

# The Ten Commandments Part 4

(Scripture: Exodus 20:8-11)

Today let us try to understand the Sabbath Law, the fourth law of Ten Commandments. It is pronounced in Hebrew as Shabot (h). Shabot(h) means rest or cessation. This Law is very unique and peculiar! Jews really stand out among us because of this law. Before giving this Law God did just that and showed us how we ought to observe it ourselves!

*Genesis 2:2, 3. "By the seventh day God completed 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."*

The interpretation of this law becomes very easy if we take this as a physical rest. I believe, that is what the 4th commandment in Exodus was requiring the Israelites to do. It just talks about refraining from work. Nothing else!

*Exodus 20:8-11. 8"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9"Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 11"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

We are expected to rest from all regular activities. God did just that for Israelites when they were in wilderness. He provided double portion of Manna on the 6th day, so that they did not have to go out and gather manna, and they did not have to cook at all on the seventh day! There are other parts of the Scripture adds some more clauses to this 4th commandment.

Death sentence for those who break the law. (Exodus 31:15)

*Exodus 35:3. You shall not kindle any fire on Sabbath day. Absolutely no cooking, nor any cleaning either.*

In Numbers 15 we come across similar story. A man who gathered sticks for fire on Shabot (Sabbath) was put to death! (Numbers 15).

Sabbath is a perpetual sign between God and the children of Israel forever! It is a peculiar and unique law only for Israelites!

Exodus 31:16, 17

Two lambs as burnt offering for Sabbath! Numbers 28:10. The priests had to work hard on Sabbath. Jesus pointed that out to the Pharisees!

Jewish tradition made the Sabbath Law very legalistic and meaningless! There were 39 activities that were prohibited on Sabbath day!

Planting, plowing, reaping, gathering/threshing/winnowing/sorting, grinding, sifting, kneading, cooking, baking, shearing, laundering, weaving, carding, threading, warping, spinning, tying, sewing, trapping!

Slaughtering, cutting, skinning, writing, erasing, building, demolition, extinguishing fire, starting a fire.....etc.

But the Jews allowed people to work to save a person from death. Yes, people could help a pregnant lady to deliver. They did work to rescue when their sheep fell in a ditch.

Rest on seventh day from everything. This is a great law. We must strive hard to adopt this law as part of our life style. We should strive hard to finish all our work by Friday evening and try to rest physically as well as spiritually. I can see, your blood pressure is going up and you are all getting very angry now. How can this be possible? I just said, try your best to finish your work as much as possible by Friday evening, Rest and relax with your family, and focus on fellowshiping with God and with your family. This law is very similar to tithing! Just like we squeeze 10 percent of our income to give to God's kingdom, we ought to squeeze 20 percent of our time to give it to our family and God. It is all about squeezing worldly activities so that we can give that free time to God. This means I have to finish preparing my sermon by Friday. We must finish cooking and cleaning by Thursday night. It is a tall order. But God can give us double portion of strength to accomplish it if our motives are clear.

Please note something great about this wonderful law. It is given for each family or household. There is no mandate about all the saints gathering together for worship. I searched the Scripture thoroughly. It mandates such gathering on Sabbath day only during the Jewish feasts and Yom Kippur! No other time. Ezekiel refers to Sabbath convocation but it points to Messianic time. The priests were forced to come to the temple to offer sacrifices and they probably worshipped together. But later on it was opened to other people also, and synagogues everywhere started gathering on 7 th day, because that was the only time they could gather together, It was the tradition during Jesus time, and Jesus did not break the rules of their oral tradition either. God had originally designed Sabbath for the households alone and not as a congregational activity. Jewish tradition changed it into congregational activity also.

The Christians could really take advantage of this law. Jesus said that our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees! We should not only observe Sabbath in our homes with our family, and rest well, but also, we should gather on Lord's Day with the saints to break bread together and worship the Lord. What a joy it would be! A complete rest on Sabbath day and then come to church in the morning to break bread! Yes my life is changing. Saturday will be with my family alone, and on Sunday mornings I will be breaking bread and worshipping with my friends and families, and gates of hell is not going to stop me! I love Sabbath as I see it!

Life is very beautiful. Do not pervert it and make it abnormal through super spirituality like the Pharisees. Let not our life become too fleshly, and at the same time let it not become too rigorous, self-applied masochistic rules. Let there be a nice, wholesome, joyful family experience. It is a real day for relationship with God and our kindred! You should not be thinking about resting if you don't work at all! Sabbath is for people who work 6 days!

*Jeremiah 6:16. Stand by the road and look. And ask for the ancient path where the good road is and walk in it and find rest for your souls.*

Sabbath is a real good road that provides us rest!

*Matthew 11:28. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden. I will give you rest.*

*29. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me. For I am meek and lowly in heart. And you shall find rest for your souls.*

Sabbath gives not only physical rest, but real spiritual rest in Christ also!

It is a permanent rest in Christ, and only believers are eligible because according to Hebrews, God swore in His anger that the rebellious people will not enter His rest!

A word of caution about Seventh Day Adventists. They will insist on Saturday alone and they will not pay attention to Paul's logic in Romans 14. What do you do if you live in Alaska? What do you do if you live in international time line? Will you observe on Friday or Saturday or Sunday? Sabbath is not a congregational activity, but it is a family activity together. Don't let them ruin your real Sabbath! Rest, relax, praise God, and thank God, and have fun with your family all day long! This law will indeed enrich every family if they follow this law accurately.

### **Conclusion:**

1. Shabot (Sabbath) day is a day of meditation, to study the law of God! A good time for reading and understanding God's Word.  
Numbers 15:37-40. Let the color of blue thread remind you of God's commandments! Let us remember to rest in His Word every week.
2. Shabot (Sabbath) day is a day to admire the very creation or works of God! It is a "WOW" day for all of us to sit and admire the works of God's hands! A short nature walk is a very nice thing to do on a Sabbath day. Admire the grass, the flowers, the sky, the stars, the trees, the birds, the animals, fish, and everything else!
3. Sabbath day is a great day to be with our families and loved ones together.
4. Designate your favorite day. It does not have to be a Saturday!

Read *Romans 14:5-8*. *"One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. 6. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God. 7. for not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; 8. For if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."*

5. Shabot (Sabbath) is made for man and not the man is made for Sabbath.
6. Compassion and mercy concerning human dire needs takes precedence over Sabbath and our Lord understands that.
7. Our Lord is the Lord of the Sabbath! Worship and honor His Commandments that we may live!

Thank God! We as Christians have flexibility. If we are forced to work on Saturday, we can make some other day as Sabbath day and enrich our family! Remember to honor the Shabot. It is meant to honor our God, and enrich our family members, and ourselves! It is a great law that can heal us from all our

anxieties. Remember, Sabbath is all about being together with each other cherishing and nourishing each other's presence and enjoying the presence of the Lord in our own household.

Let us eternally rest in Christ by faith!

**Daniel Israel**

**Pastor**

**[Pastor@acts242church.org](mailto:Pastor@acts242church.org)**