

The Seventh Day: A Day of Blessing

Genesis 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

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Last week we reflected on how the seventh day was a day of rest for God. It was a day, not that He needed to stop and rest because He was tired, but a day where He chose to cease His creative activity. His creation plan was finished.

This week we will look at what God has declared for this seventh day, which makes it special in ways which the other six days are not.

I. The Meaning – What Makes the Seventh Day Special

“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it”

בָּרַךְ vb. kneel, bless

A couple of places it is translated “bring up on his knees” and seems to have the idea of looking with favor on a child. In Judges 7, the same word is used of the men who dropped to their knees and drank like dogs.

God blessed creation:

Genesis 1:22 And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."

Genesis 1:28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

God blessed Abraham and Sarah, Isaac:

Genesis 12:2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.

Genesis 17:16 "And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother of nations*; kings of peoples shall be from her."

Genesis 25:11 And it came to pass, after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac dwelt at Beer Lahai Roi.

God blessed Ishmael:

Genesis 17:20 "And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great

nation.

Others blessed God:

Genesis 9:26 And he said: "Blessed *be* the LORD, The God of Shem, And may Canaan be his servant.

Deuteronomy 10:8 At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister to Him and to bless in His name, to this day.

There are only a few places where God blesses something that is not alive (animals or man):

Exodus 23:25 "So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you.

1 Samuel 9:13 "As soon as you come into the city, you will surely find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now therefore, go up, for about this time you will find him."

Many times in scripture we see men blessing other men (Isaac blessing Jacob instead of Esau, for instance, Jacob blessed pharaoh).

Blessing seems to pertain to God giving someone good things:

- Children (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Hannah)
- Land (Israel)
- Food (Israel)
- Peace
- Military Victory (Balaam)

Blessing seems to involve the giving of good to someone. In the case of someone blessing God, the meaning would be that we are trying to bring about good to God. For example, often the scriptures speak of blessing His name. We would bless His name by speaking good of God, and by bringing about good by our actions.

God blessed the Sabbath day:

Exodus 20:11 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.

God blessed the seventh day. It is special in a way the other six days are not. The seventh day is a day that reminds us of the Creator. It is a day which brings glory and honor to God which the other days do not. It is a day which is blessed to do this.

קָדַשׁ vb. denom. be set apart, consecrated

This concept goes hand in hand with the idea of blessing. The seventh day is set apart from the other days as a special day. Often times we see *qadosh* used of something that is holy. In Isaiah 6, the four creatures are crying out “*qadosh, qadosh, qadosh, is the Lord God of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory.*” Often, in scripture, the idea of *qadosh* is the idea of setting something aside for a special use:

Exodus 19:14 So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and **sanctified** the people, and they washed their clothes.

Moses sanctified the people of Israel so that they would be ready to serve the Lord.

Leviticus 8:10 Also Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that *was* in it, and **consecrated** them.

Numbers 7:1 Now it came to pass, when Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle, that he anointed it and **consecrated** it and all its furnishings, and the altar and all its utensils; so he anointed them and **consecrated** them

Moses set aside the tabernacle and all of the object made for it (lampstand, table, the laver, etc.) so that it would be ready to use to worship the Lord.

Leviticus 8:30 Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which *was* on the altar, and sprinkled *it* on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he **consecrated** Aaron, his garments, his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.

Moses sets aside Aaron and his sons and their garments so that they would be prepared to serve the Lord as priests.

Numbers 20:13 This *was* the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel contended with the LORD, and He was **hallowed** among them.

1 Samuel 16:5 And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. **Sanctify** yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he **consecrated** Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.

Samuel consecrated Jesse and his sons so that they could worship God and also so that God would be ready to pick the next king of Israel from among them.

2 Chronicles 7:7 Furthermore Solomon **consecrated** the middle of the court that *was* in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings, because the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat.

Solomon consecrated this part of the temple so that it would be

ready to serve the Lord.

The idea of sanctifying the seventh day is the idea of setting it apart for a specific purpose. The seventh day is special because it is a day created to honor and glorify the Creator. God could have just told us that He created the world in six days and we could have had a six day week. Instead God made this seventh day so that we would remember the Creator and give Him praise.

II. The Motive – Why God Made the Seventh Day Special

“because in it He rested”

Rested - שָׁבַת **vb. cease, desist, rest**

Isaiah 40:28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable.

The other six days, God chose to create. Although each day God did something different, He did something. On this seventh day, God chose not to create anything new. This is different from all the other days. God made this day special because He did something special on it. (This concept will be important in a couple of weeks – that God honors a day because He did something special on that day).

(Birthdays, anniversaries).

Again, God could have just given us a six day week, but He did not. He gave us this seventh day, a day on which He rested, which he ceased working.

III. The Motivation – What God Accomplished that made the Seventh Day Special

“from all His work which God had created and made.”

Better translation “from all His work which God had created, what He did.”

בָּרָא **vb. shape, create --** Qal shape, fashion, create, always of divine activity,
with acc. rei. 1. obj. heaven and earth; mankind; the host of heaven; heavens; ends of the earth; north and south; wind. **2.** the individual man; the smith and the waster; Israel as a nation; the seed of Israel. **3.** new conditions and circumstances: righteousness and salvation; darkness and evil; fruit of the lips; a new thing הַדְּשָׁה (a woman encompassing a man); cloud and flame over Zion. **4.** of transformations: a clean heart; new heaven and earth (in place of old); transformation of nature; with double acc. בּוֹרֵא יְרוּשָׁלַם גִּילָה *transform Jerusalem into rejoicing.*
Niph. Pass. 1. be created: heaven and earth; creatures; mankind; heavens. **2.** with reference to birth: אֲשֶׁר נִבְרָאתָ בְּמִקְוֶם *in the place where thou wast created* (i.e. native land). **3.** of something new, astonishing: miracles; new things, חֲדָשׁוֹת.
Pi. 1. cut down: a forest. **2.** cut out: יָדַּח hand, as an index. (pg 135)

Again, the focus is on the subject, the Creator. It is what God has made. The Hebrew word *bara* is always used of God creating something.

Psalm 89:12 The north and the south, You have created them; Tabor and Hermon rejoice in Your name.

Psalm 148:5 Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created.

Isaiah 45:12 I have made the earth, And created man on it. I -- My hands -- stretched out the heavens, And all their host I have commanded.

Gods rest on the seventh day, of course, pertains to His creative acts. The seventh day focuses our attention on a God who is able to speak the universe into being. It focuses our attention on a God who is powerful enough to make everything out of nothing. It should cause us to worship a God who has given us life. (There is an appropriate response to our reflection of the seventh day – and that is a response of worship).

Application:

- Our reflection on the seventh day should draw our attention to creation and thus, to the Creator. As we think on the seventh day we should respond in worship.
- God is setting a pattern for us. There is no Sabbath command at this point in scripture, but there seems to be a principle of resting from one's work. Man cannot work and is not made to work 24/7. God uses Himself as an example of taking time off from one's labors. He gave the seventh day as an example to us.