

The Sabbath Day

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[0 : 00] Jeremiah chapter 17 and I want in particular to read with you the passage from verse 19 and onwards.

But as I was looking through this passage and as I looked at two readings, there's one or two things that interested me that I hadn't looked at before and I just want to make mention of that before we turn to the passages I want to study with you this morning.

To those that are visiting with us, we have gone through the last 17 chapters of Jeremiah as we are going through this prophecy throughout the coming months, God willing.

Those that have listened from the beginning will have found out that Jeremiah had a difficult job. He had to come to a people who were basically religious and he had to come to them and say that God was about to judge them.

Not for their religion, but for their lives. And the people and the churches, if you want to use it in language of today, neither would believe him.

[1 : 42] He was considered to be a minister of doom. How did he feel like it? That's what I want to look at just in passing. How did he feel like it?

Well, he honored God. He said, you know, I've not hastened from being a pastor. The pastor has got two messages.

One is a word of hope. If you hear this morning, the pastor will always have a word of hope. You find that in Jeremiah's prayer.

It's the prayer of everyone who ever came to God. They say to God, heal me, O Lord, and I'll be healed. I'll be clean.

Save me, and I will be saved. And if a person doesn't come to God and say to God, heal me, save me, then that person doesn't know God.

[2 : 47] And if you want to know God, you need two things. You need to be healed. That means cleansed from every sin you ever did.

And to be saved. Not only from today, but for tomorrow and from all eternity. So there's a message of hope. Jeremiah has it.

Heal me that I might be saved. Jeremiah had another message, as you know. He says, with regard to that message, and it's very interesting.

That's what was most interesting to me. Sometimes you'll hear me in this pulpit warning against the judgment. You've heard me time and again saying, there's going to be a great white throne, and we're all going to be standing before it.

And those that are out of Christ will be lost forever and ever. That's a frightening message. I wonder if people think of how the minister feels when he's giving this message.

[3 : 56] Does he feel happy over it? No. No more than a doctor might have to give a message to a patient that he has a tumour of cancer.

It's something like that. And even Jeremiah is saying to God, he's saying, and he's so very, very honest here, he says, you know, he says, I don't desire that woeful day.

I don't want it. I don't like it. I don't want that woeful day, but you told me to say it. That's the pastor, you see. And so, right throughout all this, there is opportunity for hope for the future.

So if you're here this morning, and you're without God, and you're without Christ, then there is a frightening day. But I have another message for you.

If you go to God and say, heal me, save me, you can go out this church this morning a different person. Right?

[5 : 06] That's the message. And we thank God for it. Now, it would seem to be that this chapter comes to the further down through the end, that the people had turned away from the word of God.

In fact, they'd turned away from the Sabbath. That was one of the evidences of their iniquity. And although they were quite religious in some part, where it affected them, they didn't fulfill God's work.

And so it would seem, in a sense, that one of the evidences of repentance here, that they obeyed God's work.

And they did that in a public way, by honouring God, by honouring his day. Now, it's as simple as that.

And so this morning, I want to look with you at this passage. And it's not an easy passage, because I want to avoid from preaching a legalism that's hard and sore.

[6 : 33] And I want to proclaim the spirituality of having God's day. You see, if someone came here this morning, and you're sitting there, I hope this is not true, and you read this, oh, the minister's going to preach on the Sabbath.

By word, I'm glad of that. Someone's going to get it. But if that's your attitude this morning, may God forgive you. Because I don't know any Christian, in any part of the earth, however spiritual, don't find the standard of God difficult.

I don't think so. So we can't crow over anyone. It's like if a fellow who's got a wee cancer in his finger, and he's crowing about another person who's got a tumour in his brain.

We don't want that. I don't want that. But I want to be truthful to God's word at the same time. And so this morning, I want to attempt two things. One, to try and crystallise what God's word reveals about the Sabbath.

That's the first thing. And the second thing is to try to see this truth as it's encircled in this passage. Just two simple things.

[8 : 05] Now, what does God's word say about the Sabbath? And what must our response be as a Christian or as a Christian church?

The first thing we find out is very, very simple. The first thing we find out is that the day has been changed. There's no doubt about that.

The day has been changed. You see, after the creation in the Garden of Eden, long before any sin came into this earth, God hallowed the Sabbath.

And he said, I want one day special for myself. Now, there was no sin in the world at that time. He hallowed the Sabbath. That's where it began. And then after his second work of redemption, that's his second work.

His first work was creation. His second work is recreation for evil men and women like you and me. After redemption, God then hallowed the first day of the week.

[9 : 19] Just as it's quite simple here. The early church honoured the first day of the resurrection. And this was an act of the apostles under the power of the Holy Spirit.

So, when we talk of the Sabbath, we also are talking, in measure, of the Lord's day.

Now, I want you just simply to cross over for that. But I want to look at the principles that you find in the Sabbath, and I feel that it should be fulfilled in the Lord's day.

What do you do with the Lord's day? What is the Lord's day to you and to me? I know for a long time it was the most drudgery experience that I ever experienced.

The Sabbath, I used to remember as a boy. Well, that was the day I had put on the suit. That was the day that nobody came out. I got a walk in the afternoon, and I had to be careful.

[10 : 29] Well, that was, I thought it was drudgery. I didn't understand. However, that's how I felt. Many people might feel that way.

If you're unconverted, there's one thing certain, you won't land. The Lord's day. That's quite true. You won't land. Today, I'm thankful for it.

I look back, and I look at the old days, when in the village that I lived in the summertime, when the people went up to the house of God, maybe three or four hundred of them, and now they can't get ten.

There was a quietness over the village. I liked it. It's a memory that I thank God for. All right, that's me. But the rest, the Sabbath, was to be a Sabbath rest.

One day for God, in a special way. And at the same time, though not always understood, it was to be a blessing for man. Now there are four things in the Sabbath, and I've just passed them.

[11 : 37] First of all, it was ordained in perfection. Two, it was confirmed then, after sin, by the moral law, when Moses came up to the mountain, and God gave ten commandments, in there, in the center of them, he did this.

So it's ordained by, by the moral law of God. It's required by the prophets, in the people of God, as we've read here. And then, finally, it's reaffirmed, by Jesus.

Don't you denounce that? In Jesus' teaching, it is presented, it's perpetuity, the going on of it.

Listen to what Jesus says. Think not that I am able to, I am come to abolish the law, or the prophets. I am not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them.

And I come and say to you, till heaven and earth pass, not one jot, or one tittle, in no wise, shall pass from the law, until all be fulfilled.

[12 : 49] That's what Jesus said. That's quite clear, isn't it? Now I want, before I look at this passage, I want, very briefly, to try, and, have a, an interpretation, on the Sabbath, clarified, because, Jesus, clarified it.

What happened, happened in the Old Testament, was a lot of old men, who might have been very good, at the beginning, they said, well you should do this, on the Sabbath, or you shouldn't do that, on the Sabbath.

And you shouldn't do that, and you shouldn't do that, and you shouldn't do that, and I think, I'm not sure, how many thousand laws, were made, around the Sabbath. I can't remember, what it was. Like, when I was young, some of you here, some of the older folk, which I respect, when we were old, when we were young, my grandfather, we did the potatoes, on a Saturday night.

We did the poop, on a Saturday night. We did the shaving, on a Saturday night. Now, that was a good thing, for that person. But, when a person, comes along, and says, unless you do the potatoes, on a Saturday night, unless you do the shoes, on a Saturday night, therefore you're not, a good Christian.

Now, that's what I'm against. But, I am not, against those, who in their hearts, wanted, to have as much time, on the Sabbath, as they could get. You understand?

[14 : 21] There's a difference. You don't make laws, for the Sabbath, that the word of God, doesn't make. Right? So, Jesus, clarified, a lot of these things. I'll give you two, which you know, just as easy as I do.

He clarified, the works of necessity. When the donkey, came into the pit, he didn't say, because it's the Sabbath, leave him in the pit, the poor old donkey, he doesn't matter too much.

He said, he'd take him out. And that's why. One day, when the disciples, were going through the cornfield, they were hungry, they pulled the cornfield out.

Of course, one of the old laws, they don't do that. God didn't say that, but the people did it. And so, he clarified a principle, of necessity. Necessity.

Now, he clarified also, what we call, the works of mercy. For instance, the blind man, he healed him, on the Sabbath. It was, it was mercy.

[15 : 28] And so, there is mercy, and, there is, there is, necessity. And so, if you want to apply that, if you want, I'll just take three or four of them.

Take for instance, medicine, the nurses. Take the police, because of criminals. If you take the fire brigade, because of fires.

If you take the, the captain of the ship. Well, these things have got to go through for life. And Jesus, clarified it.

All right? Now then, that's, quite simple, spiritual, common sense. for instance, let's look at the principles, of the Sabbath.

Because people, are asked, to remember, the Sabbath. You'll see it in this passage here, but I want you to look at, just another two things, and then I'm finished.

[16 : 32] Generally. I believe, that, what a man wants, for himself, he should want, for his neighbor.

Do you understand? If I don't want, to work, because God tells me, on God's day, I don't want, to go to a shop, don't want to open a shop, because of God's day, for me, therefore, I don't want that, to be for another person.

Do you understand, what I mean? That's, that's the principle. And so, to try and work, that principle, I would say, I myself, would not, go and, go into a shop, to make profit, and I wouldn't, make anyone else, to do it, and then, I will not, go to that shop, at that day, at that time, because of that principle.

Got it? That's a good principle. What you want, for your neighbor, is what you want, for yourself. So, I, use, I do not use, the facility, for the Sabbath, in making another, having to be there, to do it, unless it was necessary.

You say to me, well, I can understand that, I'm glad you can, I want you to think over it. You may say to me, well, there's so many things, yes, there's so many things, and you've got to, do you, make your own decisions.

[18 : 09] I don't, I don't put on, the Sabbath, the television, because I don't want people, to be working, to do it.

That's the principle. It's not legalism. It's a principle, that has to go right through. Okay. And this can go right through, for an individual, that's the first thing.

The second principle, that you must, always recognize, in the scripture, you find it through the, the apostle Paul, is there's always, got to be the, recognition, of conscience.

And you've got to, recognize, that different, consciences, are different, in different people. What one man, might do, another man, can't do.

But there is to be, no, judgmentalness, over conscience. Now, that's a principle, that Paul, thing with. You know, in the works, of necessity, and mercy, one man might say, well, my conscience says, that's not wrong.

[19 : 16] Another man's conscience, may say, it's not. It's mercy. It's necessity. Like, for instance, some people, their conscience, wouldn't let them eat, any meat at all, because, it was associated, with idolatry.

None of us, will eat that meat. Paul says, no, if they don't say it, for my idolatry, just eat it, because God has blessed it. But one man can't do it, the other man can't, and that's what the scriptures say.

There is conscience, and no arrogant, over, overlooking people, in some, because of someone's, own conscience themselves.

The Sabbath must not, at any time, must never, never, never what, it must never, be a mountain, that brings a shadow, over the Sabbath, and the Savior himself.

The Sabbath must, not be a mountain, that makes, the Savior, to be in the shadows. Because, Sabbath was given for man. And, again, I say again, the remembrance, of the Sabbath, must be spiritual, and not legalistic.

[20 : 31] Got it? You must remember, that, there's, there's no merit, with regard, salvation, by keeping the Sabbath. I want you to know that. You don't merit salvation, or, or anything else, in God's sight, because you keep the Sabbath.

No more than you, have merit, if you don't, steal, or if you don't lie, if you don't, do anything else. It takes one, sin, that will keep you, out of heaven.

And it's not just, the not keeping, of the Sabbath. But, who is ever going to say, well, because you're a Christian, you can, you can commit adultery, and then you'll get better.

You'll steal, and you don't need to worry, too much over that. And then you can lie, every now and again, and you don't need to go, to the house of God, and worship. Because you're a Christian, you can no, any more say, I can ignore, the word of God, in his day.

That's all I want, to say there. Now then, I, I want to, what, warn against, legal association, for self glory, in feeling oneself, very proud, because they are, a little bit better, than the Sabbath, than others.

[21 : 49] I don't want that, I don't want it, in the congregation, and it's not, in the word of God. And so, bearing that, is that the principle, of the Sabbath, as I find it, in the word of God, I look at it now, dear me, my time is really gone, but I want to, just for a short time, and I'll be very quick, over, over it, in this passage, right?

Now the first thing, you find in this passage, in verse 21, it's this, thus saith the Lord, take ye not heed, to yourselves, a burden, on the Sabbath days.

That's the principle. And the first thing, I noted in that, is that this is, a heavenly request. This is what, the Lord says. Now this is for, all children of God.

It's what the Lord says. That's the most important thing. That's everything. If the Lord doesn't say it, we don't need to worry about it. If the Lord says it, we've got to remember it.

And so it's, a heavenly request. Is that right? This is what the Lord says, be careful not to carry a load, through the streets of Jerusalem, neither take a burden from your house.

[22 : 59] That could have been, produce, worked in the house, or something like that. You understand? You can see what it is. I don't say it's a, a packet of, of, of milk that Donnie took this morning, going out for, for the cup of tea, for, for, for the church this evening.

That's a burden, but it's not that. It's, it's, it's, it's, it's something to do with work. And there's three things in it. It says there, neither to do any work, but to hallow the Sabbath.

In other words, it's a simple command, right? Simple command. It's a clear command. And three, it's a possible command.

Because it's possible to do. Not legally, not perfectly, I'm sure. But in attempt. That's the first thing. It's a, it's a heavenly request.

Second one here is, it's a general responsibility. Listen to it, it says again. This is what the Lord says. Go and stand at the gate of the people, through which the kings come out.

[24 : 04] Stand at all the gates of Jerusalem, and say, here saith the Lord. In other words, it's a general responsibility for everyone. The king, the crowd, the believers, the God-haters, the infidels, the rulers.

God is above all. Do you understand? That's it there. A nation, I may say this, a nation dies spiritually when that nation ceases to respond to the law of God.

I don't know who said to me the other day, somebody was on holidays, and they met, they met, a fellow from one of the third countries, a coloured gentleman, and he was listening, I think, I'm trying to recall this, he was listening to a debate among many Methodist Christians about homosexuality, and defending it.

And he never said anything until the end, until he got up and he said something like this, he said, when it would seem to me that when many Christians seem to get older, and supposedly to be wiser, they stop calling sin sin.

I like that, you know, because it was true. Okay, this was a general responsibility in that passage. Then, there is in this passage, which is more important here too, is an inner attitude is required.

[25 : 55] It says, be careful to obey me. Verse 24, diligently hearken, take heed to yourself, hallow or keep the Sabbath.

And I've got to ask just one question on this, what is our measure of desire to remember God's day? That will be a revelation of our obedience to God himself.

The next thing is here is a personal test. You can have a test yourself. Verse 24, if you hearken, I used to take that word if out, if.

Now that's a personal test. It's a test of the measure of your love for God, it's a measure of your obedience to God, God, it's a measure of your self-denial of yourself, it's a measure of your spirituality itself.

It's a personal test, your reaction to God's day. More than that, it must become a life pattern. You read it in 26, it says, they shall come from the cities of Judah, from the places of Jerusalem, coming burnt offerings and sacrifices and meat offerings and incenses, bringing also sacrifice of praise unto the house of God.

[27 : 29] You see, can you see it? It's a special day for God. It's a special day for worship. It's a special day for joy for those that know God.

That's the Sabbath. It's not the drudgery that I once thought of it. Because I didn't know God, and I didn't know that the Sabbath was to remember the resurrection of Jesus after he was crucified for me.

And God said, I want you to have a day where you can worship me, you can think of me, you can be different from the rest of the day. I believe that's what it is.

And finally, there's a promise assured to it. And this city will remain forever. 25. This city will be inhabited forever.

In other words, God gives a wonderful promise to those who remember him, because he remembers his day. It's a promise of blessing.

[28 : 37] The city will remember they're going to be inhabited. It's a promise of blessing. Right? It's a promise of protection. salvation. It will remain forever.

And it's a promise of perpetuity. It's ongoing. You see, it's the symbol of the city of God itself in heaven, as you find in Hebrews.

The Sabbath down here is a foretaste, a symbol of the Sabbath that comes from God. And my friends, if you don't love it down here, and if you don't love the God that's of the Sabbath down here, you and I will never have the taste to love it up there.

what an awful heaven to some people, a perpetual solace, it will make them die. There's more things and I'm finished.

This is a demand of truth. You can't ignore it, neither can I. It's more than that, though, it's not only a demand of truth. I feel that makes people sometimes very, very proud sometimes, when they perform it.

[29 : 59] And they always usually do it very, very, my, my, my, I'm a great believer in remembering God's day. My children and my wife used to get me, get onto me sometimes, because they would say to me, you know, you didn't mind going to bed for a couple of hours.

I find myself still I don't mind an hour of rest, but there's got to be something else with it. I don't want, this is a demand of truth, it's a broad one, but also it's a response of love.

It's got to be a response to God of love. God's love. But in this chapter there's a third thing. It's an evidence of genuineness of your faith.

It's an evidence of genuineness of your faith. And then finally I think right throughout the whole of the Bible, it's an opportunity for witness, so that those outside will come to you and say, why do you do this?

Why don't you do that? And you'll say, I don't do this because I believe God wants me to have a special day for himself. It's the God that made me, it's the God who sent Jesus to die for me.

[31 : 21] It's a God that's loved me and I want to love him in a special day. what a way of witness that way, not a big frown and say, well, you washed your windows.

I don't like washing things in the Lord's day, but it's that spirit, no no witness is coming out and telling people, well, we do this because we love God, not because we're better than other people.

That's the message. May God help us. Now I said at the beginning, if you're unconverted, you're a sabbath maker like myself. But you've got a hundred other sins as well.

I want you to learn this one. That's only one. And so if your sins, however they are, are unforgiven, this one as well as others, go to God this morning and say, God, like Jeremiah, heal me.

Heal me and clean me from everything I've ever done wrong. God, save me this morning. Now, if you want to pray that this morning, pray now as we have a word of prayer in silence.

[32 : 39] If you want to pray that to God, say, heal me, save me, and make me a Christian this morning as I seek to trust trust in Jesus.

Shall we pray? Dear gracious God, we come to you this morning and we ask you to help us to respond to your word in learning what God's word tells us about and respond to you this morning.

if we've been guilty, we ask to be cleansed. We pray thee for any who are not saved, who are not cleansed.

We pray thee that maybe now they will turn to Jesus and say, Jesus, clean me in your blood that you shed on the cross.

heal me and save me and then I'll seek to follow you in every way.

[33 : 54] If that response, oh God, comes to you this morning, answer it, we pray you, giving that person peace.