

“THE REST OF GOD”
Genesis 2:1-3
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INTRODUCTION

Our world has forgotten about God’s day of rest, and most people have not entered into His spiritual day of rest. Man lost his “rest” when he fell into sinful rebellion against God; he can only be restored to genuine rest in Christ.

YOU MUST ENTER INTO GOD’S REST.

In this message we look at 1) the reason why man cannot possibly explain the Earth’s origins by looking at the current processes at work in our world, 2) the time when God finished His work, 3) The kind of rest that He took, 4) the work that God finished, 5) the day that He set apart, and 6) the spiritual rest that all God’s people need to have in Christ.

- I. WHY MAN CANNOT EXPLAIN THE PAST (**CREATION**) FROM OBSERVING THE PRESENT (**PRESERVATION**) (1)
 - Verse 1 reviews what has gone before.
 - Four times God stresses the completion of His work in vv. 1-3
 - Three times God stresses that it included all His work.
 - “The heavens and the earth and all their hosts”—this involves the totality of beings that fill heaven and earth—plants, animals, people on Earth; stars in Heaven (cf. Neh. 9:6; Dt. 4:19; 17:3). In some places angels are “the hosts of heaven”—e.g. I K. 22:19; Heb. 9:6; Ps. 148:2; but, since God makes no reference to them in ch. 1, it is unlikely they are intended here.
 - The present processes of the cosmos are different; no longer is He “creating and making” (v. 3)
 - Then it was innovation—*creation*—and integration—*making*.
 - Now the processes are **exactly opposite**—conservation and disintegration; the **first and second “laws of thermodynamics.”** The Fall of man into sin led to the process of decay and decline.
Therefore, one cannot possibly learn about the origin of the universe by studying present processes!!
Only by divine revelation can we know how creation occurred.

- II. THE TIME WHEN GOD FINISHED HIS WORK—on the 6th day or the 7th? (v. 2 seems to say on the 7th)

In actuality, the completion consists in”

 - 1) Negatively, the cessation of the work of creation.
 - 2) Positively, His blessing and sanctifying of the 7th day.
 - 3) On the seventh day God ceased to produce anything new.

- III. THE KIND OF REST THAT GOD TOOK (2)
 - A. He entered into the rest of His all-sufficient being—it is the “rest” of divine satisfaction.
 - B. It is called “resting” in Ex. 20:11; “being refreshed” in Ex. 31:17.

- IV. WHAT DID GOD REST FROM?
 - A. His “work”, i.e. the special task of creation which He had set for Himself.
Later the word is regularly used for the **work** forbidden on the Sabbath—e.g. Ex. 35:2; Jer. 17:22, 24.
 - B. But, is God no longer busy in our world?
 - Of course He is! Now He **preserves** His creation.
 - See Jn. 5:17: “My Father works until now, and I work.”
 - See preservation taught in Ps. 104:28-29.
 - Cf. Heb. 8:1; 10:12—Jesus “sat down”; redemption had been accomplished. However, He still works to dispense its benefits.

- Likewise, God dispenses the benefits of Creation in His divine preservation.

V. THE DAY THAT GOD SET APART—the 7th day (3)

- A. It is the actual day which God blessed and hallowed (cf. v. 22—creatures blessed; v. 28—man blessed; 2:3—7th day blessed)
1. This is a literal day—just like the other 6 days (cf. Ex. 20:11; 31:17—an ordinary day).
 2. Why then is there no summary of the 7th day as with the other 6: “then there was evening, then morning, day seven”?
 - Because the 7th day was only the beginning of His rest.
 - The rest continued and the creation entered into His rest and continued to enjoy it.
 - The seventh day represents the spiritual rest of God which creation enjoyed.
 3. The Sabbath was made for man—for his benefit and blessing!
 - God blessed it, as a gift to man—physical rest and change; spiritual joy and peace.
 - God sanctified it—as God’s claim on man; his obligation to attend to God’s business.
- B. The Seventh Day was likely Observed by godly people since Creation as a symbol of God’s rest since God blessed it—even though no specific command is given in this place.
1. God was not content to participate in His rest alone; he desires the entire creation to participate; thus, He blesses and sanctifies the day.
 2. All this shows that:
 - The divine rest is noble and holy and not to be lightly regarded.
 - Man is to participate in both the blessings and obligations of God’s rest—both by observing the day and by living in His rest.
 3. His blessing was a real communication of His grace and peace [as it was in vv.22 & 28].
 4. His sanctifying was not merely declarative, but was causative—communicating His holiness and placing creation—especially men—in a living relationship with God.

VI. THE SPIRITUAL REST THAT ALL OF GOD’S PEOPLE NEED TO HAVE IN CHRIST

- A. Hebrews 4:9 speaks of the ultimate consummation of the divine rest for all of creation with man at its head.
- B. But, the rest of creation has been destroyed by the sin of man.
- C. Therefore, man still needs to enter His rest (Heb. 3:7-4:11—**esp. 4:7-11**)
- D. In order to restore man, God had to create again—a new creation.
1. Darkness, disorder (no form), and death (void) had again returned in place of Light, order, and life (fullness).
 2. Jesus is the Light of the world (Jn. 1:4—“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men”; “II Cor. 4:6—God lightens us in Christ as at Creation.
 3. Christ brings order to the soul; He is the Sun of righteousness who becomes the center of attraction.
 4. Christ is the life of the soul—Eph. 2:1; Col. 3:3.

CONCLUSION

Thus in Christ we have true: Knowledge (light), righteousness (order), and life (fullness).

We now have a **new rest** in Him.

And, we have an ultimate fulfillment in the millennium and in the New Heavens and New Earth.

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