



The Gospel



The Sabbath

The Wheel of Faith Bible Study Guides Lesson #12

“The Gospel and the Sabbath”

Our final study is the topic of the **Sabbath**. Usually when we think of the Sabbath it is merely a matter of counting. We figure that to explain the Sabbath we must simply count from the first day of the week to the seventh. However, the Sabbath is about something much more than worshipping on the right day. It is the great symbol of the Gospel and is designed to keep us in the **Wheel of Faith** unlike anything else. Let us now turn our attention to this fascinating topic.

1. **Read Nehemiah 2:11-17** What is the problem in Jerusalem?

- This is the time period about 70 years after the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon. Jeremiah predicted that the Jewish captivity would last seventy years, and then the exiled Jews would go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the city. Nehemiah went to survey the damage of the city, and what he saw must have been overwhelming as he describes the piles of rubble that was once his beloved Jerusalem. Nehemiah was sent to start the rebuilding process.
- a. As Nehemiah had been called to restore the physical wall who else had God called to assist Nehemiah, and what was his commission?

- **Read Nehemiah 8:1**

*“Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told _____ the scribe to bring the Book of the **Law** of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel.*

- As Nehemiah was called to rebuild the physical wall of Jerusalem; Ezra the scribe and priest had been sent to build the inner wall of his people. Ezra had been called to bring the people into revival.

b. Where did Ezra begin this revival?

- **Read Nehemiah 8:1-2**

“So Ezra the priest brought the _____ before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the _____ of the _____.”

c. What happened to the people as they heard the **Law** of God?

- **Read Nehemiah 8:9**

*“And Nehemiah, who was the ^[b]governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not _____ nor _____.” For all the people _____, when they heard the words of the **Law**.”*

d. What other things happened to them as the **Law** was read?

- **Read Nehemiah 9:1-3**

*“Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with _____, in _____, and with dust on their heads. Then those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and _____ their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the **Law** of the Lord their God for one-fourth of the day; and for*

another fourth they confessed and worshiped the Lord their God.”

- As you ponder this, it becomes evident that as the **Law** of God is being dwelt upon, conviction, repentance, true sorrow for sin begins to set in on the heart. In short, the **Wheel of Faith** begins to turn in their life again. The **Law** is doing what it always does; it was exposing their sin and leading them back to faith in the plan of Salvation.

Exercise: Go through chapters eight and nine again in Nehemiah and look for all the great Gospel themes we have studied together in the **Wheel of Faith**.

2. It seems at this moment Ezra has taught his people well. He has reminded them of the **Law**, and for three weeks he has been teaching them out of the **Law**. The plan of salvation is being understood, and the people are back in relationship with God. All seems well at this point; however, Ezra reminds them of one more thing that would have secured the people from ever forgetting the Lord again.

a. Read Nehemiah 9:6,14.

Why do you think Ezra is reminding them of the Sabbath?

To understand this, let us see how the Sabbath relates to the Gospel so that we will understand why Ezra is using this to keep his people in a state of perpetual faith.

b. What is the Sabbath a sign of?

- **Read Exodus 20:8-11**

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord _____ the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

- **#1 The Sabbath is a Memorial to Creation**

Ezra brings them to the Sabbath to remind the people that they were created by God and owe to Him their deepest allegiance and loyalty. Every Sabbath

day they were to be reminded to worship their Creator.

- What else is the Sabbath a sign of?
- **Deuteronomy 5:15**
“And remember that you were a _____ in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God _____ you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.”
- What does God call this freedom from slavery in **Deuteronomy 7:8**?
“but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has _____ you out with a mighty hand, and _____ you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.”
- #2 - In Deuteronomy the Sabbath is used as a symbol for **redemption from slavery**. What does Paul say about spiritual slavery? **Romans 6:6**
- How does Paul tie together redemption and our justification?

Read **Romans 3:24 (NKJV)**

“being _____ freely by His grace through the _____ that is in Christ Jesus,”

- How does Paul use the symbol of the Sabbath in Hebrews?

Read **Hebrews 4:1-6,9-10**

“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His _____, any of you should seem to come short of it.”

- For a better understanding of what is meant by the word “**rest**”, read in the **SDA Bible Commentary Hebrews 3:11** commentary. This will give you a solid understanding on the arguments made in Chapters three and four about resting and the Sabbath. Here is a summary of that commentary:

God offered the people of Israel rest by promising them the Land of Canaan. But because of their rebellion, they did not enter that rest, but wandered

forty years, and then died in the desert. Then Joshua did bring them to the promised land, and they entered into it literally; but still the spiritual aspects of entering that rest they did not enter in to because of the same rebellion, i.e. idolatry.

*Then again, the offer of entering that rest was repeated in the time of David; but, yet again, they still did not enter into **spiritual rest**. In other words, entering into the **rest** was God's desire for them to become a nation that brought salvation to the world through a knowledge of the coming redemption in the Messiah. They never entered into God's spiritual desire for them, but they continued to fall back on a works-oriented concept of salvation.*

- **Read Hebrews 4:2**

“For unto us was the _____ preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with _____ in them that heard it”.

- Here in verse two it is clear that Hebrews three and four are clearly talking about the Gospel and faith in it, or the work of Salvation in the merits of Jesus Christ.

- **Read Hebrews 4:3**

“For we which have _____ do enter into _____, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

- Here we see that believing in the Gospel is what is meant by entering into his rest.

- **Read Hebrews 4:4**

“For he spake in a certain place of the _____ day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works.

- **Read Hebrews 4:5**

“And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

- **Read Hebrews 4:6**

“Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of _____”

- Here is our first hint of the Sabbath being used as more than just a **memorial to creation** but also as a symbol of **resting in the gospel**, rather than our own works

- **Read Hebrews 4: 9-10:**

There remaineth therefore a _____ to the people of God. For he that is entered into his _____, he also hath ceased from his own _____, as God did from _____.

- Here is the punchline of the entire chapter, and that is that entering into the **Sabbath rest** is a symbol and reminder that we have entered into that **spiritual rest**, and we have ceased from laboring to save ourselves, and rest in Christ to save us.
- Therefore **#3** - the Sabbath is a sign of our **justification**.

c. What else is the Sabbath a sign of?

Read Nehemiah 13:15-21.

- What is the issue in this chapter?
- **Thought question:** When a person begins to treat the Sabbath as a common day, or when the Sabbath becomes boring, and things of the world begin to gain more of your attention than God on this day what do you think is beginning to happen?
- What was the danger they faced as a result of profaning the Sabbath?
Read verse 18.
- Why do you think Nehemiah was extremely alarmed by this?
- The Sabbath is a **memorial to creation**, and our **justification** and anytime it becomes profaned, it is a sure sign that the **Wheel of Faith** is beginning to slow down. It is evidence that we are losing our faith relationship with God

and are in danger of being lost.

- What was Nehemiah’s solution to the problem? **Read Nehemiah 13:22**
“And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to _____ the Sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.”

- **Read Exodus 31:13**

“Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth _____ you.”

#4 The Sabbath is a sign of our **Sanctification**.

- **Sanctification** is the process whereby we are **set apart for holiness**. Sanctification is the process of **being changed**, and **recreated** in the image of God, therefore, as He is our Creator. He is also our re-creator, or our Sanctifier.
- **Read Genesis 1:27** and compare it to **Ephesians 4:24** Discuss the correlation between the two texts as they relate to Sanctification.

e. Finally, the Sabbath is a symbol of one more thing. Read **Isaiah 66:22-23**

- The Sabbath is also a sign or reminder of **Eternity**. It is a reminder that Jesus has promised to return and take us to our Eternal Home.

3. The Sabbath is the great sign of the **Gospel**. It signifies who we are created by, whom we have been justified by, whom we have been sanctified by and whom is coming back to save us.

E.J. waggoneer: *“The Sabbath is the grand fulcrum for the lever of faith, which lifts the soul to the heights of God’s throne, to hold communion with Him”*

a. For further consideration let’s look at the word “Sabbath” itself.

In proto Hebrew each symbol carried a particular meaning. It was a pictographic language with symbols carrying particular meanings, and the word was a picture that conveyed a very concrete meaning.

S/AB/BATH

Sha = Eternal one

Ab = Father

Bath = sign of

- The Sabbath literally means **eternal sign of the Father**. Now, we see the Sabbath's deeper meaning.

4. Read Revelation 7:1-3. What is this seal traditionally thought to be?

- a. While it is true that the Seal of God is the Sabbath, it would be a crime to think we are only talking about a matter of worshipping on the right day. The Sabbath Seal is inclusive of the entire Gospel message. People are sealed because they not only recognize their **Creator**, but their **Justifier** and **Sanctifier**, and one whom they shall live in Eternity with.

Thought questions: In order to be sealed, and in light of these lessons, how has your understanding of what it means to be sealed deepened?

What might be some areas of concern in your life that need to be addressed in order to receive the Seal of God?

- b. How might your Gospel experience be enhanced each Sabbath?

Exercise: This Sabbath concentrate on the four points of the Sabbath that we have looked at them. Try to divide your Sabbath hours up by reflecting on each thing the Sabbath is a sign of and reflect on your experience.

1. Memorial to Creation
2. Redemption from slavery
3. Justification
4. Sanctification