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# GOD WORKS FOR OUR REST

EXODUS 31:12-18



Yesterday we learned about working for God. Today we learn about resting in God. We're considering Exodus 31:12-18 where God expands on his Sabbath command, and we're asking, 'What does this teach us about God?' As we've worked our way through Exodus, we've seen how God used everything to teach Israel about who he is. Nothing happened by chance, but rather God organized providence, people, and places so that Israel could learn who God was. Same goes for this Sabbath command. What does it teach us about God?

## LEARNING

### THE SABBATH SAYS GOD IS IMPORTANT

After giving Israel so many laws, God prioritizes one of them. **“Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths”** (13). Why ‘above all’? Because if Israel gave up this command, all the others would quickly follow.

God emphasized the importance of this command by saying, **“This is a sign between me and you”** (13). Like all signs, the Sabbath was given to warn them, to keep them on the right path, and to direct them safely to their destination.

God then underlined the importance of the Sabbath by calling them to obey it **“throughout your generations”** (13), and **“throughout their generations as a covenant forever”** (17).

And just in case they were still in any doubt, God highlighted the importance of the Sabbath by adding the sanction of death for any who profane it (14, 15).

**GOD IS SERIOUS ABOUT THE SABBATH BECAUSE HE WANTS PEOPLE TO BE SERIOUS ABOUT HIM.**

Why was it so important? Because it taught them that God is holy.

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## THE SABBATH SAYS GOD IS HOLY

The holiness of the day was communicated in three ways. First, God said he gave them the Sabbath that **“you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you”** (13). It was a sign that separated them from the rest of the world and said, “This people are different.” Next, God said, **“You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you”** (14). And finally, it wasn’t just a day for rest but a day of **“solemn rest, holy to the Lord”** (15).

THE SABBATH SEPARATES  
FROM SIN AND TO HOLINESS.

Has God given any example to help with this? Yes, he gave himself.

## THE SABBATH SAYS GOD IS OUR MODEL

The sign of the Sabbath ultimately pointed to God as an example to follow. **“It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed”** (17). God wasn’t telling them to do something he didn’t do himself. No, it was a pointer to what God did on six days and didn’t do on the seventh day. He didn’t need to rest but chose to do so to encourage his people who do need it. In doing so he revealed himself as the one who worked for his people and then rested and refreshed his people. God’s work was followed by his and his people’s rest.

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LOVING

The Sabbath says God is important, God is holy, and God is our model. Praise God for this sign that he has given us for our spiritual benefit. And just in case we think that the New Testament has somehow eliminated this sign, Jesus reminded the Pharisees that he (not they) is Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:8), and it was made to benefit people, not burden them (Mark 2:27). He still calls laborers to rest in him (Matt.12:28). While some of the small details have changed, the Lord’s claim on the day remains and its message remains the same. God is important, God is holy, and God is our example.

LIVING

Use the Sabbath given by God to enjoy Sabbath rest in God.

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