

SECRETS OF PROPHECY

REST FOR THE SOUL



it is written
OCEANIA





Today's fast-paced, multi-tasking and socially disconnected lifestyle has resulted in unprecedented levels of stress. It seems as if our world has gone mad. We feel a sense of unease about all this. A sense of insecurity. A sense of discontentment. A loss of control of our own lives.

As financial security vanishes concern over personal debt has increased. People are overworking to cope. In a global survey of business leaders, accountancy firm Grant Thornton reported that stress levels had increased by an average of over 50 percent in 12 months. The highest stress levels were recorded in South East Asia. Countries such as Australia (48 percent), New Zealand (46 percent) and the United States (45 percent) all recorded major increases in work-related stress.

Personal reflection on any past week results in: "it was too busy". Harried housewives are talking about their "time crunch". They work through the day and then perform a "second shift" at home. Quality time in needed sleep has been reduced and the stress of modern life is affecting families and relationships. A Cornell University study revealed that the average American father spends just 38 seconds each day in quality time with his children.



There is a breaking point. Personal health suffers, along with emotional stability and resilience. A new condition called "the Atlas syndrome" has appeared. It refers to the feeling of having the weight of the world on your shoulders.

As people look for answers, a variety of solutions to stress have emerged. Harriet Meyers, president of the employer consultant group The

Confidence Centre, has suggested a number of interesting tactics to enable people to cope with stress. These include: planting a tree, feeding the birds, dancing a jig, taking a bubble bath, tickling a baby and avoiding the wearing of tight clothes.



Does God have a solution to the current day issues with stress? Does the Bible suggest a practical plan to help us to rest in a restless world? What did Jesus say to those weighed down with hard work and personal burdens? In this study guide you will discover a lost secret that will help you become a closer friend to Jesus and develop a happy and healthy resilience within a stressful world.

Q1 WHAT DOES JESUS PROMISE TO THOSE WHO COME TO HIM WHEN THEY ARE TIRED, WEARY AND STRESSED OUT?

Matthew 11:28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you _____

If you would like some rest for your body, mind and soul, then Jesus invites you to come to Him. Jesus wants to spend time with you; quality time and regular time – time away from the frenetic pace of life.

Throughout the Bible God's people always set aside quality time. This included a full day per week, totally dedicated to spending time in worship and rest with their Creator God. During this day of rest the people would be refreshed and rejuvenated – physically, mentally and spiritually.

Does God have a solution to the current day issues with stress?



Q2

WHERE DOES THE IDEA OF A REST DAY COME FROM AND WHAT WAS IT CALLED?



Genesis 2:2 *And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He _____ on the _____ day from all His work which He had done*

Exodus 20:10 *... but the seventh day is the _____ of the Lord your God*

God established a day of rest at the origins of this world. After a busy six days creating planet earth, God rested on the seventh day. The word “rest” in the Genesis story is translated from the Hebrew word “Shabath”. In other places of the Bible the seventh day is simply called the “Sabbath”.

It was God who kept the first Sabbath day. This was at least 2,000 years before the birth of the Jewish race, 2,500 years before the giving of the law at Mt Sinai and 4,000 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. In fact, the Bible says the Sabbath is so important it is called “the Sabbath of the Lord your God” (Exodus 20:10).

Q3

WHAT DID GOD DO TO THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH TO SET IT APART FROM ALL OTHER DAYS OF THE WEEK?

Genesis 2:3 *Then God _____ the seventh day and _____ it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made*

God not only rested on the seventh day, He also blessed it. To bless literally means to “make happy”. The Sabbath is not a boring day of restrictions; it was blessed by God to be the happiest day of the week. God also sanctified the seventh day. To sanctify literally means to “set apart for holiness”. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. God had such a wonderful experience on that first Sabbath day; He couldn’t keep it to Himself. He gave it as a gift to all humanity.

It is important to note that God has only ever blessed and sanctified one day. He has never blessed the first day or the third day or the fifth day. God did not bless the act of resting, He blessed the day itself. As a result, no matter how sincerely someone keeps a day holy (e.g. Muslims keep Friday), it will never be the Sabbath. No human being can make a Sabbath or change the Sabbath. This honour is totally in the hands of the Creator God.

God established a day of rest at the origins of this world.

Q4 HOW DO WE KNOW THE SABBATH REMAINED IMPORTANT TO GOD?

Exodus 20:8 _____ *the Sabbath day, to keep it*

God took the Sabbath day of rest and placed it right into the heart of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17). Of all the things God wanted His people to do, the Sabbath was placed in His “top ten” list of priorities for loving obedience. The Sabbath rest is not just a “side issue”. Anyone who disregards the Sabbath today is disregarding God’s holy Commandments.

The Sabbath Commandment is the only one which begins with the word “remember”. It is a tragic fact that the most forgotten Commandment in the world today is the Sabbath. In a British survey, over a thousand people were interviewed and asked about the relevance of the Ten Commandments. One of the least remembered and voted as most irrelevant Commandments, was the Sabbath. Only 4 percent of people had even heard of it.

A global count of those who keep the Bible Sabbath reveals that in this time of stress and hectic lifestyle less than 1 percent of the global population keep the seventh-day Sabbath. It is no wonder God said, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy”.



Q5

IN THE SCRIPTURES, WHAT DOES THE SABBATH REPRESENT?

Ezekiel 20:12 *Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a _____ between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who _____ them*

The seventh-day Sabbath is important because it is rich in symbolic meaning. The Sabbath is a sign or symbol representing God as our Creator and Redeemer. If we keep the Bible Sabbath we are signifying that we:

a) Believe and trust in a Creator God

The Sabbath is a special day for us to worship the Creator God, to remember that we were made in God's image and as such, we have great value to God. The Sabbath openly rejects evolution. It lifts up a powerful Creator God who designed and created something from nothing, through the power of His Word.

b) Believe in salvation through Christ not works

God completed His work and rested on the Sabbath. We keep the seventh day Sabbath as a symbol of resting from the impossible task of trying to work our way to heaven (Hebrews 4:9,10).

c) Have a living relationship with God

God says the Sabbath is a sign of sanctification (i.e. becoming holy – Ezekiel 20:12). Just as He made the seventh day holy, now God takes the responsibility of making us holy also. As we spend quality time with

Jesus, trusting in His creative power, our lives will change to become like His.

d) Are loyal to God

God has singled out a specific day of the week. He asks us to keep it holy and rest during this day. Those who keep the Sabbath trust God’s Word and demonstrate their loyalty to Him through loving worship and obedience.

Q6 WAS THE SABBATH MADE JUST FOR THE JEWS?

Mark 2:27 And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for _____, and not man for the Sabbath”

Jesus clearly says the Sabbath was made for man – not just Jews. The Sabbath is the “Lord’s day” (Revelation 1:10). Indeed, Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28). The Sabbath was made to remind us of our Creator God, a God who created Australians, Chinese, Africans and Americans – not just Jews.

As we spend quality time with Jesus, trusting in His creative power, our lives will change to become like His.



The Sabbath was created thousands of years before any Jews existed and is called “the Sabbath of the Lord your God” (Exodus 20:10). It is not just the Jewish Sabbath – it is God’s Sabbath. The Sabbath is a special gift to everyone who wants to have an intimate relationship with Him.

Q7 WHICH DAY OF THE WEEK IS THE SABBATH?



Luke 23:52-24:2 *This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus ... That day was the _____, and the Sabbath drew near (v52,54)*

Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they _____ on the Sabbath according to the _____. (v56)

Now on the _____ day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. (Luke 24:1,2)

The Bible is clear. The day before the Sabbath is called the “Preparation” day. The day after the Sabbath is the first day of the week. Therefore, the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week. Jesus died on “Good Friday”. He rested in the tomb on the Sabbath and rose again on “Easter Sunday”. The seventh day of the Bible is Saturday.



It is important to note in Luke’s record, that the women kept the Sabbath “according to the Commandment”. This gospel was written nearly 30 years after the resurrection. If there had been a change in the day of worship, then this would have been an ideal time for Luke to record it. Instead, he simply confirms the seventh day Sabbath Commandment.

A simple look into the various languages of the world also demonstrates that Saturday is the Sabbath. In over 150 languages of the world the word that is currently used for Saturday means “the Sabbath”.

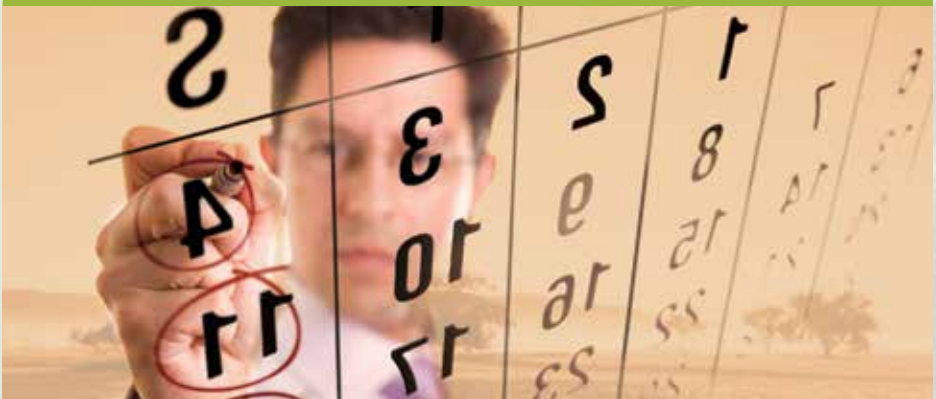
To illustrate:

- German: Samstag – meaning Sabbath’s day

- Spanish: Sabado – meaning Sabbath
- French: Samedi – meaning Sabbath day
- Italian: Sabato – meaning Sabbath

The Jews have been keeping the Saturday Sabbath of the Bible for thousands of years. A study from any encyclopaedia or dictionary will show that the Sabbath is Saturday.

Religious leaders from all different religions agree that the



Sabbath of the Bible is Saturday. Here are just a few examples:

“So, basically, Saturday is the Sabbath day. It’s the last day of the week, the seventh day, the day on which God rested after six days of creation. Even modern calendars have Saturday as the last day of the week and Sunday as the first day of the new week.” *Catholicism for Dummies*, Rev Trigilio & Rev Brighenti

“Is there any command in the New Testament to change the day of weekly rest from Saturday to Sunday? None”. *Anglican Manual of Christian Doctrine*, p127

“There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but the Sabbath day was not Sunday.... It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week.... Where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament – absolutely not. There is no Scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week.” Dr Edward T. Hiscox, author *The Baptist Manual*.

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Q8 WHICH DAY DID JESUS KEEP HOLY?

Luke 4:16 *So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the _____ day, and stood up to read*

When Jesus was here on earth He was in the custom or habit of Sabbath observance and attending a worship service on that day. The Bible tells us that Jesus is our example in all things, particularly in relation to obedience to the Commandments (1 Peter 2:21,22).



Q9 DID JESUS TEACH THAT SABBATH KEEPING SHOULD BE OBSERVED AFTER HIS CRUCIFIXION?

Matthew 24:20 *And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the*

While predicting the impending destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus asked His people to pray that they would not need to flee from their enemy on the Sabbath. This destruction took place in 70AD, many years after the life and death of Jesus. It is clear from this statement that Jesus expected and supported His people keeping the Sabbath many years after His death.

Q10

DID THE APOSTLE PAUL KEEP THE SABBATH AND WORSHIP ON THE SABBATH WITH BOTH JEWS AND GENTILES?

Acts 13:42-44 *So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next _____ . Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. On the next Sabbath almost the _____ came together to hear the word of God*

The apostle Paul was a Sabbath keeper (Acts 17:2, 18:4). He, along with the other apostles worshipped on the Sabbath with both Jews and Gentiles. If there was no synagogue in town, Paul would meet by the riverside with the Gentiles. Here he would pray and share the Scriptures on the Sabbath day (Acts 16:13). The Sabbath was certainly the day of worship for the early Christian church.

Q11

WHAT PROMISE IS MADE TO THOSE WHO RETURN TO KEEPING THE BIBLE SABBATH?

Isaiah 58:13,14 *If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on _____ holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; And I will cause you to _____ on the high hills of the earth...*

What a wonderful promise. God tells us that if we stop neglecting and trampling all over the Sabbath, He will lift us into a beautiful experience of joy and fulfilment. It will feel as if we are “flying high” riding on the high hills of the earth. The Sabbath is a delightful day where we can forget about the stresses of life. We can focus on spending quality time with Jesus and helping other people.

Q12

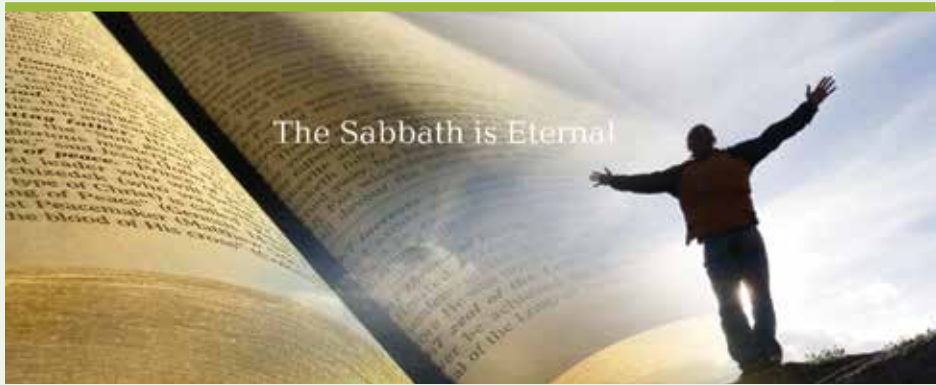
ON WHICH DAY WILL THE REDEEMED WORSHIP GOD IN THE NEW EARTH?

What a wonderful promise. God tells us that if we stop neglecting and trampling all over the Sabbath, He will lift us into a beautiful experience of joy and fulfilment.



Isaiah 66: 22,23 *“For as the new heavens and the new _____ which I will make shall remain before Me ... And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one _____ to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD*

In the new earth, God’s people will still come together to worship Him on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was created before man sinned in Eden (Genesis 2:2,3). As such it was kept by God and sinless humanity. God has asked His people to keep the Sabbath throughout the life of this sinful planet and once again He will experience the Sabbath with His people in the new earth.



Key points relating to the Sabbath:

- a) The Sabbath was kept by God at creation.
- b) The Sabbath was confirmed at Sinai in the Ten Commandments.
- c) The Sabbath was honoured by God’s people.
- d) The Sabbath was exalted by Jesus.
- e) The Sabbath was established in Christianity by the disciples.
- f) The Sabbath will be kept for eternity.

Q13 HOW SHOULD WE KEEP THE SABBATH ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE?

Exodus 20:8-11 *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it _____ (v8)*

The Sabbath is the most enjoyable day of the week. It’s a day to forget about the headaches and stress of work and spend a full day in rest and

relationship with Jesus. The Bible says that even when work gets really busy, we need to still put God first and keep the Sabbath holy (Exodus 34:21). The Sabbath is to be kept for 24 hours from sunset Friday night to sunset Saturday night (Leviticus 23:32). It is like a park in time – an area of sanity and peace with God while protected from the stress of life.

The Sabbath is a day to spend getting to know God better



through studying His Word, prayer and worship at church. It is a day where family and friends can meet together and enjoy each other's company in a spiritual setting. It is a great day to spend in God's nature, or helping other people who may be sick or discouraged. Jesus gave the ideal example of keeping the Sabbath. He went to worship God at the local church. He healed people of physical illness and also restored spiritual health to people (Luke 13:10-17).

Q14 DOES IT REALLY MATTER WHICH DAY IS KEPT AS THE SABBATH?

Deuteronomy 4:2 *You shall not _____ to the word which I command you, nor _____ from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.*

Acts 5:29 *... We ought to obey _____ rather than _____.*

There are some Christians who keep Saturday as a rest day. Others rest and worship on Sundays. There are sincere loving Christians in both groups. However, most people never stop to ask God which day is correct according to the Bible. You may be thinking, "Well, does it really matter? What's the difference

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which day, as long as I keep a day? Surely it wouldn't matter which day I choose to keep holy? After all, any day will do? Isn't a day just a day?"

When it comes to man-made memorials or anniversaries such as ANZAC day, Independence Day or a wedding anniversary it is vital that they take place on the specific day relevant to the issue being celebrated or remembered. No-one would suggest "any day will do". The Sabbath was put in place, not by a human government, but by the Lord God Almighty. This is a specific day that God has established each week, for us to think back and celebrate the love and power of our Creator God.

It is a dangerous thing for us to try and alter an express command of God. When God says something, He means it. In fact, God is always very particular when He asks us to do something or not to do something.



To illustrate – In the Garden of Eden, God told Adam and Eve they could eat from any tree, except one. God specified the one tree. He did not give them liberty to choose any tree they wanted. In the same way, God did not say we could choose any day we wanted as an anniversary of His creation. We simply demonstrate our devotion to Him by our obedience. Now, in Eden, the devil came along in the form of a beautiful serpent and suggested to Eve that God didn't really mean what He said, and when it came to eating food "any tree will do".

After all, all trees are alike. What's the difference? A tree's a tree and the tree was not poisonous. Adam and Eve did not die because of poison. The issue was obedience not the tree. In the same way the issue of the Sabbath is obedience not the day. Unfortunately, this whole world today is in the mess it is, because Adam and Eve used their own reasoning

above the express command of God.

Some people believe that the Christian Sabbath is Sunday in honour of the resurrection of Jesus. There is not the slightest evidence of this in the Word of God. By that reasoning, why not keep Friday in honour of the crucifixion?

According to the Bible, breaking the Ten Commandments is sin (1 John 3:4). Misguided men have attempted to change the Sabbath to Sunday, however when it comes to the Sabbath day, the best way to honour God is to “obey God rather than men”. God wants you to keep the seventh-day Saturday Sabbath of the Bible.

Q15 WILL GOD’S CHURCH OF THE LAST DAYS BE KEEPING THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

Revelation 12:17 *And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who _____ the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ*

God’s last day church will possess the beautiful harmony of obedience and faith in Jesus. Throughout Scripture, it has always been Jesus and the Commandments that are the foundation for the church. Those who are ready and waiting for Jesus to come will be those who love Jesus supremely and demonstrate their love through keeping all of His Commandments. One of these Commandments is the beautiful gift of the Sabbath. This is a perpetual symbol of God’s creative power and grace for humanity.

Three points to remember:

- God made and kept the Sabbath
- The seventh day (Saturday) is the Sabbath
- The Sabbath is important because it represents God as our Creator and Redeemer

The story:

On one occasion a man stood before a crowd, took a piece of red

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cloth and publicly burnt it. There was no reaction from the crowd. They just thought he was a bit strange. He then took out a blue piece of cloth and proceeded to burn that cloth also. Once again there was very little reaction. He then took out a white piece of cloth. He showed the cloth to the crowd and burnt the white cloth. By now the crowd thought this must be a joke. They weren't upset – just bemused. They laughed and scoffed at the man.

The same man then took out the flag of New Zealand. In front of hundreds of people the man burnt the flag and trod all over it. Now the crowd were so upset they attacked him and the authorities threw him into jail. What made the difference? After all, the flag was just a few pieces of cloth sewn together. Some white cloth. Some blue cloth. Some red cloth. The man argued that one piece of cloth is the same as any other piece of cloth. But when those colours are formed to make the New Zealand flag the symbolic meaning becomes enormous. That flag represents New Zealand and all that it holds to be important.

In what ways do you think this story illustrates the importance of the seventh-day Sabbath?

Relational questions:

1. Why do you think the Sabbath is so important to God?
2. In what ways can you prepare for the Sabbath during the week?
3. How can you ensure the Sabbath is seen as enjoyable and not just a list of do's and don'ts?

Your response:

Do you desire to rest in God's creative power and strengthen your relationship with Him through regularly keeping the Sabbath holy? _____