

The Doctrine of Sabbath Keeping

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Secular Work: Commerce	Neh 13:15-22
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Exceptions: Circumcision	John 7:23

The Sabbath Commandment (Ex 20:8-11)

- A positive command to “remember” which day is the Sabbath
- A positive command to “keep it holy” (i.e., maintain holy time)
- A positive command to “do all your work” within six days
- The seventh day is a Sabbath (Heb. *Shabbat*, rest) of Yahweh
- A negative command to “not do any work” (i.e., labor, occupation, business)
- No one under your control shall work: family, slaves, animals, employees
- The Creator blessed the seventh day and made it holy

The Commandment Restated (Deut 5:12-15)

- A positive command to “observe” (guard, obey) the Sabbath
- A positive command to “keep it holy” (i.e., maintain holy time)
- A positive command to “do all your work” within six days
- A negative command to “not do any work” (i.e., labor, occupation, business)
- No one under your control shall work: family, slaves, animals, employees
- A positive command to “remember” Egyptian slavery and God’s liberation

A Holy Convocation (Lev 23:1-3)

- A positive command to proclaim a holy convocation, an appointment (Heb. *moed*).
- A positive command to hold a holy convocation on the seventh day
- See also Hebrews 10:25 “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”

The Preparation Day (Ex 16:1-30)

- A positive command to gather twice as much bread on the sixth day
- A positive command to bake and boil food ahead of time for Sabbath
- A positive command for Israelites and Gentiles to observe the Sabbath

Exceptions: Minor Food Preparation (Ex 12:15-16)

- A negative command that “no work shall be done” (i.e., workmanship, tasks)
- An exception: work that is necessary, required for food preparation

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Secular Work: Gathering Firewood (Num 15:32-36)

- An example of a man gathering wood on the Sabbath day (secular work)
- The penalty for Sabbath breaking is death

Secular Work: Commerce

- An example of Israelites foregoing work, trade on the Sabbath (Neh 10:28-31)
- An example of Nehemiah forbidding work on the Sabbath (Neh 13:15-22)
- An example of Israelites grumbling about foregoing trade (Amos 8:4-5)

Secular Activities (Isa 58:13-14)

- A requirement to desist “from doing your own pleasure” on the Sabbath
- A requirement to call the Sabbath a delight, honorable
- A requirement to desist from your own ways (Heb. *derek*, paths)
- A requirement to desist from seeking your own pleasure
- A requirement to desist from speaking your own word (matter, thing)
- A promise to “make you ride on the heights of the earth”
- A promise to “feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father”

Exceptions: Urgent Human Needs, Ministry (Matt 12:1-8)

- In the Torah, some laws take precedence over others, even over the Sabbath
- An exception for meeting urgent human needs, special circumstances
- An exception for priests working in the temple, ministry in general

Exceptions: Sickness, Emergencies (Matt 12:9-14)

- An exception for healing, ministering to the sick (a crippled hand)
- An exception for dealing with emergencies (sheep falls in a pit)
- See also Luke 13:10-17, 14:1-6 (water an animal, pull it out of a pit)

Exceptions: Circumcision (John 7:23)

- An exception for circumcision (required eight days after birth)