

# Finding Rest: Understanding the Gift of Sabbath

Exodus: Life in the Wilderness- Part 5  
May 10, 2026

## Discussion Questions

1. **The "10% Notification":** If you had a battery percentage hanging over your head right now, what number would it show, and why?
2. **Slavery vs. Freedom:** The Israelites were former slaves who had worked seven days a week for 430 years without rest. How does understanding their background change the way you view the Sabbath as a gift rather than just another rule to follow?
3. **The Heart of the Command:** The Sabbath command is placed right in the middle of the Ten Commandments. Why do you think God considers ceasing and resting to be as centrally important as "do not lie" or "do not steal"?
4. **Trust and Manna:** In Exodus 16, God used manna to teach the people to trust Him for daily provision rather than what they stored up. In what ways does taking a day off from work today require a similar act of trust in God's provision?
5. **Shadow vs. Reality:** Colossians 2:16-17 describes the Sabbath as a "shadow" and Jesus as the "reality." What does it mean to you practically that Jesus is the true fulfillment of the Sabbath?

## Life Application

6. **Resting from Striving:** The message mentions that we can be "spiritually tired" by constantly asking, "Am I doing enough? Is God pleased with me?" How does resting in Jesus' finished work on the cross provide a rest for your soul that the world's view of rest cannot?
7. **Reframing the Gathering:** Sometimes we view going to church as just another item to check-off on a busy schedule. How can we reframe our Sunday gathering so that it feels like a place of refreshment rather than a burden?

8. **The Weekly Rhythm:** Looking at your current calendar, do you have an intentional rhythm of rest?
9. **Identifying Your Rest:** Rest looks different for everyone—for some, it's working in the yard; for others, it's a "phone Sabbath" or family time. What are 1-2 specific activities that actually recharge your battery rather than just passing the time?
10. **A Declaration of Identity:** For Israel, the Sabbath was a sign that they were God's redeemed people, not slaves. How can the way you prioritize rest this week serve as an example to others about where your true identity and security lie?

# Summary

In our modern world, we are more connected—and perhaps more exhausted—than ever before. Many of us use apps like Life360 to keep track of our families, which often includes a feature that notifies everyone when a family member's phone battery hits 10%. While this is meant to be helpful, there are days when that "10% remaining" notification feels less like a technical update and more like a commentary on our own internal state.

If you had a battery percentage hanging over your head right now, what would it say? Many of us are running low—physically, mentally, and emotionally—drained by the endless cycle of work, household responsibilities, and the underlying spiritual pressure of wondering if we are doing enough to measure up.

## The Heart of the Commandment

In Exodus 20, right in the middle of the Ten Commandments, God gives a command that is of central importance: the command to rest. The word "Sabbath" literally means to cease or to rest.

The Israelites were commanded to labor for six days but to keep the seventh day holy—set apart—as a Sabbath to the Lord. For the nation of Israel, this commandment served four vital purposes:

- **A Weekly Rhythm:** God established a pattern of work and rest during creation, resting on the seventh day not because He was weary, but to set a pattern for His people.
- **A Gift:** As former slaves who had no rhythm of rest for 430 years, the Sabbath was a radical gift of freedom from constant bondage.
- **A Call to Trust:** To stop working for a full day required faith that God would provide, much like when He provided a double portion of manna on the sixth day so the people would not have to gather on the Sabbath.
- **A Sign of Identity:** The Sabbath was a visible sign that marked the Israelites as God's redeemed people and served as a witness to the nations around them.

# Jesus as the True Fulfillment of the Sabbath

As followers of Jesus, we are no longer under the Old Covenant or the strict regulations of the Mosaic Law. However, the Sabbath does not disappear; it deepens as it moves from being just a day to something much greater: a person.

## The Shadow vs. The Reality

The Apostle Paul, who once strictly kept the Sabbath as a Pharisee, explains this shift in **Colossians 2:16-17**:

"Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."

Paul clarifies that the Old Testament Sabbath regulations were "shadows" pointing forward to a substance. That substance and reality is Jesus.

## Entering God's Rest

The author of Hebrews further explains that the Sabbath was always pointing to a deeper rest found through faith in **Hebrews 4:9-11**:

"There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest..."

When we put these passages together, we see that the Sabbath was never just about a day; it was about resting from our striving and our attempts to prove ourselves to God through our own works.

## The Invitation to the Weary

Because Jesus is the fulfillment of this rest, He provides the ultimate invitation in **Matthew 11:28-30**:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

We no longer have to wonder if we have done "enough" to be accepted by God. We find our true rest by relying on the finished work of Christ—His perfect life, His death on the cross, and His resurrection.

## Practical Rhythms for Today

While we are not bound to a specific day like Saturday, the principle of a set-apart time to gather with God's people and find physical rest remains essential.

- **Rest through Gathering:** We should prioritize gathering with other believers, not as a legalistic obligation, but as a way to refresh our souls and reconnect with God.
- **Rest through Rhythm:** We are designed for a 6-to-1 ratio of work and rest. Whether it is putting the phone down for a "phone Sabbath," spending time with family, or engaging in a hobby that gets your mind off your normal labor, we must intentionally receive the rest God has given us.

If your battery is low, don't ignore the warning. Look to Jesus, the true Sabbath, and find rest for your soul.