

The Need for Rest in Our Busy Lives



SABBATH—JUNE 26

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Genesis 2:1–3; Jeremiah 45:1–5; Deuteronomy 31:16; Mark 6:30–32; Genesis 4:1–12.

MEMORY VERSE: “LORD, I cannot wait to enter your Temple. I am so excited! Every part of me cries out to be with the Living God” (Psalm 84:2, ERV).

MARY LOOKS AT THE CLOCK. Only two hours until Sabbath starts. Then Mary looks sadly around her small apartment. Toys are everywhere in the living room. The kitchen is a mess. Sarah, the youngest child of Mary and Josh, is in bed with a fever. Mary agreed to help greet people at church tomorrow. So, Mary and her family will need to leave home 30 minutes early in the morning. “I hope I can find some quiet time tomorrow,” Mary wishes to herself.

At the same time, on the other side of town, Josh stands in line at the grocery store. Traffic on the way to the store was awful. The checkout line is very long. “Why does everyone need to do their shopping at the same time?” Josh wonders. “I need some rest,” he groans in his heart. “I cannot keep rushing around in this way. There must be more to this life!”

Our lives are so busy. They are full of rush hours, work hours, visits to the doctor, conversations on Skype and WhatsApp, shopping, school, and more. Many of these things give us joy. At the same time, we must be careful not to get so busy that we fail to rest or remember what is really important in life.

So, how do we find rest in our busy lives?



We must be careful not to get so busy that we fail to rest or remember what is really important in life.

WORN OUT AND TIRED (Genesis 2:1–3)

Why does God make a rest day before anyone on earth is ever tired? For the answer, read Genesis 2:1–3.

God made a special day for people to remember to rest: the Sabbath. This day is a time to stop and enjoy life. The Sabbath also is a time for us to celebrate the gift of grass, air, animals, nature, water, and other people. Most of all, the Sabbath is a time for us to remember God. He is the One who made every good gift.

But then Adam and Eve sinned. God told Adam and Eve they must leave the Garden of Eden. Did the invitation that God gave humans to rest on the Sabbath stop at that time? No. God wanted to make sure people know that the Sabbath is forever. So, God made the Sabbath a part of time from the very start of life on earth. There will always be the invitation from God to us to rest every seventh day.

Science has given us many inventions to help us save time. So, you may think that we should be less tired than people who lived 200 years ago, right? But today, many of us feel that we do not have enough time to rest. When we do not work, we rush here and there to do so many more things. But no matter how much we get done, we always feel we are behind. There is always more to do!

Studies show that we are getting less sleep, too. Many people drink coffee to work more. It is sad. Yes, we have faster cell phones, faster computers, and faster Internet connections today. But even so, we still feel we do not have enough time.

Read Mark 6:31; Psalm 4:8; Exodus 23:12; Deuteronomy 5:14; and Matthew 11:28. What do these verses teach us about why we need rest?

The God who made us knew we needed to rest. God made the night and the Sabbath to give us a chance to rest from our work and to sleep. Did you know that accepting Jesus as the Lord of your life includes your making time to rest? Think about this: the Sabbath is not just a good idea or suggestion. The Sabbath is a commandment!

Are you very busy? What can you do to enjoy better the rest that God wants us to have?



God made the night and the Sabbath to give us a chance to rest from our work and sleep.

WHEN OUR “TANK” IS EMPTY (Jeremiah 45:1–5)

Many people today do not get enough sleep. They feel so tired and worn out. Worse, many of us feel that our minds are the same as empty gas tanks. But somehow, we keep busy anyway. What happens when we feel tired during these hard times? We often feel hopeless and lost.

Baruch must feel that way, too. Baruch is the assistant to Jeremiah. Baruch writes down the messages that Jeremiah gets from God. For sure, Baruch feels sad and tired during the final years before the Babylonians destroy Jerusalem.



Baruch writes down the messages that Jeremiah gets from God.

Read Jeremiah 45:1–5. What do these verses tell you about how Baruch feels?

Baruch gets a message from the throne room of God (Jeremiah 45:2). Wow! What if God sends you a personal message the same as He sends Baruch? How do you think you will feel? God sends Baruch a personal message during the 4th year that Jehoiakim is king in Judah. That happens around 605 or 604 B.C. Jeremiah 45:3 shows us a real picture of how someone feels when his “gas tank” is empty.

We know the history of that time. So, Baruch is not being a crybaby or making a big fuss about nothing. He has good reason to feel hopeless and tired. A lot of bad things are happening. More bad things are on the way.

How does God answer Baruch? Read Jeremiah 45:4, 5 to answer the question.

Baruch feels deep pain. God does, too. The answer that God gives Baruch shows us His pain. The pain God feels is much deeper than anything Baruch feels. God built Jerusalem. Soon He will let the Babylonians tear it down. God planted Israel the same as a garden of grapes (Isaiah 5:1–7). Now God will let the Babylonians “pull out” Israel the same as roots. God does not want this to happen to His people. But they have turned against Him. So, this is the only way God can save them.

But there is hope for Baruch. God will save Baruch at a time of awful loss when Jerusalem will be destroyed.

What hope and comfort do the words of God to Baruch give you? How do these words show that God is there for us even when bad things happen in our lives?

WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT SAYS ABOUT REST (Deuteronomy 31:16)

For sure, we all need rest. That is why the whole Bible talks about this idea. God gave us work to do, yes. But God wants rest to be a part of everything we do, too.

The Old Testament includes several verbs that show rest. In Genesis 2:2, 3, God rests on the seventh day. The Hebrew word for rest in these verses is “**shabat**.” “**Shabat**” means “to stop work, to rest, to take a holiday.” “**Shabat**” also is used in Exodus 5:5, where it means “making someone rest” from work. The king of Egypt is angry because Moses makes the people rest from their work.

The fourth commandment says that God rests on the seventh day. The Hebrew word for “rests” is “**nuakh**” (Exodus 20:11; Deuteronomy 5:14). “**Nuakh**” also is written as “rest” in Job 3:13. But in Numbers 10:36, “**nuakh**” is written as “put in its place” (ERV) and “stopped” (NirV) to show that the holy men of Israel put the ark, or Holy Box with the law of the Lord, in the camp. 2 Kings 2:15 shows us that the spirit of Elijah “rested” on Elisha.

Another important Hebrew verb for rest is “**shaqat**.” “**Shaqat**” means “to be at rest; to help someone; to be quiet.” “**Shaqat**” is written as “rest” in Joshua 11:23 to show us that the land rests after Joshua wins many wars. The word “**shaqat**” also shows “peace” in Joshua and Judges.

The verb “**raga**” shows rest, too. In Deuteronomy, God warns His people not to disobey Him. God tells Israel that they will not find rest when their enemies carry them away from their land (Deuteronomy 28:65). “**Raga**” also is written in Jeremiah 50:34 to show that God gives rest to the land of His people.

Read Deuteronomy 31:16 and 2 Samuel 7:12. What rest do these verses talk about?

Rest, or lying down, in these verses is a word picture for death. God makes a promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:12: “When your days are done and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up [put on your throne] your son after you, who will be born from you. And I will build his nation [country]” (NLV).

What do all these Hebrew verbs show us? They help us understand what the Bible means when it talks about rest. Rest is not limited only to the Sabbath. Our bodies, minds, and hearts need rest, too.



Rest is not limited only to the Sabbath. Our bodies, minds, and hearts all need rest, too.

REST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (Mark 6:30–32)



The words of Jesus are not an invitation. They are a command!

The New Testament writers often use the Greek word “**anapauo**.” “**Anapauo**” means “rest, relax, and to make something fresh and new again.” We see this word written as “rest” in Matthew 11:28. Jesus says: “ ‘Come to me, all you who are tired and are carrying heavy loads. I will give you rest’ ” (Matthew 11:28, NlrV). “**Anapauo**” also can mean “rest for the body” (Matthew 26:45). Paul writes the word “**anapauo**” when he says that seeing his friends again fills his spirit with new life (1 Corinthians 16:18).

The word written as “rest” in Luke 23:56 comes from the Greek word “**hesychazo**.” In this verse, Luke uses the word “**hesychazo**” to talk about the Sabbath rest. Luke says that the followers of Jesus rest on the Sabbath while Jesus rests in the grave (Luke 23:56). “**Hesychazo**” also means living a quiet life (1 Thessalonians 4:11). The verb can show someone who does not disagree and so stays quiet (Acts 11:18).

Hebrews 4:4 says that God rested on the seventh day after He made the sky and the earth. The word written as “rest” in Hebrews 4:4 comes from the Greek verb “**kata-pauo**.” This verb means to “cause something to stop; to rest.”

In Mark 6:30–32, Jesus tells His followers to come and rest. His followers have a lot more work to do for God, right? So, why does Jesus command them to stop doing this work? Look at the verses leading up to Mark 6:30–32 to help you understand why Jesus says what He says.

“ ‘Come with me. . . . You need to get some rest’ ” (Mark 6:31, NlrV). Do you see that the words of Jesus are not an invitation? They are a command! Jesus cares about His followers and their health. His followers just came back from a big trip. Jesus sent them in pairs to do work for God (Mark 6:7). Mark 6:30 tells us that the followers of Jesus are excited when they get back. Their hearts must be full! They want to talk about everything with Jesus. But first, Jesus orders them to rest. Mark explains why Jesus says this: “There were so many people that he and his followers did not even have time to eat” (Mark 6:31, ERV). Modern followers of Jesus have the same problem today. Jesus helps us remember that we need to protect our health and hearts by taking time to rest.

CAIN: ALWAYS WANDERING, BUT NEVER AT REST
(Genesis 4:1–12)

Read Genesis 4:1–12. Why does Cain “wander from place to place” on the earth (Genesis 4:12, ERV)?

God respects Abel and his offering, but not Cain and his offering (Genesis 4:4, 5). The Bible does not give us the exact reason. But we know why. “Cain comes to God with wrong feelings in his heart. Cain complains. He is unhappy about the offering God wants him to bring. The animal offering shows that Cain needs a Savior. So, Cain brings God a different gift. This gift does not show God that Cain is sorry for sin. Cain feels he will show he is weak if he follows the exact plan of God. Many people feel the same way today. They do not want to trust in the promise of a Savior. That is why Cain chooses to do things his way. He comes to God with fruit. This offering from Cain is a word picture for his own good behavior.”—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 72, adapted.

God announces that Cain will “wander from place to place” on the earth (Genesis 4:12, ERV). Does God force Cain to wander? No. Cain suffers because of his bad behavior. He wanders because he disobeys. Cain has no rest in God. So, Cain can find no rest on the earth.

The Hebrew word written as “accepted” (Genesis 4:4, ERV) also can be written as “to look closely at something; to think about it carefully.” What God really looks at in this verse is the heart. God does not accept the fruit from Cain because God looks deep into the heart of Cain. God sees the real reason Cain brings the fruit offering. This verse is a good example of how God will search the hearts of everyone who ever lived when He does His end-time work as Judge.

How does Cain feel when God judges the sin in his heart? Read Genesis 4:13–17 for the answer.

When we run from God, we find no rest. We try to fill our need for God with other things, people, and a busy life. Cain built a city and had many future children. These are not bad things to do. But if we do not work for God, all our hard work will be for nothing.

Our sins often cause us to suffer. How can the forgiveness that Jesus offers us help us to heal?



God does not accept the fruit from Cain because God looks deep into the heart of Cain.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: “The Jewish Teachers in the time of Jesus believed they needed to show the people they were busy all the time. The people believed that the teachers were very religious because they were so busy. The teachers did not depend on God. They trusted in their own good works and correct behavior to show they were very holy. By doing these things, the teachers separated their spirits from God. We face the same danger today. We do more and more work for God. We have success in the work we do. So, we are in danger of trusting human plans. Then we pray less and have less faith. The followers of Jesus were in danger of forgetting to depend on God. We are, too. But our good behavior cannot save us. We always must look to Jesus. He is the reason for our success. For sure, we must work hard to save people from sin. At the same time, we also must take time to think about God, to pray, and to study the Bible. So, we must remember to pray. We must ask God to bless our work with the love and mercy of Jesus. Then our work will be a blessing to other people.”
—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 362, adapted.



“We must ask God to bless our work with the love and mercy of Jesus.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① Do you feel the pressure to do everything “perfect” all the time? Do you feel that you always must be there for anyone who needs you anytime he or she wants? When we try to live up to these false ideas, we can make our hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits tired and sick. How can your church become a welcoming place for worn-out, tired people who wish to rest?
- ② We all have busy lives. Is it possible we are busy doing too many good things, even for God? Read the story in Mark 6:30–32 about Jesus and His followers. What lessons does this story have for us today?
- ③ Everything is faster than it was in the past: airplane travel, cell phones, cars, and computers. So, why do we still feel rushed and tired? How does your answer help you to see why God made rest one of His Ten Commandments?
- ④ Before humans sinned, God made the Sabbath in Eden. What does this show us about why humans needed rest, even on a perfect earth, before there was any sin?

SANDALS AND FIGHTS

When six-year-old Danay came to the United States, everything looked strange. Danay never saw so many cars on the streets. Danay and his family ran away from their own country, Myanmar. They stayed in a camp in Thailand before coming to America. Life in Myanmar was very different from life in America. In Myanmar, Danay and his family lived in a bamboo house and bathed in a river. Now Danay and his family were comfortable in their new house in America. Danay thanked God for his new home.

On the first day of school, Danay was sent home because he was wearing sandals. A school worker drove Danay to his house and told his mother where to find a shoe store. But she did not speak English or know how to drive. So, a cousin took Danay shopping to buy his first pair of shoes.

Danay went back to school the next day. His first year in school in America was hard. Some kids were mean to Danay. One of his older brothers got into lots of fights at school.

Then a Seventh-day Adventist became friends with the family. This friend helped Danay go to church school for second grade. Money from a 13th Sabbath Offering helped pay for his school. Danay was happy to be with kind and friendly classmates. Danay knew about God from his Christian parents. Now he was reading the Bible for himself at school. He wanted to learn more. When he grew older, Danay joined many Bible study groups.

When Danay was 12, his father fell outside while he worked in the garden. No one knew how to call the ambulance. So, family members picked up Father, put him in the car, and went to the hospital. Danay was very sad. That night Danay did not sleep much at all. He prayed as he never prayed before. "God, please help my dad get better. If he gets well, I will get baptized and give my whole life to You."

Danay visited his father in the hospital. The doctor said Father had a stroke. Danay kept praying. Father slowly got better. Danay kept his promise to God and got baptized.

Father lived five more years and died from cancer. Danay is glad he kept his promise to Jesus. "After I got baptized, I read the Bible more and prayed more. I felt happier when I did these things. God is always there for me. I feel thankful."

A 13th Sabbath Offering in 2011 helped children who ran away from war. This offering helped these children study in Adventist schools in North America. Some of your offering for this quarter will again help children from other countries go to Adventist schools in North America. Thank you for helping them.

INSIDE
Story

by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



A cousin took Danay shopping and bought him his first pair of shoes.

