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Exodus 23 verses 10 through 19. These are God's words, six years. You shall sow your land and gather in its produce. But the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie. Fallow that the poor of your people may eat and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat in like manner.

You shall do with your vineyard and you're all of Grove, six days you shall do your work and on the seventh day. He's so rest that your ox and your donkey may rest from the son of your female servant and the stranger maybe refreshed. And then all that I have said to you. These circumspect and make no mention of the name of other gods, nor let it be heard from your mouth.

Three times. You shall keep a feast to me in the year. You shall keep the Feast of unleavened Bread. You shall eat unleavened bread. Seven days as I commanded you at the time appointed in the month of Aviv for in it, you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty and the Feast of Harvest.

The first fruits of your laborers, which you have sown in the field and the Feast of Ingathering. At the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field three times in the year, all your males shall appear before the Lord Yahweh, He shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with love and bread nor shall the fat of my sacrifice, remain until morning.

The first of the first fruits of your land. You shall bring into the house of Yahweh. Your Lord. You shall not boil a young goat and it's mother's milk. So far. The reading of God's inspired and inherent tort

When we come this Lord's day afternoon, to the end of what is sometimes referred to as the book of the Covenant, a small sampling of case law and ceremonial law that Moses. Preaches by God's Word at Sinai. You remember the Lord had given, the people, the law, and they had heard his voice, and they had decided, they did not want to hear anymore of his voice, and so they asked, Moses to go and listened and come back and relay.

And We find out from Deuteronomy that, that was actually a good thing considering what the hearts of the people were like. And what would happen to them without this mediator who is for us, of course, a foreshadowing, even in this role as that. He fulfilled for Israel. A foreshadowing of Christ.

And so he began in this. In this short section and these laws. Many of them that we have heard have longer treatments in Deuteronomy, which is Moses's last sermon as they're about to enter the Promised land and in Leviticus the code that is written for the worship and the consecration, maintaining of the worship, and the holiness of the people of Israel.

And So we've had a lot of a couple verse chunks, but now We come at the end to this theme in the middle of our passage. And in all that I have said to you be circumspect and make no mention of the name of your of other gods, nor let it be heard from your mouth.

And this echoes what we heard at the beginning of the book of the Covenant in 2023, You shall not make anything to be with me. Gods of silver. Gods of gold. You shall not make for

yourselves. The Lord has brought Israel into an exclusively committed relationship with Him. He has constituted them as both a church and a nation at Sinai.

And we're going to especially see the Constitution of them as a church and his designing, and enabling them to build the apparatus by which they will worship him. And by which he will dwell among the most of the rest of Exodus is going to be taken up with that instruction for there, being constituted as a church and we've already seen him start to give them some civil law.

In the sampling of the case law that we find in the book of the Covenant here, constituting them of course as a nation as well. And the Lord's bearing has to one another. We are going to find that there is some intermixture between ceremonial law that he gives to them as a church and civil law that he gives to them as a nation.

But there is in these laws that he gives them. And what is before us this morning is especially as a church. Although there's a civil component, there is a reminder that Israel has been redeemed from a humanity that has fallen. You remember when he gave them the Ten Commandments in Exodus chapter 20 and especially when he gave them the fourth commandment which with which he now chooses to close these case laws, these samplings of his law in the book of the Covenant, You remember the way he phrased it.

Remember the Sabbath day, not that he was establishing the Sabbath day. In fact, he tells us when he established it on the seventh day of the creation and that it has been a consecrated as holy and blessed as good ever since then. But what does a fallen humanity do?

Does it revere that? Which is holy, Does it enjoy that? Which is truly blessed. And of course following humanity hasn't but now God has constituted for himself. A nation that is also a church whom he has redeemed by blood in his bringing them out and order to bring them here to Sinai to gather them to himself.

And so he doesn't just reiterate the fourth commandment. He does do that in our passage. You can see that in verse 12, six days you shall do your work on the seventh day. You shall rest but he shows and commands. Many outworkings of the Sabbath principle that are unique to Israel that they won't just be unique in keeping the moral law.

If they had ever done that consistently, that would have made them unique among the nations. Praise God. But they would also be unique in some of these variations that God makes especially upon this commandment of his moral law, that would display the blessedness of being a people who have been bought and constituted by the blood of the sacrifice that looked forward to Christ.

And who, as we're going to hear Lord willing, Lord, helping us next. Next Lord's day afternoon are actually led by Christ or a pre-incarnation appearance of Christ didn't have been. As we'll hear next week, Lord willing And so Jesus is the Lord who has bought them by blood And Jesus is the one who is constituted them a nation at a church from which he himself when he comes into the world as he and the Father, and the Spirit of have covenanted and determined to do from before the world began, He will come from this people.

And so he gives them not just the moral perpetual Sabbath but many different Sabbaths plural in this passage we have a Sabbath year that's referred to and of course many of you are thinking also probably of Leviticus 25 and the year of Jubilee, a Sabbath of Sabbath years. And this entire passage is treated in a little bit more detail in.

Leviticus 23 but we have first Sabbath the Sabbath year that's described and versus 10 through 11 and then the Sabbath day and something particular to Israel as a redeemed culture within a fallen world that will happen there on the Sabbath day. And then in verses 14 through, 19 Sabbath seasons, a things that are repeated every year and there's three of them or feasts.

If we use the language of the text three times, he shall keep a feast to me in the year. And so there are these variations on this wonderful Sabbath scene that Sabbath theme that of all his creatures. God has created man to know him for God. From all eternity knows himself.

And God has created man to delight in him for God. From all eternity has delighted in himself and has that fellowship within himself. And these are the great privileges of his image-bearers that we would enjoy the blessedness of God, which Jesus himself says, doesn't he when he comes into the world?

And he says these things I have spoken to you, that you're my joy may be in you and that our joy, his joy in us, may be complete. So first thing we see here is these Sabbath year six years you so your land and gather its produce but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie.

Follow and we'll stop there. Just now, What would you have to do kids? If you were going to, you know, if there weren't grocery stores and grocery stores, I guess they collaborated in markets and things to some extent. But if there was no such thing as grocery stores, and you couldn't order it on your cell phone and you had to get your food out of your garden plot, which may happen again soon.

And so the Lord help us to be wise and to be well practiced. But what would it mean? If what would you have to do if you couldn't garden for one year out of every seven? One of the things you might do is you might break that plot up into sevenths and every year, use 6/7 and let the 1/7 and let that one.

Rotate. However, The language here does emphasize the six years sowing and gathering in the seventh year, letting it rest. But what would you have to do? You would have to get seven years worth of produce out of six years worth of gardening, or if you've got just enough garden for you, you'd have to get, you know, seven sevenths of produce out of 6/7 of your garden.

There's an implied promise of abundance here that God will give them enough in the six years to supply for the seven. This is actually something we're familiar with in a much more spectacular. Way, aren't we? Because one of the ways that Israel became a nation and there's some overlap here between this.

And and the deaconate course, is there was a famine coming that was going to be seven years. A long. And God was going to give Egypt enough in seven years for the entire ancient Near East to have 14 years worth of produce. But in the giving of both Sabbath day is Well think about in a moment but also the Sabbath year in verses 10 through 11.

There's an implied promise of abundance of food from God. We follow His commands because He who gave them is good and the ability to follow them. Well, depends upon trusting, His goodness and not just trusting His goodness. But we have here a reminder that or instruction that this is also an opportunity for them to reflect his goodness.

In the seventh year you shall let it rest in life fallow that the poor of your people may eat and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. And so we have poor. The poor are not going to disappear from among us in this age, the Lord Jesus said that this also connects to the deaconal class because you're a member, when the church had its birth under the

administration of Jesus, who is sitting in heaven as opposed to the church in the wilderness, having its origin here at Sinai.

Under the administration of Moses, they actually have a statement, don't they? That we heard preach not too long ago, There were no poor among them and the and the question. Well, was Jesus wrong. No, Jesus wasn't wrong. And that didn't last very, very long. But If you have to be poor and in the world, at this time, in Exodus 23, Israel's the place you want to be poor, because there you have the abundant blessing of God that gives them seven years worth in six years of working, the land.

And The commands that he gives them for letting the the land lie rest are specifically mentioning you. So that you may go into those, This isn't just the corners of the fields, right on the seven years on the six years, that they work. The lands. They have to leave the corners open, but on that seventh year, the poor get to have full gleaning in those fields.

And even for beasts of the field, It was better to be a wild. Beast in Israel. Then it was to be a wild beast in any of the other nations. So you have Sabbath years and it's setting Israel apart as a blessing to the nations a blessing to the poor and even a blessing to the creation in a way that man of course was designed to be a blessing to the creation.

Wasn't he not that we exist for the creation, but that we reflect the goodness of our God. In how we subdue the earth and help the creation to flourish. Then there's the Sabbath day and there's something similar here, six days. You shall do your work and on the seventh day you shall rest and this implies that God helping us and giving us wisdom and dependence upon him.

He's going to give us enough effectiveness and getting what we need done on the six days. So that on the seventh day, we can not just stop from the stuff that we do on the other six. That's implied of course, but find our rest in Him, that's the design of the Sabbath.

That's what it is. Consecrated four and how it is a blessing. But note what's added here in verse 12 that your ox and your donkey may rest and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed. So again, if you're going to be a beast of burden, you want to be a beast of burden in Israel because you get one day and seven to rest.

And if you're going to be the son of a female servant or a stranger, you want to be a son of a female servant in Israel and a stranger in Israel so that you can

Be refreshed. The reason I set it that way, or did it That way? The end of verse 12 is because the word actually comes from a root, that means to be able to catch your breath. The Lord gives his people to be able to catch their breath and not just physically.

But upon him spiritually, We are a spiritually harried people. Over busy over tired over frenetic. And we need to catch our breath as it were spiritually in him for which the Sabbath was given from the beginning of the creation. But what about people who don't know him and don't have their spiritual rest in Him?

Well, one of the one of the ways that they may be blessed, is by being among those people who do know him and who do have that day of spiritual rest because God commands His society here, that in the day that they're taking their spiritual rest. Even their slaves, even the foreigners will be able to catch their breath.

This is actually something that has happened at times in the history of the church. Where the church in obedience to God and seeing the Lord's day, as the culmination of all this, which will

come to in the conclusion, has kept the Sabbath. Holy viewed. It as something that is consecrated by the Lord Jesus to himself because he is Yahweh and called the Sabbath a delight.

And then delighted in the day and by delighting in the day came to delight in the Lord Himself and those even who have been unbelievers and yet have been in those cultures have enjoyed not just being able to catch their breath one day in seven. But where Christian cultures have been most healthy in times of revival and reformation have been urged to come and hear Christ preached.

And the worship assemblies of the church, something that you can't really do with the servant class in America, The minimum wage people who are working all the jobs that are necessary for all of the people who leave their worship services and go and indulge and worldly, creational pleasure rather than rejoicing in the Lord.

And so the, the church is failure to delight itself in the Lord, for an entire day in seven, has both taken away the benefit to those who cannot catch their breath as it were. And even if you invited then they'd say, sorry, I'm doing food prep at that time because you come here and eat your lunch when you're done.

And so there's a Sabbath day abundant effectiveness from God. Seven days worth of productivity in six days worth of work and then mercy to others, not just sons of female servants and strangers. But even oxen and donkeys that get a day of rest. And then there's these sabbath seasons three times.

He shall keep a feast to me in the year and he gives them these feasts in which they'll be able to gather to where the Lord is where the Lord makes His named to be. That he puts it this way. In verse 17, three times in the year, all your males shall appear before the Lord Yahweh.

You see already the keeping the feast and verse 14 and then the all the males in verse 17, there's a logistical difficulty here because the dwelling place of God with man is is going to be located in a tent at first and especially in the inner part of that tent and a box that is in the inner part of that tent in the Holy of Holies and the arc of the Covenant and later is going to be a permanent structure is going to be in a permanent place that the traveling of the Tabernacle will be gone and the place to gather for these feasts for these feasts will be just one place on earth.

There is this wonderful removal of the logistical difficulty. When we move for the from the administration of Moses to the administration of Jesus, isn't there? There's not just a change in laws because there's a change in priesthood in which you no longer have these feasts or any of the ceremonial law that was connected to the time and the priesthood of Levi, under the church as it was constituted.

And in, which Moses was faithful in God's house, as a servant, When we come to Jesus faithful over God's house as a son. What does he do? He doesn't lead them into a tract of land in the ancient Near East. He passes through the heavens and takes his seat and glory and gathers us there in himself, so that we don't come to Sinai and neither.

Do we come to earthly Zion Jerusalem? We come to that Zion where the angels are gathered. Whereas the congregation of the firstborn Where are there are the souls of the just made perfect and with the logistical difficulty of the travel and the disruption of the family life. So that in many cases, it would be just the males who were able to go with those things removed by union, with Christ, through faith and being seated.

In the heavenly places within. We are able to have a weekly feast so that you don't have this thrice yearly rhythm with Passover at the beginning, which is called unleavened bread here, and then Pentecost some seven weeks later, which is called harvest here. And then Feast of Tabernacles or booths towards the end of the year, which is called in gathering here.

And so in Israelite life the the shape of the year was along these three feasts and this looked forward to Christ when the logistical difficulties would be removed and the wives and daughters and younger children would always be able to go to and where the assembling was in a much better place and not with fear and of immediate destruction but with reverence and awe to him who is a consuming fire.

And so there is this sabotism on this Sabbath. Keeping that remains the Sabbath years are gone. The Sabbath day, of course, being a perpetual moral commandment has an even greater a characteristic of If Angelism and refreshment for the stranger that aspect in verse 12 is actually stronger or should be in the church now than it was for Israel.

But you see how there were all of these different Sabbaths, plural. And now you can understand Colossians 2 and you're not going to read Genesis to out of your Bible. When you get to Colossians 2 because the word Sabbath there, when he says, don't let people judge you in this.

It's not part of what God requires anymore. The word sabbaths there is plural. It's the multiple variations on the theme of the Sabbath that belonged to the Jewish calendar because the Lord of the Sabbath has come and become the mediator in and over the house of God and gathers us into heaven, one day a week, He has rested from his works in this world.

We haven't We haven't entered his rest yet to that. Caught a palsus but he gives us that weekly sampling of that heavenly rest by which he brings us at last when we have ceased from our works. In this world into that rest that he enjoys and that those souls of the just were made perfect and joy.

And so since he has gone before us through the veil and he has canceled this thrice, yearly pattern to life and replaced it with a sabotism on that remains and the gathering of ourselves together that we are not to forsake. He has, since he has taken the, the moral perpetual command of the Sabbath, and he has laid claim to it and he calls it.

Now, the Lord's day since he has done, so what ought to be our joy that the Mosaic administration is over and the Levitical priesthood has ended. And Jesus is over the church of both Jews and Gentiles, and he is our great High Priest and he gathers us all with VIP high priestly access.

We're just one man in Israel, could go even when it was a shadow copy. Now, every single one who believes in, Jesus, Christ goes every week in the assembly in Zion in glory, where we are seated with him in the heavenly places. No wonder then Such a good commandment.

As it had its particular extra variations in the time of Moses, which now being canceled in Christ for the supremacy of Christ. No wonder. It would come under such attack and really all the ages of the church. And yet the goodness of what God gave Israel here, cannot be denied, just ask those beasts of the field or those poor or that son of the female servant or that stranger and the goodness of what he has given us in Christ is all the greater and it should be delighted in.

So by his church and the effect of being among a people who have him and who have His day and have jettisoned, of course, all man-made days. But even that, which belonged to the

shadow time, it ought to be enjoyed by those who are in a Christian culture. Even if Christians they themselves not be because Jesus alone is our God.

There is one God and one mediator. And he says don't make anything else to be with me. Don't add human fingerprints. To the religion of God. He says, don't even let the names of their gods beyond your lips and all what dreadful but just providence, that one of the names of those gods or Goddesses.

She's the wife in the husband wife. Deity pair in so many of those ancient Near Eastern religions is depending on the religion ashra astraloth Ishtar esteray, whom we know from the text of the ancient world was married to a god named Tamuse, and they would die every fall. And they would rise again.

Every spring. And now the weekly day of the Lord is profaned not only by trying to reintroduce some of man's rhythm to Jesus's calendar. But it is done and direct violation. Verse 13 by the name that it is given in some of our cultures.

That we would see the goodness of Jesus as the Lord of the sabbath singular. And his day as higher than any of these seasonal days or Sabbath years or even Jubilees because he are creator has become our Redeemer and gathers us to himself in heaven every single week. Amen.

Let's pray.

Lord Jesus. We thank you for your great mercy to us. And we pray that we would learn the Blessedness of the holiness of your day and we pray that you would make us to be generous and merciful like, you are that even unbelievers? Would know that Christians make the best neighbors and Christian countries, make the best countries.

Christian governments, make the best governments. What we pray that you would grant, this might have even an evangelistic effect that they have the opportunity to be gathered, where your people are entering. Evan would hear your word proclaimed would hear you. Lord. Jesus proclaimed and be brought to faith as those appointed to eternal life and would be glad and would glorify your word and would believe how we thank you for this day.

That you've given us with you, in your word in glory, where you have seated us by our union with you through faith. Thank you for applying that to us by your spirit and giving us some tests. Some experience, Thank you for your blood. Which as in the Passover put away our sin.

Thank you for absorbing all of the wrath, even as the sacrifice had to be consumed. And we pray that our blood boughtness and perfect righteousness in, you would be a joy to us our whole lifelong and especially on these your days which we ask in your name, Amen.