



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

#20 – God Rests From His Work
Genesis 2:2-3

PICTURES NEEDED

20-1 Day 1
20-2 Day 2

20-3 Day 3
20-4 Day 4

20-5 Day 5
20-6 Day 6

20-7 Very Good
20-8 Day 7

REVIEW (Before Teaching Lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review) When God was done creating what did he say about his creation? What makes something very good? Because of all God has done, how should we respond to him?
- **The Big Question Review: Who is the Creator God?**
Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review: Psalm 100:2-3**
God is the one who made us and we belong to him.

²Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. ³(Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.)

LESSON CONTENT

Note: The Bible verses included in the lesson are from the NIV 1984 edition. The wording of the questions is derived from that version. If another version of the Bible is used, questions may need to be adapted.

God completed all the work of creation in six days. What did God do on each day of creation? (Review the six days of creation and what God brought forth on each day. Write the number of the days across the board. If the children can't remember what was created on each day, read the parts of Genesis 1 and show the appropriate picture.) (pictures 20)

- **Day 1** – Space and matter (a place to put things and the stuff things are made of), light and energy (picture 20-1)

¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

³And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

- **Day 2** – Earth and sky (separation of waters into that above and that below) (picture 20-2)

⁶And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water."

- **Day 3** – Separation of dry ground from water (land and seas) and plants (vegetation) (picture 20-3)

⁹And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear."

¹¹Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds."

- **Day 4** – Heavenly bodies to mark seasons and give light (sun, moon, stars) (picture 20-4)

¹⁴And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years,

- **Day 5** – Sea life and winged creatures (birds and insects) (picture 20-5)

²⁰And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky."

- **Day 6** – All types of animals (those that crawl along the ground, wild animals and live stock) and man (male and female in God's image) (picture 20-6)

²⁴And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: live stock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind."

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness."

What did God say about his creation? God said his creation was very good. **(picture 20-7)**

What does that mean? Everything was just as God wanted. It functioned according to his design for it.

What did God do when he finished creating? (Add day 7 to chart.)

Genesis 2:2-3 says, ²*By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.* ³*And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.*

When God was done creating all that he had planned to make he rested from his work. This set up a model for measuring a week: six days of work and one day set apart as holy for rest. God confirmed this model when he gave the Ten Commandments to Moses.

The fourth commandment says, (Exodus 20:8-11) ⁸*Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.* ⁹*Six days you shall labor and do all your work,* ¹⁰*but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.* ¹¹*For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

Why do you think God commanded man to take a day of rest from his work?

Work is something people do both to provide for themselves and also to advance and improve their lives. Without a day of rest a lot of people would probably work continually every day without stopping. This would not be good as both the body and mind need rest or they wear out. People would focus entirely on the world, instead of God

What does it mean that God made the Sabbath holy? He set it aside as a day for him. If a day weren't set aside as holy to worship God then a person's mind would tend to focus solely on the things of the physical world and shut out God. **(picture 20-8)**

What day do the Jews (God's chosen people) set aside as the Sabbath? Saturday

As Christians what is our Sabbath day? Most Christians have set aside Sunday as their holy day of rest but there are some who observe Saturday as the Sabbath like the Jews do.

Why do Christians celebrate Sunday as the Sabbath and not Saturday like the Jews?

The earliest Christians were Jews. They would observe the Jewish Sabbath and go to the synagogue as was their custom on that day, then on the next day (the first day of the week) they would meet together as a Christian group to learn about Jesus their Savior. As Gentiles (non-Jews) were converted to Christianity they would attend these Christian meetings with the Jews who believed in Jesus. (Acts 20:7a - *On the first day of the week we came together to break bread.*)

The Gentiles didn't go to the synagogue on Saturday because they weren't Jews and they wouldn't have been accepted there. In this way the first day of the week (our Sunday) became associated with the Christian worship of God. **(picture 20-2)**

The first day of the week also had special meaning to Christians because it represented the day of the week that Jesus rose from the dead. It shows us that when we come to Jesus we have a new beginning. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! That is an important idea to think about every Sunday when we come together to worship God on the first day of the week.

How should we as Christians honor the Sabbath and keep it holy? To honor the Sabbath we want to show God that he is our Lord and that we don't put other things before him. We want to demonstrate that we are devoted to God above all other things. God wants us to love him whole-heartedly, more than anything else so that we want to honor him on the Sabbath. He wants us to do what Psalm 100 (the Psalm we studied last lesson) says to do.

¹Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. ²Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. ³Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. ⁵For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

What are some of the things Psalm 100 says to do? (Make a list of things the children say and then discuss why doing these things would honor the Sabbath.)

- Shout for joy to the LORD
- Worship the LORD with gladness
- Come before him with joyful songs
- Know that the LORD is God
- Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise
- Give thanks to him
- Praise his name

LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** Why is a week seven days long? What did God do on the seventh day of creation? What does God want people to do on the Sabbath? What day of the week is the Christian Sabbath? Why? What day of the week is the Jewish Sabbath? Why? What does it mean to honor God? How do we honor God on the Sabbath?
- **Thought Questions:** Does it honor God if we come to church out of obligation instead of love? Why not? Why does honoring God have to come from the heart? Is our focus generally on God or the things of the world? Why? What are activities that can interfere with honoring God on the Sabbath? Why do we let these interfere with our worship of God?
- **Prayer:** Pray that you would be whole-heartedly devoted to God and worship him above all other things. Pray that he would show you the ways that you honor other things above him.
- **The Big Question: What is the Sabbath?**
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.

- **Memory Verse:** Exodus 20:11

On the seventh day of creation, God rested and called it holy.

¹¹For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Ask the students to summarize in one sentence what the lesson was about. Then have them give three main points covered in the lesson. An example is below.

Theme: God created the heavens and the earth and everything in them in six days.

1. On the seventh day God rested from his work.
2. God called the seventh day the Sabbath and he blessed it and made it holy.
3. God told man to work six days and to rest on the Sabbath.

- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the class notes and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse.

- ★ **Activity Page:** Sabbath Acrostic Poem

Instructions: Work in pairs (competition) or as a whole group to write an acrostic poem for the word "Sabbath". Use each letter of the word to start a phrase that says what we should do on the Sabbath. Brainstorm words before writing the poem. Below are some verbs that start with the letters.

S – serve, shout, share, submit, sacrifice

A – adore, acknowledge, approach, appreciate, acclaim

B – be (something), bow, bestow, bring, boast, better

B – see above B

A – see above A

T – thank, talk, turn to, take delight in, think about, treasure, treat

H – honor, hold, hark, hear, heal

- **Further Understanding:** Investigation/Reasoning Skills

God's model of work

God has commanded man to work for six days and to rest for one. When we follow God's model we keep a right view of work, which is to both work hard and to keep our focus on God and the eternal. What happens if we don't work hard? What happens if we take our focus off God and what is eternal?

Ecclesiastes 7:18 says, *The man who fears God will avoid all extremes.* What would be the two extremes in terms of work? People have a tendency to go to extremes. In terms of work one extreme would be to be lazy and not work hard enough on the six days God has said to work. The other extreme would be to put too much focus on gaining material possessions, working too hard and forgetting about God. Solomon, a very wise king of Israel, gave us wisdom about these two extremes. (After reading each passage, discuss what it means.)

Proverbs 6:6-11

⁶*Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! ⁷It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, ⁸yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. ⁹How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? ¹⁰A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest-- ¹¹and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.*

What does this passage mean?

Ecclesiastes 5:10-11

¹⁰*Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. ¹¹As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them?*

What does this passage mean?

The journal is passed out at the end of class for the students to complete at home. It has six readings that answer a digging deeper question. It would be beneficial for the teacher to work through the journal readings also.

Digging Deeper: How was Israel to honor the Sabbath?

Reading 1: Exodus 31:12-18 They were to celebrate it as a sign of God's covenant. What is the Sabbath? Why were the Israelites to observe the Sabbath? What does it mean to desecrate? What were the Israelites to do to someone who desecrated the Sabbath? Why do you think God commanded that? What does that mean for you?

Reading 2: Isaiah 56:1-8 They were to bind themselves to the Lord and do what pleases God. How were the people to keep the Sabbath? What will God do for those who keep the Sabbath? What does that mean for you?

Reading 3: Isaiah 58:13-14 They were not to go their own way or speak idle words. How were the people to honor the Sabbath? What does it mean to go your own way? What does it mean to speak idle words? What would God do for those who honor the Sabbath? What does that mean for you?

Reading 4: Jeremiah 17:19-27 They were to keep it holy by not doing any work. What were the people to do on the Sabbath? What would be the result? What would happen if they didn't keep the Sabbath? Why would God do that?

Reading 5: Mark 2:23-3:6 They were to do good, not evil, on the Sabbath. What did Jesus mean in verse 27? Why was Jesus angry and distressed about the way the Pharisees were keeping the Sabbath? What does that mean for you?

Reading 6: Colossians 2:13-23 Honoring the Sabbath
Think about ways you can honor God more on the Sabbath. Focus on what is in your heart and the way you treat and respond to others.