's the Passover of Yahweh. That's the night that God brings the 10th and final act of judgment on Egypt, which goes all the way back to the beginning of the Exodus narrative with the death of the firstborn.

Pharaoh has been slaughtering the firstborn of Israel, and God has given Pharaoh nine opportunities to humble himself and that every turn Pharaoh has just given the strong middle finger to Yahweh. And so it comes down to it that God visits upon Pharaoh the very thing that Pharaoh visited upon Israel - which is the death of the firstborn. In the middle of the night, the firstborn dies, Pharaoh tells them to leave. And so at night...

Jon: And they're ready.

Tim: And they're ready. They've also been told to prepare a unique kind of bread (unleavened bread). Unleavened bread is bread that you make and

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you don't put yeast into it. Yeast takes hours and hours for it to rise and then you bake. So unleavened bread is bread for the road.

Jon: Road bread.

Tim: You can make it just very quickly. All you have to wait for it to dry. That's flatbread. So you make it because there's no time to waste. So they set out at night, and from that moment that they set out begins a seven-day feast, a seven-day sacred ritual called the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Jon: So it's a feast on the road?

Tim: It's the feast of the flight.

Jon: Feast of the flight.

Tim: I just thought about that right now. Feast of the flight.

Jon: What do you mean just thought of that? It's not what it's called?

Tim: It just came out of my mouth. I've never thought...

Jon: That sounded like an official title.

Tim: I know. But I'm just saying it. There you go. Then for seven days you eat that bread, that feast of flight. Passover, it begins in the evening and goes for us. Then from there evening forward in a seven-day rhythm. And this is the first ritual symbolic feasts of Israel's calendar.

Jon: And there's something about this feast which is like, "Be ready," because in a way it's like this new act of God bringing liberation.

Tim: Liberating them from darkness and death on their way to the Promised Land.

Jon: On their way to the promised land, it's going to happen in an instant. Like it's just going to "be ready."

Tim: We'll take a few moments to drill down into these, but all of the key items that work in Genesis 1 get picked up and developed and inverted or tweaked in the exodus story leading up to the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Jon: Wait, is this why Jesus talks about the blink of an eye in like when the end times come? And he's like, "No one really knows, but in blink of an eye."

Tim: Well, the blink of an eye is Paul in 1 Corinthians 15.

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Jon: Oh, that's Paul, not Jesus.

Tim: Our bodies being transformed into the resurrection body. Yeah, that's it.

Jon: I was just thinking about how this Passover is about to be ready.

Tim: The suddenness.

Jon: The suddenness.

Tim: That's right. And remember, it's the day. This is where the day of the Lord theme begins here. The final of the 10 plagues and the liberation from Egypt through the waters, it's all called in later biblical poetry "the day." Which begins the day of Yahweh theme.

Jon: Because the Day of the Lord comes before the rest?

Tim: Yes, the day of the liberation and judgment on the violence of the nations. That's right. Let's back up and we're going to look at some stuff in the whole shape of the Exodus story to see how it's been designed as a full-on replay and development of Genesis 1.

Jon: Okay.

[00:42:38]

Tim: Let's go to Exodus 1 - thinking big picture. You have Israel, the family of Jacob exiled from the Promised Land down in Egypt.

Jon: That's in Genesis?

Tim: Yeah. Exodus 1 begins with saying the sons of Israel were fruitful and multiplied and filled the land.

Jon: That's Genesis 1 language.

Tim: Totally. That what I would expect the family of Abraham to do because they carry the Sabbath Eden blessing out there among the nations. You remember in Genesis when the nations recognized Abraham as the source of God's blessing, peace and covenant, and water for everybody.

Jon: There's enough.

Tim: There's enough, yeah. Pharaoh is represented as one of the first empire rulers of the nations, who looks at the blessing God has given to the family of Abraham, and he's threatened by it.

Jon: "I can't trust these guys."

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- Tim: What he thinks is these immigrants are multiplying and he sees a threat to national security and the economy. So he enacts a slow genocide of the people through avodah - through working of the ground. It gets translated "slavery" or "labor." It's the same word as Genesis 3. Now it's Pharaoh...So think of Genesis 3. God exiles the people, and they're going to have hard avodah (labor) that kills them on the ground to return to the dust. Here in Exodus...
- Jon: It's Pharaoh driving them to do that.
- Tim: Yeah, Pharaoh's the one who's killing people through avodah in the land of exile, Israelites. Think, there's very big picture here. There's so many things we could do. But that's how it begins. The third attempt of Pharaoh to destroy these people is eventually just start throwing the boys into the waters, the waters of death. So God raises up one of those boys who's casting the waters in a little floating arc with his brothers. And so that becomes Moses. Fast forward, Moses is told to go confront Pharaoh with his brother Aaron and with the staff.
- Jon: The snake staff.
- Tim: And so begins the famous story of the 10 plagues. Well, they called the 10 plagues, but they all begin with 10 acts of God speaking.
- Jon: The 10 words.
- Tim: "And God said to Moses..." That's how they all began. Or "God said to Moses and Aaron" or something. Just like Genesis 1, 10 acts of God speaking.
- Jon: Oh, there's 10 acts of God speaking in Genesis 1?
- Tim: Yeah. Why are there 10?
- Jon: Why are there 10?
- Tim: I mean, you could just say because 10 happened.
- Jon: Why there's 10 in Exodus or why they are 10?
- Tim: What's up with the number 10? Why is that significant? Is there a pattern of 10 acts of divine speech? Well, yeah, on page 1.
- Jon: And page 1, if I can remember, 10 times God speaks.
- Tim: "And God said."

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- Jon: And it happens in the beginning of every day? Or no, at some point of the day?
- Tim: Each day begins and then a couple of days have more active divine speech. There's 10 acts of divine speech. This what's interesting. Then I've got a little chart here. If you track through the 10 plagues when God speaks what the 10 plagues will be, all these hyperlinks to the 10 acts of speech in Genesis. My favorite one is one of the later plagues, which is darkness over the land. Think of the first day. The pre-first day is and darkness was over the surface of the deep and God said, "Yə-hî 'ō-wrn (let there be light).
- Jon: That's one of God's words.
- Tim: That's actually God's first words.
- Jon: It's His first word.
- Tim: They are His first words. In Exodus 10, God says, "Yə-hî h'oshekh (Let there be darkness)," and there was darkness over the land of Egypt. But for the sons of Israel, there was light in all of their dwellings. In other words, God is allowing Egypt to collapse back into darkness and disorder, but providing light for His chosen people.
- Jon: The plagues aren't like uncreation. They're sifting of sorts.
- Tim: In this case, yeah. Well, they're pulling Egypt which is unleashed violence and death into the world; he's allowing them to be decreed. The plagues are a kind of decreation.
- Jon: It is a type of decreation. But not over everything. Over just things that need to be decreed.
- Tim: But for His people who He's going to redeem He provides them with a light. In, let's see, the Nile will swarm with frogs - There will be sharatz. On day five, "let the water creatures sharatz (swarm) with every sheretz (every swarming creature).
- Jon: The water swarmers?
- Tim: Yeah. The plague of the frogs recalls God's power to generate swarmers. In Exodus 10, "the Locust will eat every tree which sprouts for you from the field. The fruit of the tree and all vegetation in the tree and every green thing in the field it will eat." There's all the vocabulary.
- Jon: It's like it's quoting from Genesis 1.

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- Tim: From the sixth day in Genesis. "I've given for you food, all the vegetation from every tree which has the fruit, and every green thing." It's exactly the vocabulary. The point is this is just three examples. You can map through all 10.
- Jon: Wow.
- Tim: The vocabulary of the plagues is all hyperlinked to the days of creation in Genesis 1.
- Jon: Wow. I have never been shown this before.
- Tim: Isn't it awesome? Just think what this is supposed to be doing to your imagination. You're supposed to view the 10 plagues as God uncreating Egypt but providing selective little bits of new creation for the redeemed ones, giving them...
- Jon: It's not like this full uncreation. And I guess in the same way the flood, it's uncreation.
- Tim: Correct. That's right. Just like Israel survives the flood of God's judgment in the Exodus, so Noah and his family. Actually, it's the other way around. As Noah and his family survives the flood of God's judgment. And what is God's judgment? It's to hand creation back over to the chaos of darkness and death.
- Jon: Moses and his people. Moses who has his own ark.
- Tim: Yes, totally. Moses goes through the waters of the ark. And now Moses and all Israel goes through...I mean, they're going to go through the waters also altogether as a people. All the imagery is connected. This is important. The 10 plagues then are taking you on a journey backwards through Genesis 1. If you go back through the 10 acts of divine speech, where did it all begin with that darkness of disorder and nothingness? The 10th plague, all the way back, the 10th plague was the death of the firstborn happening at night. So why does Passover begin at night?
- Jon: Because creation began at night.
- Tim: Yeah. Because the idea is creations begin with God containing the darkness and breaking its power by speaking light into being. In a similar way, he's reducing Egypt back to the Tohu wa-bohu of Genesis 1:2. The 10 plagues bring us back to Genesis 1:2. Then he's going to take one particular people and provide light just for them as they go out.
- Jon: And passes through the waters.

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- Tim: Yeah, they go out. Then think, what happens right after the Passover, Pharaoh says, "Get out of here, everybody," and they flee in the middle of the night. This is when the pillar of fire is introduced that leads them by light through the darkness out into the wilderness. This is in Exodus 13 and 14.
- Jon: Pillar of fire is supposed to remind me of something in creation story?
- Tim: Let there be light. Let there be light. He's reduced Egypt back to wild and waste through the 10 words, but now for Israel, as they go out into the night. He provides them with light.
- Jon: It's interesting we think of day starting in the morning but in Hebrew thought the day begins in the evening.
- Tim: Correct.
- Jon: Which is a very optimistic way to think about the day.
- Tim: Hopeful.
- Jon: Hopeful day. Hopeful. Right?
- Tim: That's right.
- Jon: The day begins when it gets dark. No, that's like, "Why would the day begin there?" It's this hope of like, well, because there will be light.
- Tim: There will be light. Even in the midst of the darkness there will be light.
- Jon: Be ready.
- Tim: Israel flees out into the wilderness, and Pharaoh's army chases them. This is at the end of Exodus 14. And so you get this Genesis 1:1-3 again. Exodus 14:19. "Then the angel of God was traveling in front of Israel's army, it withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of the cloud moved from in front and stood behind them and it came between the armies of Egypt and Israel." Pharaoh just said, "Oh man, we just let our labor force go." So he chases them out in the wilderness at night.
- Jon: He regrets.
- Tim: At night. It's all happening at night. The Israelites flee into the night. And then chapter 14 they hit the coast and then they're trapped. Then here's Pharaoh bearing down on them with his armies. You have waters on one side and you have a human threat on the other side.
- Jon: Darkness and disorder on the other side.

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- Tim: So the pillar of fire and cloud comes and moves in between to block Egypt.
- Jon: Block chaos army.
- Tim: Totally. And then it says, "Throughout the night, the cloud brought darkness to one side (the Egyptians) and light on the other side.
- Jon: It separated day and night.
- Tim: Yes, totally.
- Jon: Oh, my goodness. So that pillar of fire in the nighttime brings darkness on Egypt and light on Israel as they stand before the waters. Moses stretched his hand over the sea. The Lord sent a strong east wind (the ruakh)."
- Jon: Yeah, the Spirit of God came over the waters.
- Tim: And it blew over the waters and it turned the waters into dry land.
- Jon: Oh my gosh. Oh, my goodness.
- Tim: You get it?
- Jon: And we have talked about that specific before being a creation moment but they're all stacking up.
- Tim: Totally. Everything about the exodus story is trying to portray it as an act of new creation. But it's more complex now because some people want to stay in the darkness. Like Egypt and the nation. They don't want to enter God's seventh-day. Their patterns of behavior have shown they don't want to participate in the rest of the Promised Land and the blessing. So God allows them to sink back into darkness and death through the 10 words, but He provides light for the redeemed. Then he does just for this group of people now what He did for creation in Genesis in the first day.
- Jon: Which separates....
- Tim: ...the wind over the waters.
- Jon: Creates dry land.
- Tim: Light. Speaking leads up to dry land.
- Jon: In order to get to Eden, the promised land...

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Tim: It's the next step. We're getting there. The wind blows all night and the waters part and they cross through on dry land, they get through to the other side.

Jon: That's day two in the Genesis?

Tim: Dry land is day three.

Jon: Day Three. Light and darkness?

Tim: Light and darkness is day one. Separating waters from the waters is day two. The water separator in the Red Sea, and then they'd walk through on dry land. Actually, the passage through the Red Sea led by the pillar of fire is all days one, two and three.

Jon: One, two and three.

Tim: That's a good way of putting it. They get to the other side, the armies of Pharaoh are vanquished, and then they sing the first worship song in the Bible.

[00:55:45]

Tim: Exodus 15. Let's start in vs 10. "You Yahweh you blew with your ruakh; the sea covered the bad guys. They sink like lead in mighty waters. Who's like you among the gods, O Yahweh; who's like you majestic in holiness, awesome in praise, working wonders. You stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed them." That's interesting. I mean the waters did, but you can also say the earth did. "In your covenant loyalty you have led the people whom you have redeemed. You have led the people you have redeemed; in strength you have guided them to your holy dwelling." The word "lead" there is made up of the same letters as the name Noah, which is the word for "rest." Nahal. "Nuakh" is the verb for "rest." "Nahal" is the verb for lead, but uncertain verb forms it looks like the word "rest."

Jon: Is that a coincidence?

Tim: It's wordplay.

Jon: Did they come from the same root, resting and leading?

Tim: It's just they share two letters.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: They share two letters. It's very typical biblical authors to do. Because remember what God did for the human, He took him out of the realm of

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the dirt and rested him. He nuakhed him. Here God is not nahaling them towards his holy dwelling.

Jon: So it's like putting them towards the land?

Tim: Keep reading.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Vs 17 "you will bring the people you've redeemed. You will bring them and you will plant them in the mountain of your inheritance. The place of your dwelling (shibteka)...That word "dwelling" (shibteka), your dwelling has the three letters of the word "Shabbat." It's the same three letters.

Jon: Is this the same dwelling as before in vs 13?

Tim: I think it's a different word.

Jon: I see. Okay,

Tim: The word "dwelling" is a word play on the word "Shabbat." "The place of your dwelling which you have made the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established." So plants. When's the last time you heard the word "plant?"

Jon: The last time?

Tim: Well, sorry. When's the first time I heard the word plant? In Genesis 2, God planted a garden in Eden. Eden is the cosmic mountain. It's a high place. That's where God plants the garden. That's where He dwells and walks.

Jon: According to the prophets?

Tim: According to the prophets and according to Genesis 2.

Jon: Because of the stream.

Tim: Not at a river. That sources all of the rivers on Earth. I mean, come on. That's a high place.

Jon: It's a high place.

Tim: God's going to plant them in the mountain where God dwells. And the word "dwell" is spelled with the three letters of Shabbat. And it's called God's sanctuary. This is all Eden, Sabbath language and imagery going on here. So just like God took the human that He formed out of dirt and

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planted a garden and rested him in the garden, so God is leading/going to rest the people in the mountain that He has planted.

Jon: Wow.

Tim: And this is all forecasting the promised land - bringing Israel into the promised land. Exodus 15 is portraying Israel's journey from the death and chaos of Egypt all the way to Joshua and forward of Israel going to the promised land. It's casting that whole narrative arc on analogy with humans in the garden of Eden resting there with God. Does that make any sense?

Jon: Totally makes sense.

Tim: And it's happening during the seven days of Passover and Unleavened Bread. It's when all these events are happening in Exodus.

Jon: The feast of flight.

Tim: The feast of flight. Yeah, totally. The Exodus and Passover is like is a new creation. It's an act of new creation when you see it from this point of view.

Jon: The Passover is about celebrating a new creation - liberation out of darkness and disorder into something new.

Tim: Into the New Eden that God's preparing for his people to rest them.

Jon: They're stuck on the suddenness of it. It's like, "be ready."

Tim: Yeah, totally. That's right. Every year, this event makes now the month where this happens to be the beginning month of Israel's ritual calendar. This event of the new creation and liberation of Israel now becomes the first month.

Jon: The first thing of the year I want you to do is spend a whole week enacting that creation will be renewed.

Tim: Yeah, liberated from its bondage to decay. That's what Paul would say in Romans 8. Back where we started. Exodus 12, Passover instructions begin, and God says to Moses, "This month will be for you the Rosh Hodeshi (the head of the months), rishon hu lachem (it is the first for you). The first word of Genesis 1:1 is Bereshit from the same root. "Reshit" comes from the root "rosh."

Jon: It means first?

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- Tim: Beginning. The exodus story makes that month the beginning for Israel's calendar. It's the beginning of Israel so to speak. It's God creating His covenant people, liberating them from slavery. And that's all set on analogy to the beginning of Genesis 1.
- Jon: Because in a real way it wasn't them just pretending like new creation came. That was new creation.
- Tim: It was rescued from death.
- Jon: It was rescued from death and slavery.
- Tim: And darkness. Again, do you remember our first conversation about this, the two Sabbath commandments and the two repetitions of the Ten Commandment, one of them and Exodus was "in six days, God made the skies and the land and rested."
- Jon: So just like God rested.
- Tim: Just like God do that.
- Jon: In Deuteronomy 5 it's "Shabbat on the seventh day because God rescued you out of Egypt so that you may nuakh, you may have rest along with your slaves." Along with your slaves.
- Jon: I see. These are really like the same idea.
- Tim: Same idea.
- Jon: Because the rescue from Egypt is replaying creation.
- Tim: Yeah, it's a new creation. The rescue of slaves from darkness and death through the waters into light and a garden and resting in the promised land, that is act that replays the creative intentions and purposes of God. And God's doing there for His people what He did for all creation in Genesis 1, which is to release it.
- Jon: And what He wants to do for all creation.
- Tim: Yes, and it's what He wants to do for all creation again. The liberation from Egypt is a cosmic event. In the story, that's why it's using the cosmic language of Genesis 1 to tell the story.
- Jon: On the list is the video new Exodus?
- Tim: Yes.
- Jon: Is that what that video is?

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- Tim: The whole video I want to just drill down on this. Correct. But it's you see it in Paul's worldview in Romans 8. We just said it already. He depicts creation in slavery to wake off the bondage of decay and death. He says it will be liberated when the sons of God are liberated into the glory that God has for them. And glory is temple language and it's humans resting and ruling at one with God. So he views the exodus narrative as a cosmic story of creations liberation.
- Jon: He does because you read Exodus and obviously the author here does as well.
- Tim: Correct. The main meanings of The seventh-day are, one, its points to the complete wholeness of creation of heaven on earth united God, humans dwelling together, plenty and abundance. That's the seventh-day. But then also, the seventh-day is the seventh-day, which means you have to go through days one, two, three, four, five, and six on a journey being liberated from darkness and death to journey towards the seventh-day. So the seventh-day is the culmination of God liberating and leading people towards the seventh-day.
- Jon: It's interesting in Genesis 1 humans are created on the sixth day, so you don't have to experience days one through five.
- Tim: Oh, that's interesting.
- Jon: But now, back into this disorder, God's going to bring creation back through the cycles and we're along for the ride.
- Tim: That's right. In the exodus story, now everybody's going through the journey of waiting.
- Jon: Days one through six.
- Tim: Days one through six. Yeah, totally. Again, two key words then, by the exodus story, the seventh-day is both signifies liberation from death and darkness, journeying towards the complete wholeness that the seventh-day represents. Once those two beats are down the rest of the Hebrew Bible is just going to riff off of these and expand and develop it even more.
- Jon: Thanks for listening to this episode of The Bible Project podcast. This conversation on seventh-day rest is about halfway over. We're going to stop and do a question and response episode. So if you have any questions so far, as you've been listening along, please send them to info@jointhebibleproject.com. Record your question on your phone or any other device, try to keep it to about 20 seconds and let us know your

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name and where you're from. Again, send it to info@jointhebibleproject.com.

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