### Winter Quarter - Lesson 1, December 7, 2025, Sunday School Lesson:

### "The Sabbath Day"

Bible Basis: Exodus 20:8–1; 31:12-16

**Bible Truth:** The Lord gave the Sabbath as a day of rest and to recommit to holy living.

**Memory Vers**e: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8)

#### **Lesson Aim Key Takeaways:**

- Understand why God commanded Sabbath rest, how it connects to creation, and how it points to Christ.
- 2. **Sabbath is not a burden but a blessing**—a weekly reminder that God is our Creator, Provider, and Redeemer.
- 3. **The Sabbath was not just a day off;** it was a spiritual marker of belonging to God.
- 4. **It taught Israel to trust God's provision, rest** in His sanctifying work, and live distinct from surrounding nations.
- 5. **In the New Covenant, this points forward to rest in Christ** (Hebrews 4), where holiness and identity come through His finished work.

#### **Background:**

### What Happened Before Exodus 20

- 1. Israel's Slavery in Egypt (Exodus 1–12)
- 2. The Exodus and Crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 13–15)
- 3. Journey Through the Wilderness (Exodus 16–18)
- 4. Arrival at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19)

### Why This Matters for Exodus 20

- The Ten Commandments are given after redemption—God saves His people first, then calls them to live as His covenant community.
- The Sabbath command is rooted in both creation (God rested) and redemption (God freed them from endless labor in Egypt).

• The dramatic setting at Sinai underscores the seriousness: God Himself speaks these words directly to the people.

### The Lesson:

### A MEMEORIAL (Exodus 20:8-10)

- 8 "Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
- <sup>9</sup>You have six days each week for your ordinary work,
- <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you.
- What's happening here? Exodus 20:8–10
- The Command to Remember
  - God tells Israel to "remember" the Sabbath.
    - o This isn't just recalling—it's active, intentional observance.
    - o Sabbath is meant to be prepared for, not stumbled into.

## **50** Holiness of Time

- The Sabbath is set apart ("holy") from ordinary days.
- It's not simply a pause from labor—it's dedicated to the Lord, a day of worship and renewal.

# 🔐 Radical Inclusivity

• The command covers everyone in the household: sons, daughters, servants, foreigners, even animals.

#### Work and Rest in Balance

- · Six days affirm the goodness of work.
- The seventh day sets a boundary—rest is obedience, not laziness.
- Ceasing from labor is an act of trust: acknowledging that God provides even when we stop striving.

#### Rooted in Creation

- This pattern mirrors God's own pattern in Genesis 2: He worked six days, then rested.
- Sabbath reminds us we are not defined by endless productivity, but by belonging to God.

### Why It Matters

- Identity: Sabbath marks Israel as God's people.
- Dependence: Rest shows faith in God's provision.
- Holiness: It's sacred time, not ordinary leisure.
- Justice: Everyone shares in God's gift of rest.

### II. A Blessing (vs. 11)

<sup>11</sup> For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.

### What's Happening Here?

### Blessing and Holiness

- God blessed the Sabbath day, meaning He filled it with goodness and favor.
- He set it apart as holy, meaning it was distinct from ordinary days.
- Sabbath is not just about ceasing work—it's about dedicating time to God.

### Filling in the missing pieces: Exodus 21-30

#### Exodus 21–23: Covenant Laws

- Regulations on social justice
- Guidelines for community living
- o Instructions for personal conduct
- Laws for worship

#### Exodus 24: Covenant Confirmed

Moses reads the Book of the Covenant; the people agree to obey.

#### • Exodus 25-27: Tabernacle Instructions

Detailed plans for the Tabernacle

### • Exodus 28–29: Priestly Instructions

o Aaron and his sons are chosen as priests.

### • Exodus 30: Additional Worship Regulations

- o Altar of incense, census tax, bronze basin, anointing oil, and incense recipes.
- The section closes with God giving Moses the two tablets of the testimony, written by His own hand.

### III. A Sign (Exodus 31:12-16 - The Sign of the Mosaic Covenant

<sup>13</sup> "Tell the people of Israel: 'Be careful to keep my Sabbath day, for the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant between me and you from generation to generation. It is given so you may know that I am the Lord, who makes you holy.

<sup>14</sup> You must keep the Sabbath day, for it is a holy day for you. Anyone who desecrates it must be put to death; anyone who works on that day will be cut off from the community.

<sup>15</sup> You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day must be a Sabbath day of complete rest, a holy day dedicated to the Lord. Anyone who works on the Sabbath must be put to death.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> The Lord then gave these instructions to Moses:

<sup>16</sup> The people of Israel must keep the Sabbath day by observing it from generation to generation. This is a covenant obligation for all time.

### What's Happening in Exodus 31:12–16

#### God speaks directly to Moses

- After giving instructions about the tabernacle and covenant, God emphasizes the Sabbath again.
- This shows the Sabbath isn't just one command among many—it's central to Israel's identity.

#### • The Sabbath as a Covenant Sign

- God calls the Sabbath a sign between Him and Israel "from generation to generation."
- Just like a wedding ring symbolizes marriage, Sabbath symbolizes Israel's covenant relationship with God.
- o It's given so Israel would *know* the Lord is the one who makes them holy.

#### Holiness and Seriousness

- o The Sabbath is described as holy—set apart for God.
- Desecrating it (treating it as ordinary or ignoring it) was seen as breaking covenant loyalty.
- The severe penalty (death or being cut off) underscores how vital Sabbath was to Israel's identity and obedience.

#### Pattern of Work and Rest

- Six days are for ordinary work.
- o The seventh day is a day of *complete rest*, dedicated to the Lord.
- This mirrors creation (Genesis 2:2–3) and reminds Israel that their rhythm of life comes from God.

### Covenant Obligation "for all time"

o Sabbath wasn't optional—it was a perpetual sign of belonging to God.

 It distinguished Israel from surrounding nations who had no such rhythm of rest and worship.

### Why It Matters

- Identity: Sabbath marked Israel as God's people.
- Dependence: Rest showed trust in God's provision.
- Holiness: It reminded them that God, not their work, makes them holy.
- **Foreshadowing:** The Sabbath points forward to the ultimate rest found in Christ (Hebrews 4).

### **Reflection Questions**

- 1. "How does Sabbath challenge our culture of busyness?"
- 2. "What does it mean to trust God with our time?"
- 3. "In Christ, how do we experience Sabbath rest beyond one day?"

#### Jesus Christ the ultimate Sabbath:



### **Key Scriptures**

- Matthew 12:8 "For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."
  Jesus makes this declaration after being challenged for allowing His disciples to pluck grain on the Sabbath. He asserts His authority over the Sabbath, implying that He defines its true meaning.
- Mark 2:27–28 "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."
   This reinforces that the Sabbath is meant to serve humanity, and Jesus, as Lord, has authority over it.
- **Hebrews 4:9–10** "There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his."

While not naming Jesus directly as "the Sabbath," this passage connects entering God's rest with ceasing from works—pointing to the spiritual rest found in Christ.



# Theological Understanding

#### • Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Sabbath:

The Sabbath in the Old Testament was a sign of God's covenant and a shadow of the rest to come. In the New Testament, Jesus is portrayed as the one who brings true rest—not just physical rest, but spiritual rest from striving and legalism. This is why some theologians say Jesus is our Sabbath rest.

• Colossians 2:16–17 – "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ." This reminds us that Sabbath observance pointed forward to Christ, who embodies its ultimate meaning.