

THE LAST DAY OF PROPHECY

DISCOVER THE REST OF THE STORY

THE BIBLE SABBATH

Shortly after the two new humans met, Adam and Eve strolled through their new Eden home on the sixth day of creation, blessed with every sweet fruit and with fresh, pure water . . . among many other wonderful blessings. However, as the sun began to set, the Lord had in store for them another gift, a unique blessing for all humanity—a special day in time. The Bible puts it this way . . .

“Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 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. 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 2:1–3).

This amazing day, the day the Bible says God blessed and sanctified, is called the **SABBATH**—given to our human parents before they fell into sin. It is a day that many have lost sight of through nearly 6,000 years of human history, but nonetheless, God has always intended it to be a central part of our lives. Take note how three divine actions established this day:

- God rested on the Sabbath. Obviously, the Lord does not rest from fatigue—instead, this word simply indicates that God ceased His work of creating.
- Second, God blessed the Sabbath. This tells us that those who keep the Sabbath will experience a special blessing too!
- Third, God sanctified the Sabbath. To sanctify something means to make it holy. The Sabbath is sacred time set apart by God for a holy use.

THE MANNA MIRACLE AND THE SABBATH

When the Israelites were captives in Egypt, they had pretty much forgotten about God’s Sabbath day. But soon after they were set free, the Lord reminded them through an amazing miracle.

When the people traveled through the wilderness toward the Promised Land, they ran out of food. So God provided them manna—small, dough-like pellets—that appeared on the ground every morning. But on the sixth day, they were instructed to gather a double portion so that there would be enough to eat on the Sabbath. “Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none” (EXODUS 16:26). When some of the people went out to gather manna on the Sabbath, the Lord said, “How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws? . . . So the people rested on the seventh day” (vv. 28, 30).

For 40 years the Israelites experienced this weekly manna miracle and were constantly reminded of the seventh-day Sabbath.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND THE SABBATH

From Mount Sinai, God spoke His Ten Commandments to the children of Israel. He also wrote them with His own finger on stone tablets and gave them to Moses. In the very heart of this law is the fourth commandment, which reads:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 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. 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” (EXODUS 20:8–11).

Every commandment in God’s moral law is vital to our happiness and joy (JAMES 2:10). Nothing should be left out, including the fourth commandment, which auspiciously begins with the word “Remember.” This word hearkens us back to creation—when God gave the Sabbath for all people and before there was any Jew.

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CHRIST AND THE SABBATH

Did you know Christ kept the Sabbath on a regular basis while on earth? “So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read” (**LUKE 4:16**). The Bible teaches that Christ Himself is the Creator (**SEE HEBREWS 1:1, 2**). He also identifies Himself as the great “I AM” (**JOHN 8:58**). So it was actually Jesus who set apart the seventh day as the Sabbath.

Not only does the Sabbath remind us of Christ as our maker, but the seventh day also symbolizes the rest we have in Jesus as our Savior and Redeemer (**SEE DEUTERONOMY 5:14**).

While on earth Jesus could have done away with the Sabbath, but instead stated that “Sabbath was made for man” (**MARK 2:27**). And Christ showed that He expected His followers to be keeping the Sabbath 40 years after His death during the destruction of Jerusalem when He warned, “Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath” (**MATTHEW 24:20**).

THE APOSTLES AND THE SABBATH

The Scriptures also record that the apostles and early Christians observed the seventh-day Sabbath on a regular basis. “Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures” (**ACTS 17:2**). Throughout the New Testament, the early church kept the Sabbath as their regular practice. (**SEE ACTS 13:42; 17:2; HEBREWS 4:9**.)

What about today? The Sabbath is still full of deep meaning for the Christian. It is a constant reminder that our world was created by God and that Jesus is our redemption (**DEUTERONOMY 5:15**) and our sanctification (**EXODUS 31:13**). It is also a sign of our loyalty to God (**REVELATION 14:12**).

STUDY QUESTIONS

Q. What is the connection between the Sabbath and the covenant?

A. “Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them” (**EZEKIEL 20:12**).

Q. Are there other types of sabbaths found in the Bible besides the weekly Sabbath?

A. There are seven annual, ceremonial sabbaths not directly related to the weekly Sabbath found in the Ten Commandments (**SEE LEVITICUS 23:7, 8, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28, 35, 36, 38**).

Q. Which day of the week is the Sabbath?

A. “But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God” (**EXODUS 20:10**). “Now when the Sabbath was past . . . very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen” (**MARK 16:1, 2**).

Q. Will people keep the Sabbath in God’s new earth?

A. “For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me . . . so shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, says the LORD” (**ISAIAH 66:22, 23**).

Q. Have the days of the week changed since Christ’s time?

A. No. Encyclopedias and reference books do not record any change to the calendar that has ever affected the weekly cycle. Our seventh day is the same one that Jesus kept holy.

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