

Shabbat

By Matthew Day

This month I want to tell you about my favorite day of the week. It is Shabbat, more commonly known as Sabbath. Many of you probably don't believe that Shabbat applies today. All I ask is that you consider the possibility that it might apply, and I also will consider anything you write back concerning this.

Shabbat is a Hebrew word that means "rest". Before I begin, I want to let you know that my family and I are still learning how to keep Shabbat ourselves, but I still want to share with you what we do on this day.

-Shabbat traditions

Shabbat starts at sunset on Friday evening and ends at sunset on Saturday evening. Part of keeping Shabbat is keeping it separate from other days. So, we try to keep some of the traditions for Friday and Saturday evening that mark the beginning and end of Shabbat.

On Friday evening, we light two candles called the Sabbath candles. We say some blessings, break bread and drink grape juice. Now, one is not supposed to light a fire on Shabbat, so this must be done a little before sunset.

On Saturday evening we have a Havdalah service. You may remember me talking a little about the havdalah service at the conference in the last newsletter. For this service we light a havdalah candle (which is done just after sunset). The havdalah candle is a special kind of candle. The best way to describe it is three candles twisted together like a rope.

During Shabbat, we try to refrain from work. We don't light fire. And we try not to buy or sell. I have found only a little bit of evidence for not buying on Shabbat in the Bible (which I have included below).

With no work, cooking, or shopping Shabbat becomes free for things like Bible study, prayer, and family time. So, not only do you get to rest from the past week's work, but you get to spend quality time with your family and learn more from God's word.

-Shabbat in the Bible

Genesis 2:2-3. Shabbat is the first holy day mentioned in the Bible, put into place before any other. These verses give the day it is to be remembered (the seventh day) and introduce the concept of resting on this day.

Exodus 16:22-30 Here God commands Israel to keep Shabbat for the first time. Notice that this is still before the ten commandments. Also notice the wording in verse 29. It says that God gave Israel Shabbat. It is a gift.

Exodus 20:8-11 Here it is mentioned in the ten commandments. Once again God forbids work on this day. Also he mentions that this day is also for strangers staying with Israel.

Exodus 31:13-17 There are three things I want to point out in this passage. First, verse 13 says that it is a sign to show that God sanctifies His people. Second, this is the first place where God gave a punishment for breaking Shabbat. Third, it is a everlasting covenant. Also notice that the Bible refers back to Genesis here.

Exodus 35:2-3 Here God mentions that fire is not to be started on Shabbat.

Numbers 15:32-36 The first recorded Shabbat breaker.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15 Here it is in the ten commandments again. This time the Bible relates Shabbat to the

deliverance from Egypt.

Nehemiah 10:31 This verse says that they did not buy on Shabbat.

Nehemiah 13:15-22 More about buying on Shabbat.

Psalms 92 This is a psalm written for Shabbat.

Isaiah 58:13-14 Blessings for keeping Shabbat.

Matthew 12:1-13 Here I believe Jesus separates Torah from tradition. Israel added much to the Torah. Here the disciples are not breaking Torah, but rather they are breaking the added laws. That is what I believe.

Matthew 24:20 Shabbat is mentioned in the prophecy of the end times.

Luke 4:16 Jesus kept Shabbat.

Acts 13:42-44 Even the Gentiles came to learn on Shabbat.

And there are many more scriptures on Shabbat.

This is what I believe about Shabbat. I encourage you to study this topic for yourself and with your family, and feel free to write back and tell me what you believe about Shabbat.

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