

GENESIS: GRACE FROM THE BEGINNING

THE ONE WHOSE YOKE IS EASY, AND WHOSE BURDEN IS LIGHT

Genesis 1:31 - 2:3

The words "sabbath," "seven," and "rest" all come from the same root word in Hebrew, *Shabat*. The heart of the meaning of Sabbath is rest. The Old Testament Sabbath (Saturday) was a picture of the real Sabbath. The true Sabbath is a rest; the Old Testament Sabbath was a "shadow," a picture of that true rest.

In Colossians 2:13-17, Paul explained that the shadow-Sabbath ended at the cross. The next day was the Day of Resurrection, when the Lord Jesus rose from the grave. On that day a new day began—the Lord's Day (Sunday).

Today we celebrate the concept of Sabbath without being bound by dates or legalistic requirements—a day of rest, of worship, of celebration, and of enjoying God's blessings. And all of it began as a reflection of God's eternal character revealed at the completion of Creation.

1. God's WAYS are always perfect (Gen. 1:31-2:1)

- All of Creation as originally made was perfect. Creating mankind, the epitome of God's creation, was "very good".
- When you are born from above as a child of God, you are declared righteous – from sinner, to "very good". Your status is forever changed in the sight of God, when Christ's perfect righteousness is credited (imputed) to you (Rom. 5:18-19)

2. God's WORK is always complete (Gen. 2:2)

- God's rest means completion, not exhaustion.
- In the same way, when Jesus said "It is Finished" (John 19:30), it means that He had accomplished everything that is required for Him to become the once-and-forever sacrifice that every person needs to be forgiven by God and be related back to Him (Hebrews 10:11-14).

3. God's WILL is to distinguish the seventh day for a testimony about His nature: that God is a completer, a finisher, and a perfecter (Heb. 12:2)

- Sabbath is a celebration of His perfect work. It is a statement that God could not improve on or add more to what He had already finished—that everything was perfect. God's ability to complete and perfect His work calls for a recurring celebration—the concept of Sabbath.
- God Himself stopped to enjoy what He had made. Let us follow His lead and learn to enjoy the rest of His blessings—family, fellowship, worship, etc.
- For believers, God's rest includes His peace, confidence of salvation, reliance on His strength, and assurance of a future heavenly home (Matthew 11:29). The spiritual rest that God gives is not incomplete or unfinished. It is a rest that is based upon a completed work, just like the rest which God took after He finished creation.

Final Thoughts:

There is a Sabbath rest for every Christian, but it is spiritual and timeless, not chronological. For one day a week we are reminded to come to Jesus for rest, the One whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30). In commemorating that day, we are reminded to keep going to Him, again and again.

Whatever your circumstances, God's ways are always perfect and complete. You can worship, trust, and obey a God who is perfect AND complete in all His dealings with you, whatever you are going through.

*All the way my Savior leads me; what have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy, Who through life has been my Guide?
Heav'nly peace, divinest comfort, Here by faith in Him to dwell,
For I know, whate'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well!*

- Fanny Crosby, *All the Way My Savior Leads Me*