



The Sabbath

The Sabbath commandment given to Israel was designed by God to teach grace principles. The Sabbath was a thinking day without work to commemorate the grace of God. Rest is necessary for freedom! This is the Sabbath of innocence. Gen. 2:2-3; Exodus 20:8-10.

“By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” (Genesis 2:2-3, NASB)

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.” (Exodus 20:8-10, NASB)

On the seventh day of the restoration of the earth, God rested. The earth was not created in six days, but restored in six days. God rested because there was nothing left to do, to give, or to accomplish. God rested on the seventh day as a memorial to the grace principle that there was nothing more to provide. God had provided everything for the happiness of man. Later, salvation would be provided.

There are two categories of Sabbaths –Temporal and Eternal. Temporal Sabbath is the faith-rest Sabbath of the believer. It is the moment by moment rest of the believer. It also was the basis of spirituality in the Old Testament. Heb. 3:11; Heb. 4:1-7; Heb. 11.

“AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.” (Hebrews 3:11, NASB)

“Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, “AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,” although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: “AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS”; and again in this passage, “THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.” Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, He again fixes a certain day, “Today,” saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, “TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.” (Hebrews 4:1-7, NASB)

The Eternal Sabbath is eternal life. Matt. 11:28.

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28, NASB)

The Sabbath of Israel was a memorial to the grace of God. Therefore, it was instituted as the fourth commandment. The Jews were commanded to think and not work. “Remember” means to think. Isaiah 58:11-14; Deut. 5:12-15; Lev. 23:3.

“And the LORD will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail. Those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins; You will raise up the age-old foundations; And you will be called the repairer of the breach, The restorer of the streets in which to



dwelt. "If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot From doing your own pleasure on My holy day, And call the sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable, And honor it, desisting from your own ways, From seeking your own pleasure And speaking your own word, Then you will take delight in the LORD, And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (Isaiah 58:11-14, NASB)

"For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation. You shall not do any work; it is a sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings." (Leviticus 23:3, NASB)

The Sabbath demanded that they do no work on the seventh day as a commemoration of God's grace. You can do nothing for salvation. You can do nothing for spiritual growth. It's all grace. Periodic rest or recharging is necessary for the orderly function of the human body. A change of pace also helps. The health of the body also contributes to the freedom function of the mind.

The Sabbatical year of Israel was the generation test for grace. Under an agricultural economy, every seventh year they were to stop all work and live off the previous six year's production. This gave the land a rest. This gave the people a rest. This was a test of their faith-rest. Could they trust God to provide in the seventh year? Exodus 23:10-11; Lev. 25:3-4; Lev. 26:33-36.

"You shall sow your land for six years and gather in its yield, but on the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the needy of your people may eat; and whatever they leave the beast of the field may eat. You are to do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove." (Exodus 23:10-11, NASB)

"Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crop, but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath rest, a sabbath to the LORD; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard." (Leviticus 25:3-4, NASB)

"You, however, I will scatter among the nations and will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste. Then the land will enjoy its sabbaths all the days of the desolation, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it will observe the rest which it did not observe on your sabbaths, while you were living on it. As for those of you who may be left, I will also bring weakness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies. And the sound of a driven leaf will chase them, and even when no one is pursuing they will flee as though from the sword, and they will fall." (Leviticus 26:33-36, NASB)

The Jewish rejection of the sabbatical year was the basis for determining the length of the fifth cycle of discipline. Israel had gone 490 years missing the 70 sabbatical years. Therefore, God administered the fifth cycle of discipline to Israel in 586 BC to let the land pick up her Sabbaths. Lev. 26:33-36; 2 Chron. 36:20-21; Jer. 25:11-12; Dan. 9:2; Dan. 9:24-27.

"Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete." (2 Chronicles 36:20-21, NASB)

"This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the LORD, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation." (Jeremiah 25:11-12, NASB)



"in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years." (Daniel 9:2, NASB)

The Sabbatical Year of Jubilee occurred every 50 years. After 49 years, 7 Sabbaths, then the 50th year. On this year, all the real estate in the land went back to its original owners. All businesses went back to the original owners. Everything was on a lease basis. All slaves were to be freed and every 50 years they started over.

In the next 50 years, the smart ones picked up everyone else's. Whatever the means of distribution, the smart ones always get the land. They did do some equalizing. Profaning the Sabbath was associated with idolatry and the apostasy of the Jews. Ezek. 23:37-39.

"For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. Thus they have committed adultery with their idols and even caused their sons, whom they bore to Me, to pass through the fire to them as food. Again, they have done this to Me: they have defiled My sanctuary on the same day and have profaned My sabbaths. For when they had slaughtered their children for their idols, they entered My sanctuary on the same day to profane it; and lo, thus they did within My house." (Ezekiel 23:37-39, NASB)

Sabbath violation occurred after the restoration. Neh. 13:15-21.

"Then I reprimanded the nobles of Judah and said to them, "What is this evil thing you are doing, by profaning the sabbath day? Did not your fathers do the same, so that our God brought on us and on this city all this trouble? Yet you are adding to the wrath on Israel by profaning the sabbath." (Nehemiah 13:17-18, NASB)

"Once or twice the traders and merchants of every kind of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem. Then I warned them and said to them, "Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will use force against you." From that time on they did not come on the sabbath." (Nehemiah 13:20-21, NASB)

The Sabbath has been set aside in the Church Age. Col. 2:16-17; Book of Galatians. So now the Sabbath is not the seventh day of the week (Saturday), but the first day of the week (Sunday). 1 Cor. 16:2; Acts 20:7.

"Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day— things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ." (Colossians 2:16-17, NASB)

"On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come." (1 Corinthians 16:2, NASB)

"On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight." (Acts 20:7, NASB)