

“The Legalistic Police”

Luke 6:1-5

Feb. 27, 2022

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4 how he entered the house of God, and took and ate the consecrated bread which is not lawful for any to eat except the priests alone, and gave it to his companions?"

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- It began Friday evening at sunset and ended Saturday evening at sunset.
- The official start was when three stars were visible in the sky. If only one star was visible it was definitely day, if two it was questionable whether it was night, but if three then it was definitely night, the Sabbath had begun.
- The rabbis added the Kiddush, a prayer that began the Sabbath, thanking God for the Sabbath and the Havdalah, a prayer that ended the Sabbath, praising God for distinguishing the Sabbath from the other days of the week.
- The life of Israel revolved around the Sabbath.
- Next to the Temple, it was the most important aspect of Jewish life.

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“Sabbath” – to cease, to rest.

Ex 20:8-11

8 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 "Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

11 "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

4 Purposes for the Sabbath:

1. A DAY OF REST.

Ex 34:21

21 "You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest;

"Keeping the Sabbath day was incorporated into the Ten Commandments so that no unscrupulous and cruel landowner in Israel could force his workmen to labor every single day of the week. . . the bosses had to give the workmen a Sabbath day's rest or they were guilty of law-breaking and the penalty was serious."

Ex 31:15

15 'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the Lord; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death.

2. TO DEMONSTRATE THAT MAN WHO IN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD DOES NOT HAVE TO WORK 7 DAYS. GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF HIM.

Ex 16:23-26

23 Tomorrow is a sabbath observance, a holy sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning.

24 So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not become foul nor was there any worm in it.

25 Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the Lord; today you will not find it in the field.

26 "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the sabbath, there will be none."

3. TO SET ISRAEL APART FROM THE OTHER NATIONS.

Ezek 20:12

12 "Also I gave them My sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them."

4. TO WORSHIP GOD AND TO FELLOWSHIP WITH HIS PEOPLE.

Lev 23:3

3 There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest; **a day of sacred assembly**. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, **it is a Sabbath to the Lord**.

Isa 58:13-14

13 "If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot
From doing your own pleasure on My holy day,
And call the sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable,
And honor it, desisting from your own ways,
From seeking your own pleasure
And speaking your own word,
14 Then you will take delight in the Lord,
And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;

- **Legalism** - a system of man-made rules and regulations that result in traditions for achieving both salvation and sanctification.
- For the Sabbath there were eventually 39 categories of laws specifying what was labor and what was not.
- Within those 39 categories was a total of about 1,500 rules that surrounded the Sabbath.
- 24 chapters.
- Let's take a look at them . . .

So where and when did things go wrong -

- A group of Rabbis formed, some 450 years before Christ, with the purpose of putting a hedge around the Mosaic Law.
- They did want another captivity for profaning the Sabbath.
- They were known as the Sopherim. They developed rules which became the Oral Law.
- In 30 AD a new group was formed, the Tannaim. They were to replace the Sopherim. A Jew might question what the Tannaim said but never what the Sopherim said.
- This Oral Law with all of its rules and regulations, later known as the Mishnah, was considered equal in authority to Scripture.
- It was the Scribes who worked out these regulations in detail. It was the Pharisees who dedicated their lives to keeping and enforcing them. They were the **"legalistic police."**
- These were really the architects of Pharisaical Judaism.

39 categories –

"sowing, plowing, reaping, binding sheaves, threshing, winnowing, selecting food, grinding, sifting, kneading, baking, shearing wool, washing wool, beating wool, dyeing wool, spinning, weaving, making two loops, weaving two threads, separating two threads, tying, untying, sewing two stitches, tearing in order to sew two stitches, trapping (a deer), slaughtering, flaying, salting, curing a hide, scraping a hide and cutting it up, writing two letters, erasing two letters, building, tearing down, extinguishing a fire, kindling a fire, hammering, and transporting an object from one domain to another."

Matt 11:28-30

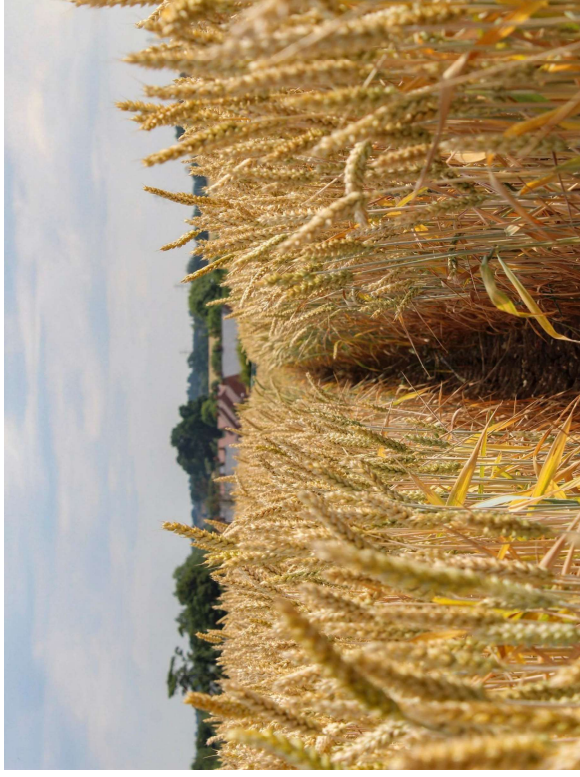
28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.

30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

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The disciples here violated 4 rabbi Sabbath laws:

1. Reaping.
2. Threshing.
3. Winnowing.
4. Storing.

Ex 34:21-22

21 "You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during plowing time and harvest you shall rest."

‘He that reapeth corn on the Sabbath to the quantity of a fig is guilty; and plucking corn is reaping.’ Rubbing the grain out was threshing. Even to walk on the grass on the Sabbath was forbidden because it was a form of threshing. ‘In case a woman rolls wheat to remove the husks, it is considered sifting; if she rubs the head of wheat, it is regarded as threshing; if she cleans off the side-adherences, it is sifting out fruit; if she throws them up in her hand, it is winnowing’
- The Mishna

2 But some of the Pharisees said, "Why do you do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"

- So now the Pharisees come unglued.
- By the way, if this is the Sabbath, what are they doing out in a wheat field? Maybe 3,000 feet away from home?

Jesus was confronting one of the four major pillars of Pharisaicalism:

1. Sabbath keeping.
 2. Circumcision.
 3. Laws about eating clean and unclean foods.
 4. Worship at the Temple in Jerusalem.
- Note how this question is stated:
 - “you” – Jesus included.
 - “Why are you shoving in our face your breaking the Law?”
 - “Why do you have such disdain for what is in the Law? This isn’t against us but against God’s Law.”
 - But the question is, “Does God Law say anything about what the disciples and Jesus are doing? **Nothing.**”

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- First let's make it clear Jesus and the disciples were not stealing.

Deut 23:25

25 "When you enter your neighbor's standing grain, then you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not wield a sickle in your neighbor's standing grain.

- Jesus could have said that their violation was only against a man-made tradition. But He wants to really strike at the core of their system.

- "Do you guys even read the Bible?"

- The Pharisees don't need to simply tweak their interpretation. They missed the entire point of the Sabbath.

- Why bring up David? The Pharisees loved David. He could do no wrong. Highly revered.

- I Sam. 21:1-6

- David, and his small band of men, are fleeing from Saul and the invading Philistines.

- Stops at Nob where the tabernacle is.

- Ahimelech the priest is there.

- David asks for something to eat.

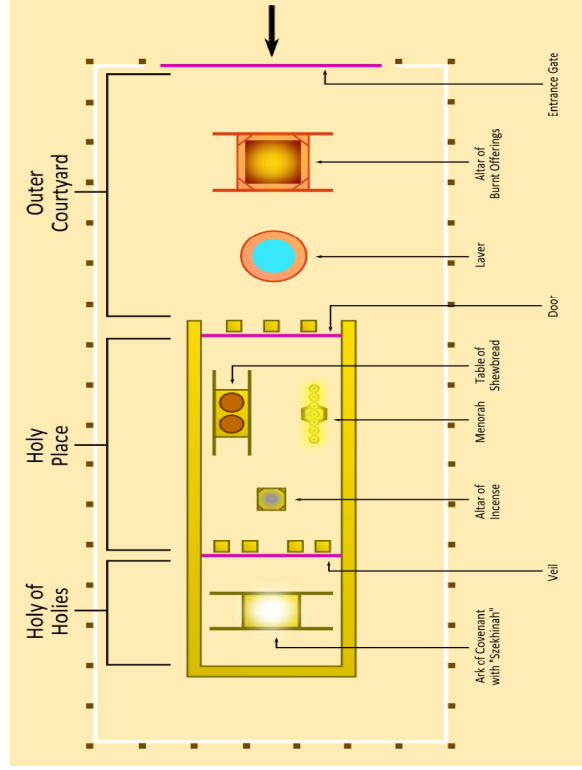
- Priest says he has nothing only the showbread on the golden table in the Holy Place.

- It is the Sabbath and those 12 loaves are being replaced with some fresh hot loaves.

- The old ones were to be eaten only by the priest according to the Law. Those loaves had been consecrated.

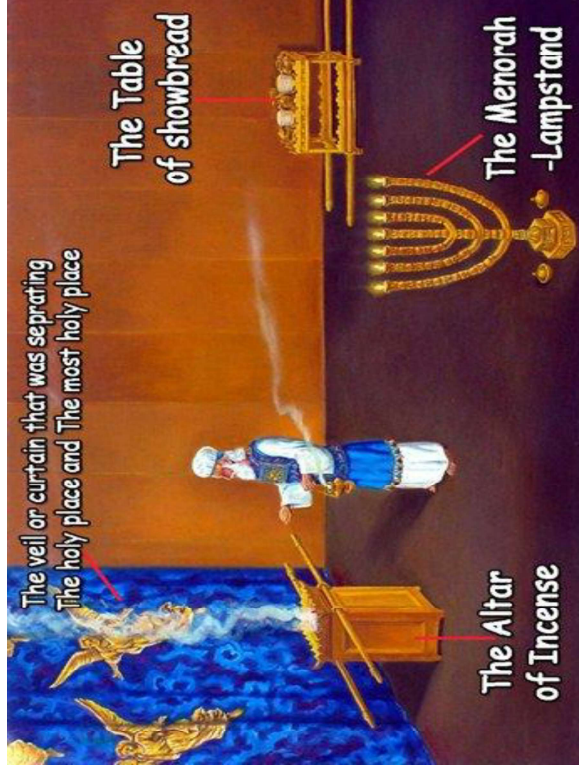
- David says. "I'll take them."

- Priest gives the 12 loaves to David and his men.



The Table of Showbread

- There were 12 loaves on the table arranged in 2 stacks each 6 loaves high.
- They were replaced every Sabbath.
- Jesus is the bread of life, and the Passover uses unleavened bread as a symbol for his sacrifice.



2 violations of the Law:

1. Obtaining food on the Sabbath (gleaning)
2. Eating only that which could be eaten by the priests.

- If you do not condemn David, you cannot condemn Jesus and the disciples.

- David was serving God. The disciples were serving God.

- So in the case of David, the Mosaic Law on that point was waved because human hunger was more important than a ceremonial use of the showbread.

Bottom line:

- Jesus and the disciples did not break God's Law but they did break the traditions of the Pharisees.
- God is more concerned with meeting the needs of people than He is with protecting religious traditions.

Mark 2:27

27 Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

“Suppose you pass a house that is on fire. You stop, run up to the front door, bang on the door, and ring the doorbell. You look in the window and see someone lying on the floor. You then kick in the door and drag the unconscious person outside to safety. Even though breaking into someone else’s house is a criminal offense, the law will not prosecute you since you saved that person’s life.”

“If you are on an interstate highway and the posted minimum speed is 40 mph. If you drive 25 mph you could get picked up for breaking the law. HOWEVER if freezing rain comes down and the highway becomes glare ice, if you go 25 mph you will not get picked up for breaking the law.”

Principle in both cases: The welfare and needs of humans is more important than an established law.

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- The Pharisees had gone totally off the rails. Jesus is saying, “Look Pharisees, I’ll tell you exactly what the Sabbath means because I created it and have the authority to tell you exactly what it means. “I’m in charge of the Sabbath. You are not.”
- Jesus, by making this statement, is claiming to be God.

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Application

1. You or I do not have the freedom to define Scripture however we want to.
2. We are not Sabbatarians. We do not observe the Sabbath today. It was not a part of the moral law but rather the ceremonial law. That is why it is the only commandment that is not repeated in the N.T.

Sabbatarian Baptists

Seventh Day Baptists

Sabbatarian Adventists

Adventist Church of Promise
Churches of God (Seventh-Day)
Creation Seventh Day Adventist Church
Sabbath Rest Advent Church
Seventh-day Adventist Church
Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement
International Missionary Society of Seventh-Day Adventist Church Reform Movement
True and Free Seventh-day Adventists
Shepherd's Rod (Davidian Seventh-day Adventists)
United Sabbath-Day Adventist Church
United Seventh-Day Brethren

Sabbatarian Pentecostals

Nazareth Baptist Church
Sabbatarian Pentecostals, Ukraine [uk], Oneness denomination, formed in the 1920s–1930s in the Western Ukraine, Poland
Soldiers of the Cross Church
True Jesus Church

Sabbatarian British Israelites

Church of God International (United States)
Church of the Great God
Church of God Preparing for the Kingdom of God
Global Church of God
House of Yahweh
Intercontinental Church of God
Living Church of God
Philadelphia Church of God
Restored Church of God
United Church of God

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3. Watch out for the "dogs." (Phil. 3:2) Those who would lead you into legalism.
4. We do observe Sundays (Lord's Day – Rev. 1:10, 1 Cor. 16:2), not as a legalistic burden but as a blessing.

5. J.C. Ryle - "Our Sundays and how we use them is one of the most sure signs of our spiritual condition."

6. Sundays demonstrate to God, to ourselves, and the world that:

1. God is more important than any blessing that we enjoy on this earth.
2. God is more important than anyone else.
3. This is His day given for –

Reflection – for the blessings God has given the past week.

Restoration – rest for our minds and bodies.

Refreshment – to gain strength spiritually and physically for the coming week. Corporate worship, teaching from His Word, fellowship with family, friends, other believers.

7. How do you use your Sundays?