

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## HIS REST

*For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.*  
*Hebrews 4:10*

As we read the account of the World's creation, in the book of Genesis, we find that GOD rested on the seventh day, since HE had completed the work which HE meant to undertake and alone performed HIS sovereign purpose. Nothing was left undone nor would anything be added later to that work which the LORD fully finished. *"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."* (Gen 2:2-3)

The LORD first memorialized this day when HE fed the children of Israel with manna in the wilderness. HE told them to gather enough on the sixth day so that they would be able to rest from their labors on the seventh. Those who tried to gather bread on this day which HE sanctified found that there was no manna to be found. (see Exo.16:27) *"So the people rested on the seventh day."* (Exo 16:30)

Then when HE gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, HE instructed the Israelites to remember this "Sabbath day" (i.e.; an intermission or rest) to keep it holy (i.e.; sanctified or set apart). No work was to be done on this day, *"For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."* (Exo 20:11) Thus a perpetual memorial of the completion and cessation of the natural creation was to be observed by the Israelites by ceasing from their own labors which HE commanded them to undertake on the other six.

HIS rest on the "seventh day", ( i.e.; the Sabbath) is an exact picture of HIS completion of the work of salvation which HE undertook and performed for HIS elect bride. In this manner the commandment to "keep the Sabbath day" which was given to the nation of Israel, was also a prophetic type or foreshadow of the rest which would be brought in by the cessation of labor by the REDEEMER. In the same fashion in which HE rested on the seventh day when HE had "finished" HIS work in the "natural creation", so too did HE cease from HIS labors to save HIS "spiritual creation" when HE hung on Calvary's cross and said, "It is finished".

In doing so HE left no particular day which was set aside for the children of GOD to observe HIS "rest" from HIS labor. Thus HE emphasized the "spiritual" nature of that Kingdom which HE established by the shedding of HIS own blood and HIS resurrection from the dead. *"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."* (Luke 17:20-21) Yet, HE did indeed leave a memorial of a different kind when HE said, *"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew (i.e.; proclaim or declare) the Lord's death till he come."* (1Cor 11:26)

Yet we also read in the book of Hebrews that *“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.” (Heb 4:9)* This can literally be translated “there remaineth a Sabbath-keeping for the people of GOD.” So what is this “Sabbath keeping”? It is clearly not the same one which is referred to in Moses’ law, since a contrast is made between that “Sabbath keeping”, (which was but a shadow of the substance and not the very substance itself) and the one which is promised by CHRIST. *“For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.” (Heb 4:8)* This “Sabbath” is synonymous with “salvation” and the day is indeed the “day of salvation”, which has reference to that complete salvation which is wrought by CHRIST.

When the children of Israel rebelled against the LORD, in the wilderness, HE sent fiery serpents among them to bite them. Then HE gave Moses a remedy for this dilemma. HE had Moses to make a replica of the serpent made out of brass on a pole, so that whosever looked upon this brazen serpent would be healed and not die from the serpent’s bite. This was ordered by the LORD and useful unto the end for which it was ordained. (see Num. 21:1-9)

In time, as men are wont to do, the children of Israel made this Brazen Serpent into an idol and worshipped it rather than recognizing it for what it was and the useful purpose which it had served according to the ordained will of GOD in times past. So too many have taken a part of the Ten Commandments and moved beyond the original purpose of the commandment making the keeping of the Sabbath a Nehushtan (see II Kgs.18:1-4) and judging the salvation of men on the basis of whether or how they “keep” this day. One of the most amazing aspects of this mindset is that many willingly change the “day” from Saturday to Sunday with no apparent scriptural mandate except anecdotal references to the day of the week which many of the early church assembled themselves together on.

The Pharisees were strict law keepers, so meticulous as to tithe even the leaves of their spice plants, according to the LORD’s own words. Yet their lawkeeping had become an idol unto them to the extent that they were willing to leave off the showing of mercy in order to abide by the letter of the law. The LORD upbraided them when they criticized his disciples for gathering corn on the “Sabbath” by saying “the Sabbath is made for man and not man for the Sabbath.”

Those who are focused on “keeping” (whatever that may mean, as it has different definitions and restrictions among different factions) one day in seven as a holy day unto the LORD polish the husk and disregard the kernel of that “Sabbath” which is to be “kept” by New Testament saints. Nowhere in the New Testament are the saints ever “commanded” to keep one day in seven as a “holy day”, in memory of the LORD’s rest on the seventh day of the natural Creation. Rather we are exhorted to memorialize the resting of CHRIST from HIS labors by the taking of the bread and wine which are symbols of HIS broken body and shed blood, which were poured out for sinners. Yet even this “memorial supper” can and does become an idol unto some because they use it in the letter and not the very substance.

The substance of the “rest” for the people of GOD is found in remembering the finished work of CHRIST who has ceased from HIS labors and does present HIS church as a bride without spot or blemish, holy and acceptable in HIS sight. Since HE has ceased from HIS labors, so too have the sons of GOD ceased from their own in honor of HIS rest, and in thanksgiving for a salvation which is complete before the throne of their heavenly FATHER who has made them heirs and joint heirs with CHRIST through the work of their SAVIOR.

HE does manifest this great salvation in HIS elect by writing HIS law upon their heart and constraining them by HIS love rather than the demands of law. Many are the prophets and false teachers who would turn them away from this rest with the siren call of “duty”, which appeals to the natural religious nature of men. Yet they must testify with Peter of old when men preach another gospel, *“Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)*

*“For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. (Heb 4:10-11)*