

Exodus 23:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.

Analysis

Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.

Sabbath principle extends beyond weekly rest to include land (Sabbath Year) and economic relationships. The Hebrew **שַׁבָּת** (shabbat, 'cease/rest') reflects God's creation pattern—work six, rest seventh. Sabbath is gift, not burden: protecting workers from exploitation, land from exhaustion, and community from greed. Jesus declares Himself 'Lord of the Sabbath' (Mark 2:28)—He fulfills and interprets Sabbath's meaning. Christians rest in Christ's finished work, not just one day weekly but continually.

Historical Context

Sabbath observance distinguished Israel from all ancient Near Eastern cultures. No other society practiced mandatory weekly rest from labor. The Sabbath testified to Creator who rests and grants rest.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does this law reveal God's character—His justice, mercy, or holiness?
2. What New Testament principles build upon or fulfill this Old Testament regulation?

Interlinear Text

שְׁבִיעַ יּוֹם מְעַשֵּׁךְ וּבְיּוֹם שְׁבִיעַ
Six day thou shalt do thy work day and on the seventh
H8337 H3117 H6213 H4639 H3117 H7637

תָּשַׁבְתָּ בְּיּוֹם שְׁבִיעַ שׂוֹרֵךְ בְּצַמְךָ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹת לֹמַעַן
thou shalt rest may rest that thine ox and thine ass may be refreshed
H7673 H4616 H5117 H7794 H2543 H5314

בְּנֵי אַמְתָּבָה וְהַגָּרָן
and the son of thy handmaid and the stranger
H1121 H519 H1616

Additional Cross-References

Luke 13:14 (Parallel theme): And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

Exodus 35:3 (Parallel theme): Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.