

WEEK FIVE

# RULE 4: KEEP THE SABBATH AS A SPECIAL DAY OF REST AND REMEMBERING GOD

## BIG IDEA

There are six days for work and the seventh day is God's special day for

# RECREATION, WORSHIP AND REST

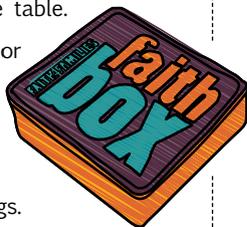
A LESSON FROM NEHEMIAH

### PREP: (Kids can help!)

- Find 7 sandwich bags or envelopes and write a different day of the week on the outside of each.
- Place in each bag an item that represents something your family does on these days. (e.g. *Monday*: a pencil; school starts for the week; *Tuesday*: a hair clip. Sally does ballet and has her hair in a bun; *Wednesday*: a Scout badge; etc. For Sunday, keep the bag empty)
- Buy a bag of marshmallows (regular size, not mini).
- Place your jar with the Ten Commandments on the table.
- Have a pile of pillows or cushions ready.

### WHAT GOES IN THE BOX?

- The seven sandwich bags.
- The bag of marshmallows.



### INTRODUCTION

- Who can remember the first 3 commandments? (Take them out of the jar).
- Let's check: The first commandment is to put no other gods before the true God.

The 2nd commandment is to worship only God.

The 3rd commandment is to use God's name with respect.

Today we are looking at the 4th commandment which tells us to remember God's Sabbath.

**Does anyone know what Sabbath means?**

**What day of the week is the Sabbath for us?**

(The word sabbath is from the Hebrew word SHABÀT, meaning 'cessation,' or 'time of rest.')

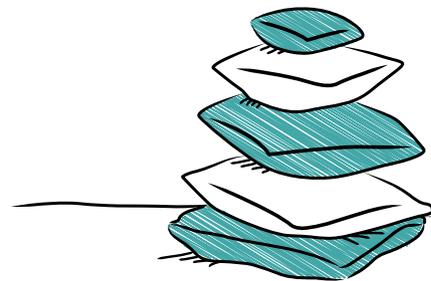
### OUT OF THE BOX

- Take out the 7 bags/envelopes and let the children read the day of the week on each one, then work together to line them up in order. (Make sure the Sabbath Day comes at the end.)

### Questions:

- **Can you tell us what your favourite day of the week is?**

Work your way through the week, giving everyone a turn at saying which day is their favourite.



- Now let the youngest child open the first bag and guess what activity is represented by the object inside.
- When you get to the final bag, and the child discovers it is empty, ask what they think should have been inside. What special activities happen on Sunday?
- **When God created the world how many days did it take?** (6 days.)
- **What did God do on the seventh day?** (God rested.)

God knows that rest is important and he modelled it for us himself.

- Tip the bag of marshmallows into the 7th bag and let everyone take a handful. See who can put the most in their mouth and still say “Sabbath is special”.

God made us and knows that our minds and bodies work best when we rest, take time to worship Him, and relax with our family and friends.

It is a day when we remind ourselves that God is in charge of everything and we can trust him to care for us. We can take time to appreciate the good things He has given us.

## ACTIVITY

We are about to read about how Nehemiah rebuilt the walls around the city of Jerusalem and learned how to

take a rest on the Sabbath. Let’s play a game to see what it was like.

### Raucous & Rest Obstacle Course

- Send the children running around the house to gather pillows/cushions and stack them in the doorway.
- Stand beside the cushions with the children beside you.
- Choose 2 corners in the room and tell the children they must run to the first corner, roly-poly to the second corner, and frog-hop back to the starting point. They can try to dodge as parents throw pillows at them.
- At the “ready, steady, go”, let the first in line take their turn and race back to tag the next person. .
- When everyone is finished with the raucous race, everyone helps build a wall out of the pillows they can find.
- Everyone lies down on the pillow-wall and quietly takes three big breaths, relaxing and being peaceful.

### How did it feel when you had cushions thrown at you?

During the week we are busy with school and activities, and sometimes things happen which make us a bit tired or grumpy.

### What happens when we take a rest?

Finish eating the marshmallows while you read.

WEEK FIVE

READ

“ Jerusalem had once been a beautiful city, with gardens and fountains, and a high wall around it. But enemies had destroyed it, breaking down the walls, and burning the gate. Now only a few people were left within the city.

At this time there was a Jew named Nehemiah living in Persia where he worked as the King’s cup bearer. He had discovered that the walls of his hometown Jerusalem were broken down and had not been repaired. This troubled Nehemiah. He had such a love for his beautiful city that he couldn’t bear to think about it in ruins.

He cried and prayed for several days, and the next day, when Nehemiah served in the palace, the king noticed that he was upset. Nehemiah was a very trusted man in his service, and the king liked

and cared for him. Nehemiah quickly prayed and then told the king and queen of his sadness. He boldly asked the king if he could go and begin to rebuild the city walls in Jerusalem. God answered Nehemiah’s prayer and the king not only agreed but also gave him the building timber that he needed and some soldiers to protect him.

Nehemiah went to Jerusalem late at night when no one was watching to see how bad it was. It was terrible! The next morning he called the people together, showed them his timber, and said he had come to help them rebuild the city.

Everyone was excited. They started with new gates so the wolves could not come down from the mountains and get in. They made it safe as well as beautiful.

But as they began working on the houses, the enemy heard them building, became angry and made plans to attack. So Nehemiah gave weapons to the people, and while half of them kept building, the other half stayed on guard.

But Nehemiah knew that rebuilding the city was only part of the job. The people had to be rebuilt as well. Part of that was re-learning how to live the way God wanted them to.

The people had forgotten to keep God’s Sabbath, and Nehemiah taught them to change. No matter how much work there was to do, the people learned that they had to make time to rest, to remember God and to worship Him.”

*Excerpts from Nehemiah 10-16*



FAMILY TALK TIME

Nehemiah had a really important job to do. But he also knew how important it is to keep the Sabbath.

God knows we need regular times of quietness to enjoy time away from work and noise and to be refreshed. That’s why this commandment is so important – God says he made the Sabbath for us because He knows we need it. Recreation is participating in playful or leisurely things.

Questions:

- What things do we do now as a family to show that Sunday (or Saturday if you keep that day special) is God’s special day?

“ IF YOU CALL THE SABBATH A DELIGHT AND THE LORD'S HOLY DAY HONOURABLE, AND IF YOU HONOUR IT BY NOT GOING YOUR OWN WAY AND NOT DOING AS YOU PLEASE OR SPEAKING IDLE WORDS, THEN YOU WILL FIND YOUR JOY IN THE LORD.”

- ISAIAH 58:13-14 -

- Is Sunday a day of rest for us? In what ways? (e.g. Daddy doesn't go to work. We have a sleep in. We go to the beach or for walks.)
- Do you have any other ideas about how we can rest and remember God on Sunday?

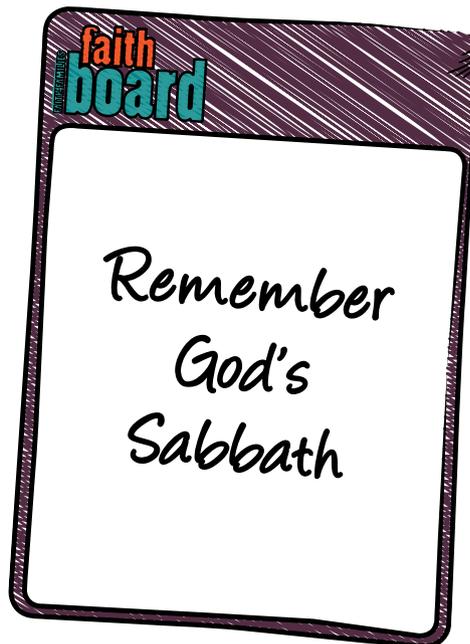
### PRAY

- Decide on a favourite place where the kids like to pray and go there.

*Dear God, Please help us to keep Sunday as a special day for you and to put into practice some of the ideas we have talked about today.*

### LIVE

Make a Sabbath special box, with a range of fun activities (e.g. bush walk, board game, story reading, family cricket – things your family loves to do together). The children can have turns picking one each Sabbath. The main thing is to ensure your Sabbath is a time everyone looks forward to – make it a special family time as well as a time for church gathering and worship.



### OTHER IDEAS

- If you celebrate Sabbath as Sunday, you could make ice cream sundaes. As everyone adds treats to it, they name something God would like us to do on a Sunday.
- A fun way to watch the story of Nehemiah is at <http://whatsinthebible.com/video/story-of-nehemiah-from-volume-7/>
- **GAME: Back to Back**

Start with two family members sitting back to back and get them to see if they can stand straight up without using their hands.

Add one person every time they stand up successfully.

Talk about the way some things are difficult to do but if we all work together, it becomes easier. When we all as a family work together to make the Sabbath something good and special, it will become easier for everyone.

**CHECK OUT WHAT YOU NEED FOR NEXT WEEK...**

