

*For Heaven's Sake, Give It a Rest!: God's Radical Sabbath Command*  
Session Two – Keeping the Sabbath: Saying “No” to Pharaoh  
Pastor Ruud – November 2023

### Session Overview

“It’s one thing to get the people out of Egypt. It’s another thing to get Egypt out of the people.” In this session we’ll look into the drastic difference between Pharaoh’s economy of relentless, anxious productivity and God’s economy of gracious, committed neighborliness. The biblical story of the Israelites' struggles in the wilderness may give key insight into our human tendency to fear scarcity and rely only on our own constant work to achieve security, success, and value. We then see how God's command and value of Sabbath illuminates a more free and interconnected understanding of ourselves, our neighbors, and God which focuses more on "daily bread" and embracing life as God's cared-for and beloved people.

### Key Scripture

- [Exodus 16 and 17](#) - Bread from Heaven, Water from the Rock
- [Deuteronomy 5](#) - The Ten Commandments

### Questions

1. Who and/or what are the Pharaohs we face today, or how is the voice of Pharaoh still present? From where? How? May we even face it in ourselves?
2. In what ways are we conditioned to be fearful of scarcity, and/or what ways are we encouraged to see our value and worth only in terms of what we do, achieve, and/or produce?
3. How does faith factor into keeping the Sabbath command?
4. In what ways may the Sabbath command embolden us to say “no” to Pharaoh today?
5. Does learning about these stories about Sabbath help transform your idea of rest? Does it give you new inspiration? How?

### Prayer:

*God, amid the constant, worldly race of amassing and acquiring more, and the incessant voice to “make more bricks,” give us the courage to resist faithfully, not skirting our duties, but embracing holy rest as a part of your call and wish for us to be your free, wholly beloved, and honored people. Amen.*