

Exodus 35:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the LORD: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death.

Analysis

The Sabbath command precedes tabernacle construction, establishing that even the holiest work must not violate God's rest principle. The Hebrew structure emphasizes 'six days' (שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים, sheshet yamim) for work and 'the seventh day' (הַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי, ha-yom ha-shevi'i) as קֹדֶשׁ (kodesh, holy) to the LORD. This order of priorities teaches that worship precedes work, being precedes doing, and relationship with God supersedes even building His dwelling place.

Historical Context

This reiteration of Sabbath law (see 31:12-17) was necessary because tabernacle construction might tempt workers to labor continuously. Ancient Near Eastern temple construction often involved relentless work, but Israel's pattern distinctly honors sacred rest.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Why does God place Sabbath-keeping before the most sacred work of building His dwelling?
2. How does the principle of rest before work challenge contemporary approaches to ministry and Christian service?

Interlinear Text

שֵׁשֶׁת	וַיְבִי אֹם	הָעֵשָׂה	מְלָאכָה	וַיְבִי אֹם	הַשְּׁבִיעִי	יְהוָה	H1961
Six	day	be done	shall work	day	but on the seventh		
H8337	H3117	H6213	H4399	H3117	H7637		
לָכֵן	קִדְשׁ	שַׁבָּת	שְׁכֵת וּן	לִיהוָה	כָּל		H3605
H0	there shall be to you an holy day	a sabbath	of rest	to the LORD			
	H6944	H7676	H7677	H3068			
הָעֵשָׂה	בֹּ	מְלָאכָה	יוֹמָת:				
be done	H0	shall work	therein shall be put to death				
H6213		H4399	H4191				

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 23:3 (Holy): Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

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.

Exodus 23:12 (Parallel theme): 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.