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# Sabbath Day

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D&C 59:10, 13, 16

In this revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord emphasized the importance of the Sabbath Day: “Remember that on this, the Lord’s day, thou shalt offer thine oblations, and thy sacraments unto the Most High” (D&C 59:10). An *oblation* is tithes and offerings and other donations freely given.

The word *Sabbath* is derived from the Hebrew word *shabbat*, meaning to “break off,” “to desist,” and “to rest.” Ancient Israelites, who remembered and observed the Sabbath Day, received the Lord’s favor. Jehovah sent rain in due season, caused the land to yield an increase, helped his chosen people conquer enemies, brought peace to the distraught, and multiplied a righteous posterity (see Leviticus 26:4, 7–9). For keeping the Sabbath Day holy, Jehovah promised, “I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. ... [I will] feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father” (Leviticus 26:12; Isaiah 58:14).

The revelation contained in Doctrine and Covenants 59 also gives guidelines and promises for keeping the Sabbath Day holy: “And on this day thou shall do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect” and “inasmuch as ye do this, the fulness of the earth is yours” (D&C 59:13, 16).

President Russell M. Nelson spoke about the Sabbath Day in his general conference address in April 2015:

I am intrigued by the words of Isaiah, who called the Sabbath “a delight.”  
Yet I wonder, is the Sabbath really a delight for you and for me?

I first found delight in the Sabbath many years ago when, as a busy surgeon, I knew that the Sabbath became a day for personal healing. By the end of each week, my hands were sore from repeatedly scrubbing them with soap, water, and a bristle brush. I also needed a

breather from the burden of a demanding profession. Sunday provided much-needed relief.

What did the Savior mean when He said that “the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27)? I believe He wanted us to understand that the Sabbath was His gift to us, granting real respite from the rigors of daily life and an opportunity for spiritual and physical renewal. God gave us this special day, not for amusement or daily labor but for a rest from duty, with physical and spiritual relief.

President Nelson continued by saying,

The Savior identified Himself as Lord of the Sabbath. It is His day! Repeatedly, He has asked us to *keep* the Sabbath or to *hallow* the Sabbath day. We are under covenant to do so.

How do we *hallow* the Sabbath day? In my much younger years, I studied the work of others who had compiled lists of things to do and things *not* to do on the Sabbath. It wasn't until later that I learned from the scriptures that my conduct and my attitude on the Sabbath constituted a *sign* between me and my Heavenly Father. With that understanding, I no longer needed lists of dos and don'ts. When I had to make a decision whether or not an activity was appropriate for the Sabbath, I simply asked myself, “What *sign* do I want to give to God?” That question made my choices about the Sabbath day crystal clear.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Russell M. Nelson, “The Sabbath Is a Delight,” *Ensign*, May 2015.