

Still Times

Exodus 16, 20, 23, 31; Psalm 92

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- Vacation planning and the need to find a “safe place”
- For many, vacation means work for they take their work with them
- Moses understood the importance of retreating to a “safe place” where he could commune with God

Still Times

A. The GIFT of Sabbath

- Exodus 16:21-30-- *“So they gathered it every morning, every man according to his need. And when the sun became hot, it melted. And so it was, on the sixth day, that they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. 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.’ ” So they laid it up till morning, as Moses commanded; and it did not stink, nor were there any worms in it. Then Moses said, “Eat that today, for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none.” Now it happened that some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather, but they found none. And the LORD said to Moses, “How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws? See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.” So the people rested on the seventh day.”*
1. **The Sabbath was engrained into their lifestyle**
 2. **The Sabbath was modeled by God in creation.**
 - Genesis 2:2-3-- *“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”*
 - Genesis 1:31a-- *“Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.”*
 3. **It was codified by God in the Law given to Moses.**
 - a. **Commanded to observe the Sabbath**
 - Exodus 20:8-11-- *“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 the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”*
 - b. **Consequences for failure to keep the Sabbath**
 - Exodus 31:12-17-- *“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘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. You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath*

throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.' "

- 1) The keeping of the Sabbath was the sign of the Old Covenant.
- 2) Failure to keep the Sabbath was punishable by death

B. The BENEFITS of the Sabbath

1. Designed for your benefit

- Exodus 31:14-- *"observe the Sabbath because it is holy to you."*
- Mark 2:27-- *"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."*

2. Enables you to "Catch your breath"

- Exodus 23:12-- *"Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female seroant and the stranger may be refreshed."*

3. It's the Antidote to a spiritual malady.

- a. Two spiritual maladies to which we are susceptible: Materialism and Workaholism
- b. "Tithing" is the antidote for Materialism for it reminds us that everything we have belongs to God.
- c. "Sabbath" is the antidote for Workaholism for it tests our faith as to whether we can trust God to meet our daily needs.
- d. God also instituted yearly feast days and holidays when they were not to work, but rest. Plus every seven years was considered a Sabbatical year, when they were not to sow but rather live off of what the land produced on its own. Then every fifty years was the Year of Jubilee, another Sabbatical year when again they were to live off the land. All of this was a test of their faith. Could they trust God to take care of them while the land rested.

4. What are the Antidotes TODAY?

- a. "Tithing" and keeping the Sabbath are not commanded in the New Testament.
- b. Instead of "Tithing", the New Testament teaches "grace" giving, that is, giving in proportion to how God has prospered us and as the Spirit of God prompts us. We are encouraged to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, and we do so by investing our finances in reaching the lost.
- c. Instead of keeping the Sabbath on Saturday, we have the freedom to decide when rest should occur.
 - Romans 14:5-- *One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind."*

C. The Restorative ACTIVITIES on the Sabbath

- Psalm 92:1-15-- *"It is good to give thanks to the LORD, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning, and Your faithfulness every night, on an instrument of ten strings, on the lute, and on the harp, with harmonious sound. For You, LORD, have made me glad through Your work; I will triumph in the works of Your hands. O LORD, how great are Your works! Your thoughts are very deep. A senseless man does not know, nor does a fool understand this. When the wicked spring up like grass, and when all the workers of iniquity flourish, it is that they may be destroyed forever. But You, LORD, are on high forevermore. For behold, Your enemies, O LORD, for behold, Your enemies shall perish; All the workers of iniquity shall be*

scattered. But my horn You have exalted like a wild ox; I have been anointed with fresh oil. My eye also has seen my desire on my enemies; My ears hear my desire on the wicked who rise up against me. The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those who are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing, To declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."

1. Time for **REJOICING**
2. Time for **REFLECTION** on the greatness of God, His works, and His Word
3. Time for **RECALIBRATION**. Tuning our minds and hearts to the standard of truth
 - a. **God is "exalted forever"**
 - Psalm 93:1-2-- *"The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The LORD is clothed, He has girded Himself with strength. Surely the world is established, so that it cannot be moved. Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting."*
 - b. **God exalts whoever He desires.**
 - c. **True prosperity comes to the righteous**
 - Psalm 92:12-15-- *"The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those who are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing, to declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."*
 - Matthew 6:33-- *"seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."*
 - 1 Timothy 6:6-10-- *"godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."*

APPLICATION for you and I?

1. Personal experience with "burn out" in the past and the need today to take a mini-sabbatical.
2. If you struggle with weariness and feeling overwhelmed...
 - a. You need to give yourself permission to take time to REST! You need some "Still Time".
 - b. You need to make the necessary preparations to do so. You need to prepare ahead so as to be able to take time off.
 - c. The physical and spiritual benefits of still time.