

Exodus 31:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

Analysis

The Sabbath is a sign between God and Israel forever, reminding them that the LORD sanctifies them. Sabbath-keeping testified to creation (God rested on the seventh day) and sanctification (God sets apart His people). Sabbath rest prefigures the spiritual rest believers find in Christ—ceasing from self-effort, trusting His finished work (Hebrews 4:9-10). Violating the Sabbath incurred death, showing that rejecting God's rest is spiritual death.

Historical Context

The Sabbath command's placement after tabernacle instructions (before construction began) emphasized that even sacred work must pause for sacred rest. God's people rest in His timing, not working constantly even for holy purposes.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Sabbath rest prefigure ceasing from self-effort and resting in Christ's finished work?
2. What does the severity of Sabbath violation teach about rejecting God's rest?

Interlinear Text

וְיִין	בֵּין	בֵּין	יִשְׂרָאֵל	אֵת	וְאֵת			
H996	H996	between me and the children	of Israel	It is a sign	H1931			
		H1121	H3478	H226				
לְעַלְמֵי	כִּי	שֵׁשֶׁת	וַיְהִי	עָשָׂה	יְהוָה	אֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	וְאֵת
for ever	H3588	for in six	day	made	the LORD	H853	heaven	H853
H5769		H8337	H3117	H6213	H3068		H8064	
וְאֵת	הָאָרֶץ	וַיְהִי	הַשְּׁבִיעִי	שָׁבַת	וַיִּנָּפֶשׁ:			
and earth		day	and on the seventh	he rested	and was refreshed			
H776		H3117	H7637	H7673	H5314			

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 1:31 (Creation): And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

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.

Hebrews 4:10 (Parallel theme): For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

Ezekiel 20:12 (References Lord): Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them.

