

# God's Sabbath

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The Ten Commandments seem to hinge on the fourth: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." From this simple statement flows a stream of spiritual lessons and principles about God, man and our potential. Disregarding the Sabbath is like throwing away the key to a treasure chest—we are ignoring a vital area of understanding that will open up our minds to God and His purpose.

The Sabbath is much more than a weekly day of rest. It is the one day each week that we devote totally to God, and thus it is a good regulator and barometer of our relationship with Him. The following study will refresh the Bible's basic information on the Sabbath, and—it is hoped—spur further study on this most important of topics.

**1.** Who made the Sabbath and when? Genesis 2:2-3.

**2.** For whom was the Sabbath made? Mark 2:27.

**Comment:** Since the Sabbath has been in force from Creation, it is not just for the Jews, but for all mankind!

**3.** What did God do on the seventh day of Creation that serves as an example of how we should keep the Sabbath? Same verses and Exodus 20:8-11.

**Comment:** Because God rested after six days of labor, the Sabbath is also our day of rest and a memorial of Creation. We are to remember, not only what God did in the physical creation, but also that His spiritual creation continues in us.

**4.** Other than the fact that we do no work, how is the Sabbath different from the other six days? Same verses.

**Comment:** God blessed the seventh day, making it holy. It is holy time, set apart for God's use! Only God can make a day holy, and He does this by putting Himself, through His Spirit, into it. We are then instructed to "keep" it holy.

**5.** How do we keep the Sabbath holy? Leviticus 23:3; Exodus 16:23; Jeremiah 17:21-22.

**Comment:** These scriptures give a few examples of things God prohibits on His Sabbath: working, cooking, carrying burdens. God does not make a comprehensive list of "dos and don'ts" for us to follow. Instead, He gives us principles of what is proper and improper Sabbath behavior, and we then must use God's Spirit to decide our actions.

**6.** Is the Sabbath a "sign"? Exodus 31:12-17; Isaiah 56:1-7.

**Comment:** A sign identifies a business, a street, a product, etc., and so does the Sabbath! It identifies God's people! Notice also that this covenant, made after the ratification of the Old Covenant, bound the Sabbath as a "perpetual covenant" upon God's people.

7. Who is "Lord of the Sabbath"? Mark 2:28.

**Comment:** As its Creator (John 1:1-3, 14), Jesus is "Lord of the Sabbath." As a man, He showed us the intent of this commandment in numerous accounts recorded in the four gospels.

8. Did Jesus keep the Sabbath? Luke 4:16. Did Paul? Acts 17:1-2. Did the early church? Acts 13:42-44; 16:13.

9. Is the Sabbath a burden or a "delight"? Isaiah 58:13-14.

**Comment:** If we keep the Sabbath properly, and work to improve our relationship with God, this holy time will be most precious and a tremendous blessing each week!