

Choosing Happily Ever After: Rest & Trust

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I. Leviticus 25:1-7

1. The Lord set up the Israelites to have a regular Sabbath.
2. This meant they would stop, cease from labor regularly.
 - a) Once a week (had previously been established)
 - b) Once every seven years they & the land would rest

II. The Sabbath is practical.

- A. The Jewish religious leaders changed it so that it was a strict, religious custom during the time of Jesus. But, in doing so, they missed it. Jesus tells them this:
 1. Mark 2:23-28 “And it happened that He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads of grain. The Pharisees were saying to Him, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” And He *said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and he and his companions became hungry; how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for anyone to eat except the priests, and he also gave it to those who were with him?” Jesus said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”
 2. NLT = “The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!”
- B. The Sabbath experience (the way the Lord created it, not the Pharisees) predates the law.
 1. It is in the pattern of the days of creation when God created on the first six days & then rested.
 2. It occurred before the existence of sin & so, I believe, is eternal in nature.
 3. If this is true—what is it and why?

III. To understand, let’s look at the Israelites experience a little more.

- A. The Lord set up the Sabbath as part of the law for the Israelites, but it was something that they practiced even before the law was given.
 1. For example, when God provided manna, they were instructed to gather twice as much on the sixth day so they would have enough for that day and the next.
 2. In fact, this was miraculous—along with the manna itself. All other days if they gathered extra it would be rotten by the next morning. But, not on the Sabbath.
 3. This is amazing!!
 4. But there was a problem.
- B. Hebrews 3-4
 1. The Israelites were not able to enter into the rest God offered because:
 2. Their hearts were hard
 3. They didn’t trust the Lord
 4. They were disobedient
- C. The good news is that we *can* enter into the rest of the Lord! The question is will we?

IV. How to enter into rest:

- A. Hebrews 3:12-13
 1. Take Care that you don’t have an *evil, unbelieving* heart
 2. that *falls away* from the living God
- B. Instead we enter into rest by:
 1. Responding to the Lord’s voice.
 - a) Hebrews 4:7 - don’t harden your heart when you hear God’s voice
 - b) because the Word of God is alive & powerful (vs.12, NLT)
 - c) It exposes us

2. Relying boldly on Jesus! Hebrews 4:14-16
 - a) Trusting Him
 - b) going to Him boldly
 - c) receiving mercy and grace *in our time of need*

V. Bringing it all together:

- A. The Sabbath was created for man in the pattern of creation.
- B. Practically speaking physical rest is important! Stopping & resting helps our bodies & minds to reset and be refreshed. Going, going, going will eventually lead to burn-out. You can do this for a season, but if you do it as a way of life, it will probably come back to bite you.
- C. It isn't good for you or for your relationships! Rest from labor gives you the opportunity to be present with people! This matters!!
- D. And, I haven't even gotten to the most important part—the spiritual implications.
- E. Rest, bigger picture, requires trust.
 1. Trust that the Lord's provision is enough.
 - a) Do you know that it requires trust to align your values with heaven? Because the world's values often don't line up with them! And so when you live according to the values of heave, you are trusting the Lord to make your way, be your provision.
 - b) You are choosing to value people over success, honesty over manipulation, generosity over gain, etc.
 2. You are trusting God's ways. You are trusting the manna won't go bad, even though it does every other day!
 - a) You are trusting that doing things His way will bring about the proper results.
 - b) Which, by the way may not be the results you initially had in mind. Maybe His goal isn't for you to be rich! Or successful in the worlds eyes.
 - c) But, I guarantee that if you live His way, you will be successful in heaven's eyes. Which is what actually matters.

VI. One last thing: The sabbath is the key to the Jubilee.

- A. Lev. 25
- B. The Lord is the one who restores. He is the one who blesses.

VII. Conclusion

- A. It's time for us to trust Him! Really & truly!
 1. This requires that each day we trust Him by responding to His Words in faith—
 2. *doing* what He says.
 3. trusting Him for the right results and
 4. trusting Jesus to provide the mercy & grace we need in the process!
- B. If we choose to trust Him every day, we will see amazing results—a life that stores up treasure in heaven and also reflects heaven here on earth in our daily lives & relationships.