

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
First Quarter 2022: *In These Last Days: The Message of Hebrews*
Lesson 5 “Jesus, The Giver of Rest”

Read for this week’s study

Genesis 15:13–21; Hebrews 3:12–19; Hebrews 4:6–11; Hebrews 4:1, 3, 5, 10; Deuteronomy 5:12–15; Hebrews 4:8–11.

Memory Text

“There remains therefore a rest for the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Land as a Place of Rest
- III. Because of Unbelief
- IV. Today, If You Hear His Voice
- V. Entering into *His* Rest
- VI. A Foretaste of New Creation
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Hebrews 1 and 2 focused on Jesus as God, Son of God, and brother to humanity. In chapters 3 and 4, Jesus is described as the One who provides rest for those who trust in Him. What are some of the various meanings of “rest” in the Bible? Use an English concordance to find texts where the concept is featured. (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. Read Genesis 15:13-21. What did God promise to Abraham in this passage? Among other things, God reveals His foreknowledge that Abraham’s descendants would be slaves for 400 years. Why did God allow that to happen? Why do you think God placed Israel in Canaan rather than some other part of the ancient world? In what sense would living in Canaan provide the Israelites with “rest”? Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15. What two things does the Sabbath rest commemorate and how are they related to each other? How does Sabbath-keeping help us understand our complete dependence on God? (Sunday’s Lesson)

3. Read Hebrews 3:12-19. Why was Israel unable to enter into the promised rest? In their report, what did the twelve spies agree on, what did they disagree on, and what was the crucial difference? In what way is obedience an expression of faith? (Monday's Lesson)
4. Read Hebrews 4:6-11. How did the author of Hebrews apply Israel's experience in the desert to the situation of his original readers? What does the fact that the invitation to rest was offered again to David imply about the conquest of Canaan during the Exodus? (Tuesday's Lesson)
5. Read Hebrews 3:11 and 4:1-3, 5, 10. How does God characterize the rest He invites us to enter? What is "My" rest? God seems almost to be withholding His rest from them. How would you understand what is going on here? Read Hebrews 4:9-11. What kind of Sabbath-keeping is the author talking about here? Read Hebrews 4:16. What is this "confidence" all about? What does it mean to enter into God's rest now? How does this relate to the concept of atonement? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. Compare Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:12-15, and Hebrews 4:8-11. How does each of these passages define Sabbath rest differently? What meaning did the Sabbath have at the beginning, before there was a synagogue or other forms of worship? (Thursday's Lesson)
7. It is interesting that the author of Hebrews used the Sabbath day rather than Sunday or some other model as a symbol of salvation by grace. What does this imply about the practices of the early Christians in regard to the Sabbath? What were the motivating reasons why Christians eventually gave up the Sabbath? If the Sabbath had retained its grace-filled biblical meaning would it have faded out of use among the early Christians? (Friday's Lesson)
8. What does a legalistic observance of the Sabbath imply about our view of the character of God? How would one keep the Sabbath differently if one viewed it from a gospel perspective? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Yet Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for us; Mark 2:27. It was not to be a mere test of obedience, but rather to be a help. I believe that the great purpose of the Sabbath is to remind us of the truth that is the basis of our faith; the very truth that does set us free. In the first place, the Bible tells us in Exodus 20 and Exodus 31, that the Sabbath is designed to serve as a reminder that God created us; that we are his creatures. But to be more specific according to Colossians 1:16, the one who created us was none other than Christ himself. The seventh-day Sabbath reminds us that the one who came to save us is also the one who made us in the beginning. The gentle Jesus who died on Calvary is also the supreme, all powerful creator of the universe. God did not send some subordinate person to die for us. The Creator came himself

one who is equal with God, for he is God. By keeping holy the seventh-day Sabbath, we acknowledge our faith in Jesus as not only our Savior, but also our Creator and our God.

A second way in which the seventh-day Sabbath serves to strengthen faith is mentioned in Exodus 31:13 and Exodus 20:12, 20. There we're told the Sabbath is designed to remind us that God is the one who sanctifies us. Our sanctification includes not just forgiveness, but the healing of the damage sin has done. It means the harmonious development of our physical, mental and spiritual powers, until the image of God, in which we were originally created, is perfectly restored. The observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is an acknowledgement that only the Creator can perform such a marvelous work of healing and transformation. Just as he created us in the beginning, so he has the power to re-create us now. Surely it is no less a miracle of creation to restore fallen human beings than it was to create them perfect in the beginning. No wonder David prayed as he did after his sad experience with Bathsheba, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Psalm 51:10.

Now some seek to accomplish this transformation by themselves by rigorous obedience, self-discipline and self-denial. The Sabbath comes each week to remind us that only by faith in our Creator can the healing work be done. It's strange that Sabbath-keeping should be thought to be a legalistic act; a denial of true faith. Actually, Sabbath-keeping done in the right spirit is a denial of legalism, a denial that we can save ourselves. It's an acknowledgment that only by faith in the one who created us in the beginning can we possibly be healed and re-created now. And what a perversion it is to suggest that seventh day Sabbath-keeping is legalism; except that we can turn it around that way—and it has been done.

A third way in which the Sabbath serves to remind us of the truth and strengthen our faith in God is mentioned in Hebrews chapter four. There the Sabbath is described as a type and a foretaste of the final rest and restoration to come. Just as God rested from his labors at the end of creation week so there remains a Sabbath-like rest; the Greek says a '*sabbatismos*'. You can almost hear the meaning of the word. "There remains there a Sabbath-like rest for the people of God. When the children of Israel marched into the land of Canaan, they failed to enter into God's rest," the apostle says, "because of lack of faith. They possessed the Promised Land but they did not enjoy the Sabbath-like rest that faith brings." Just remember the book of Judges. Would you call that the Sabbath-like rest? That is not God's intention. "But those who maintain their faith in Christ may begin to enjoy this rest even in this life and they will enter into it fully when they are admitted to the heavenly Canaan and Eden is restored." So by keeping holy the seventh-day Sabbath, we acknowledge our anticipation of this Sabbath-like rest to come. We acknowledge our faith in the second coming of Christ and the re-creation of all things. There are more of course, but these three focuses or purposes of the Sabbath answer the three great questions that have stood in the minds of thinking people—the three great quests of philosophy. Where have we come from? Why are we here? And where do we go after we die?

But mankind has paid a heavy price for neglecting the Sabbath, or substituting another day. For without the Sabbath to provide the answers to the three great questions of life, other solutions have been substituted. Where have we come from? Without the seventh-day Sabbath to remind us that in the beginning Christ created us, room has been left for the substitution of the theory of the evolutionary origin of the human race. Or as others say more scientifically, we don't know where we've come from.

Why are we here? How do we attain to the greatest good in life? Without the seventh-day Sabbath to remind us that righteousness and salvation come by faith in Jesus Christ, room has been left for the substitution of the fundamental error of righteousness by works. Or as others have said more carelessly, we don't know why we're here. So let's eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die!

And where do we go after we die? Without the seventh-day Sabbath to point forward to the second coming, to the rewards of faith and the results of sin, room has been left for the substitution of the belief in the natural immortality of the soul. Or as others prefer to say, we don't know where we go after we die. So again, let's eat, drink and be merry.

Incidentally, those three substitute answers; aren't they almost universally held? And not just in Christianity. Belief in the natural immortality of the soul is shared by almost everybody. The idea that salvation comes by works; Ellen White states that is the fundamental error of every false religious system, salvation by works. There are all kinds of substitute explanations as to where we came from that put God in a bad light, or that make of no effect the plan of salvation. But all three of these substitutions wipe out all the significance of the plan of salvation. This is why the seventh-day Sabbath is so vital a part of God's last message to the world. The main difference between the many religions in the world and true Christianity lies in the answers to these three great quests.

We also speak of the seventh-day Sabbath as being the seal of God and we all want to be sealed at the end. In what sense do you understand the seventh-day Sabbath to be the seal of God? In what sense could it be? Would it be possible to be observing the seventh-day Sabbath at the end and be on the wrong side in the Great Controversy? It's happened before. Is the mere refraining from work from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown evidence that one has the seal of God?

If to be "sealed" means to be so settled into the truth about God, both intellectually and spiritually, that one cannot be moved, then obviously there have been many people who appeared to observe the seventh-day Sabbath who were not settled into the truth. In fact they had accepted the lie. The men who crucified Christ didn't work from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown. Would you say they had the seal of God? So in what sense could the seventh-day Sabbath be the seal, do you think? The Sabbath really does sum up this truth about

God. It answers the questions about life, and the questions about God; they go right together in a package, don't they? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Faith, Righteousness and Salvation, #13, "Faith and the seventh-day Sabbath", recorded April 3, 1975, Lynwood, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:* <http://pkp.cc/13MMFRS> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/14MMFRS> (Part 2)

Isn't it significant that after all the answers during creation week, the next day was a rest day, for reflection and celebration? And after all the answers given during crucifixion week, the next day was a rest day, a day for reflection, for remembering, for celebration. To me, that's the whole purpose of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is designed to remind us of the truth about God that is the basis of our trust. It's not a test of obedience. It's not a burden; it's been made one. It was given to man. Remember Mark 2:27? "And he said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; so the Son of man is lord even of the Sabbath.'" The Sabbath was made for us, to help us, because more than at any other time we need to be reminded of the truth that was not claimed, but revealed and demonstrated during creation week, and during crucifixion week.

Incidentally, was that first Sabbath our seventh day? It was our second day. Sometimes we say we should worship every seventh day because it's built into our system that we need to rest every seventh day. If that's a good argument, then on which day should we rest? Which is our seventh day? Thursday! I don't know anybody who chooses Thursday. Friday yes, Saturday yes, Sunday yes. But this would start a whole new movement. If we're supposed to rest on the seventh day, our seventh day is Thursday. God's seventh day, with the universe watching, their seventh day, earth time, is the one that follows all those revealing events of creation week. That's when God and the universe celebrated. And then God says, "I want you to do the same from here on, not to be a burden and a test of obedience; you need this. The controversy is on; you need to be reminded once a week of the evidence I have presented, and there will be much more coming." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Genesis, recorded October 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/1MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/2MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

The Sabbath is a sign of creative and redeeming power; it points to God as the source of life and knowledge; it recalls man's primeval glory, and thus witnesses to God's purpose to re-create us in His own image. {Ed 250.1}

The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God's purpose they are indissolubly linked together. On this day more than on any other, it is possible for us to live the life of Eden. . . . {Ed 250.2}

The Sabbath is a pledge given by God to man—a sign of the relation existing between the Creator and His created beings. {3SM 256.1}

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world as the unwearied servant of man's necessity. He "took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," that He might minister to every need of humanity. Matthew 8:17. The burden of disease and wretchedness and sin He came to remove. It was His mission to bring to men complete restoration; He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character. {MH 17.1}

Through the gospel, souls that are degraded and enslaved by Satan are to be redeemed to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God. God's purpose is not merely to deliver from the suffering that is the inevitable result of sin, but to save from sin itself. The soul, corrupted and deformed, is to be purified, transformed, that it may be clothed in "the beauty of the Lord our God," "conformed to the image of His Son." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Psalm 90:17; Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 2:9. Eternity alone can reveal the glorious destiny to which man, restored to God's image, may attain. {MB 60.3}

God's healing power runs all through nature. If a tree is cut, if a human being is wounded or breaks a bone, nature begins at once to repair the injury. Even before the need exists, the healing agencies are in readiness; and as soon as a part is wounded, every energy is bent to the work of restoration. So it is in the spiritual realm. Before sin created the need, God had provided the remedy. Every soul that yields to temptation is wounded, bruised, by the adversary; but whenever there is sin, there is the Saviour. It is Christ's work "to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. {Ed 113.1}

The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means that sin is taken away, and that the vacuum is filled with the Spirit. It means that the mind is divinely illumined, that the heart is emptied of self, and filled with the presence of Christ. {OHC 154.5}

God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that

appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith. {SC 105.2}

God gives sufficient evidence to every soul. He does not promise to remove every doubt, but he gives a reason for faith. {RH, January 24, 1899 par. 7}

Satan has ability to suggest doubts and devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue and mark of intelligence in them to be unbelieving and questioning, and quibbling. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and teachable spirit. All should decide from the weight of evidence. {RH, September 16, 1873 par. 10}

What is the “rest” promised?—It is the consciousness that God is true, that He never disappoints the one who comes to Him. His pardon is full and free, and His acceptance means rest to the soul, rest in His love. {OHC 97.7}

Christ is the wellspring of life. . . . When the sunlight of God’s love illuminates the darkened chambers of the soul, restless weariness and dissatisfaction will cease, and satisfying joys will give vigor to the mind and health and energy to the body. {MH 247.2}

As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, Come, learn of Me, and in thus coming we begin the life eternal. Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be opened to us; and the more we know of God, the more intense will be our happiness. {FLB 367.4}

Jesus never disappoints the one who comes to Him for help. He is saying to you today, “Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). He will give you rest in Him. No one who comes to Him goes away unhelped. Take your burdens to the divine Burden Bearer and leave them with Him, knowing that He will carry them for you. . . . {HP 275.2}

The precious Saviour will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace. The time of trouble is a fearful ordeal for God’s people; but it is the time for every true believer to look up, and by faith he may see the bow of promise encircling him. {GC 633.1}

He who took humanity upon Himself knows how to sympathize with the sufferings of humanity. Not only does Christ know every soul, and the peculiar needs and trials of that soul, but He knows all the circumstances that chafe and perplex the spirit. His hand is outstretched in pitying

tenderness to every suffering child. Those who suffer most have most of His sympathy and pity. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and He desires us to lay our perplexities and troubles at His feet and leave them there. {MH 249.3}

In the earth made new the redeemed will engage in the occupations and pleasure that brought happiness to Adam and Eve in the beginning. The Eden life will be lived, the life in garden and field. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. . . ." {ML 358.4}

There every power will be developed, every capability increased. The grandest enterprises will be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations will be reached, the highest ambitions realized. And there will appear new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects of study to call forth the powers of body and mind and soul. {ML 358.5}

There certainly is and ever will be employment in heaven. The whole family of the redeemed will not live in a state of dreamy idleness. There remaineth a rest to the people of God. In heaven activity will not be wearing and burdensome; it will be rest. The whole family of the redeemed will find their delight in serving Him whose they are by creation and by redemption. {ML 358.6}

With the trusting faith of a little child, we are to come to our heavenly Father, telling Him of all our needs. He is always ready to pardon and help. The supply of divine wisdom is inexhaustible, and the Lord encourages us to draw largely from it. {SD 121.3}

When the Christian takes his baptismal vow, divine help is pledged to him. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit stand ready to work in his behalf. God places at his command the resources of heaven, that he may be an overcomer. His own power is small; but God is omnipotent, and God is his helper. Daily he is to make known his wants at the throne of grace. By faith and trust, by availing himself of the resources provided, he can be more than a conqueror. {OHC 157.5}

There will be open to the student, history of infinite scope and of wealth inexpressible. Here, from the vantage ground of God's word, the student is afforded a view of the vast field of history and may gain some knowledge of the principles that govern the course of human events. But his vision is still clouded, and his knowledge incomplete. Not until he stands in the light of eternity will he see all things clearly. {Ed 304.2}

Then will be opened before him the course of the great conflict that had its birth before time began, and that ends only when time shall cease. The history of the inception of sin; of fatal falsehood in its crooked working; of truth that, swerving not from its own straight lines, has met and conquered error—all will be made manifest. The veil that interposes between the visible and the invisible world will be drawn aside, and wonderful things will be revealed. {Ed 304.3}

There every power will be developed, every capability increased. The grandest enterprises will be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations will be reached, the highest ambitions realized. And still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of body and mind and soul. {Ed 307.4}

All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God's children. With unutterable delight we shall enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. We shall share the treasures gained through ages upon ages spent in contemplation of God's handiwork. And the years of eternity, as they roll, will continue to bring more glorious revelations. "Exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20) will be, forever and forever, the impartation of the gifts of God. {Ed 307.5}

The earth originally given to man as his kingdom, betrayed by him into the hands of Satan, and so long held by the mighty foe, has been brought back by the great plan of redemption. All that was lost by sin has been restored. . . . God's original purpose in the creation of the earth is fulfilled as it is made the eternal abode of the redeemed. "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever." {ML 350.3}

Then we shall enjoy with Him all the glories of the world to come throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. . . . There is nothing in the kingdom of God to disturb or annoy. This is the life that is promised to the overcomer—a life of happiness and peace, a life of love and beauty.... There is no sin, no distracting care, nothing to mar the peace of the inhabitant. {ML 350.4}

There we shall know even as also we are known. There the loves and sympathies that God has planted in the soul will find truest and sweetest exercise. The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages, the sacred fellowship that binds together "the whole family in heaven and earth"—all are among the experiences of the hereafter. {Ed 306.2}

The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal." Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. {DA 22.2}

The fall of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent. Redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam, but an eternal purpose, suffered to be wrought out for the blessing not only of this atom of a world, but for the good of all the worlds that God had created. . . . {TMK 18.2}

And while Christ opens heaven to man, the life which He imparts opens the heart of man to heaven. Sin not only shuts us away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him. All this work of evil it is Christ's mission to undo. The faculties of the soul, paralyzed by sin, the darkened mind, the perverted will, He has power to invigorate and to restore. He opens to us the riches of the universe, and by Him the power to discern and to appropriate these treasures is imparted. {Ed 28.3}