

COVENANT SIGN

I
Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

II
Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III
Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV
Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy: six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid, thy ox, nor thy ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V
Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI
Thou shalt not kill.

VII
Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII
Thou shalt not steal.

IX
Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X
Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.



Lesson 9 for
May 29, 2021

The Sabbath is special in many ways. It is a reminder of Creation (Ex. 20:11) and Redemption (Dt. 5:15). It is a sign of the Everlasting Covenant, and it will last forever (Is. 66:23). At the same time, it is also one of the ritual laws that led to Christ (Nm. 28:9-10).

The Sabbath goes beyond being a mere allotment of time; it is a promise of a rich and meaningful relationship with God. It is a day we set aside everything in our lives except God and take time to strengthen our relationship with Him.



-  The Sabbath in Creation
-  From Creation to Sinai
-  From Sinai to our time:
 -  Covenant sign
 -  Sign of sanctification
 -  A sign to remember

THE SABBATH IN CREATION

"Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." (Génesis 2:3)

God created signs to determine specific time periods. The Sun and the Moon set the days and the years (Genesis 1:14), and the Sabbath set the weeks (Genesis 2:2). Therefore, there are physical events that determine days and years. These events are repetitive and measurable.



However, weeks cannot be measured by physical phenomena. God established them, and we are still measuring weeks like God did. God created the Sabbath as a sign for all humankind, not just for Israel (Mark 2:27).

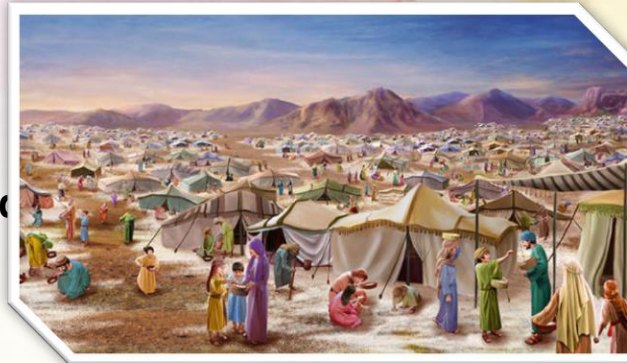


FROM CREATION TO SINAI

“Then he said to them, ‘This is what the Lord has said: “Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.”” (Exodus 16:23)

In that moment, the people of Israel were grumbling about God because of hunger at the Desert of Sin.

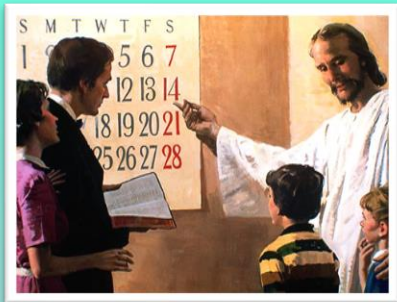
They were not able to keep the Sabbath while being slaves in Egypt. In addition to giving them manna to eat, God also reminded them of the importance of resting on the Sabbath day.



Miraculously, the manna got maggoty the day after picking it up, but not on Sabbath. Besides, manna did not come on Sabbath. They gathered additional manna and cooked it on Friday.

God wanted them to devote the Sabbath to be in communion with Him (Ex. 16:29). He still wants to spend the Sabbath with us today.





COVENANT SIGN

“Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.”
(Exodus 31:16)

Four times in the Bible the Sabbath is designated as a sign:

Exodus 31:13

To remind us that God sanctifies us

Exodus 31:17

To remind us that God is our Creator

Ezekiel 20:12

To remind us that God sanctifies us

Ezekiel 20:20

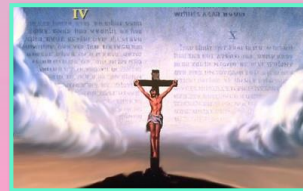
So that we may know God

The Sabbath is an external sign that marks us as participants of the Everlasting Covenant.



By dedicating a special day to God on the day He designated, we acknowledge that we have accepted His Covenant, that we want to know Him better every day, and that we want to be more like Him.

The Sabbath is also a sign of God's grace. It is a reminder of Jesus' work of redemption in our favor (Dt. 5:13-15).



SIGN OF SANCTIFICATION

“Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you” (Éxodo 31:13)

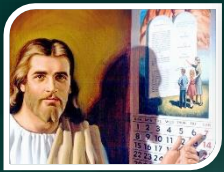
In two of the four times the Sabbath is introduced as a sign, it is mentioned that God wants us to know that He sanctifies us.

To know God means more than just intellectual knowledge. It involves a close relationship with Him. This relationship is specially strengthened thanks to our communication with Him during Sabbath.

Knowing the Lord involves serving Him (1Chr. 28:9); fearing Him (Is. 11:2); believing in Him (Is. 43:10); trusting Him and seeking Him (Ps. 9:10).

God can sanctify us through this close relationship with Him.





A SIGN TO REMEMBER

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8)

There are three things we must do with the Sabbath: to remember it, to keep it, and to keep it holy (Ex. 20:8; Dt. 5:12). They cover three aspects in time:

Past



The Sabbath reminds us of Creation

Present



We enjoy a special moment of communion with God when keeping it

Future



God is sanctifying us to prepare us for an eternity with Him (Is. 66:23; Rev. 21:27)



The Sabbath is a seal, a sign of identity. It contains the elements that identify its creator: who is signing (God); His realm (heavens and earth); and the date of the signature (at Creation).

“Great blessings are enfolded in the observance of the Sabbath, and God desires that the Sabbath day shall be to us a day of joy. There was joy at the institution of the Sabbath. God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All things that He had made He pronounced “very good.” Genesis 1:31. Heaven and earth were filled with rejoicing [...] Our heavenly Father desires through the observance of the Sabbath to preserve among men a knowledge of Himself. He desires that the Sabbath shall direct our minds to Him as the true and living God, and that through knowing Him we may have life and peace.”

E. G. W. (Testimonies for the Church, book 6, cp. 44, p. 349)