

Exodus 20:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

Analysis

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

The Sabbath belongs to YHWH ('sabbath of YHWH thy God')—it's His day, His gift. The comprehensive list (you, son, daughter, servants, animals, strangers) universalizes rest—no one is exempted, including slaves and foreigners. Ancient Near Eastern masters might rest while slaves worked; God prohibits this. The Sabbath is democratizing—servant and master equally cease labor. Even animals rest (humane treatment centuries before animal rights movements). 'Stranger within thy gates' (גֵּרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ, gerka asher bish'arekha) includes resident aliens—God's mercy extends beyond covenant community. This models Christ's rest available to all.

Historical Context

The inclusion of servants, animals, and foreigners in Sabbath rest was revolutionary. Ancient economies depended on slaves' continuous labor; God's Sabbath challenged systemic exploitation.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does the inclusion of servants and strangers in Sabbath rest teach about God's heart for the vulnerable?
2. How might modern Christians practice Sabbath in ways that benefit others, not just themselves?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	לַיהוָה	שֶׁבַע	תֵּן	הַשְּׁבִיעִי	י	וְיוֹם
	thy God	of the LORD	is the sabbath	But the seventh	day		
	H430	H3068	H7676	H7637	H3117		H3808
וּבִנְךָ,	אַתָּה הוּא	מְלָאכָה	ה	כָּל	תַּעֲשֶׂה	ה	
thou nor thy son		any work			in it thou shalt not do		
H1121	H859	H4399		H3605	H6213		
וּבְהֵמָתְךָ	וְאִמָּתְךָ	עֶבְדְּךָ	וּבִתְּךָ				
nor thy cattle	nor thy maidservant	thy manservant	nor thy daughter				
H929	H519	H5650	H1323				
בְּשַׁעַר יְיָ:	אִשׁ	ר	וְגֵרְךָ				
that is within thy gates			nor thy stranger				
H8179			H1616				

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 34:21 (Parallel theme): Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.

Nehemiah 10:31 (Parallel theme): And if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day: and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt.

Exodus 31:13 (References Lord): Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.

Luke 23:56 (Parallel theme): And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.

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