The Sabbath



MEMORY VERSE

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8).

Word of the Week—Sabbath (noun):

The seventh day of the week, from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday, God's blessed day of rest.

Sabbath (verb):

To rest, to cease. In Hebrew, *shabath* means to stop work or activity. Can you see the word "Sabbath" in *shabath*?

This week's lesson is based on Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-10; *Patriarchs and Prophets,* pp. 47, 48; and *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 220, 221**. Extra Reading:** *The Bible Story,* vol. 1, pp. 57-60.

SUNDAY

God Created the Sabbath

The sun sank slowly behind the distant hills, setting the sky ablaze with red and orange. The wonder of it marked the end of the six days of Creation. Everything was just as God had planned it would be—beautiful and perfect. His final act of Creation, the seventh day, would be like placing a diamond on top of a sparkling crown.

God didn't create Sabbath with a mighty command or by sculpting with His hands. What did God do? **Read Genesis 2:2.**

Psalm 121:3, 4 says God never sleeps, so He wasn't feeling tired, and He didn't need a nap. But God rested "from all His work" (Genesis 2:2). This was a different kind of rest. This rest meant that God made an extra-special time just to be with Adam and Eve: Sabbath. Perhaps they explored the garden, admiring each new plant or animal. Maybe they laughed at the birdcalls, tasted sweet new fruits, or just smiled at each other in kind silence. Time together on the Sabbath was very special.

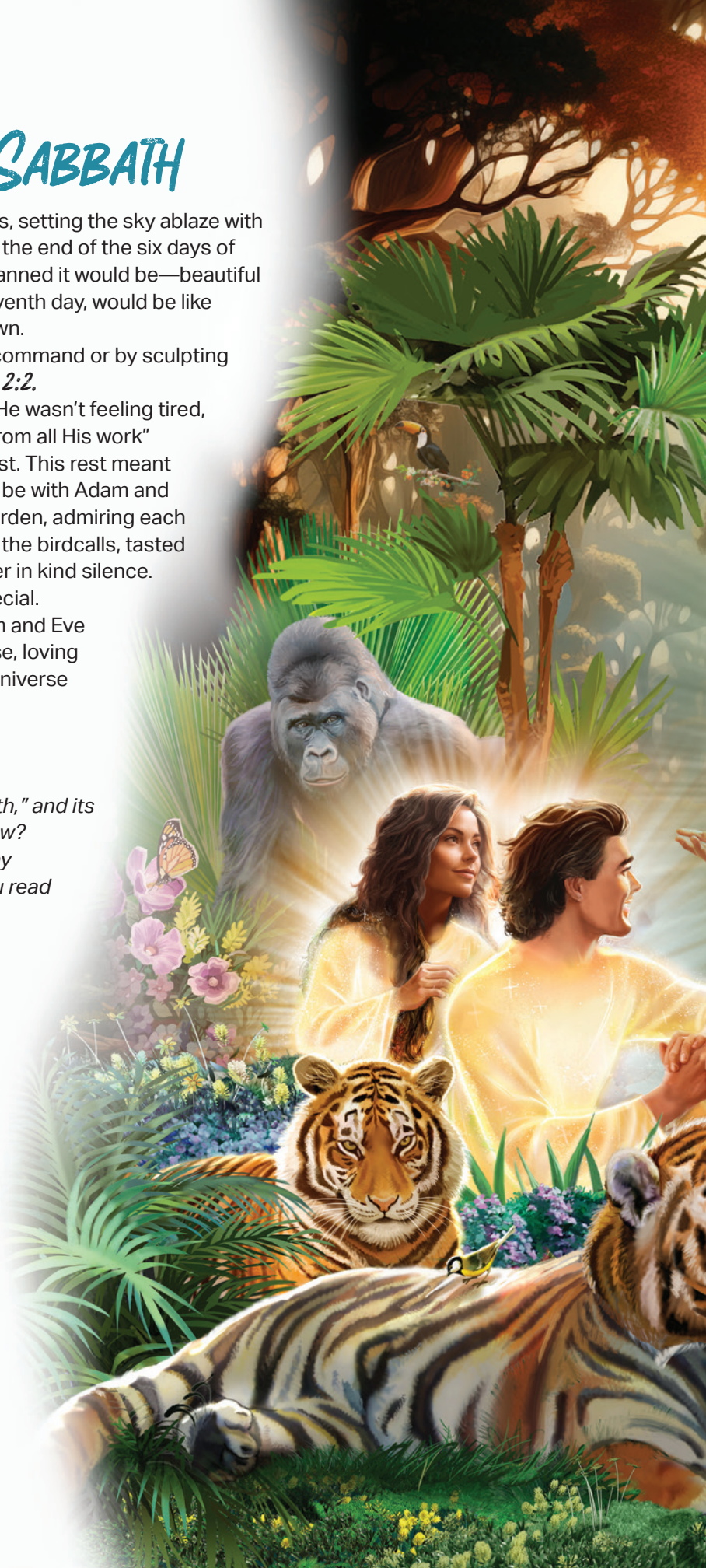
Of all the beauty that God had given Adam and Eve to enjoy, His greatest gift was to be in a close, loving friendship with Him. The God of the whole universe stopped all His work to give us this gift too.

Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *Think about the Word of the Week, "Sabbath," and its meaning. Have you discovered anything new?*
- *Why do you think we are called Seventh-day Adventists? (Think about the answer as you read this week's lesson and look for clues.)*

Pray: Thank God for loving us so much that He stopped everything to be with us in an extra-special way on Sabbath.

Do: Find out the name of the seventh day in other languages.





PRAY: Thank God for making and blessing the Sabbath so that we can spend time with Him, our family, and our friends.

DO: Plan this Sabbath as you would a special birthday. Create an invitation for God. (He's already sent you His!) Decorate it and write out what you're going to do as you spend time together. How will you make the celebration look, feel, sound, and taste extra-special? (Look for extra ideas later in the week!)

☐ **MONDAY**

A Blessed Day

On that very first Sabbath day God did something different and very wonderful—He spent a whole day with Adam and Eve. This was Adam and Eve's first full day together and with God. What do you think they might have done together on that first Sabbath?

God must have loved to hear Adam laugh at monkeys chattering in the trees. He must have smiled as Eve stopped to smell a perfect rose. Imagine all the questions they had for God. He must have enjoyed explaining the wonders of things such as armadillos and centipedes, why the hippo has a huge mouth, or how He made the tiny fireflies. As they spent time resting and exploring with their Creator God on Sabbath, Adam and Eve couldn't help loving Him in return. His heart was so big and tender, and they got to know this without a doubt.

This is what Genesis 2:3 means when it says, "God blessed the seventh day." He blessed this day with His very own special and perfect kind of love. God gave this Sabbath blessing to *everyone* at the beginning of our world—from Adam right down to you. **Read Mark 2:27.**

Just as He did for Adam and Eve, God invites us to spend every Sabbath resting with Him. We can come together in church to learn about Him, talk to Him in prayer, hear His words in the Bible, and praise Him for His great love. We can learn about Him in nature, share and help each other, and grow closer to Him. The seventh day, Saturday, is the most special day!

Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *God wants to build your friendship with Him in a special way every Sabbath. How does that make you feel?*
- *What can you do this Sabbath to make it a special day with God?*

☐ TUESDAY

Remember the Sabbath

Imagine receiving an amazing gift that is too big, too important, and too special to ever forget! That's exactly what the Sabbath is! But sadly God knew that people would forget it. What did He tell us to do? *Read Exodus 20:8* (first word).

God wrote this command in stone with His own finger when He gave His people the Ten Commandments—that's how important it is! It's also the only commandment that starts with the word "remember." In the same way that a memorial that your country might have to remind people of a national hero or a battle, God made the Sabbath to remind us of where we came from and who made us. Because it's so important, God instructed that we don't do any work on the Sabbath. So instead of doing all the things we think about during the week (work, shopping, and lots of other things), we do different things that focus on God. That's how we keep the Sabbath holy. God should be part of our everyday lives, but Sabbath is extra-special!

God also sent prophets, Jesus Himself, and teachers in the Bible, such as Paul, to remind us to keep Sabbath as God's special day. It's so special that the Bible says we will be enjoying Sabbath with Him forever in the earth made new (Isaiah 66:23). Just as Adam and Eve did at the beginning, we will be able to spend Sabbath face-to-face with God!

Until then we can meet God every Sabbath in other ways. We can gather together with friends and family to sing to Him, pray, read the Bible, and tell Jesus how grateful we are that He died to save us.



God's beautiful sunsets help us remember when the Sabbath day begins and ends. As the sun sinks in the sky on Friday evening, we know it's time to stop and worship God, because Sabbath has begun. Then on Saturday night the setting sun tells us Sabbath is ending. We can pause again to worship God, remembering that He is our special Sabbath friend.

What a big gift and a blessing it is to remember God's Sabbath!

Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *What could you do to make someone else's Sabbath a day they will always remember?*

Pray: Ask God to help you appreciate the Sabbath and remember what He made it to be—a day to come close to Him.

Do: Share the Sabbath with someone new. Pray this week over whom you could invite to Sabbath School, to a Sabbath walk in nature, or to Sabbath family worship. The gift of Sabbath shouldn't be kept to ourselves!

WEDNESDAY

A Day to Learn

On the very first Sabbath, Adam and Eve learned how amazing and creative God was when He made the world with just words. They must have had so many questions. "They may have asked God why a giraffe has such a tall neck . . . how He made the enormous sun and small bees (how do they make their sweet honey?) . . . and why grass is green." God must have loved their curiosity. He knew that learning new things about Him and His creation would help them understand and love Him more.

Later, when Jesus came to earth, He also knew how important it was for God's people to keep learning about God too. So He helped to teach them. How did Jesus help others learn about God on the Sabbath? **Read Luke 4:16.**

When Jesus lived on earth, His church was held in a synagogue. Jesus loved to worship there on Sabbath. He read to the people from the Bible scrolls to help them learn new things about His Father God so that they would get to know Him better.

Reading Bible stories on Sabbath is a special way for us to get to know God better too. The story about Jesus calming the scary storm helps us know that He is with us when we're frightened (Mark 4:35-41). The story of Jesus blessing the children helps us know that He will bless us too (Mark 10:13-16).

We can also learn about God and His creation by spending time in nature on Sabbath, noticing all the small things that we can easily miss when we're rushing.

What an awesome God we can learn more about every Sabbath!

Pray: Thank God for what you have already learned about Him, and ask Him to help you learn more this Sabbath.

Think . . . Then Talk About It

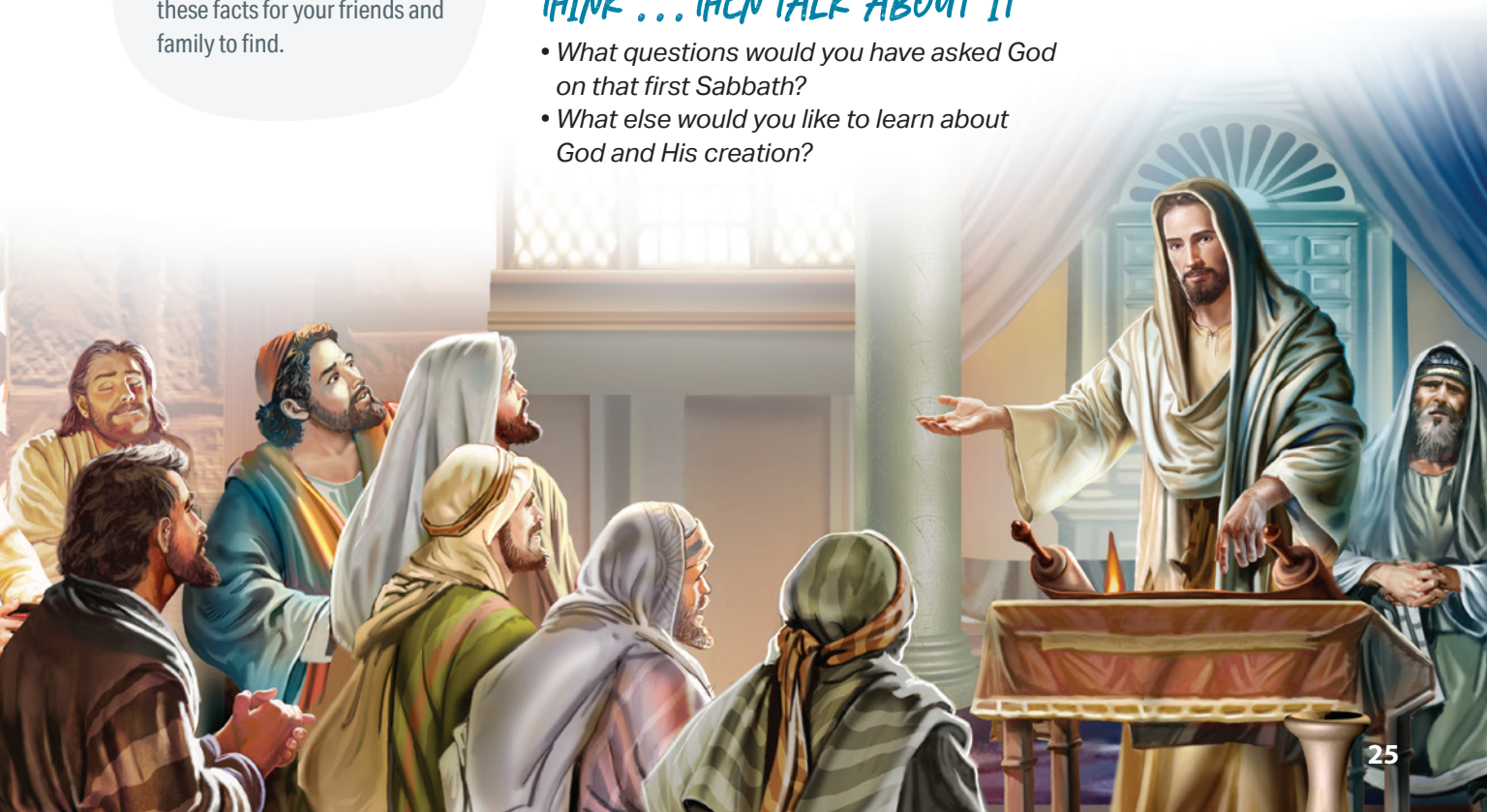
- *What questions would you have asked God on that first Sabbath?*
- *What else would you like to learn about God and His creation?*

Nature Challenge: Plan a Sabbath nature walk to see what you can learn about God outdoors. See who can find the smallest nature object and who can find the biggest! Find something in nature from each color of the rainbow, or something that reminds you of a Bible story you know well. What do these things teach you about God?

Do: Find some nature books to browse through on Sabbath. You may learn such things as:

- The world's tallest tree is as high as a 35-story building.
- Your heart beats about 115,200 times a day.
- A cat has 32 muscles in each of its ears.
- A dragonfly has six legs, but it can't walk.

Plan a treasure hunt and hide these facts for your friends and family to find.



THURSDAY

A Very Special Day

The seventh day was to be no ordinary day! Adam and Eve spent time with their wonderful God, exploring, learning, and praising Him for His love. God had rested, and they had followed His example. What else did God do? *Read Genesis 2:3.*

Our God is so good and holy, and His love is perfect. When He made the Sabbath *holy*, or *sanctified* it, He was making it unique and special, just like Himself. God was setting apart a whole day to share His perfect love with His children. Wow! A whole day of perfect love. What does God ask us to do so we can spend a whole day with Him? *Read Exodus 20:9,10.*

God gives us six days to work hard, then He sets apart the Sabbath so we can stop being busy doing school and homework, cleaning, and shopping. He knows our brains need a break from learning, planning, choosing, and organizing. He also knows we need a break from worry and stress.

With all those things out of the way, we can rest and be close to God. It's a special time to remember and celebrate our Creator God. When we are with God, our hearts want to love Him. We go to church on Sabbath to worship God with others on His holy day. We want to sing and talk to Him. We want to give our time or money as an offering to Him. We want to do something special for somebody else because they are precious to Him. We want to thank God for all the good things He created. Each of these things is a beautiful way to show God that we love and respect Him because He is our mighty Creator God. Each of these things is an act of worship.

PRAY: Thank God for knowing we would need a break from work and for the blessing of the Sabbath.

THINK . . . THEN TALK ABOUT IT

- *What work are you glad you can have a break from on Sabbath?*
- *Some people need to work on Sabbath to help others—what jobs might this include? Pray for them this Sabbath as they help others.*

God blesses us if we take a rest from working, just as He did on the very first Sabbath.



FOR YOU, PARENTS:

God sees the work you constantly do for your family, so He blesses you with Sabbath rest too. "God's love has set a limit to the demands of toil. Over the Sabbath He places His merciful hand. In His own day He preserves for the family opportunity for communion with Him, with nature, and with one another" (Ellen G. White, *Education,* p. 251).

☐ FRIDAY

Celebrate Sabbath!

To help us understand and enjoy His creation, God gave us five senses. (Can you name the five senses God has given you?)

God knew our senses would help us enjoy His creation in special ways. Because we rest from our busyness on Sabbath, we have time to appreciate God's world through our sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. How can you use your senses to experience the world in special ways on Sabbath?

You might like to do some of the following or plan your own Sabbath afternoon family activity.

- Explore a public garden and find the flower with the sweetest fragrance.
- Look for nature treasures as you explore a beach and rock pools.
- Add something special, such as a glass of grape juice, to your closing Sabbath meal.
- Take paper with you on a nature walk. Draw some things you see or write down what you hear. You may like to take photos too.
- Give someone a hug, cuddle a baby, or pat an animal to share God's love through touch.
- Sing your favorite songs to God.
- Draw a picture of something God has created, or something you like to do on Sabbath.
- Encourage someone by writing them a note of thanks or kindness.
- Make a blessing book. Draw or take photos of blessings for every letter of the alphabet. Do it with some friends!
- Read about God's Sabbath: "This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). If you know this verse as a song, you may like to sing it now. Or make up your own song (perhaps to a familiar tune).
- With a family member, read and/or sing some of the Sabbath hymns in *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, such as hymn no. 390, "We Love Thy Sabbath, Lord."



Friday Night

Share and Praise

It's Sabbath, the best time of the week. Celebrate in a new way: light seven candles—one for each day of Creation; sing a song of praise; or take turns thanking God for something He's made you. You might like to repeat something every Friday evening so it becomes a family tradition.

Family Journal

- What have you learned about God and His Sabbath that helps you love Him more?
- What might the world be like now if everyone had always accepted God's Sabbath gift and worshipped Him every week?

Parent Faith Talk

Share some very special standout Sabbaths you have enjoyed. Invite your child to share a special Sabbath they remember. Brainstorm ideas together to celebrate an upcoming Sabbath in a different way or place, to create memories together. Think about inviting someone to your home and sharing a meal with them.

Do

Create a Sabbath "lucky dip" of praise. Have each family member write down what they love about Sabbath on a small slip of paper. Fold up and pop in a jar. Take turns dipping in and sharing praise.

Pray

Pray a popcorn prayer of thanks to God for His Sabbath, during which family members say one thing, in any order, and as many times as they like.





SABBATH SPECIAL

The Hammer That Wouldn't Work on Sabbath

BY LAWRENCE MAXWELL

José* loved to make shoes. His shoes were beautiful, but times were tough in Spain many years ago, and he was very poor. He was so poor that he owned only one hammer. He also had a radio that he played while he worked.

One day over this radio came the sound of a quartet singing a worship song. Then a man talked about the love of God and the Bible.

"Good sermon; good singing," José murmured to himself. "I must tune in again next week." He listened to the program many more times, and the more he heard, the more he liked it.

Then one morning a man selling books entered his shop. "How interesting," José exclaimed. "These books say the same things I hear on the radio every week."

"You mean on the *Voice of Prophecy* program?" the book salesman asked.

"The very one," José replied.

The delighted Adventist book salesman offered to share more with José and met with him every evening for a week, studying the Bible. José accepted all the Bible truths except for the Sabbath. He just couldn't give up work on this busy day.

"If God were to send you a sign telling you He wants you to keep Saturday holy, would you keep it then?" asked the bookseller.

"Oh, yes, yes, of course," José replied.

The very next Sabbath José went to work as usual, but he couldn't find his hammer. He searched high and low, in the cupboards and under the workbench, but there was no hammer. And since that was the only hammer he had, he couldn't work that day.

He went back Sunday morning—and there was the hammer as large as life!

"A strange thing," he whispered. "Is this the Lord's sign? No, it couldn't be."

So he went to work the next Sabbath too. He had no trouble finding the hammer this time. He lined up a nail and struck the nail with the hammer. But as the hammer came down, its iron head broke off in two pieces!

"It is the sign of the Lord!" José cried. My hammer wouldn't work last Sabbath, and it won't work today. And if it won't work on Sabbath, I won't either. From now on I shall keep the Sabbath."

As soon as possible, José was baptized. Afterward, the pastor handed him a gift: a new hammer.

*Name has been changed.

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