

The Fourth Word 2

Ex 20 ⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made 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.”

► The best sabbath _____ I know of is Nehemiah 8, where the people are gathered on the day of _____, which was a seasonal sabbath and a holy assembly on which no customary work was to be done.

Neh 8 ¹ Now all the people gathered together ... ² ... on the first day of the seventh month.

Lv 23 ²⁴ “In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. ²⁵ You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.”

- Trumpets were used for a number of purposes such as assembling the people or rallying the people for war, but the deeper purpose was to signal that the LORD was _____ over Israel and all the earth, and to call Israel to the _____ remembrance.

Ps 47 ⁵ God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. ⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! ⁷ For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with understanding. ⁸ God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne. ⁹ The princes of the people have gathered together, the people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of earth belong to God; He is greatly exalted.

Num 10 ² “Make two silver trumpets for yourself; ... you shall use them for calling the congregation and for directing the movement of the camps ... ⁸ The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets; and these shall be to you as an ordinance forever throughout your generations. ⁹ When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the LORD your God, and you will be saved from your enemies. ¹⁰ Also in the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be a memorial for you before your God”

- The day of trumpets began with gathered, Bible-centered, heartfelt _____.

Neh 8 ¹ Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square ... ² So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. ³ Then [Ezra] read from [the law] ... before the [assembly]; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law ... ⁶ And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. Then all the people answered, “Amen, Amen!” while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground

- When the people wept due to conviction of their _____, the leaders exhorted them not to mourn, for the day was “_____ to the LORD.” In other words, no matter how great our sin, there is a greater reality, the work of _____. The sabbath is about living in light of that greater reality – resting and rejoicing in Christ and his _____.

Neh 8 ⁹ And Nehemiah, who was the 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 mourn nor weep.” For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. ¹⁰ Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” ¹¹ So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, “Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved.”

- When the people understand the words of the leaders, what do they do?

Neh 8 ¹² And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to send portions and rejoice greatly, because they understood the words that were declared to them.

- Their sabbath was _____ of activity and labor, not of vocational labor by which they gained increase, but of _____ in God and his people, enjoying the best of what God had given them, and sharing it.

- Contrast their celebratory view of the Sabbath with the Pharisees' _____ view of the Sabbath.

Mk 2 ²³ He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and ... His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain. ²⁴ And the Pharisees said to Him, "Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" ²⁵ But He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: ²⁶ how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the show-bread, which is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?" ²⁷ And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." ²⁸ Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath." ³ ¹ And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. ² So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. ³ And He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Step forward." ⁴ Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent. ⁵ And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. ⁶ Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

► **The Pharisees** were an extreme example, but the _____ between the celebratory and stoic views of the Sabbath has continued among sincere Christians throughout church history and still today. At the root is a failure to discern the biblical meaning of keeping the Sabbath _____. Is it _____ working or is it worshipping God as _____, which entails resting and rejoicing in His work and blessing? Fueling the stoic view are OT death penalty verses for Sabbath breaking. A close reading of OT Sabbath verses reveals that death was not applied to mere working on the Sabbath, but to putting oneself or something else in the place of _____.

Neh 13¹⁵ In those days I saw people in Judah treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions ... ¹⁷ Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day?" ... ¹⁹ So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day. ²⁰ Now the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice. ²¹ Then I warned them, and said to

them, "Why do you spend the night around the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you!" From that time on they came no more on the Sabbath.

Ex 31 ¹⁴ "You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people."

Ex 35 ² "Whoever does any work on [the Sabbath] shall be put to death. ³ You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day."

- Profaning the Sabbath and incurring death is what _____ and _____ did (Gn 3; 4.3-14).

- The difference between celebratory and stoic Sabbath is a big part of the difference between _____ and the Pharisees.

► Practical considerations:

- Neh 8 is your Sabbath _____.
- _____ is bedrock.
- You don't have to take it to the _____ every Sunday.
- _____ are fine.
- _____ is fine as long as it is part of a special day in which God is exalted and rejoiced in.
- A _____ are fine as long as it is wholesome and part of a special day in which God is exalted and rejoiced in.
- _____ is good, but don't overdo it.
- What about going to a _____ or a _____?
- Do not _____ your Christian neighbor, nor teach you children to.
- Guard the _____ of Sabbath above all.