

Back to the Beginning: Genesis Session 7 Summary and Study Guide

This session of our *Back to the Beginning* Bible study series concludes our look at the creation account in Genesis 1–2, focusing on the provision of food, the declaration of "very good," and the significance of Day 7's rest. We'll explore how the Sabbath principle applies today, emphasizing entering God's rest under the New Covenant. Use your Bible and notes to engage with these truths and see their relevance to your life.

Lesson Objectives

- Examine Genesis 1:29–31 and 2:1–3, covering provision and Sabbath rest.
- Understand pre-fall diet for humans and animals as vegetarian.
- Explore "hosts" as things under God's command.
- Identify four actions God took on Day 7: completed, rested, blessed, sanctified.
- Reflect on Sabbath's meaning—made for man—and entering God's rest in Christ.
- Connect Old Testament Sabbath to New Covenant freedom and rest.

Part 1: Provision in Creation – Food for All

Turn to Genesis 1:29–31. After creating humanity, God provided food: "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed on the earth's surface and every tree with fruit yielding seed—it shall be food for you." For animals, "every green plant" (verse 30).

Pre-fall, both humans and animals were vegetarians—no meat-eating. Lions, tigers, and bears ate plants; no carnivores. Creation was perfect—no weeds, pests, or fungi ruining produce. God saw all He made and declared it "very good" (*tov me'od*—excellently good).

This reflects harmony: No death, no predation. Even after the fall, echoes of this goodness remain in creation's beauty.

Reflection Questions

- How does a vegetarian pre-fall world show creation's original harmony?
- What does God's provision of food reveal about His care?

Part 2: "Hosts" – Under God's Command

In Genesis 2:1, "The heavens and earth were completed, and all their hosts." "Hosts" (Hebrew: *tsaba*) means armies or things under command—not just military, but ordered under God's will. Stars, seas, animals—all obey Him. Scripture says God knows stars by name and musters them. He is the commander and they do His bidding. This emphasizes sovereignty: Everything fulfills His purpose, like stormy winds in Psalm 148 or Jesus calming the storm.

Reflection Questions

- How does "hosts" as "under command" enhance your view of creation?
- What in nature shows God's command today?

Part 3: Day 7 – God's Four Actions

Genesis 2:1–3: God completed His work, rested (*shabath*), blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it as holy—set apart. He finished perfectly. It was complete, there was no work that could have been done to make it better. He rested not from fatigue but to enjoy completion; blessed time itself; sanctified for holiness. The phrase "It is finished." reminds us of Calvary and Jesus's pronouncement that redemption had been completed.

There was no "evening and morning" on that seventh day. It's an indication of an eternal aspect. Sabbath (*shabbat*) models rhythm: Work six days, rest one for refreshment and focus on God.

Reflection Questions

- Why did God rest, and what does it model?
- How does sanctifying Day 7 show its importance?

Part 4: Sabbath Made for Man

Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). In Jesus's explanation, he reverberated back to David and his being allowed to eat the show-bread from the tabernacle. Jesus was indicating that one greater than David was in their presence. Under the Old Covenant, Sabbath was commanded (Exodus 20:8–11), with strict rules—no work, limited travel.

We need to observe, however, that even before the commandments were given on Mt. Sinai, the people observed a sabbath of sorts when it came to how they were to gather the manna. But Jesus asserted that He was the Lord of the sabbath and therefore could change the rules at any time.

In the New Covenant, we're not under OT law (Romans 6:14). Romans 14:5–6: Some regard one day special; others every day alike—be convinced in your mind. Faithful Christians differ: Some treat Sunday strictly (no eating out, no chores); others relax more.

Principle remains: Sabbath made for our good—rest from striving, entering God's confidence.

Reflection Questions

- How does "Sabbath made for man" free us from legalism?
- What Sabbath practices honor God in your life?

Part 5: Entering God's Rest – Hebrews 4

Hebrews 4 teaches a rest remains for God's people. God rested after creation; invites us to join. "Strive to enter that rest" (verse 11)—work at resting in His sovereignty.

Everything seems uphill sometimes, but God says, "I'm at rest; join Me." His plans stand (Psalm 33:11); He frustrates nations' schemes.

In Christ, we cease striving for salvation—His finished work provides eternal rest. The rest spoken of here in Hebrews 4 refers to the fact that the striving to fulfill the law has ended. Jesus fulfilled the law for us and therefore we don't have to. We're told to cease from our works just as God did from His. The author of Hebrews tells us to enter it **today**.

Reflection Questions

- What prevents you from entering God's rest?
- How does Christ's work enable true rest?

Part 6: New Testament Connections and Application

We're not under OT covenant but moral principles endure. Sabbath symbolizes rest in Christ (Matthew 11:28: "Come to Me...I will give you rest").

Practice: Set aside time for God—worship, rest, reflection. Avoid extremes; focus on heart.

As image-bearers, represent God justly, resolving conflicts biblically (1 Corinthians 6)—practice for ruling with Him.

Reflection Questions

- How does New Covenant freedom change Sabbath observance?
- What "gray area" (Romans 14) do you need conviction on?

Study Exercises

- List God's actions in Genesis 1:29–2:3; compare to earlier days.
- Research *tsaba* (hosts) and *shabath* in a concordance.
- Compare Genesis 2:1–3 with Hebrews 4 and Mark 2:27.
- Journal: Personalize a promise like God's rest.
- Reflect: Apply Sabbath principle this week.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Genesis 1–2 culminates in perfect provision and rest, inviting us to enter God's Sabbath through Christ. For next week (Genesis 3—the fall):

- Review Genesis 1–2; complete exercises.
- Reflect: How does "very good" contrast sin's entry?
- Prepare questions on the fall.

Let's pray: *Lord, thank You for creation's goodness and Sabbath rest made for us. Help us enter Your rest through Christ, living as faithful image-bearers. Guide our study. In Jesus' name, Amen.*