

## Back to the Beginning: Genesis Session 8 Summary and Study Guide

This session of our *Back to the Beginning* Bible study series continues our exploration of the creation account in Genesis 1–2, emphasizing the Sabbath rest as a type of the spiritual rest available to us today through Christ. We'll dive into Hebrews 4 to understand how to enter God's rest amid life's stresses and the pressure to be obedient Christians. Use your Bible and the notes booklet to follow along, reflecting on how Old Testament pictures point to New Testament realities.

### Lesson Objectives

- Review the Sabbath rest in Genesis 2 as a picture of spiritual rest.
- Explore Hebrews 4's teaching on entering God's rest "today."
- Understand the connection between unbelief, disobedience, and failing to rest.
- Reflect on what "rest" means emotionally, physically, and spiritually.
- Apply the promise of rest personally, ceasing striving in daily life.
- Connect creation's rest to New Covenant fulfillment in Christ.

### Part 1: The Sabbath as a Type of Rest

The Sabbath rest in Genesis 2:1–3 pictures the spiritual rest God offers us today—not death or heaven, but available now. God rested after creation, inviting us to join Him in confidence, peace, and completeness.

Ask yourself: What does "rest" evoke? No activity, relaxation, restoration, re-energizing, surrendering stress, ceasing labor—the pressure off. The job is done!

Hebrews 4 argues Old Testament people (under Moses) failed to enter rest due to unbelief and disobedience. The Bible refers to an “evil heart of unbelief.” God swore in wrath they would not enter His rest.

### Part 2: The Promise of Rest in Hebrews 4

Hebrews 4:1–8 warns: Be fearful of failing to enter rest, like Israel. The good news was proclaimed, but unbelief blocked it. God's works finished from creation's foundation—He rested on Day 7.

Psalms 95 (via David) says "today" if you hear His voice, don't harden hearts as in the wilderness. Unbelief led to disobedience. In fact, unbelief is disobedience.

If Joshua gave full rest, no later mention would have been needed.

### Reflection Questions

- Why link unbelief and disobedience in failing to rest?
- What does "today" emphasize about entering rest?

### Part 3: A Sabbath Rest Remains

Hebrews 4:9–10: There remains a Sabbath rest (*sabbatismos*) for God's people. Entering His rest means ceasing works as God did—stop striving, trust His finished work.

Available "today" (September 7, 2025, or any day)—not past or future. Strive to enter by believing and surrendering.

Rest as relationship: God shared first Sabbath with Adam and Eve in communion—stress gone, striving ceased.

### Reflection Questions

- How is entering rest like God ceasing after creation?
- What does rest as "relationship without stress" mean for you?

### Part 4: Personal Application – Ceasing Striving

"Strive to enter rest" (verse 11)—work at resting in God's finished work on the cross. Amid stresses (e.g., weddings, health), cease internal fighting; trust Him. But more importantly, rest in the fact that your sin penalty has been paid and there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1).

1 Peter 5:7: "Cast cares on Him, for He cares for you"—He does the caring/carrying, not just sympathizing. Envision daily tasks—errands, decisions, raising children—at rest, confident in His control. Not easy, but promised.

### Reflection Questions

- How to "strive" at resting amid to-do lists?
- Can you picture life without internal striving?
- More importantly, can you picture life without the need to be perfect.

### Part 5: New Testament Connections

Sabbath made for man (Mark 2:27). Under New Covenant, not OT law, but the principle of the Spirit of God at work to accomplish the obedience that God expects and the assurance that God's own righteousness has been credited to you.

Christ's finished work provides eternal rest—come to Him and find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11:28). Old Testament types (Sabbath, Canaan) point to this reality.

### Reflection Questions

- How does New Covenant change rest's application?
- What unfinished "works" do you need to cease?

### Part 6: God's Finished Works and Invitation

God's works finished from foundation—creation complete, He rests in confidence. Invites us to join, stopping our works like He has. The Bible calls our efforts to please God in our strength as "dead works." Today, enter by faith—striving, let Him carry burden of righteous living because He lived it for us.

### Reflection Questions

- Why available "today," not just future?
- How does God's confidence model our rest?

### Study Exercises

1. Chart Genesis 2:1–3 with Hebrews 4 parallels.
2. Verb Hunt: Mark "rest" forms in Hebrews 4; note contexts.
3. Cross-References: Read Psalm 95, Mark 2:27, 1 Peter 5:7—connect to rest.
4. Word Study: Look up *sabbatismos* and *katapausis* in a concordance.

### Conclusion and Next Steps

Genesis' Sabbath pictures the rest available today in Christ—cease striving, enter His peace. For next session (continuing Hebrews 4 and the fall):

- Review Genesis 2 and Hebrews 4; complete exercises.
- Reflect: How does unbelief block rest?
- Prepare questions on applying rest daily.