

The Seventh Day: A Sabbath Day

As we talk about the seventh day, and as we talk about God resting on the seventh day and consecrating and blessing it, we think about what is man's responsibility in observing a seventh days rest. God's first commands on what to do (and not to do) on the seventh day are given to Israel. These are the commands concerning the Sabbath. In order for us to understand what God expects of us, we need to understand what these Sabbath commands mean and who they apply to. This morning we will look at the Old Testament commands concerning the Sabbath.

Sabbath – שַׁבָּת - *Shabbat* – Sabbath, week.

(under infl. of יום in freq. 'יום הש') **Sabbath** (= ת + שבת) **1. sabbath: a.** primitive ליהוה לש; on seventh day יום השבת; time of change of watch in temple; orig. observed simply by *abstinence from labour*. **b.** Deut. reason for day is deliverance fr. Egypt, hence its consecration. **c.** intensified by antith. **d.** basis God's resting; ביום ה' H' on every sabbath, abbr. שבת שבת; work punished by stoning; trade prohib. **2. day of atonement** is a שבת שבתון. **3. sabbath year**, שבת שבתון. **4. = week** (?). **5. שבת הארץ** = *produce* in sabbath year (growing of itself). (pg 992)

The Command –

Exodus 20:8-11 ⁸ " Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. ¹¹ For *in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15 ¹² ' Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. ¹³ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴ but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. ¹⁵ And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

Remember - זָכַר **vb. remember -- Qal I.** human subj. **1. remember, recall, call to mind,** usu. as affecting present feeling, thought or action.

In Exodus 20, God commands Israel to remember the Sabbath day. If there is any confusion over what it means to remember, Moses uses the term "observe" when he repeats the command in Deuteronomy 5.

Holy - קָדַשׁ **vb. denom. be set apart, consecrated.**

God made the seventh day holy, when creation was finished, as we saw in Genesis 2. Here God commands Israel to keep the Sabbath holy. God set the day apart. Israel is to set the day apart in their lives. It is to be a special day to them. It seems there are two important, but interrelated things which they are to do to keep the Sabbath holy:

- They are to do not work.
- They are to make it a special day of worship.

Isaiah 56:2 Blessed *is* the man *who* does this, And the son of man *who* lays hold on it; Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And keeps his hand from doing any evil." ⁶ " Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, And to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants -- Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant --

Isaiah 58:13 " If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, *From* doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy *day* of the LORD honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking *your own* words,

What does keeping the Sabbath entail?

- Six days you shall labor and do all your work
- The seventh day you shall do no work

Why should Israel keep the Sabbath?

- The seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God
- In six days the LORD created
- On the seventh He rested
- The LORD blessed and hallowed the Sabbath
- God brought Israel out of the land of Egypt

Who should keep the Sabbath?

- God gives a list of people who must observe the Sabbath
 - The hearers of these passages: Israelites
 - Their children
 - Their servants
 - Their animals
 - Anyone who is living in Israel.
- This is a command given to the nation of Israel directly.

What was the consequence for not following the Sabbath command?

Exodus 31:14 – 16 - 'You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for *it is* holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does *any* work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. ¹⁵ 'Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh *is* the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does *any* work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. ¹⁶ 'Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations *as* a perpetual covenant.

Exodus 35:2 "Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.

What is considered not observing the Sabbath?

Manna – **Exodus 16:26** - ²⁶ "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, *which is the Sabbath*, there will be none."

Exodus 35:3 - ³ "You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day."

Numbers 15:32 Now while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day.

Nehemiah 10:31 *if* the peoples of the land brought wares or any grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we would not buy it from them on the Sabbath, or on a holy day; and we would forego the seventh year's *produce* and the exacting of every debt.

Nehemiah 13:15 – 18 In those days I saw *people* in Judah treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all *kinds of* burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned *them* about the day on which they were selling provisions. ¹⁶ Men of Tyre dwelt there also, who brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold *them* on the Sabbath to the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. ¹⁷ Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing *is* this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? ¹⁸ "Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath." ¹⁹ So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. Then I posted *some* of my servants at the gates, *so that* no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day.

Jeremiah 17:21, 22, 24, 27 - "Thus says the LORD: "Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring *it* in by the gates of Jerusalem; ²² "nor carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, nor do any work, but hallow the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. ²⁴ " And it shall be, if you heed Me carefully," says the LORD, "to bring no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but hallow the Sabbath day, to do no work in it, ²⁷ "But if you will not heed Me to hallow the Sabbath day, such as not carrying a burden when entering the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." ' "

How was Israel supposed to worship on the Sabbath?

Leviticus 16:31 "It *is* a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. *It is* a statute forever.

Leviticus 23:11 'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

Numbers 28:9, 10 ' And on the Sabbath day two lambs in their first year, without blemish, and two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, with its drink offering -- ¹⁰ *this is* the burnt offering for every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering with its drink offering.

Leviticus 24:8 "Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.

This is not the first place a Sabbath command occurs:

Exodus 16:23, 25, 26, 29 - Then he said to them, "This *is what* the LORD has said: 'Tomorrow *is* a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake *today*, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.' "

²⁵ Then Moses said, "Eat that today, for today *is* a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field.

²⁶ "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, *which is* the Sabbath, there will be none."

²⁹ "See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.

Here God does not give a command to remember the Sabbath, but instead instructs the Israelites on how to gather the manna. For six days God will cause the manna to appear, but on the sixth day, the Israelites were commanded to gather double because God was not going to give any manna on the Sabbath. This continued for forty years until Israel, under the command of Joshua, entered the land and was able to eat off of the produce of the land.

How else is the Sabbath principle observed?

- A seventh Sabbath

Leviticus 23:15, 16 ¹⁵ ' And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. ¹⁶ 'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

- A seventh year

Leviticus 25:2-7 ² "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD. ³ 'Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; ⁴ 'but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. ⁵ 'What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, *for* it is a year of rest for the land. ⁶ 'And the sabbath *produce* of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, ⁷ 'for your livestock and the beasts that *are* in your land -- all its produce shall be for food.

- A seventh seventh of years

Leviticus 25:8-16 ⁸ ' And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. ⁹ 'Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. ¹⁰ 'And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. ¹¹ 'That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather *the grapes* of your untended vine. ¹² 'For it *is* the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field. ¹³ ' In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession. ¹⁴ 'And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another. ¹⁵ 'According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you. ¹⁶ 'According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he sells to you *according* to the number *of the years* of the crops.

This week we looked very briefly at how God commanded Israel to keep the Sabbath. Next week we will look at the New Testament teaching concerning the Sabbath.