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**M**inisters **U**ncompromisingly **S**ubmitted to **C**hrist in **L**ove and **E**ndless **S**ervice

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**Teaching from the desk of Kenneth Etta**

## **Entering into the rest of God**

### **Part 2: The 7th day of The Sâbbath Rest.**

Hebrews 4:9-11. There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest has also ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, least any fall after the same example of unbelief.

As stated in the first study on this subject God didn't create the heavens and the earth and all in the earth in six days because it was impossible to do otherwise neither did He rest because He was physically tired. God was setting lifestyle precedence for the crown of His creation, man to follow. As the Father of all creation and the God of amazing love He is responsible for the welfare of His creation. The heart of any true and noble parent seeks to fully provide everything that newborn baby needs. Adam and Eve entered life in the garden as full-grown adults in complete provision and they were required to be stewards of what God had provided. It was only after they sinned that they brought upon themselves and the earth the curse of judgement. Then and only then did Adam had to "eat bread" **in the sweat of his face**. However, sin did not take God by surprise neither did it alter His divine eternal plan. The "rest of God" is still available today and the admonition in Hebrews 4 and Jesus' invitation to all that are tired and heavy laden to come enter into rest still stands.

Though the word Sabbath was first used in the bible in Exodus 16:23 the concept of rest dates back to the garden of Eden following the 6<sup>th</sup> day of creation when God rested or ceased from all His works on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. Consequently all through out the bible the word Sabbath is used in connection with the 7<sup>th</sup> day of rest. The Sabbath was a special day blessed and set apart by God (Exodus 20:10-11) and required to be kept holy unto the Lord God. Under the old covenant, it was a Day of Atonement when all forms of labor were forbidden. (**Exodus 31:12-17, Exodus 35:21 and Leviticus 23 and 24**) On the sixth day, all that was needed for the 7<sup>th</sup> day was required to be in place so that the Israelites would rest from all the labors of the week in remembrance and observance. Over and over again they were commanded to remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy (**Exodus 20:8, 35:2, Deuteronomy 5:15**). By resting on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, (thus emulating the divine example) and sanctifying it the Jews remembered and acknowledge God as creator of the heavens and the earth and worship Him and spent time together with family and loved ones.

That edit still stands today because the **Sabbath of rest** was an everlasting covenant which ultimately points to no one else but Christ who is now our rest. As stated in the first study in this series when we take intermissions from the labors of life and focus our being on the creator in worship, praise and thanksgiving we are refreshed. The word states that God has given us all things freely to enjoy and when we enjoy Him, loved ones and the beauty of his creation it brings strength of repose and refreshing. That is why people take and companies give their employees vacation. That is why you have regular dates and outings with your wife macho man. That is why you go away for a weekend with your spouse and/or your children for a time together and alone. That is why believers take retreats from the craziness of work and life just to be with God and others in a setting where you don't have to think about work. . That is why you spend time regularly with

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*Now abides faith, hope, love, these three: but the greatest of these is love. 1Corinthians 13:13*

God away from everyone and everything that has to do with this life so that when you refocus on this life you are renewed and invigorated to take on life from a position of rest not weariness.

Secondly, they were to remember that they were once slaves in Egypt and that God by His mighty hands brought them out. What does the exodus from Egypt have to do with resting on the 7<sup>th</sup> day you may ask? **It has to do with freedom.** In ancient times slaves did not get a day off. God had to get rid of that slave mentality from their minds. By resting on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of Sabbath, the Jews were reminded that they are free. Egypt no longer had a hold on them. As with them so it pertains to us. We have been translated from the kingdom of darkness (Egypt) to the kingdom of God's dear son. Praise God. **Satan has no legal hold on us as blood bought covenant children of God and we are free** to worship and enjoy our heavenly Father and all He has provided for us because of Jesus victory. Don't live your life as a slave to religion, traditions and doctrines of men (I didn't say doctrines of God. We have biblical and New Testament doctrines you do well to observe) or the legality of trying to please God in your own righteousness rather than resting and relying on the righteousness of Christ who is your rest.

The big question then is, is the Sabbath day rest **as was** practiced in the Old Testament on the 7<sup>th</sup> day required and relevant to the New Testament believer. Do we have to observe the Sabbath on the 7<sup>th</sup> day alone? The answer is yes to the principle and a matter of personal choice to the letter. If you choose to continue the observance of Saturday as the Sabbath day as was in the Old Testament as some do today that is okay. If you insist that it must be Saturday and Saturday only and observed in its strictest form as some do, then you may as well reinstitute animal sacrifices. According to **Romans 14:1-8, Galatians 4:1-12 and Colossians 2: 16-17** the eating of certain food and observance of certain religious days is a matter of personal choice. The day (law of the practice) is not a black and white issue; the spirit of the principle of the law of the Sabbath was much more than just a physical ritual observed on a particular day. The Jews observed the letter of the Sabbatical law to its core but according to Hebrews 3 and 4 they failed to walk in the spirit of the Sabbatical law. They were unbelieving, stiff-necked; wieners and complainers who did not remember and honor the Lord as He lovingly tried to get them to their promise land of rest, which was Canaan. Because of unbelief they did not enter into God's rest.

For all intents and purposes, Jesus did things on the Sabbath day that got the religious people of His day infuriated supposing he had broken the law of God. They were trying to impose on the lawmaker terms and clauses that did not originate from God. What Jesus did as the usher and enforcer of the new covenant was display the heart and spirit of the law of the Sabbath rest. It is only when we are living a life of faith (anxiety and carefree) that we can truly experience the rest (refreshing, repose) of God-spirit, soul and body

For the New Testament believer the Sabbath is a lifestyle of faith and when you are walking in faith you will live in His rest regardless of outward circumstances. Remember Hebrews 4 says that there remains a rest for the people of God and further calls on us to **labor** to enter into that rest. Spiritually speaking Christ is our rest. Naturally speaking we still live in the world in physical bodies with a soul and spirit that need intermittent Sabbatical in line with the divine example. Any one who ignores the physical sabbatical law of rest is a high risk of burn out, which has the potential to negatively affect you and your relationship with everyone close to you and yes including God. The life of faith and obedience doesn't mean you throw common sense out the window. We are commanded to love the Lord with all our mind as well. The fact that God's ways may not seem logical and sensible doesn't mean that it is not. God's ways sometime seem illogical and insensible only because as humans we try to understand God's ways from the restrictions of the human mind. Faith is a pre-requisite to comprehension of the divine mind of God. Next time we will examine the promise God made to Abraham to give him and his seed after him the land of Canaan, which was to be a land of rest, overflowing with milk and honey.

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Shalom and with much love as always  
*Kenneth Etta*

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