

**'IN THE BEGINNING'**  
***(The Origins of Everything Coming to Pass in These Last Days)***  
**Studies in Genesis 1-11**

**Rest Stop**

Driving long distances are much more pleasant if there are periodic rest stops along the way. It is a blessing to see those roadside signs announcing '**Rest Stop Ahead**'. After monotonous hours of travel, it's time to exit, take a break, rest, refuel, and refresh for the rest of the journey ahead. A nice 'Rest Stop' is good for everybody along for the ride.

The seventh day of Creation week was made by God to be a regular calendar '*rest stop*' for mankind. God even named the seventh day '**Sabbath**' (*Hebrew for 'rest'*) thereby '**blessing it and sanctifying it**' (**Genesis 2:3**). God wasn't tired or exhausted from His creative work, but 'it was good' to finish the work, step back and take time to enjoy it for a day, before moving on with human history. Centuries later, after Israel's 430 years of slavery without *Sabbaths*, God commanded the *Sabbath* as mandatory for His newly liberated '*chosen people*' Israel (**Exodus 20:8-11, 31:12-17, 35:1-3; Leviticus 25:1-22; Deuteronomy 5:12-15**). If anyone ever doubted how important obedience in keeping '*the day of rest*' was to God, it was clarified in the wilderness when some rebels decided to challenge the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment (**Numbers 15:32-36**). The Sabbath law was more than 'a day of rest' – observing it was a public testimony to unbelieving peoples around them that they were *resting their faith* in Jehovah God by using it as a day of worship as well. For Old Testament Israel, the *Sabbath* was a weekly 'rest stop' to bless them and refresh them spiritually, mentally, and physically.

In the New Testament, Christians are taught that we no longer must keep the *Sabbath* for spiritual reasons (**Colossians 2:16-17**). Now that the Son of God has done the work of the cross to procure our salvation, we 'rest' our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, thus negating all legalistic spiritual reasons to keep the seventh day. For born again believers, our *Sabbath* rest is in the Person of Jesus and His cross-work for our salvation, not just the last work day of the week on a calendar (**Hebrew 4:1-10**). Although there are good physical, mental, and psychological reasons for taking a day off every week, there are NO spiritual reasons to so. In fact, making a particular day an issue connected to salvation and equating it with spirituality is reverting to the obsolete law of Moses which believers are forbidden to do (**Romans 6:14, Galatians 2:21, etc.**). Thus, the *Sabbath* has not been switched to Sunday as a New Testament *Sabbath* rest. Believers worship on Sunday because it is the day Christ arose from the dead, met with His disciples (**John 20**); the day when the Holy Spirit came upon the Church (*Pentecost / Acts 2*) and the day on which believers met regularly (**Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, Revelation 1:10**). Although the concept of a weekly day of rest is biblical for physical, mental, and social reasons, it has no more spiritual value than any other day of the week (**Romans 14:5-6**).

The *Sabbath* is not a day of worship, ministry and fellowship with other Christians-- **Hebrews 10:24-25**/ *we now have the first day of the week, Son-day, for those things*. But wise Christians see the seventh day as a weekly day of rest from work and all the hustle bustle rush of living. Sunday, the Lord's Day, isn't a day of rest for committed Christians! They are busy serving the Lord at church in worship, ministries, and fellowship gatherings throughout the day.

Saturday is still a day for a *rest stop* between the regular work week and the Lord's work on Son-days. It is wise and spiritual to pull back from the world and all its busy-ness every Saturday (*unless you must work*) to give more time to devotions and prayer, preparing for Sunday worship and ministry, and time with family. Unbelievers can do all kinds of things on Sunday, leaving the Lord out of their lives, unless they have nothing else to do. But believers have Son-day obligations to their God and their church family, so all those 'other things' must be *finished* on Saturday. For the ideal Christian life, as described in **1 Thessalonians 4:11-12**, to be a reality, disciples of Jesus need to '*finish*' all other things on Saturday and keep Son-day, the Lord's Day, *blessed and sanctified*. Living like this will enable you, like God, in Whose image you have been created, be able to say about your life as you begin each new week: '**It is very good!**'

**PtL**

## ‘Give It a Rest!’

(T.G.I.F. = *Thanking God It’s Finished!*)

Genesis 2

### The 1<sup>st</sup> Weekend

(*Hallowing the Sabbath Day*)

*“Thus the heavens and the earth and all the host of them, were **finished**. And on the seventh day God **ended His work** that He had done and **He rested** on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God **blessed** the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He **rested** from all His work which God and created and made.” 2:1-3*

*“This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day **the LORD God made the earth and the heavens**, before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; but **a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground**. And **the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being.**” 2:4-7*

- God’s pattern is ‘get it done’ and ‘give it a rest’ every week. Do you think it is optional or mandatory to take a day off each week? (*Why or why not?*)
- Animals and plants don’t need a day off, but because we have an ‘*image of God*’ soul, we do. What’s bound to happen if we continuously fail to take a day off?
- What are some ideas on how to make Saturday a ‘day of rest’ for God’s people?

### The 1<sup>st</sup> Work Place

(*Tending the Garden of Eden*)

*“**The LORD God planted a garden** eastward in Eden; there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. **The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden & the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**” 2:8-9*

*“Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden and from there parted and became four riverheads... Pishon... Gihon... Hiddekel... Euphrates.” 2:10-14*

- What about these verses proves that work is a good part of life? It was good, but had built-in temptations to avoid – why did God include temptation in the Garden of Eden?
- What are some workplace temptations Christians need to always be on the alert about?
- What helps us overcome and be victorious? Is overcoming testing just part of the job for saints? (Explain), How can trials on the job be spiritually beneficial to Christians?

### The 1<sup>st</sup> Weakness

(*Dealing with Human Inadequacy*)

*“Then **the LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it**. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him **a helper comparable to him.**” 2:15-17*

*“Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air; and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. **Whatever Adam called each living creature that was its name**. So **Adam gave names of all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field**. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.” 2:18-20*

- In a perfect creation, God says for the first time something ‘is not good’. Although there are some people who are called to a celibate (single) life, most people need somebody else to compliment, support, and help them in their walk with the Lord.
- Discuss what ‘comparable’ means in finding the chosen helper of God for one’s life.
- Discuss Adam’s jobs (tending and keeping the Garden) and naming animals. Were these important jobs (explain your answer). Talk about why your job is important and useful to God, you and others.
- How can you tell if you are doing what God wants you to do with your life?