

Why He Is the God of Celebration and Rest

One of my favorite memories of living in Jerusalem was how the city would completely shut down on Shabbat (Hebrew for Sabbath).

Friday was always a hectic day as many people were off work, shopping and running last-minute errands. But by mid-afternoon, everyone had to be on their way home because busses would soon stop running and shops would be closed.

At sundown on Friday, the siren would echo throughout the city, letting everyone know that Sabbath had begun. The roads were empty, and the city, usually bustling with noise, grew quiet—the only sounds came from families gathering for dinner. All was still peaceful and quiet throughout the day on Saturday when it was fun to walk down the middle of the eerily empty streets.

In the Mosaic covenant, God required the ancient Israelites to observe Sabbath, a sign of their relationship with Him. Sabbath could be likened to a wedding ring—it was to remind the people of their covenant with God, and it also marked them and set them apart from all the other people.

Just as God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh, so He wants His people to do the same. He even required the land to rest every seven years. Some rabbis have suggested the world itself will exist for 6,000 years and then rest for 1,000 years (which could be what Christians call the Millennium).

God also told the children of Israel to observe certain feasts, which He called “My feasts.” All of history can be said to be summed up in these feasts: Passover is from creation up until Jesus’ death as our Passover Lamb; Pentecost

is from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts until Jesus' return; and Tabernacles is the coming kingdom of God.

To better understand the Sabbath and the Feasts of the Lord, join me this week on the *Out of Zion* podcast on *The God of Celebration and Rest. Walk Thru the Bible* with me each week by downloading our Bible reading plan, and get started reading right away! Invite your friends and family to join us! I can't wait to *Walk Thru the Bible* with you! {eo}

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