

# There Remains a Sabbath Rest

- <sup>1</sup> "Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.
- <sup>2</sup> For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.
- <sup>3</sup> For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, "As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest,'" although his works were finished from the foundation of the world.
- <sup>4</sup> For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works."
- <sup>5</sup> And again in this passage he said, "They shall not enter my rest."
- <sup>6</sup> Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience,
- <sup>7</sup> again he appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts."
- <sup>8</sup> For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on.
- <sup>9</sup> So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God,
- <sup>10</sup> for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.
- <sup>11</sup> Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

Hebrews 4:1-11

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## Resting and Creation

**I. AM. TIRED.** Have you ever said this? Have you ever meant it in a way that it is a three-word reflection of your deep longing that the woes and trials, the sufferings and evils of this world just be over? Don't these words presuppose that life is hard *work*, and that somewhere, somehow, there has to be permanent *rest*? I think we all feel that way from time to time. I've seen my grandparents, parents, myself, my wife, even my children, my friends, my neighbors, many in our church all experience this aching. Yes, I think it affects all of us. There has to be more than this burdensome toil under the sun. There has to be **a place of rest.**

One of the very first things to come up in the Bible is “rest.” **Genesis 2:2** says, “**And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.**” Here, “resting” is opposed to “working.” When you read Genesis 1, you quickly see all of the work God did. And what work it was!

No other being in all the universe could do what God did, no matter how much time they were given. Yet, the text says that God did it all in six days. Then God rested. And what was God making? He was making **creation**. He was forming and filling the heavens and the earth.

But a question quickly arises: **Why did God take a rest?** We often associate resting with sleeping or napping. So was God tired? Did all that work make him sleepy? The thought is blasphemous. He is God. He could have created everything in the blink of an eye had he desired to. Something else must be going on then.

I believe the answer to this question is **two-fold**. **One answer** pertains to **the kind of work God was doing**. The **second answer** involves **the meaning of this rest**—for our sake. When we learn about these from a biblical perspective, we quickly discover that God didn't rest because he was tired. He was doing something even in resting, and what he was doing was opening up a way for us to enter in some way into God's rest. But what would that even mean?

# God's Rest

When trying to make sense of the Bible, the most important question we can ask is, “What did this originally mean?” Not, “What does this mean *to me*?” Not, “How do you feel about this passage?” Not, “How can I use this to win an argument?” But, “**What does this mean?**” Since **Genesis 1:3-2:3** is the origin of the idea that God rested, what would this passage have meant to a Jew wandering around in the wilderness, getting ready to build a tabernacle (as Hebrews 3 has just discussed), who have just come out of slavery (also talked about in Hebrews 3) in a land filled with false gods, which had its own creation stories about those gods, who were going to a land filled with different gods and also had their own creation stories? More to our point, what would they have understood when they heard that after creation, on the seventh day God rested?

Believe it or not, this question is actually not that difficult to answer. Genesis 1 is a creation story. It is similar in many ways to other creation stories of the time period. Although different at the vital points, it is still a *creation* story. In the same way, God's rest in the Genesis creation

story is parallel, but different, to the rest that the gods always take in the pagan creation stories (including Egypt, Syria, Assyria, Babylon, and Canaan where Israel would eventually settle). In Egypt, which Israel has just left, perhaps the very Pharaoh (Ramesses) whom God dealt so harshly with wrote about how, “After [he, who was “the son of the Father of gods” “who had been “assigned a kingdom”] had built a temple for the god Ptah [as he “created Egypt for God anew”], he made an image of the deity, set it in the most inner holy chamber, and exclaimed that now the god was ‘resting upon its [the temple’s] throne.’”<sup>1</sup> You can hear obvious similarities here to the son of the gods, temple building, and a kind of new creation. In Babylon in its famous creation story the Enuma Elish we read about how, “... after the god Ea defeats other divine

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<sup>1</sup> G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, ed. D. A. Carson, vol. 17, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL; England: InterVarsity Press; Apollos, 2004), 65. The full texts read, “Utterance of the divine king, Lord of the Two Lands, lord of the form of Khepri, in whose limbs is Re, who came forth from Re, whom Ptah-Tatenen begat, King Ramses II, given life; to his father, from whom he came forth, Tatenen, father of the gods: ‘I am thy son whom thou hast placed upon thy throne. Thou hast assigned to me thy kingdom, thou hast fashioned me in thy likeness and thy form, which thou hast assigned to me and hast created. I shall do again every good thing that thou desirest, while I am sole lord, as thou wast, to settle the [affairs] of the land. I have created Egypt for thee anew, I have made it as at the beginning, I have wrought the gods’ forms from thy limbs, even to their color and to their bodies; I have equipped Egypt according to their desire, I have built it up with temples” and “I have enlarged thy house in Memphis, protected with everlasting works, with excellent labor, in stone, wrought with gold and genuine costly stones, I constructed thy forecourt on the north with an august double façade before thee. Their doors are like the horizon of heaven, causing (even) strangers to praise thee. I made for thee an august temple in the midst of the enclosure. Thou god, [whom I have] fashioned, art in its secret chapel, resting upon its great throne.” See J. H. Breasted, (1906), “Reply of Ramses 411” and “Building of Memphis Temple 412,” in *Ancient Records of Egypt*, 4 vols. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1906): 3:181.<sup>1</sup>

opponents, he rests in a shrine.”<sup>2</sup> In Genesis, the opponent is not a god, but the *tohu vabohu* (the waste and void of Genesis 1:2). God easily dispatches this and takes his rest.

We find parallels in temple texts that teach us even more about what this resting is. Listen to the following story with Genesis in mind:

Quickly his house they built;  
Quickly the constructed his palace.  
They went to Lebanon and its trees,  
To Siryon and its choicest cedars;  
Yes, Lebanon and its trees,  
Siryon and its choicest cedars.  
Fire was placed in the house,  
Flames in the palace.  
Lo, A day and a second,  
Fire burned in the house,  
Flames in the palace.  
A third and a fourth day,  
Fire burned in the house,

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<sup>2</sup> Beale, *ibid.* The text reads, “After Ea had vanquished (and) subdued his enemies, Had established his victory over his foes, (And) had peacefully rested in his abode, He named it *Apsu* and appointed (it) for shrines.” (*Enuma Elish* 1.73–76).

flames in the palace.  
A fifth and a sixth day,  
Fire burned in the house,  
Flames in the midst of the palace.  
Look! On the seventh day  
The fire was removed from the house,  
The flames from the palace.  
The silver had turned into ingots;  
The gold had been changed into bricks!  
Valiant Baal rejoiced:  
'My house I have built of silver,  
My palace out of gold!'  
(The Baal Cycle, KTU 1.4 vi 17-38)

In six days, after dispatching the sea god Yam, Baal builds his temple. On the seventh he rejoices. Baal, one of seventy sons of El, building his temple to take his throne as king. For you see, [it isn't the basic idea of what this resting](#) did that is different. It is who is doing the resting and why is he doing it? As we see, especially when comparing Genesis 1 and the building of the Exodus tabernacle, this is essentially what is happening in Genesis 1:3-2:3. It is not Baal, the evil god of

the Canaanites who is resting in the Bible. It is the LORD. And he is the one enthroned upon his temple of creation.

But is it right to call creation a temple? Isaiah writes of God who said, “Heaven is my throne, earth is my footstool” (Isa 66:1).<sup>3</sup> However, the verse continues, “Where is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest?” The imagery is obviously that of ruling, but also of a temple. Isaiah said that he saw the LORD with his eyes, “... sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up and the train of his robe filled the temple” (Isa 6:1). So the throne was in the temple.

The idea reflects the same thing he told David so many years earlier. “I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling” (2Sa 7:6). Why? As his son Solomon learned, “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!” (1Kg 8:27). Yes, God will dwell on earth in his special gracious presence, but only because it pleases him to

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<sup>3</sup> We do not have time to see how even in Genesis the whole language of Chapter 1 is all about the making of a royal temple. See my sermon “Temple Building: Genesis 1:3-2:3” for more on that.



do so. Still, the whole universe is his temple.

The people in Isaiah's day were trusting in the temple, as if they could manipulate God who cannot be contained anywhere. For at the beginning, he made the whole universe his temple and he is enthroned above all things. His place of rest is the whole creation. But he is pleased for the sake of his chosen people, to dwell among them for their good.

So the basic ideas of resting and creation are almost always found together, no matter where you go looking in the ancient world. The Jews would have known these stories from the land they had spent hundreds of years living in every bit as much as we know or know about things like Star Wars. You can't help it, even if you've never seen it. It is just the air that we breathe. Not that we believe Star Wars tells us the facts of the universe, but we do know about it. Therefore, we can see how an Israelite would have understood the words of Genesis, even as Isaiah did. This is just simply the way every ancient culture talked about creation.

What we learn then is that to rest after creation was to take one's place as king over that creation. Resting was a royal enthronement. That seventh day might be akin to

something like everything stopping in Washington D.C. each time a new President takes office. An inauguration ceremony and swearing into the office takes place and all the people rejoice. This is no day for work! A better example might be when a new king or queen of England takes the throne and there is one massive ceremony involving all the people as they usher in their new monarch. There is a ceasing, a halting, a resting from work so that all the people might celebrate together in something that is a religious enthronement service. The king or queen swears others before God that they will rule justly as a servant of God. In Genesis you might think, “Who was around to see such a thing, and how could God, who is spirit and invisible, ever be enthroned over anything?”

Briefly, who was around? Adam and Eve were around, and so also were the angels, and even the animals were there too. It isn't like God was all alone when he rested on the seventh day. Second, God was walking with Adam and Eve. He spoke with them in person. He clothed them. In other words, there was embodiment going on here. Given that the NT and Hebrews itself is fixated on telling us that Christ created in the beginning, given this language of embodiment

in Genesis 2-3, and given that all of the other creation stories involve the son of the God receiving a temple, isn't it at least worth considering that the Word is being enthroned on the seventh day (and this isn't to deny that the Father and Spirit are not, but it is to emphasize the parallels and the interpretations of other Scriptures in this matter).

## **There Remains a Sabbath Rest?**

This is all of the background that a Jewish priest, who is probably among the central intended audiences of the sermon that is Hebrews, would have understood. It is into this background that Hebrews 3-4 takes up [a long discussion on the Sabbath](#). Curiously, the Sabbath has been a central point of contention throughout church history, and our own day sees this controversy continue. You have some people—like our friends who rent space from the same church that we do—who will say that [the Sabbath continues, but it continues on Saturday like always](#). You have others who say, [yes, the Sabbath continues, but it continues on a different day of the week to reflect the central tenant of our faith—Christ's resurrection from the dead on](#)

the First Day. Still there are others who say, no, the Sabbath was an OT ordinance that is completely done away with in Christ's church. Even talking about it is tantamount to legalism. And there are other views as well.

Our own church holds to the basic position of the London Baptist and Westminster Confessions which state, "As it is the law of nature, that in general a portion of time, by God's appointment, be set apart for the worship of God, so by his Word, in a positive moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men, in all ages, he has particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ was the law day of the week, and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which is called the Lord's day: and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath, the observation of the last day of the week being abolished" (LBC 22.7). Notice that **it roots the command in creation**, not in the Ten Commandments that were given to Israel (which, ironically also roots the command in creation).

As it is a creation ordinance, **it binds all men everywhere**. It doesn't take a genius to figure out that all men are

hardwired for rest. Just look at how many take Sunday off of work and go to the mountains. They rest, but it is rest that is profoundly misunderstood. They break the Sabbath, they want the Sabbath, but they don't acknowledge the God of the Sabbath. Therefore, they do their own thing on that day.

One of the places in this paragraph in the LBC that I like to clarify is when it says that the Sabbath was on the seventh day in the OT. This is, of course, true, but it doesn't go far enough. For there were "Sabbaths" that were actually on the first day of the week in the OT. "Besides the LORD's Sabbaths and besides your gifts and besides all your vow offerings and besides all your freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD. On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD seven days. On the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest" (Lev 23:38-39). These were feast days, celebration days, and I believe days that anticipated the resurrection of Christ. So it isn't that Christians "changed" the day, it is that those Sabbaths that anticipated the resurrection superseded those that pointed back to creation.

But what is the **resurrection** if not itself the beginning of the **new creation**, when God made the Second Adam alive forever in a new, eternal body fit for earth heaven? And what is conversion to Christ if not also the beginning of a **new creation**? We are “new creations” in Christ. In other words, the seventh day points backward to the first creation and the first day points forward to the last creation when God will make all things new in Christ. So what does all of this have to do with Hebrews 4? Everything!

## Hebrews 4 and Resting

“Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it” (**Heb 4:1**). The words “rest” or “resting” appear **a dozen times** in **Hebrews 3-4**. It is the central theme of these chapters. Hebrews 3 quoted **Psalm 95** as it referred to the grumbling people of Israel in Moses’ day who did not enter his rest because of unbelief. Chapter 4 continues this theme and even quotes that passage several more times (**4:3, 5, 7**). But it quotes one other passage directly. This is **Genesis 2:2**, “**And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.**”

Since our preacher is quoting it, it must be true that Genesis is on his mind, hence the things we have just discussed. This means the rest that he has in mind is the **royal rest** of God in **Genesis 2:2-3**. This is the rest he is commanding us to enter. But here is where things start to be **kind of mind-blowing**. Hebrews 4 is chocked full of “continuity” between the testaments here, and many have never seen it. When you do, I believe that it must inform your theology of the Sabbath Day. This passage is basic to why I hold the view of the Sabbath that I hold. What do I mean?

**First**, he is commanding us to **enter God’s rest from Genesis (Heb 4:1)**. This is actually possible even though that rest was technically millennia ago. That day was millions (literally) of days ago. Yet there is says it in verse 3, “**We who have believed enter *that* rest.**” What rest? The divine rest of God. How do I know it is that rest? Because he quotes **Genesis 2:2** in the next verse. “**For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: ‘And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.’**”

**Second**, the Israelites were offered this same rest. Therefore, we are in a sense united to them. Again in **Heb**

4:3, “For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, ‘As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’” The point is, they could have entered it, but because of their wickedness, he would not let them. He is so emphatic on this point he quotes “They shall not enter my rest” for the third time in two chapters in 4:5. Yet, though they did not enter it nevertheless, “Therefore it remains for some to enter it” (4:6).

That leads to the **third** point of continuity. We come to this rest the same way they would have: **by faith**. This faith says, “This is my King. I will go wherever he tells me to go.” Faith grounds all of Hebrews 3-4. With all of the talk about “rest,” it is easy to miss it. “Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart” (3:12); “... they were not able to enter because of unbelief” (3:19); “... they were not united by faith with those who listened” (4:2). Some did listen (Caleb, Joshua). But most did not. Their faithlessness and unbelief are called “disobedience” in vs. 6. They “**failed to enter because of disobedience**.”

What was that disobedience? This is the **fourth** point of continuity. This is what Hebrews calls “**the good news**” (2,



6) and “the message” (2). “For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened” (Heb 4:2). “Good news” is the word *euaggelizo*. The word means, “The announcement or preaching of glad tidings.” What is the good news? Jesus gave it, didn’t he? “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt 11:28). Do you see that in making this statement, he is claiming to be the God of Israel in the OT? God gives “rest,” and Jesus gives “rest.” Both were held out, one to the OT people, one to the NT people.

Of course, the news that we have been given is much more sure, and this has already been a major point of Hebrews 3. They had the good news given to them by God (Hebrew says “the Holy Spirit”) to enter his rest. But we have the good news given by God through the God-man to enter his rest and the Holy Spirit calls out through the word that this is true. **It is the same basic news.** It is not different news. The gospel is always the same basic gospel. There are not two gospels, one for the OT, one for the NT.

But now it is made more sure because the God-man has become greater than angels, than Moses, and as we will see

later in Hebrews, than the priests, and the law, than the sacrifices, than ... *anything*. It is fascinating that John's Gospel begins Jesus ministry in a series of six days that culminate in a day of rest, a wedding feast where he does his first public miracle. The Gospel sees Jesus as fulfilling his role as King, but now on earth. He is going to take his seat as King of kings in the new creation. That is the gospel we have preached to us—the Gospel of Jesus Christ the God-man. That which was foreshadowed is now fulfilled. That which was anticipated is now completed. Their good news was that he would become a man, would obey, would die, would rise, would ascend. Our good news is that it has happened! Therefore, let us enter his rest while the promise of entering his rest still stands.

As a side note, it is possible that Hebrews and the Psalms can see this day of rest as unending because of something in Genesis. Of the seven days of creation, the first six all end with the formula, “*There was morning and there was evening day \_\_\_\_.*” But the seventh day has no such formula. Hebrews and the Psalms are arguing that this is because the royal rest of day seven has never ceased, and this may be something the writers would use to justify that,

though they don't say it in so many words.

The point of an unending day is made through Hebrews 3-4 when it talks about “today.” They lived in “today.” We live in “today.” That day is God's day of “rest” in Genesis. “Again, he appoints a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, ‘Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts’” (Heb 4:7). “Today” is yet another point of continuity between the Testaments.

After quoting this passage for the last time, he speaks about Joshua. “For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on” (Heb 4:8). This finally starts hinting at the differences between the Testaments. For in a strange way, while it is the same day, it also isn't. This is what I mean when I say the good news we have is better, more sure because of Jesus. The citation of Joshua refers to a time after the exodus, when Joshua went in to conquer the land of Canaan. War after war was fought. War is the opposite of rest in the creation stories of the pagans, because the gods fight wars at creation and the victor then rests. As Yahweh is fighting for Joshua as the Commander of the Armies of the LORD, gaining victories,

and eventually settling the people in the Promised Land, still as Judges shows us, there never really was true rest from their enemies. Their restlessness was physical. They would be taken back into captivity time and again. The better rest is not physical. The enemies of God are always present in this age, but Jesus Christ has defeated them and now offers us rest.

What he is doing with this illustration is reinforcing how much greater announcement we have than they had. He is pointing out that in the OT, they were not allowed to all enter that rest because another day later on was needed. That day is the day of Christ Jesus come in the flesh. At his death, as has already been spoken, Christ came and defeated his great enemy the devil (**Heb 2:14**). His resurrection is the vindication of this and his ascension is the exaltation of Christ as being enthroned over every name and every power. This is infinitely greater than the promise, because it is the spiritual reality. So while “Today” is the same in terms of entering into the rest God took on the seventh day, this day “later on,” is the day of Christ now come. It is greater. We enter the same rest. But our entrance is more certain because our King is living and reigning in heaven.

Therefore, this is more serious for you to obey than it was even for Israel—through whom so many mighty miracles were performed before their eyes.

## Enter that Rest

As we conclude, let's think about what it would mean to really enter that rest. Do you remember how we began this morning? We began with that heart cry that so often goes out, “**How long O Lord? I. Am. Tired.**” We long for rest. Now, death is actually called “resting” with your fathers in the OT. But is this all we hope for? No. In fact, for many, death will lead not to rest but to eternal misery. Rather, going back to **Hebrews 3:6** (as this is all part of one long argument), “**Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our holding in our hope.**” What is our hope? That hope is what it means by “resting.”

In Hebrews 4 our hope is explicitly “**resting from our works as God did from his**” (10). Again, people think that this would just mean ceasing all activity. But that isn't what it means. Do you remember when Jesus said in response to a

discussion on this very topic after he was scolded for healing people on the Sabbath, “My Father is working until now, and I am working” (John 5:17). He was “working” on the “Sabbath.” So what is that “work?”

It is **priestly work**, which is really, gospel work. It is the kind of work Jesus did for 3 ½ years. Paul talks about how he is a “minister” of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the “priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Rom 15:16). This discussion in Hebrews 3 began with a series of verses on the tabernacle, and Jesus’ doing the work of building God’s house as a Son. In the Confession is talks about the Sabbath being a day of “public and private exercises of [God’s] worship, and doing the duties of necessity and mercy” (LBC 22:8). This can be summarized simply as the work of the priests of God’s NT tabernacle or temple. The prayers of incense, the sacrifices of praise, offering our bodies, etc. Whatever Jesus did on the Sabbath, and he did various kinds of things (healing, teaching, eating, helping, exorcisms, etc.), he was doing the priestly work of the gospel.

We normally think of the gospel as a collection of

certain words that become good news. We've talked about this already. But the whole arena of good works that surround it are gospel works, activities that display God's kindness and mercy which the Gospel discusses. Thus, this is what Jesus means when, on the Sabbath, he and his Father are "working." Paradoxically, this "work" is part of what it means to "rest." Because the resting on the Sabbath is not primarily about napping and sleeping. It is about resting from the ordinary or non-holy but good work that you do the other six days, and entering into the works of the temple on the seventh. This was to be the work of Adam. It was priestly work: serving and guarding the temple. It was kingly work: ruling over creation as God's vice-regent. It was prophetic work: speaking the truth of God to the world. It is the work of a worshipper: praising the God Almighty.

Now, when you truly understand what this work is, how it lifts people up, how it helps them, how it encourages them, how it undoes the damage caused by sin, how it transforms people ... when you truly understand that then you come to see how this is "resting" with God. It is entering into the Royal Rest that God took on the seventh

day, by entering into the royal and priestly activities that display more than any other his beauty, his authority, his kindness, his rule, his lordship over creation. It is entering his rest by acknowledging his Sovereignty over all creation as King through worship and praise as his elect people, together. And this, of course, is the most restful thing you can do—if you do it from the right knowledge, not as a burden, but as the very activity of Christ on earth for others.

Let's return to this idea of a coronation or feast. The celebration of the great King or the Wedding Feast of the Lamb is what we call "worship." Corporate worship is the coming together to hear the things we are hearing, and to respond in praise and with shouts of hallelujah because we know that God is King and that Christ is Lord. Worshiping together is the ultimate expression of the Royal Rest of God, because it is here that we lay everything at his feet, even the works of necessity and mercy and preaching and helping and service and all the rest, and we say in unison, "Worthy is the Lamb who did all these works for us." Thus, we enter God's rest as we worship Him together. This is a foretaste of the very longing of our souls in heaven. When you are weary of this life, when you feel that we can't go on,



look up to the heavens and look out at God's people and know the rest that you share together in Christ Jesus. Eternal life. Hope for a perfect tomorrow. The removal of tears. The casting out of sin and death and the devil. The refreshment of the Holy Spirit which belongs to us even this day.

Then remember, on the seventh day God not only rested, but **he blessed it** and made it holy. To enter into God's rest is to be blessed above all others, because we have been hidden in Christ Jesus, cover by his blood, united to his body, forgiven of our sins, given the Holy Spirit and the promises of life everlasting. This is what it means to enter God's rest: to be given the very blessing of God. It gives your lives purpose from Sabbath to Sabbath, as the end of Isaiah discusses, because our entire cycle of life on this earth and on the one to come is governed by heavenly time and holy service to the Living God.

As people fight amongst themselves over the nature of the Sabbath today, it is really very often a fight over people misunderstanding the Sabbath, turning it into law rather than gospel, a drudgery rather than a joy, a day full of legalistic moralism rather than uncontainable joyful service

to God and to our neighbors. Therefore, Hebrews says, “Let us strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience” as Israel (**Heb 4:11**). The cure of the longing, fainting, weary soul is rest. True rest. The rest of God’s royal rule over all things. The rest that was won for us by God’s Son at the cross. The rest that he grants through his Spirit whom he has given us. The rest that is ours today in justification by faith. The rest that is ours tomorrow when Christ calls us home.

May the Triune God deliver you from any disobedience of rejecting the Gospel. May he grant you faith as you hear of the majestic rest he offers you. May he bless you and give you peace.