



## Genesis 2:2-3

(2) And by *the beginning of* the seventh day God finished His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. (3) And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

*A Faithful Version*

[Genesis 2:2-3](#) sets the tone and establishes the first reason for Sabbath-keeping: we are to follow His example. Because He specifically rested on the seventh day of creation, the [Sabbath](#) has universal validity. It is an example from creation, not from one of the Patriarchs, nor from [Moses](#), nor from any Jews—because there were no Jews then.

The Scripture clearly states that this was *the* seventh day, not *a* seventh day. Though Genesis 2 is not the theological beginning of the Sabbath, yet without doubt, [Exodus 20:11](#) shows that the keeping of it as a religious day of worship has its foundation firmly anchored in Genesis 1 and 2.

*Sabbath* does not literally mean "to rest." Instead, it means "to stop" or "to cease." Resting is the result of stopping what one does on the other six days. [God](#) could have rested at any time, or He need not have rested at all. He could have ended the creative cycle at the end of the sixth day, but He did not. The Sabbath is, in fact, His final creative act of that week. He created by resting.

The writer draws attention to what God did on that day even as it is drawn to what He did on the other six days. In reality, the Sabbath is the very crown of the creation week. He topped His creative activities off by creating a specific period of time sanctified for rest. It was as specifically created as what He did on the other six days. On the Sabbath, the creating continued, but took on a different form than it had on the other days, a form not outwardly visible.

As a believer gradually learns, the Sabbath symbolizes to God's children the fact that God is still creating ([John 5:16-17](#)). The Sabbath is an integral part of the process of creation. The physical part was finished at the end of the sixth day, but the spiritual aspect began with the creation of the Sabbath and continues to this day, even as the effects of creation on the other six days continue to this day.

At the end of the creation sequence, God created and sanctified an environment to play a major role in producing eternal and everlasting life. Through the creation of the Sabbath, God shows that the life-producing process is not complete with just the physical environment. The Sabbath plays an important role in producing spiritual life, a quality of life having a dimension that the physical alone cannot supply. Toward this end, no other day can be employed with the Sabbath's quality of effectiveness.

There is a valid reason for this. The Sabbath is not a mere afterthought of a tremendous creation, but a deliberate memorializing of the most enduring thing man knows: time. Sabbath time plays an especially important role in God's spiritual creation. Through the Sabbath, it is as if God says, "Look at what I have made, and consider that I am not yet finished creating. I am reproducing Myself, and you can be a part of My spiritual creation."

God created the Sabbath by ceasing from His physical exertion, setting the example for man also to cease from the normal activities of the other six workdays. He also specifically blessed and sanctified it. He did this to no other day, yet men argue against keeping it—even though [Jesus](#), like His Father, kept it. It is truly the least of the commandments to men.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

**[The Fourth Commandment](#)**

**Related Topics:**

[Creation](#)

[Fourth Commandment](#)

[Sabbath](#)

[Sabbath as Entering God's Rest](#)

[Sabbath as Holy Time](#)

[Sabbath as Memorial of Creation](#)

[Sabbath as Spiritual Creation](#)

[Sabbath Keeping](#)

[Sabbath Rest](#)

[Sanctification of Sabbath](#)

[The Fourth Commandment](#)