

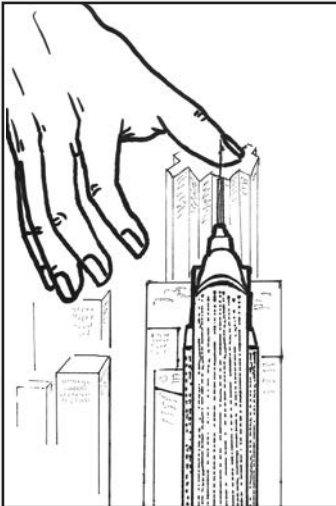
Wanting Much More



SABBATH—SEPTEMBER 4

READ FOR THIS WEEK’S LESSON: 1 Corinthians 10:1–11; Leviticus 4:32–35; Hebrews 4:1–11; Psalm 95:8–11.

MEMORY VERSE: “And these things that happened are examples for us. These examples should stop us from wanting evil things like [the same as] those people did” (1 Corinthians 10:6, ERV).



The model is a wonderful copy of New York City.

IN NEW YORK CITY, in the United States of America, you can visit the Queens Museum of Art. This museum has a 3-D map of New York City. This map is the biggest model of a city on earth. The model shows all the buildings in New York City. The model is almost 9,335 square feet (870 square meters). 100 skilled workers worked on the model for three years. They finished the model in 1964. The model has been changed over the years to show changes to the city up to 1990. The model is a wonderful copy of New York City.

In the end, the model is only a copy of a real thing. The copy is an example of something bigger.

All copies are made this way. They are not the real thing. They are only symbols or word pictures of something else. A model helps us understand better the thing that it shows us. But the model cannot replace the thing it copies.

The Bible itself is full of models and examples. These examples show us bigger Bible truths. Hebrews 4 helps us see one of those Bible truths: the Bible truth about rest.

BAPTIZED INTO MOSES (1 Corinthians 10:1–11)

What message does Paul want to communicate to his readers in Corinth when he talks to them about “examples”? For the answer, read 1 Corinthians 10:1–11.

In 1 Corinthians 10:6, the word written as “examples” in most English Bibles comes from the Greek word “**typos**.” The word “type” in the English language comes from this Greek word. A type or example is not the same as the real thing. A type is always a copy, symbol, or word picture for the thing that it shows. So, a type is a model that shows us something else.

Hebrews 8:5 gives us a good example of a model or type. This model shows us a bigger Bible truth: “The work that these priests [holy leaders] do is really only a copy and a shadow of what is in heaven. That is why God warned Moses when he was ready to build the Holy Tent: ‘Be sure to make everything exactly like [the same as] the pattern I showed you on the mountain’ ” (Hebrews 8:5, ERV).

Hebrews 8:5 shows us that God uses things on earth to show us Bible truth about the things in heaven. In Hebrews 8:5, we read a quote from Exodus 25:9: “exactly like [the same as] the pattern.” This quote shows us that the Holy Tent on earth is an “example” or model of the temple in heaven. Jesus works in this temple right now to save us.

This example helps us better understand what Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 10. In this chapter, Paul talks about some of the experiences of Israel in the desert on their way to the Promised Land. The words “our early fathers” (1 Corinthians 10:1, NLV) show us the Israelites who left Egypt. God led them by His cloud. God opened the Red Sea, and His people walked on dry land. That is why Paul says the Israelites were baptized into a new life.

Paul says that these important experiences in the desert are examples or types. These types show us baptism in Jesus. In the same way, the manna, or food from heaven, in Exodus 16:31–35 is a word picture for the “spiritual food” that Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 10:3, ERV. Israel drank water from the rock. Paul tells us this rock is Jesus (1 Corinthians 10:4). For sure, Jesus is the “bread that gives life” (John 6:48, ERV) and the “living water” (John 4:10, ERV). Paul uses examples from Old Testament history to show us Bible truth. This Bible truth has meaning for our lives as Christians today.



Israel drank water from the rock. Paul tells us this rock is Jesus.

MORE OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES (Leviticus 4:32–35)

When we read about worship in the Old Testament, we see many word pictures or symbols. These Old Testament examples show us New Testament truths. The book of Leviticus is filled with these examples. Today, modern readers of the Bible often feel these examples are boring. So, they do not read them. But that is a shame. These Old Testament examples can teach us important spiritual truths.

Read the rules for the sin offering for a regular Israelite in Leviticus 4:32–35. What Bible truth does this sin offering teach us? What is the connection between this sin offering and John 1:29 and 1 Peter 1:18–21?

Offerings and other acts of worship show us important Bible truths. But we also need to know why people worshiped and gave these offerings. Then we will understand the offerings and acts of worship much better. Most offerings and acts of worship happened at a special time and place in the Old Testament. Other things also needed to happen, too. All these things helped make the religious act or offering pleasing to God. God gave the Israelites many rules about the gifts they offered Him. God told His people when and where they should offer their gifts to Him.

Blood was an important part of offerings. This part is not pretty and is not meant to be pretty. That is because the blood shows us the ugliest thing on earth: sin.

Why is blood important in Old Testament worship? Why must the priest, or holy leader, put blood on the horns of the altar? Most of the rules about offerings in the Old Testament show how to offer an animal to God. But these rules often do not explain why the offering is made. Maybe that is because the Israelites already understood these things. We know that they understood that blood was important (Leviticus 17:11).

But we do find an important explanation in Leviticus 4:32–35 about blood. In these verses, the priest puts some blood on the altar and pours the rest at the bottom of the altar: “ ‘The priest [holy leader] will do this to make you pure [clean], and God will forgive you’ ” (Leviticus 4:35, ERV). This verse shows that blood is an important part of our forgiveness. Blood is the way that God makes us right with Himself. So, the Old Testament offerings show us the death of Jesus for us. These offerings also show us His work in heaven right now to save us.



The Old Testament offerings show us the death of Jesus for us.

THE “EXAMPLE” OF REST (Hebrews 4:1–11)

What are some of the word pictures and symbols in the Bible that show us rest? Let us take a look at one example in the book of Hebrews.

Read Hebrews 4:1–11. In these verses, what does it mean to enter into the rest of God? How does the experience of Israel when they left Egypt and lived in the desert for 40 years help us understand better the idea of entering the rest of God?

Hebrews 4:1–11 talks about two important ideas: not giving up and staying loyal to God. Hebrews 4:1–11 is an invitation to the people of God to stay strong in faith. God invites us to stay loyal to the Good News about Jesus.

Hebrews 4:1–11 helps us see that we should learn lessons from the way God led us in the past. Then “none of us will be lost by following the example of those [people] who refused to obey God” (Hebrews 4:11, ERV). So, when God leads you, pay attention! God taught Israel the Good News during Old Testament times. But the Good News did not do these Israelites any good in the end. They turned against God (compare with Hebrews 3:7–15). So, the Israelites never had the rest God wanted them to have.

Hebrews 4:3 shows us the close connection between faith and rest. We can enter into the rest of God only when we believe and trust Him. Jesus promises us rest. We must believe and trust that He can keep His promise to us.

Read Hebrews 4:3 again. As this verse shows, what problem do the Israelites in the desert have? The Good News has been preached to them and to us (Hebrews 4:2). So, what lesson can we learn from their mistake?

The early Christians in New Testament times accepted the Old Testament. They believed that Jesus was the Lamb of God and the Offering for their sins. The people also believed that their faith in this offering saved them. Their faith in Jesus also gave them rest. God offers us this same rest today.

We are saved by the blood of Jesus. How does understanding this Bible truth help us enter into His promise of rest?



We can enter into the rest of God only when we believe and trust Him.

**DO NOT LET YOUR HEARTS BECOME STUBBORN
(Hebrews 4:4–7)**

Read Hebrews 4:4–7 and Psalm 95:8–11. What warning do you see in these verses from Hebrews and Psalms? What does this warning mean for us today?

Hebrews 4:4–7 talks about how the Israelites did not show faith in God. That is why they did not enter into the rest God wanted for them. In Hebrews 4:4–7, we also see quotes from Psalm 95. Psalm 95:8–11 shows us a connection between the experience of Israel in the desert and the rest that God gives us from sin. Psalm 95 tells us that God makes a promise that Israel will not enter into His rest. At that time, people believed that this rest meant the Promised Land. But rest in Old Testament times included more than just the land the people lived on.

Of course, the people of Israel entered the Promised Land 40 years later. That happened after the old Israelites died in the desert because they did not trust God to give them rest. Then a new group of Israelites was born in the desert. This new group replaced the disobedient Israelites who died. The younger Israelites entered the Promised Land and lived there.

But as time passed, the future children of this new group of Israelites did not have an experience with Jesus as their Savior. They had no faith in His saving love. So, they did not really have rest. These Israelites broke the law of God. Their disobedience showed that they did not trust God.

In Hebrews 4:6, we see that the people of God knew about His promise of rest. But they did not enter into His rest because they did not obey God. What is the connection between not obeying God and not entering into His rest?

The Greek word for “today” in Hebrews 4:7 is “**semeron**.” “**Semeron**” helps us see that we have no time to waste. “**Semeron**” or “today” shows us that God asks us to make a decision right now. He wants us to accept His rest.

Paul, the writer of Hebrews, shows us that if we really want rest, we must answer God “today.” Psalm 95:7, 8 warns us not to make the mistakes that the Israelites made. If we do, we will fail to enter into the rest that we can find only in God and His mercy.



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ANOTHER REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD (Galatians 3:26–29)

In Hebrews 4:8–11, we read that Joshua did not give Israel rest. But God promised His people rest, and God does not lie. So, there must be another “rest” that the people of God will enjoy. This group of people are not only Jewish Christians. The people of God also include everyone who accepts Jesus as his or her personal Savior.

Galatians 3:26–29 shows us a picture of the people who accept Jesus. What does it mean that God “does not see you as a servant or as a person free to work. He does not see you as a man or as woman” (Galatians 3:28, NLV)?

Some people say that Hebrews 4 shows that we should keep the seventh-day Sabbath holy. Other people disagree. They believe Hebrews 4 shows that we no longer need to keep the Sabbath holy at all because God promises us another end-time rest. Both of these views fail to show what Hebrews 4 really teaches. Hebrews 4 shows us that our Sabbath rest gives us a small taste of the end-time rest we will have in the future. The Jews saw the Sabbath as the ‘**olam haba**’. The ‘**olam haba**’ in the Hebrew language means “the new earth.”

The promise of future rest for the people of God shows us that we do not need to work for everlasting life. We can trust God to save us. We can rest in His promise of mercy and forgiveness.

So, people are wrong who say Hebrews 4 shows that we no longer need to keep the fourth commandment. Yes, Jesus promises us rest from our sins. But this promise does not replace our need to rest on the seventh-day Sabbath. Of course not! Hebrews 4 really shows us the need to keep the Sabbath holy because of everything Jesus has done for us and is doing for us now.

We live in a time when people respect hard work and the success that comes from working hard. So, we must rest in Jesus more than ever in this time. We must trust that His mercy is enough to save us and change us. This belief goes against what most people on earth believe. But we must be brave enough to trust in the promise of Jesus at a time when other people trust in their own hard work and success.

Some people feel that their sins are too awful to forgive. How can you help these people find rest in Jesus?



We live in a time when people respect hard work and the success that comes from working hard.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: “We are not always willing to come to Jesus with our troubles and difficult problems. Sometimes we pour out the troubles in our hearts to other people. We tell our problems to people who cannot help us. We fail to tell everything to Jesus. Jesus can change our sorrow into joy and peace. We must stop being selfish and say No to self. When we do this, we will give to the cross glory and praise for winning the war against sin. The promises of God are very precious. We must study the Bible so that we may learn the plan of God for our lives. When we study the Bible carefully and obey its teachings, God will lead us. I wish that pastors and people will take their heavy loads and troubles to Jesus. Jesus is willing to accept them. He is waiting to give them peace and rest! He will not leave the ones who put their trust in Him.”—Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, March 17, 1887, page 161, adapted.

“Dear young people, do you look with joy and hope to the time when the Lord shall confess your name before the Father and the holy angels? The Lord is your holy Judge. The best thing you can do to get ready for the Second Coming is to rest in the saving work that Jesus brought to us at His first coming. You must believe in Jesus as your personal Savior.”—Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, page 368, adapted.



“When we study the Bible carefully and obey its teachings, God will lead us.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① How does the Sabbath rest give us a “taste” of everlasting life?
- ② Jesus brings us back to God and makes us one with Him again. (Read Romans 5:11.) If someone asks you, “What does it mean to be one with God? How has this made your life better?” what answer will you give?
- ③ How can we avoid making our problems bigger than they really are? What keeps our attention on the big picture that we see in the Bible?
- ④ Think again about all the mistakes that the children of Israel made in the desert. In what ways do we face the same problems they did? How can we learn from their mistakes?

TRUSTING IN GOD

Someone told a man in Iraq about Jesus. The Iraqi man loved Jesus and joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Later, life became hard for his family in Iraq. The man was afraid about the safety of his wife and two young daughters. So, they moved to the United States. In California, the man sent his daughters to public school. He did not have money to afford church school. And he did not even know where one was.

Later, the Iraqi man visited a food center. While he waited to get food, the man started to talk with a volunteer at the center. The Iraqi man learned that the food center was run by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The church also owned a church school. The Iraqi father and mother had been saving their money to go to school and get better jobs. Now, the father and mother decided to use the money to pay for their daughters to go to the Adventist school.

A short time later, Father came to the church school with Mother and their 9-year-old and 11-year-old girls. The family sat with shining faces in the office of the school manager.

The school manager and the pastor looked at each other. The looks on the faces of the family touched their hearts. But the money that the Iraqi father and mother saved up was not enough.

“We very much want your girls to study here,” the school manager said. Her face was sad. “But you do not have enough money.” The school manager looked at the pastor again. His eyes were filled with mercy. The look in his eyes encouraged the school manager to continue.

“We will put the girls in the school anyway,” she said. “We will trust in God.” Then they all knelt down and prayed.

“Dear God, we need Your help,” the pastor prayed. “Please give money for these two precious girls to go to school here.”

Shortly after the family left, someone called the school manager. The person who called was a church leader for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. The church leader said that she had money to help pay for the education of children who left their countries and came to America for safety. The money came from a 13th Sabbath Offering in 2011.

The school manager was surprised. She called the Iraqi father to tell him that they now had the money his girls needed.

“I am not surprised at all!” The father said.

Part of the 13th Sabbath Offering this quarter will help people who have left their countries to come to America. May God use your gifts of money to answer more prayers. Who knows, maybe you will meet someone in heaven because of your offering.

INSIDE
Story
by TERRI SAELEE



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“Please give money for these two precious girls to go to school here.”**