

More Than the Fourth Commandment

Sabbath days, weeks and years*Sabbath day – weekly rest**Built in feasts – seasonal rest**Sabbatical years – deeper rest*

Israelite Breaks from Work

What	When	Duration	Travel?
Feast of Unleavened Bread, Includes Passover/Feast of Firstfruits	Every Spring	Eight days	Travel Required
Pentecost	May or June	One day	Travel Required
Feast of Trumpets	1 st day of seventh month, around Sep or Oct.	One day	No travel
Day of Atonement	10 th day of seventh month	One day	Travel optional
Feast of Booths	15 th -23 rd day of seventh month	Eight days	Travel required

*Leviticus 23:3 “Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, **a holy convocation. You shall do no work.**”*

Regarding the above feasts, in Leviticus 23, in verse 7, verse 8, verse 21, verse 24, verse 27, verse 35, verse 36, verse 37, we see the repeated phrase “... a holy convocation, you shall do no ordinary work.”

Yearly rest shows up in Leviticus 25:3-6:

“For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, ⁴ but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the Lord. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. ⁵ You shall not reap what grows of itself in your harvest, or gather the grapes of your undressed vine. It shall be a year of solemn rest for the land. ⁶ The Sabbath of the land shall provide food for you...”

God is a rest-giver

Mark 2:27 “And [Jesus] said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

Learning to Rest

Two ditches

The ditch of self-reliance: “It’s all on me.”

The ditch of self-indulgence: “I’ll take the path of least resistance.”

If you're in the ditch of self-reliance...

I had to learn that my work is God's work, first. (This is not just because I work for the church!)

Exodus 34:21-24 “In plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. ²²You shall observe the Feast of Weeks, the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end. ²³Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel. ²⁴For **I will cast out nations** before you and enlarge your borders; **no one shall covet your land**, when you go up to appear before the Lord your God three times in the year.”

John 5:16-17 “And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I am working.’”

If you're in the ditch of self-indulgence...

“Six days you shall labor and do **all your work.**” (*Emphasis added*)

Remember, true happiness comes from embracing responsibility. *Freedom is for responsibility.*

Jim Collins: Keeping the fire burning into your retirement years requires embracing responsibility!

Frank Lloyd Wright: Designed the Guggenheim museum in his 70s and 80s, lived to 91.

Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote her first “Little House” book when she was 65.

The Cliff and the Fog from “What to Make of a Life” by Jim Collins

Practicing Gratitude

The bridge from a break to soul rest is gratitude

Psalms 103:2-4 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,

³ who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,

⁴ who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

⁵ who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Questions for Further Study and Application

1. What do we learn about God from the sheer quantity of breaks from work there are on his law?
2. Are you in either ditch, self-reliance or self-indulgence? If not, which do you gravitate to more naturally?
3. Why is gratitude the bridge from a break to actual rest?
4. God is a rest-giver. What is keeping you from experiencing that rest, and what might you do about it?