

# 7th Day Rest E1 Final

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## **The Restless Craving for Rest**

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Speakers in the audio file:

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Tim Mackie

## The Restless Craving for Rest

Jon: We live in a busy, fast-paced world. We can shop, eat, and work any hour of the day. Most of us live with constant access to the internet. And if you're like me, you're constantly checking the phone, and news, and updates. There's always a new deadline, a new urgent request, a new problem to solve. One day bleeds into the next. Life can be hectic, and it can be exhausting. And then we get to the Bible and there's an idea, a theme that you may have heard of, but if you're like me, you might not know a lot about. It's the idea of the Sabbath.

Tim: At its most basic is that you stop. The word Sabbath means stop. It's the word Shabbat in Hebrew. There are actually other words for rest. In English, we think of like laying down and relaxing and being rejuvenated. To do those things you'd have to Shabbat, but the word Shabbat, its basic meaning is "to cease from," "to stop."

Jon: I'm Jon Collins, and this is The Bible Project podcast. Now, the Hebrew word "Shabbat" is where English word "Sabbath" comes from. You may have heard of people observing the Sabbath day, an entire day of stopping from your work, or you might have heard of people taking sabbaticals, long breaks from their work. But this practice comes from a much larger theme in the Bible.

Tim: The practice of Shabbat is just one way to think about there's something way bigger going on, which is about this design of time all culminating in a seventh day.

Jon: God creates the heavens and the earth in six days, and on the seventh day, He stops, enters His creation, and He rests and rules. And humans are there with God's to rule and rest with Him on the seventh day.

Tim: The seventh day is like a multi-faceted gem. As the concept develops through the story of the Bible, we're going to discover in different story after story that there's going to be different ways and angles and facets that get to the core. One of the main facets is the fabric of creation as leading towards a great goal where humans imitate God and join Him in ceasing from work and labor. There's going to be another facet that's all about being in slave to our labor. And so the seventh day is the time to celebrate our liberation from slavery so that we can rest with God.

Jon: Today we're beginning a new series, understanding the theme of seventh-day rest. Thanks for joining us. Here we go.

This is going to be a very long conversation. When we did "the God" conversation, which turned into a 20 episode podcast, it was about 40 pages of notes. And here in my hand are 41 pages of notes on the Sabbath.

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- Tim: On the Sabbath. New discussion for us. This is a Bible Project theme video. I have started reading and writing and collecting notes, I don't know, a couple of months ago. I guess that's when it technically started. But our conversation about it starts now. It will become a theme video at some point.
- Jon: In future conversations.
- Tim: At some point when somebody's listening to this, it might be the past when the video is out.
- Jon: The time is relative.
- Tim: Here we go. I have learned so much as I've been preparing this conversation.
- Jon: Our office, the whiteboards are just filled with your beautiful mind notes just all over the place.
- Tim: A lot of it too was I hit the Torah hard in study mode about two years ago. It's pretty much I've been living and breathing, reading and rereading the Torah over and over again. And so I've just been noticing, collecting all these observations, specifically around patterns of the number seven woven into the narrative and poetry of the Torah. Then as I started to think about this conversation, all of a sudden it hit me like it's all connected to Sabbath. So then I'd start collecting stuff on the idea of actual Sabbath. But all these other narratives and poems in the pen to keep getting pulled into the conversation, thus 40 pages of things for us to talk about.
- Jon: Sweet.
- Tim: Yeah, I did. I learned so much.
- Jon: I'm excited to learn.
- Tim: I'm actually not even done. I've just outlined the New Testament stuff in these notes. I haven't actually filled it in.
- Jon: Oh, really?
- Tim: Yeah. I'm sorry, you're welcome.
- Jon: This theme wasn't on your original list,
- Tim: That's a good point. I don't know when it dawned on me like this is in organizing main theme of the entire biblical story. Literally begins with the opening line of Genesis.

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Jon: Really?

Tim: Yeah, in terms of its literary design.

Jon: Cool. When we started this project, you had about 25 theme videos. Then what happened was, we started thinking about doing a series on Genesis 1-3, a creation series. So basically, like five or six ideas that are really important to those chapters. And Sabbath was one of them. And instead of treating it as a Christian series, we decided to treat them all separate theme videos. So are we forcing this to be a theme or do you think this is like a biblical theme?

Tim: Oh, it definitely is. In terms of our usual criteria introduced on pages 1, 2 and 3 developed work over and over and over again and repeating developments throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, there's a culminating moment in the story of Jesus, which then launches you out into the new creation. The Sabbath, it actually probably is the more a theme in that way than some of the other themes that we have made.

Jon: Cool.

Tim: It's everywhere.

Jon: Sweet.

Tim: It's awesome.

Jon: Well, let's get into it.

Tim: All right.

[00:07:03]

Tim: Let's first do this. Instead of first going to Genesis 1, let's talk about a memory that you and I share and then connect it to a memory that I have from the year that my wife and I lived in Jerusalem. I was studying there. Our apartment was in West Jerusalem, not far from the old medieval walls in the old city. We lived by the largest outdoor market in Jerusalem. It's a famous tourist spot now, which is why years later you and I went there. It's called Mahane Yehuda (The camp of Judah). But do you remember that market?

Jon: Did we eat lunch there?

Tim: We hung out for a couple of hours.

Jon: We're at the market and then we went and found some lunch.

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- Tim: That's right. Probably it takes up the equivalent of like an American city, maybe two square blocks of space. But it's just all of these little narrow alleyways in the maze and every square foot of the walls are little storefront. And it's really just vendor tables, and then it's like fish or meat or berries or nuts or produce or bread.
- Jon: And a lot of trinkets.
- Tim: Yeah, and then tons of all kinds of stuff. You can get shoes there, homewares. When Jessica and I lived there, our apartment was two blocks away.
- Jon: Oh, wow.
- Tim: So it was I would never live so close to a much less like getting...
- Jon: Oh, wait a second. I'm thinking of a different place. I'm thinking of the very touristy place. Yeah, the market. This is where you made me do the Shema.
- Tim: Yeah, totally.
- Jon: That's right.
- Tim: All right. We'll get to that story. We lived there two blocks away, and it was great because it was like having a grocery store but where everything is fresh every day. Every day. You walk into this place hundreds of vendors, everybody's yelling, in Hebrew, of course, or Arabic, what they're selling, how much. You know, "Fish, fish, five shekels, five shekels," but in Hebrew. It's just like really intense, overstimulating.
- Jon: Lots of bodies.
- Tim: Yeah, people bustling in these little narrow alleyways, bargaining over stuff. It's like old seals and old Jewish woman haggling for her hummus or something. It was wonderful. We would basically just go there every couple of days and get food for the next couple of days instead of like going once a week or something. It was fun to go there. You and I, a number of years later when visited, we went there.
- Jon: On the Sabbath.
- Tim: We were there on Friday afternoon.
- Jon: So it was about to be the Sabbath.
- Tim: It was the afternoon before Shabbat, is how you say it in Hebrew. There were some young men, Hasidic Jews, who were there doing the

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equivalent of what some Christian traditions call like street evangelism. Do you remember this?

Jon: Totally. They were hanging out in the marketplace getting people to...Well, I didn't know what they were doing.

Tim: That's right. I was like, "Hey, Jon, come over here. Let's talk to these guys." Because I knew what they would do to you, but you didn't know.

Jon: Imagine a street preacher, they want to get your attention and then they want you to engage with them, and they want to convince you of something. But they're not talking about Jesus. They are Jewish and they want other things from you.

Tim: They want you to acknowledge the One God of Israel. So they see some tourists, I think they see you have maybe all of complexion, all of skin complexion and they're like, "Oh, this guy might be in the crew." They wrapped these leather straps around you...

Jon: Well, let's back up. My brother had just like a month previous to this taken one of those 23andMe DNA tests, and it came back that we have Ashkenazi Jew or Jewish blood. And we had no idea. So my brother had just shared that with me. I was like, "Oh, wow." And then we were in Israel and I told you. And it's like 15% or something.

Tim: Yeah, totally. I was like, "Jon, it's time to realize your heritage." So we walked over, these guys were thrilled. And then...

Jon: Well, they said, "Are you Jewish?"

Tim: That's right. And they're talking in Hebrew.

Jon: And I don't know what they're saying. And then you in Hebrew say, "Yeah, this guy is Jewish."

Tim: I'm telling them that he just discovered that he has some Jewish heritage. Then I told them, "And he would like to say the Shema." And they were thrilled. Remember they wrapped....they had these things called the Teflon in Hebrew, but they're these traditional Jewish prayer regalia. It's these straps that are connected to prayer practices in certain forms of Judaism. They put this thing on your head. Do you remember? A little prayer, a strap with a little box on it has within a little scroll that's written on it the Shema, and then they had you...

Jon: And then they had repeat and Hebrew the Shema. And I just butchering it because I don't know Hebrew.

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Tim: It was awesome.

Jon: Yeah, that was cool. It was a special moment.

Tim: Everyone around enjoyed watching you do it.

Jon: I'm glad you made me do that. Definitely good memory. And they were doing that because they were preparing people for Shabbat?

Tim: That's right. They are there every Friday afternoon because they want to...It's a place where the city gathers and they're honoring the God of Israel by anybody who's there at the market who may be their heart isn't right with God or maybe they haven't been faithful to the traditions of Israel. They want to be there. So to be available in that moment to help any Israelite, any Jew recommit. And what better time to do it than hours before Shabbat so that you could recommit and then go home and fulfill Shabbat maybe in a way you never have before.

Jon: I didn't notice anyone else doing it. Did they get a lot of people stopping by?

Tim: It's a good question. I don't know. When Jessica and I would shop there because I would have been going to school during the week and she Jessica actually served during the week, she would cross through the checkpoint over into the West Bank, and she would volunteer and Bethlehem Bible College, which is a Palestinian Christian school.

Jon: Is that where we visited?

Tim: Oh, we visited there too with the group. She would volunteer in there the administration in the office. She's a wizard in that way. So Friday afternoon, I would get out of school, she would take the bus back from Bethlehem, we'd meet up and then we just do a weekend shopping because most of those stores are not going to be open in 24 hours. So on Friday afternoon, it's like crush of people there. Everybody's there getting ready for Shabbat, and so everybody's getting 36, 48 hours' worth of food.

What would happen right before sunset is it's packed because everyone's just got off work there and it's all the busy prep. This is like a weekly rhythm just breathing for us. It's just by the clock predictable in this market. I remember the first time we were there, and we're pushing it time-wise for Shabbat, and then these men, maybe like half an hour before sunset, these men in long black jackets and robes and the Russian hats, a certain kind of Russian Jewish group that lived across the street in the ultra-orthodox neighborhood called Mea She'arim, they would run through the market with these little trumpets. I'd never seen anything

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like it - like maybe a foot long. And they would be tooting on these trumpets.

Jon: Like, "Get out of here."

Tim: Like, "You got 30 minutes." It's like the 30-minute warning. Then they would come through 10 minutes later with like the 20-minute warning. Some people liked it, and I could tell some people were annoyed.

Jon: Because not everyone in the city cares about their Shabbat.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: But a lot do. Like what percentage would you say?

Tim: Well, I don't know the answer. I think it depends in the city. In Jerusalem I think it's higher. You go to Tel Aviv, no, you have very few. I act like I really know. I don't know what the numbers are. But I remember being in Tel Aviv, which feels like you're in New York...

Jon: Far more secular.

Tim: Way secularized. You couldn't even tell Shabbat started if you're eating at a restaurant downtown Tel Aviv. But Jerusalem tracks more religious passionate people. Anyway, so these people would be running through, blowing these horns. Then if you happen to be anywhere in the city or at sunset, the sirens go off through the whole city.

Jon: Oh, wow. I don't remember that. Did we leave the city before then?

Tim: Oh, let's see. We would have been gone on the...

Jon: That's right. We did when we did the Shabbat even that night.

Tim: We were at the guy's home. That's right. We were there at the guy's house by then. So these sirens go through the whole city. If you lived in the Midwest and you know the tornado sirens, it's like that.

Jon: The Shabbat tornado is coming.

Tim: Yeah, totally. And then it's just like all of a sudden, you look out your window and there are no cars on the road and it just got real quiet. And especially in our neighborhood. And then it would just be quiet and you would just see lights on. If you happen to not be observant and you're walking around, you would just hear people singing.

Jon: Is Walking around is not observant?



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- Tim: Oh, got it. Well, if you're observant, you're in your house...
- Jon: Having the meal?
- Tim: ...with your family having the meal. But sometimes, Jessica and I liked it at the evening to go for a quiet walk. Because what we learned as you walk through some of these neighborhoods, and you would hear families singing, especially in the summer when windows are open.
- Jon: So Cool.
- Tim: It was beautiful. It was, for a whole year, just like living in the city experiencing this rhythm. It was so amazing. I knew about Shabbat, but I'd never lived in a community that was so passionate about it. So think about this. That was a long time ago 2006, 2007 that we were there, me and Jessica - didn't have kids yet. So to think what we were experiencing that year has been a ritual regular practice for this people group for somewhere around 30 plus centuries.
- Jon: Wow. Crazy.
- Tim: Think how many Friday evenings are those.
- Jon: Wow.
- Tim: I have to imagine myself into a culture that has been doing this thing for 30 plus centuries. Probably more.
- Jon: Well before anyone had a weekend.
- Tim: All around the world in different cultures, different neighborhoods, different language groups, these people has been practicing this...
- Jon: Friday at sundown.
- Tim: The Friday afternoon hustle to get everything ready because it's a lot of work to get ready to not work. You got to get all your food ready. You got to get everything arranged. Think if you're on a farm, you go to get the animals fed. All this thing because these are things you're not going to be doing for 24 hours once the sunset. Imagine yourself in to that. Imagine being born into a culture where it's already ancient, and for your whole life, you don't know anything different except this rhythm of working especially the bustle up on the sixth day, Friday, the sixth day of the Jewish calendar. Your whole week leads up to this moment. And then it stops at sunset. And then you're with your family, you have some friends over.

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Here's what you do. Sunsets and you all come around the dinner table and you light candles and then you say a prayer. Maybe dad, maybe mom sings out: "Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam, Asher kideshanu Bemitzvotav, Vetzivanu lehadlik Ner shel Shabbat." Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has set us apart as holy by His commandments, and has commanded us to light the lamp of the Sabbath. And then the next 24 hours, we're going to eat, we're going to sing, we're going to read from the Torah and prophets and writings, you're going to wake up the next morning, you're going to go to synagogue, you're going to hear the Torah prophets and writings read aloud, you're going to hear homily, you'll go home, have another meal and wait for the next dinner on what we call Saturday night. And then that's a whole other deal is to wave goodbye to the Shabbat for another six days until you're greeted again. And then you celebrate the coming of the eighth day, which then becomes the first day of a new Shabbat cycle.

In that calendar, Sunday is the beginning of the week. What we perceive as the end of the day (sunset) is the beginning of the Shabbat day. It goes from sunset to sunset.

Jon: Because that's the day delineator is sundown.

Tim: And it's all about Genesis 1. We'll talk about it. It goes from sundown to sundown. You're actually welcoming in a new day at sunset on Saturday.

Jon: It was always hard for me to understand that because that's not how I think of days. I think of days when you wake up. I remember I think it was around in college when I finally figured it out, it was because there's a website BH Photo that's owned by Orthodox Jews, and they don't let you buy online on the website from sundown on Friday. And I was always like, I would log on at certain times that I'd like to buy something and it would be like, "Wait a second. Why I can't buy anything?" "It's like Friday night. And it was like, "Oh, yeah, Friday night."

Tim: That's right. You'd walk around Jerusalem, and not everywhere, but many shops are closed and they won't be open for the next 24 hours. A lot of people, they won't drive, they walk, but just around the neighborhood. They're developed traditions about not walking too far. Yeah. The point is...

Jon: They can't work.

Tim: Because of the stories about Jesus and the Gospels having conflict with religious leaders over how to do the Sabbath, there has been an unfortunate reflex, unintended I think by the gospel authors, that has cast a negative atmosphere over the Sabbath and the guidelines for observing it as being legalistic or rule-oriented instead of God-oriented.

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And that's totally wrong. In Jewish tradition, it's so beautiful what the Sabbath means. We haven't even talked about its meaning. But what the Sabbath means is it's worthy being protected just like parents will establish guidelines for how we work as a family in our house: we don't yell at each other, we say "please", we share things. You know, those are rule, and it would be totally missing the point to be like, "How legalistic?"

The point is, is you love this thing and you want to honor it precisely by protecting it. In all these different ways, different Jewish traditions develop different types of guidelines for what constitutes work, but the whole thing was there's something beautiful here when we stop, we stop the hustle and bustle, we stop acting like we're the center of the universe or that my work is the center of the universe.

Jon: Or that my striving and work is keeping everything glued together.

Tim: Yeah, that's right. "Everything will fall apart if I don't X, Y or Z." You just stop. "We'll unpack what Sabbath means in the Hebrew Scriptures. It actually means a lot of things, but at its most basic is that you stop. The word Sabbath means "stop" - the word "Shabbat" in Hebrew. There are actually other words for rest. Like in English we think of laying down and relaxing and being rejuvenated. To do those things you have to Shabbat. But the word Shabbat, its basic meaning is to cease from, to stop.

[music playing 00:23:40]

Tim: I'm not Shabbat observant in a strict way. We've adapted, Jessica and I have over the years about how we try to live by the wisdom of it. We'll get there and we talked about being possible. So it's I haven't lived this reality except for living in a culture that did it for a year. And it was really impacting. That night when we are in Jerusalem after you said the Shema, we went to have an amazing Shabbat meal together. It was an incredible experience.

Jon: I'm remembering now we walked to that house and the city was empty.

Tim: From the market. Yeah, that's right.

Jon: The streets were completely empty. I didn't really think about that. But now I'm remembering back. We went to that guy's house and he hosted like all of us.

Tim: There was like a group of 30.

Jon: That's crazy. And then he led us through all the songs and prayers and meals. It was a lot of work for them to put that on.

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Tim: Totally. Yeah. I think it's the thing they do. They host groups of essentially tourists to introduce them to the...a really cool family. It was this amazing evening. He and his wife would sing these different traditional prayers. One part of it is singing selections from Proverbs 31, the poem about the amazing woman. Do you remember the guy was singing to his wife the lines of Proverb 31?

Jon: He was hamming it up. He loved it.

Tim: Oh, yeah, like this love song. There it is. I'm a little intimidated actually to have these conversations, then to make a video about it because this isn't native to my tradition and life experience. And so it's sort of like, "Who am I? Who are we as Gentiles to like..."

Jon: ...explain this ancient thing?

Tim: And because it's been going for over 30 centuries, it's developed its meaning and the traditions and the way people talk and practice it has changed and developed over time. So what we're going to be talking about is the earliest period and the biblical materials that talk about it, which is only the first 10 centuries of the tradition. After the Hebrew Bible period, it kept developing for another 20 centuries.

So maybe one helpful distinction to make as we began, a lot of people love to learn to talk about the Shabbat because they're really interested in the practice of it, like the Friday night, the Saturday night practice, why and what that means. Our conversation is going to be a little bit different of a focus and the video will be different, in that if you go to the Hebrew Scriptures, you have to wait 80 chapters in, the whole book of Genesis and then half of the book of Exodus. You don't get a command about observing the Sabbath until Exodus chapter 20. So 70 chapters in. Really bad math.

Think about that. If the Bible is designed to give the people of Israel a handbook on how to observe Shabbat, it's kind of a weird one because it doesn't even get to it. Not until 70 chapters. Then what's interesting, and we'll look, the Sabbath commands in the Torah are differently worded and they give different reasons about why they practice the Sabbath.

Jon: Different than what?

Tim: From each other. The Sabbath command is repeated twice. We'll look at it in a moment. But there are different reasons for why you do it. They're not necessarily contradictory, but they're different. So the Hebrew Bible doesn't seem concerned to be a handbook on how to observe Shabbat. What it's more interested is the meaning of Shabbat. Which is why it's that the meaning of Shabbat is introduced on page 1.

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Jon: And in true Jewish meditation literature style, it doesn't come right out and tell you the meaning of Shabbat.

Tim: It keeps developing. That's right. That develops it. So that by the time you're 70 chapters into the Torah, then you get a command about the Shabbat, well, you actually already all know all about what that seventh-day rest means. You've been thoroughly educated by Exodus 20. The burden of the Torah and of the Hebrew Scriptures, it does tell us about the development of the Shabbat practice and the practice. But within the storyline of the Old Testament, the practice of Shabbat is just one way to think about that there's something way bigger going on, which is about this design of time all culminating in a seventh day, which is way bigger than just what you do on Friday night.

What people do on Friday nights is one of many symbolic narrative pointers to a larger theological idea. So it's the idea that the video is going to be about. The video won't be about the practice as such. We'll get there in the video and in our conversations, but it's a governing theological idea about the concept of time in the Bible, and time as moving towards a climactic resolution and a time of ultimate bliss and abundance and rest. The weekly practice of Sabbath is just a pointer and a foretaste of something way bigger. Is that distinction clear? I'm still trying to find language for it.

Jon: Yeah, yeah. When we think of the Sabbath, especially a Christian, a non-Jewish person being introduced to the Sabbath, it's all about the practice of taking the day to stop. How do you do it? How do you do it as a Christian, and why do you do it? You're saying there's a bigger set of ideas about how the Bible thinks about time and the culmination of time that the Sabbath is just one manifestation of?

Tim: Correct. The practice of the Sabbath as its described in the Hebrew Scriptures is just one of many, many, many other ways that the Sabbath idea is explored and talked about and developed.

Jon: And I guess the tricky part is that it's the same word.

Tim: Yeah. Really what this video is about the seventh day.

Jon: The seventh day. Do we call it the seventh day?

Jon: Well, that's okay. I'm open to that. In other words, there are many different seventh days.

Jon: There are many different seventh days?

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Tim: There are many ways and words that the culminating seventh-day concept gets developed. One of them is Shabbat. Another one is called Shmita (release), which is the seventh year when slaves are released and debts are canceled. Another one of them is the year of yoyvl (of Jubilee), which is the seventh seventh - the seventh time seventh year - when debts are released, slaves are freed, and land go back to its original Eden like conditions when Israel first entered the land. So Shabbat, the year of release, the Jubilee are all different time practices that point towards the same idea of the seventh day.

Jon: The seventh day. The culminating day.

Tim: So maybe we call this video "The seventh day." That's interesting.

Jon: We don't have to decide that. But it just if the ambiguity between the practice of the weekly Shabbat and this video, which is about this idea of culmination time...

Tim: The seventh day as the culmination of history.

Jon: The seventh day as the culmination of history.

Tim: As a theme unifying the whole storyline of the Bible. And Shabbat points to it, but so does the year of release and so does the Jubilee. That's interesting. It's just becoming clear to me in this moment. Remember how we made the video called the Holy Spirit, and many people watched it hoping that we wouldn't be talking about the Trinity, and that's not what we talked? And so we reflected maybe should we have called it just "the spirit" or "the Spirit of God." because we mostly were talking about the Hebrew Bible in that video. I wonder if this is a similar thing where...

Jon: People will be disappointed?

Tim: People will be like, "Oh, they made a video about..."

Jon: They are looking for a crash course on how to do the Sabbath.

Tim: Yeah, Sabbath. What are people doing Friday to Saturday night? What's the meaning of that? And this is about what's the meaning of the seventh day in the storyline of the Bible. That's interesting.

[music playing 00:32:31]

Tim: The Sabbath is one of the Ten commandments.

Jon: Yeah, the very overlooked of the Ten commandments.

Tim: That's right. That's right. Yes.

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Jon: At least for Gentiles.

Tim: No, that's interesting, I think. You're right probably for in certain culture debates about the importance of the Ten Commandments.

Jon: Remember we were at Calamity Jane's and they had the Cowboy Commandments. I pointed this out to you.

Tim: This is a restaurant?

Jon: There's this restaurant up on the Mount Hood. Let me just google Cowboy Commandments. But it was like this tongue in cheek kind of like retelling of the Ten Commandments.

Tim: I don't remember this.

Jon: "One, just one god. Two, honor your mom, pa. Three, no telling tales or gossiping. Four, get yourself to Sunday meetings."

Tim: Oh, okay. There it.

Jon: There it is. Get yourself to Sunday meetings.

Tim: That's the Cowboy command.

Jon: It's like they get to the Sabbath, and for the cowboy, which is the American Gentile Bible person...

Tim: Protestant.

Jon: ...protestant, Sabbath just means go to church on Sunday.

Tim: Totally. I don't know if these debates happen in Europe or Australia, about the public display of the Ten commandments. This has been...

Jon: ...a big debate in America.

Tim: This has been, in the last half century, a hot topic in American culture - certain parts of America. But I think the paradigm is that we should publicly display the moral code of the Bible. The paradigm being the Bible is God's handbook for behavior so we should publicly...and the 10 commandments summarize it best. That's one way to think about it. I think there are more helpful ways to think about it. And a lot of them work. One, the One God of the Bible, tell the truth, don't lie, don't commit adultery, don't murder. The one that really sticks out...

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- Jon: Everyone agrees with them. I mean, even if you're not a Christian or even not religious, everyone's ones like, "We could all agree we're not going to murder each other."
- Tim: I don't believe it. Maybe the people who don't believe in God, they'll be like, "Okay, well, I'll take a pass on that one. But yeah, don't murder. Don't lie."
- Jon: "And tell the truth."
- Tim: "And tell the truth." But the one of the Ten that's really situated in it as an Israelite, Jewish practice is "keep the Sabbath." So in Christian tradition, what's happened is that this gets removed from the Friday night to Saturday night thing and gets applied to going to church on Sunday.
- Jon: To going to church on Sunday.
- Tim: Totally. And it's true actually. My kids are listening a lot to audiobooks of Little House on the Prairie, and so that's how mom and pop talk about going to church - keeping Sabbath. Woven early into American culture is the concept of the Sunday is a Sabbath. And that probably goes back into European Christianity roots. But there's an irony there because that's not what Sabbath means in the Old or New Testament.
- Jon: This is the argument I heard. That the Sabbath was Saturday but then Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday. And so the early Christians began to celebrate Sabbath on Sunday. That's why we all do church on Sunday.
- Tim: That's the common conception. Underneath that concept is loads of controversy because the historical data to tell us that story is not clear. It's very complicated. We might get here maybe at the end of our discussion
- Jon: It's not important.
- Tim: Well, it's not important for the video. I think actually is a really interesting and important. But Sabbath within the first two generations of Christianity and Christian literature, Sabbath never referred to Sunday. The Sabbath was Friday night to Saturday night. Sunday most likely is what the phrase the Lord's Day refers us to. It was only much later that the word "Sabbath" came to be attached to mean a Christian version, which is on Sunday. But because, think, for the many of those early generations many of the followers of Jesus were Jewish, and so they would observe Sabbath at Friday night.
- Jon: They did stop?



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Tim: No, they didn't stop observing Sabbath. They observed Sabbath, but then they would also do something on Sunday.

Jon: In fact, there was an expectation amongst Jewish followers of Jesus or kind of a hope that Gentiles would also adopt the Sabbath.

Tim: And then this became a controversy that we know about through Paul's letters to the church in Rome and to the churches of Galatians and so on in Colossae. I just want to put an asterisk on that. It will pick it up later because it's not what we're talking about in the video. What I want to draw attention to is the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments. And the Ten Commandments appear twice in the Hebrew Scriptures. We've talked about this?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Yeah, in the laws. One's in Mount Sinai in Exodus 20, another set of Ten Commandments is in Deuteronomy 5 when the children of the Exodus generation are with Moses about to go in the promised land. Exodus 2:8 begins by saying, "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy." In Deuteronomy 5, Moses says, "Keep the Sabbath day in order to keep it holy." In one, that's "remember when Moses repeats it, and remembers, for a new context he says, "keep"? That's fine.

Jon: Remember or keep.

Tim: How do you remember it? You keep it. And as you keep it, your own remembering it. But there's a little difference. From there, both commands are verbatim - the same. "Six days you shall labor and do all of your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of Yahweh your God. On it you shall do no work, neither you nor your son or your daughter or your male slave or your female slave or your ox or your..." And then here's where the passages depart. In Exodus, it finishes by saying "your ox or the immigrant who stays with you." Then it's done. In Deuteronomy 5, the list keeps on going. "Neither your ox or your donkey, or your cattle or the immigrant who stays with you."

Then here's where the two different passages depart. In Exodus 20, the reason - why do you do this? Why do you stop working for? Vs 11 of Exodus 20, "for in six days, Yahweh made the skies and the land and the sea and all that is in them and he rested on the seventh day. The Hebrew word there is Shabbat. He ceased on the Sabbath day.

Jon: He Shabbat.

Tim: So clear hyperlink to Genesis 1. So why do we do this? Why do we stop from work?

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- Jon: That's what God did.
- Tim: In Exodus 20, God stopped on the seventh day, therefore we stop. When you're reading in Deuteronomy 5 and you get to the reason why it says "so that your male slave and your female slave may rest along with you." The word "rest" there is different. The word "rest" that's the same root as known as name. Noach.
- Jon: Noach.
- Tim: Noach means that you have stopped and now you're in a state of being refreshed and settling in and resting in the place that you've stopped. There's kind of two stages. Shabbat is about stopping what you were doing, Noach is about now settling into the place where you stopped so that you can be refreshed.
- Jon: So you can't noach unless you've stopped?
- Tim: Yeah. You have to Shabbat in order to noach. And if you're Noaching, that's because you've shabbated. But then look, Deuteronomy 5 goes on and says, "You shall remember you were a slave in the land of Egypt and Yahweh your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and outstretched arms. Therefore, Yahweh your God commanded you to observe the Sabbath day." Two different rationales for the Sabbath. They're not contradictory, but they are different.
- Jon: Sure. In Exodus, the rationale is, this is what Yahweh did when he created....
- Tim: Six days work.
- Jon: Six days work, rested. There's something about the fabric of the Cosmos, and what God did.
- Tim: And imitating.
- Jon: He's imitating?
- Tim: You do this because that's what God did.
- Jon: Okay. And then in Deuteronomy, there's this focus on well...and because it's about slavery, they have slaves. How should you treat slaves? "Well, remember you were a slave, you weren't treated, God rescued you; I want you to treat your slaves in a different way."
- Tim: That's right. Why do you observe the Sabbath and Deuteronomy 5? So that your slaves can have a day of rest along with you. You get a day of rest, they get a day of rest. Why is that? Well, remember the exodus. In

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the Exodus, all of you were slaves, and God redeemed you so that you could have rest in the promised land. So now, once you go into the promised land, you make sure that everybody gets a day of rest. You could say this is a liberation unto rest.

Jon: That's interesting. I don't want to jump the gun but Paul talks about being slaves to sin. That whole identity of slavery is super crucial, especially from Exodus narrative on. It's interesting to think about what that means. What is our slavery, it doesn't mean to stop you from.

Tim: Totally. We're already to it right here. The seventh day is like a multi-faceted gem. As the concept develops through the story of the Bible, we're going to discover in different story after story that there's going to be different ways and angles and facets that get to the core. One of the main facets is the fabric of creation as leading towards a great goal, where humans imitate God and join Him in ceasing from work and labor. But there's going to be another facet that's all about being enslaved to our labor and slaves to something. So the seventh day is the time to celebrate our liberation from slavery so that we can rest with God.

Actually, both of these themes are in Genesis 1-3. Genesis 1-3 is where you find both of them developed. Then it's like from there you get two strands, two chords. Think of a symphony. One will be the creation, and all history leading up to the seventh day. Another one will be the seventh day is about liberation from slavery to rest in an Eden-like state. But they're both really about the same thing. And you can see it. This is why I like the two expressions of the Ten commandments. Exodus 20 gives you the creation imitate God, participate with Him in the seventh day, Deuteronomy 5 gives you the liberation from slavery. You're celebrating liberation from slavery every seventh day in anticipation of some future...

Jon: Full liberation.

Tim: That's right. Those two ideas are both ways of thinking about the meaning of the seventh day. It's like Genesis 1-3 will introduce these two facets of Sabbath, and then the rest of the storyline of the Bible like a symphony, it's going to riff and weave them in with different stories and different themes, and so on.

Jon: Cool.

[music playing 00:45:19]

Tim: He close this with the longest quote that I think will be interesting. This is an Israeli scholar, Matitahu Tsevat, a really amazing scholar. He is cluing into this phrase that's repeated in both Sabbath commands. This phrase in English it gets rendered "the seventh day is a Sabbath of Yahweh." In

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Hebrew, the phrase is "Shabbat La'Adonai" (a Sabbath to Yahweh). "One day out of seven the Israelite is to renounce dominion over his own time and recognize God's dominion over it. Simply put: Every seventh day the Israelite renounces his autonomy and affirms God's dominion over him in the conclusion that every seventh day the Israelite is to renounces dominion over time, renounces autonomy, and recognizes God's dominion over time and thus over himself." His conclusion: "Keeping the Sabbath is acceptance of the kingdom and sovereignty of God." I like the way he puts that. Well, you tell me what you're hearing and the significance of it.

Jon: To call the Sabbath, to claim that the Sabbath belongs to God is to kind of jar you into remembering. I mean, it's kind of weird to think about a day of the week belonging to someone. It was weird to think about it but then he kind of makes the point like "we're masters of our own time." We think of ourselves as like, time belongs to us. - our time belongs to us. Time as a currency?

Tim: Remember our conversations about metaphor and poetry?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: That was the thing about time as a possession. You earn it, you lose it; you take it into it, you spend it, you save it on that. All that.

Jon: So we think about our time as one of our possessions. I don't think we think about it enough, actually. I think it's actually kind of a cruel thought experiment to realize how little time you actually have, and how fast it goes and how one-third of it you're asleep.

Tim: One-third of it you're asleep.

Jon: That's true.

Tim: For me, it's about one quarter. I wish it was the third.

Jon: But I think that every day belongs to me.

Tim: Well, Shabbat is a ritual practice. Rituals are our habits and structures in our lives that determine reality even in ways that we're not conscious of. The fact that I have a calendar app on my smartphone and I determine what goes on and off of that, the only thing structured for me is the empty box called March 8. I determined everything that goes into March eight and that doesn't. That's a ritual and structure in my life that unconsciously convinces me that I control my days. I think that's kind of what he's getting at here. We consider ourselves the masters of our time.

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- Jon: That by the ritual practice of just observing that one day actually belongs to God....
- Tim: It humbles you. It's renouncing autonomy.
- Jon: It's kind of like cracking the door open just enough. Like, at least recognize one day. It's fine. And then all of a sudden, as you do that you realize, "Oh, all time belongs to God."
- Tim: The seventh day - this is anticipating our later discussion - but the seventh day is always some culminating day of rescue or of divine miraculous provision, or of God doing something and coming through in a way that I couldn't do myself.
- Jon: That's interesting. This is how the two motifs weave together.
- Tim: Yes, the liberation. That's right.
- Jon: One idea is I'm a master of my own time, and that needs to be readjusted. But the other idea is, "what do I do with my time?" Well, generally I obsess about "do I have enough? Am I protected? Am I going to be happy?"
- Tim: You're busy securing your life's stability and provision. That's what we're doing
- Jon: "Can I hold everything together to make sure that my life doesn't fall apart, small and big ways?" Like my car battery didn't start today.
- Tim: The universe kind of broke for you this morning.
- Jon: But that's a small thing. But we're just trying to hold it all together.
- Tim: Tragedies crash into our lives and remind us we're not the masters of much of anything.
- Jon: But we like to pretend that we are. So these two things are like, "One you're not, and secondly, you're trying to be because you're hoping for liberation."
- Tim: You're hoping for stability and peace.
- Jon: You're hoping for stability and peace. And that's something God's going to provide. God's a master time and God's going to provide.
- Tim: The master of your life and wellbeing. Here's when the tragedy hits or when I'm reminded that I'm not the master of my life or time, and tragedies have a way of shaking awake to that, but what if I've developed

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a lifetime habit of inconveniently interrupting my time and my life every seven days? It's inconvenient. The reason why Jessica and I found it hard to implement this is because we haven't been strict about a practice, and so we kind of morph it and we flex it. The whole point of this tradition is you don't morph off, you flex your life to this pattern. And it's inconvenient. That's why everybody's bustling around in the market at p.m.

Jon: To inconvenient your patterns.

Tim: On Friday, it's intentionally inconveniencing your life, and the structure reminds you, there's something bigger going on and I have to adjust my life to it. Matitiah's way of saying it is it's the kingdom of God. You're recognizing that in God's time and in God's power, He will provide and work out His purposes and I adjust my life to that storyline. That's powerful. I've often wondered this and asked friends, Jews or Messianic Jews, like the psychology that that shapes in you over time that you only get six out of seven days to do what you want. It really has a deep formative influence and how people think about their lives.

Jon: But the intent isn't though to say, "Okay, I get six days and God gets one day."

Tim: No, no, no, that's the wrong way. "I get six God gets one," it's more than what I need is a regular reminder of the true reality of my life, which is that none of my days belong to me. In a way. I like the way that he's put it: renouncing autonomy, affirming God's kingdom and sovereignty was just begs the question, the bigger question then, what is the story of God's kingdom and sovereignty that culminates in the seventh day? What am I imitating? When God culminates and rest on the seventh day, what's the meaning of that? Why is He resting?

Jon: That's a great question.

Tim: I see why I rest. I'm a little puny, mortal creature. What's does that mean? And why is the idea of God's rest connected to the liberation of slaves so that they can have rest? How does that all bundle together? I think that's where the magic of the video could be is in tying together stopping with liberation and the combination of time in some great Sabbath event. And that is the storyline the Bible.

Jon: Thanks for listening to this episode of The Bible Project podcast. Today's show was produced by Dan Gummel, the music by the band Tents. You might have enjoyed the Jewish Music today, and we'd like to thank you Eitan Katz and Joshua Aaron for generously allowing us to use that music. You can learn more on their website, [eitankatz.com](http://eitankatz.com), and [joshuaaaron.com](http://joshuaaaron.com).

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Hey, if you're listening to this episode on the week it released, I have a special announcement for you. This Thursday on our YouTube channel we're releasing a new video. We've actually been doing these live launches where you can come on to YouTube, and chat with people all over the world who are going to watch the release with us and we'll watch it all live. It's a lot of fun to see how big the community has grown. This Thursday, we're releasing a cool video, and we're actually not going to tell you what it is. That'll be fun. It's at p.m. Pacific Standard Time, this Thursday, October 17th on YouTube.

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Lucy: Hi, this is Lucy Edwards and Ella Edwards, and we're from Waco, Texas.

Ella: My favorite thing about The Bible Project is the awesome animation. I really like it.

Lucy: My favorite thing about The Bible Project is how hard they work on their videos and how much color they add. It's really beautiful watching all the animations and stuff.

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Ella: Thank you.