

The Workers of the Tabernacle and the Sabbath in Relation to the Building Work

We need to see how we can be **workers** in the tabernacle, which is God's building, and what kind of people we need to be in order to be workers in the tabernacle. We also need to see the principle of the Sabbath in relation to the building work. In brief, this principle is that **God works first and then rests**, but **man rests first and then works**. Hence, we rest, taking God as our rest, refreshment, energy, strength and enjoyment; and we are satisfied. Then after He has become our rest, we work together with Him, in Him, through Him, and by Him as our rest, refreshment, energy, strength, refuge, tower, and everything. Thus, we rest first and then we work. When we are laboring in the Lord, we need to give ourselves to enjoy the Lord. How can we **bring others into the enjoyment of the Lord** if we are not enjoying the Lord? We must enjoy the Lord first, and then we can bring others into the enjoyment of Christ.

We need to be under the shadow of God in Christ as the Spirit for our enjoyment. When we enjoy Him, the Lord as our enjoyment will keep away from us all the things with which **the enemy wants to disturb** us, and He will cause us to remain in **a peaceful condition** so that we can do the building work in **a peaceful** situation.

Isaiah 30:15 says, *"For thus says the Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, / In returning and rest you will be saved; / In quietness and in trust will be your strength."* We need to pray-read the words in this verse. We may pray, *"Lord, I desire to return to You with all my heart. I want You to be my Sabbath rest. Lord, thank You that in my returning and resting I will be saved. O Lord, be my salvation in life. Lord Jesus, save me from the failure of not living You; save me from the defeat of not magnifying You."* Moreover, the phrase *in quietness and in trust will be your strength* indicates that in the midst of the "hurricane" of our circumstances, the Lord can be our **quietness**. Whereas our circumstances and environment may be a "hurricane," our spirit indwelt by Christ – Christ as the Spirit in our spirit – is like **the eye** of a hurricane. Hence, in quietness and in trust will be our strength. Christ the Lord is not only our quietness but also our trust; He is our trust, and He is also our strength. Proverbs 3:5 says, *"Trust in Jehovah,"* and Jeremiah 17:7 says, *"Blessed is the man who Trust in Jehovah / And whose trust Jehovah is."* Thus, the Lord Himself is our trust in Jehovah. We not only trust in Him; He is our trust.

In order to be filled with the Spirit of God, we need the willingness to do something for God's building, we need to **abandon** our natural capacity, and we need to empty ourselves to have the absolute openness to God in prayer. Thus, we need to pray, *"Lord, grant me the willingness to do something for Your building."* Malachi reveals the obsession off the children of Israel, that is, their self-deception. Malachi 3:13-14 says, *"Your words have been strongly against Me, says Jehovah; but you say, What have we spoken against You? You say, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His charge and have **walked mournfully before Jehovah of hosts?**"* This word has convicted me many times and is a beacon shining in my being. When we serve the Lord, we should not walk mournfully before Him. This indicates that the children of Israel worshipped and served God, but they did so mournfully. They were not at all happy that they were required to do these things. We should not do any service mournfully; all our service should be done **joyfully**, with the joy of the Lord.

We need the willingness to do something for God's building. We need to **abandon** our natural capacity and empty ourselves in absolute openness to God in prayer. Hence, we need to empty out our knowledge, education, capacity, wisdom and capability so that we will have the openness to God to be filled with the Spirit of God.

Man's Work

Man's first day was a day of rest and enjoyment. God rested because He had finished His work and was satisfied; God's glory was manifested because man had His image, and His authority was about to be exercised for the subduing of His enemy, Satan; as long as man expresses God and deals with God's enemy, God is satisfied and can rest. Like God, when **we finish** our work, **we rest** and are **satisfied**. For instance, a carpenter who makes a chair may sit and rest in the chair after he is done [and say, "Very good."]...

As God's people, we should bear **a sign** that we need God to be our strength, energy, and everything so that we may be able to work together with Him for the building up of the church as Christ's body; this honors and glorifies Him. In every meeting and in all our service, we need to honor and glorify the Lord. In order to do this, we must bear **a sign** that we need God as our strength, energy, and everything so that we may be able to work together with Him for the building up of the church as Christ's Body. In 2 Corinthians 1:24, Paul says, *"Not that we lord it over your faith, but we are fellow workers with you **for your joy**; for by faith you stand.."* In this verse for your joy means for **your enjoyment of Christ**. In Philippians 1:25 Paul says, *"And being confident of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of the faith,"* Hence, Paul was a channel of supply **for the saints' progress** and joy of the faith... [W]hen we are a channel of supply, we are a channel of supply **for other's growth** in life and **for their enjoyment** of Christ. This means that when we are around others, we cause them to grow in life and to enjoy Christ. When [we are with certain brothers and sisters, we know that we will] enjoy Christ. He is a factor and a channel of enjoying the Lord. He bears a sign that God is his strength, energy, and everything.

He is our rest, our refreshment, our energy, our strength, and our everything for ministering the word of God. Peter says, *"If anyone speaks, as speaking oracles of God; if anyone ministers, as ministering out of the strength which God supplies; that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen."* Oracles of God are divine utterances that convey divine revelation. When we speak, our speaking needs to be the oracles of God. When we minister, we need to minister out of the strength that God supplies. When we speak, we need to pray, *"Lord I pray that I would speak in You and that You would speak in me."*

Conclusion

The mentioning of the Sabbath [in Exodus 31] indicates that everything related to the tabernacle and its furniture **leads us to God's Sabbath**, with its rest and refreshment in the enjoyment of what God has purposed and done. When we come to the bronze altar and enjoy Christ as the reality of all the sacrifices, we enjoy Him as our rest and refreshment. Likewise, when we come to the laver, the issue is rest and refreshment. Similarly, when we come to the table of the bread of Presence, the lampstand, the incense altar, and the Ark, which contains the law of life, the budding rod, and the hidden manna – the issue is God as our rest and refreshment. This is all for God's building, which is the corporate expression of the Triune God. Thus, the **workers** of the tabernacle **serve by resting** and **being refreshed**. This is how the work of building is related to our keeping the Sabbath. *(Excerpt from The Ministry of the Word, vol. 20, no. 7, July 2016. Ministry Magazine, pp. 285-316)*