

Deuteronomy 5:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee.

Analysis

The fourth commandment 'Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it' establishes weekly rest as covenant obligation. The Hebrew 'qadash' (sanctify/make holy) indicates setting apart time for sacred purposes. God commanded Sabbath observance, grounding it in creation (Exodus 20:11) and redemption (Deuteronomy 5:15). The Reformed tradition sees Sabbath as moral law continuing under the New Covenant, fulfilled on the Lord's Day (Sunday). Sabbath rest typifies the eternal rest believers enter through Christ (Hebrews 4:9-10). The day teaches trust in God's providence—ceasing work demonstrates that God sustains, not human effort.

Historical Context

Israel's Sabbath was Saturday (seventh day), beginning Friday sunset. No work was permitted—gathering manna (Exodus 16:22-30), kindling fire (Exodus 35:3), carrying burdens (Jeremiah 17:21), buying/selling (Nehemiah 13:15-22). Sabbath violation merited death (Exodus 31:14-15, Numbers 15:32-36). The early church shifted to Sunday (first day) commemorating Christ's resurrection (Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Revelation 1:10). The principle—one day in seven for worship and rest—continues.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Sabbath observance demonstrate trust that God provides, freeing believers from anxious self-reliance?
2. What does the shift from Saturday to Sunday Sabbath teach about how Christ fulfills Old Testament ceremonial law while maintaining moral principles?

Interlinear Text

צִוְּהָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּשִׁמְךָ יְיָ לְקַדְּשׁ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת יוֹם אֶת שְׁמִי וְ
Keep H8104 H853 day H3117 the sabbath H7676 to sanctify H6942 H834 hath commanded H6680
יְהוָה הֵאֱלֹהֵינוּ
it as the LORD H3068 thy God H430

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 58:13 (References Lord): If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Isaiah 56:6 (References Lord): Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;