

20. The Sabbath

The beneficent Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom. The Sabbath is God's perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and redemptive acts.

The seventh-day Sabbath was given by God to all mankind on the final day of creation week. One of the Ten Commandments, it was faithfully observed by Jesus.

- God sanctified the Sabbath during creation week. Genesis 2:1-3
- God reiterated and perpetuated the Sabbath by including it in the Ten Commandments. Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15
- God gave the Sabbath to everyone, not just the Jews. Isaiah 56:6-7; Mark 2:27
- God foresaw and predicted that the Sabbath would be especially attacked by His enemies. Daniel 7:25
- Jesus set a right example in Sabbath observance. Luke 4:16
- Jesus' followers kept the Sabbath after He was crucified. Luke 23:55-56
- The Sabbath lasts from sundown on Friday until sundown on Saturday. Leviticus 23:32; Mark 1:29-32
- To properly observe the Sabbath, we should abstain from doing business transactions or anything that might sidetrack us from delighting in the Lord. Nehemiah 13:15-19; Exodus Isaiah 58:13-14

The Sabbath is a sign of our special relationship with God as His redeemed people. Keeping it demonstrates our allegiance to Him and is a sign of His covenant with us. It is a time for communing with God and doing good.

- It is a sign of our special relationship. Exodus 31:13-17
- Keeping the Sabbath demonstrates allegiance to God. Ezekiel 20:12, 20
- It is a time for coming to know and delight in God. Isaiah 58:13-14
- Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, gave us an example of doing good works on the Sabbath. Matthew 12:1-12
- The Sabbath commemorates our spiritual rest in Jesus. Hebrews 4:1-11
- The restoration of the Sabbath truth is part of the last-day message of the church. Exodus 20:11; Revelation 14:7

Personal Application

-  If Christians live every day for the Lord, what is special about the Sabbath?
-  Why did Jesus go to the synagogue every Sabbath?
-  The Sabbath is a gift of time that God has given to me, which I can joyfully return to Him in worship and doing good.

Commitment

Father, I believe that You gave the seventh-day Sabbath to all mankind. I intend to follow Jesus' example by worshipping and doing good on it.