

# **Lesson Book:**

***The Sabbath – What is it?***

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## INTRODUCTION

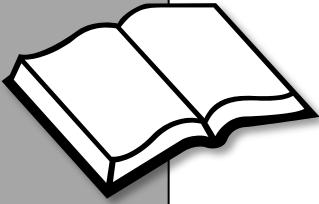
The purpose of this text is to aid the reader in a better understanding of various truths found in the Holy Scriptures and discovering for themselves how the Scriptures apply to their lives. It is the desire of this work that through this study of the Scriptures each learner will be brought closer in their relationship to their Creator as a result of these lessons.

Presented on the following pages is a series of one page lessons associated with the topic of “*The Sabbath – What is it?*”. Each lesson has been optimized to work best for use in a small group, but is also appropriate for individual review. In fact, if you plan to meet with others to work through this lesson book, it is highly recommend that you work through the lessons ahead of time to find answers in Scripture, as most lessons welcome discussion. When prompted for discussion, *opinions* should be heard and discussed, of course. However, a Scripture verse or passage should accompany discussions as the foundation for what the belief or opinion is based on. Study tools, such as a printed concordance or searchable Bible software to help you find the location of a Scripture that you may be having a hard time remembering, are encouraged for use with these lessons. Please remember always to study the Scriptures in context of the full passage to ensure that it properly accompanies the topic being discussed.

Concerning the source used for these lessons, please note that all Scripture quotations in this book are taken from the Modern King James Version of the Bible. The purpose in using this particular English translation is simply because of its wide acceptance and the fact that it is public domain in the United States, allowing the text to be freely quoted without copyright restriction. From the start, readers are encouraged to have his or her preferred translation of their Bible alongside for reference while reading along.

In addition, traditional Christian terms and names are *intentionally* used throughout this lesson book to reach a larger scope of readers and help those who may be beginners in this knowledge learn with ease. Occasionally, the need to employ the use of a Hebrew term or phrase may present itself for a clearer understanding of Scripture; when this occurs, the corresponding English meaning is always supplied.

# The Origin of The Sabbath



## Scripture Highlights

**Genesis 2:1-3** And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He had rested from all His work which God created to make.

**Exodus 20:8-10** 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 Jehovah your God. You shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger within your gates. (This is the 4<sup>th</sup> of the Ten Commandments)

**Exodus 31:13-14** Speak also to the sons of Israel, saying, Truly you shall keep My sabbaths. For it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, to know that I am Jehovah who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath therefore, for it *is* holy to you. Everyone that defiles it shall surely be put to death. For whoever does *any* work in it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

**1John 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome.

## Group Study

- 1) Please read Genesis chapters 1-2 and record what He says after each day is completed. We will discuss this later.

This is the account of God's creation of the earth and everything in it. On the sixth day He made man, and on the seventh day it says He stopped His work and rested.

We see in Gen 2:1-3 listed above, this day was different from the other days of creation week, because God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.

The word "sanctify" means to set something apart as holy - for special use. God specifically set apart the seventh day, making it holy. He finished His work on the previous six days and then stopped for the seventh day. It is His "Day of Rest" and He commanded us to observe this day as well.

## Hebrew Word Study

The two occurrences of the word "rested" in Genesis 2:1-3 listed above, come from the Hebrew word "Shabbat", often pronounced as "Sabbath" in English. It means to cease or rest. This is how Sabbath gets its meaning as "a day of rest." God "Sabbathed" on the seventh day and commands we do the same.

## Group Discussion

Please discuss the following questions:

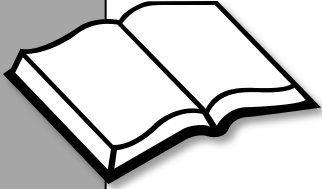
- 1) You may have heard it said the Sabbath is for the Jews. According to Exodus 20:8-10 listed above, whose sabbath is it?
- 2) According to 1 John 5:3, how do we show our love for God? Does John say these commandments, which include the Sabbath rest, are a burden?
- 3) How serious is keeping the Sabbath of Jehovah, our God and for what length of time does this apply? What does Exodus 31:13-14 tell us?

I hope you have seen the Sabbath is not a Jewish day. It is God's day of rest as He commanded to all of us who want to follow after Him. You likely recognize the Ten commandments already, but not the definition that goes with them. You see this above in the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment regarding the Sabbath.

The purpose of all of God's Law, including the Sabbath, is to be a benefit to mankind; a blessing for all who choose to obey and use it as He intended.

# What Does it Mean to Rest?

## Scripture Highlights



**Exodus 20:8-10** 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 Jehovah your God. You shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger within your gates. (This is the 4<sup>th</sup> of the Ten Commandments)

**Exodus 16:22-23** And it happened, on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one. And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said to them, This is that which Jehovah has said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath to Jehovah. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil. And that which remains over, lay up for you to be kept until the morning.

**Isaiah 58:13-14** If you turn your foot because of the Sabbath, from doing what you please on My holy days, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of Jehovah, honorable; and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in Jehovah; and I will cause you to ride on the high places of the earth, and feed yourself with the inheritance of Jacob your father. For the mouth of Jehovah has spoken.

## Review

You have now learned three important aspects about the Sabbath:

- 1) It is God's Sabbath and not the Jew's Sabbath
- 2) John told you to show your love of God by keeping His commandments and they are not a burden and
- 3) It is a day of rest for everyone in your household, including servants, strangers, visitors, and animals.

The Sabbath is God's gift to mankind by the One who designed and created us. It is a time for physical, emotional, and spiritual renewal. God knew that we would need this time to nurture and strengthen a right relationship with Him.

Part of the Sabbath command reads, "Six days you shall labor and do all your work...". God tells us we should take care of our ordinary work and concerns on the other six days, which leaves our time and our minds free to properly worship and obey Him on the Sabbath. When we are free to focus our minds and thoughts on God's way and purpose, the Sabbath truly becomes the blessing and delight God intends it to be. (See Isaiah 58:13-14 listed above)

**Romans 2:13** For it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.

## Group Study and Discussion

Please discuss the following questions:

- 1) After reading all the verses listed above, do you think eating out at a restaurant is acceptable on the Sabbath? Those who cook and serve are servants to you.
- 2) Would it be acceptable to go fishing, shopping, or to a movie on the Sabbath? Is this honoring God or pleasing yourself?
- 3) What does Scripture tell us about preparing our meals for this Sabbath day? Please read the entire passage located in Exodus 16:22-30.
- 4) What does Scripture tell us about buying and selling on the Sabbath? Read Nehemiah 10:31 and 13:15-22.
- 5) Make a list of those things you should complete by the 6<sup>th</sup> day. Then discuss how you would like to spend your Sabbath day of rest with God.
- 6) Please read Deuteronomy 4:39-40.

A lot of this is likely new to you. Are you surprised or shocked by it? You are on the path of learning.

# What Day is God's Sabbath?

## Scripture Highlights

**Gen 1:19** And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

**Mark 2:28** Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the sabbath.

**1Chronicles 17:27** And now let it please You to bless the house of Your servant so that it may be before You forever. For You have blessed, O Jehovah, and it is blessed forever.

**Psalms 119:89** ...Forever, O Jehovah, Your Word is settled in the heavens.

**Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever.

**John 8:29** And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things which please Him.

## Group Study and Discussion

I'm sure you are both surprised and shocked by what you've learned thus far. This can be a major transition for you so don't worry about doing everything perfect right away. You're on a learning path. God will bless you as you start to keep the Sabbath the way He intended.

Now, let's look at two more things that are going to turn your Sabbath upside down. When is the Sabbath? Let's begin by reviewing your notes from the initial teaching in this lesson. You were asked to keep track of what was said at the completion of each day of creation. Genesis 1:19 above, is an example.

1) What does it say? How is a day defined? Is it midnight to midnight? Is it morning to morning?

Evening and morning is the phrase used each time. From God's perspective and not man-made calendars and clocks for keeping time, a day begins at evening, therefore sunset. Sunset (evening) begins our "reckoning of time". Sunset "begins our day". Then comes morning, afternoon, and sunset, which will complete "this day". Sunset will complete one day and initiate the next day. "Sunset to Sunset" is one day on the calendar. Not midnight to midnight. Not morning then night. But, sunset to sunset. Seems backwards doesn't it? In reality, it is the rest of the world that is backward to God's way of keeping time.

2) What day of the week is the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath?

What day of the week has always been known as the first day of the week?

The church says Sunday is "the Lord's Day". Is this true? What does Mark 2:28 say? "Lord" means "Master".

Sunday has always been known as the first day of the week with Saturday being the 7<sup>th</sup> day. The Sabbath is and always has been the Sabbath of God; the 7<sup>th</sup> day; Friday sundown to Saturday sundown. Roman Emperor Constantine in 321 AD changed the Sabbath to Sunday to blend with Roman sun worship. He then changed the terminology to "The Lord's Day", implying Jesus arose on this day. Jesus was not crucified on Good Friday either, but that is another teaching.

3) According to 1 Chronicles 17:27, when God blesses something, is it blessed forever or until man changes it?

What about Psalms 119:89? How long is His Word settled?

What about Hebrews 13:8 and John 8:29? Does Jesus change? Jesus says He always does what pleases the Father.

Do times change? Does His Word change as societal customs change? Should we adapt His Word to today to keep it relevant as many suggest? In other words, does any man have authority to modify, add, or subtract from His Word? Please read Matthew 5:17-20.