



## Lesson 2 – Rest In God's Ability Exodus 16 September 4, 2019

### What does it mean to rest in God's ability?

There is a firmly held belief about clarity that states that we will only receive it when we are with moral or spiritual issues, but the things that keep us up at night are practical, everyday problems. We lose sleep because we are resting in our ability and not His. When recently dealing with an AC breakdown in Houston in the dog days of August, Jada's grandmother took this very practical problem to God. She took it to the Lord in prayer, and then, she went to sleep.

At the right time, God spoke to her out of her rest. He gave her divine clarity for a practical problem because she knew how to rest in His ability. She has built trust with God over nearly a century of walking with Him. This kind of Sabbath relief from God is impossible if you don't have a regular Sabbath relationship with God. We want Sabbath rest in the chaos and crisis of today, but God says that Sabbath is a lifestyle that must be sowed into over time.

Sabbath and true rest elude us because we try to rest in our ability and not His. Resting in our own ability only creates anxiety and loss of sleep. We stress eat and drink, and stop responding to others in love, blaming the stress. The truth is we take on the weight of the world and attempt to strategize, solve and fix – but how often do we really say "God, I'm going to give this to you and because I've reached the end of myself I am going to rest."

Sabbath is about a regular reminder we are dependent on God, that we are limited and finite. We hit the wall and our first thought is "I need to push through." God is saying, "no, you need to sit down." You will not get better insight on the other side of your limitation.

**You cannot second guess God and live a Sabbath lifestyle.** Second guessing God will make you forfeit a Sabbath lifestyle. Exodus 16 sets up a test for the Israelites (Exodus 16:4), to determine whether they will walk in His instruction. Although God gave the Israelites very specific instructions about how, when and how much manna to collect, they still hoarded the extra, and in the morning found it bred worms and became foul (Exodus 16:20). The instruction was not to leave any of it, because God wants His people to depend on His provision.

**How often has God given us extra and we didn't ask him what to do with it, and instead of offering it up, we kept it back for ourselves?** What we don't offer up, the worms of life will eat it up. The Israelites did not believe God would provide in the current situation because they weren't convinced of His last provision. They were delivered and free, but because they could not see that coming out of Egypt was actually God's provision, and therefore could not recognize what God's provision was in the current situation. They see the manna and say, "what is it?"

At times we are not convinced that God provided for us the last time, so when he is trying to show us a new thing, we don't recognize it. It passes us by because we aren't convinced that he has been a Provider all along, and we also ask, "what is it?" Some of us have been in comfortable situations, eating bread and meat, but didn't realize we were in slavery. God set you free – you might be a little hungrier, but you are **free**.

The Israelites didn't see the good things God was giving them today because they weren't thankful for what He did yesterday. **You cannot have sabbath without gratitude.** If you don't see even the most painful thing in your past was still somehow God's provision, you will miss the manna

Oh, what peace we often forfeit  
Oh, what needless pain we bear  
All because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer  
What a Friend We Have in Jesus  
Joseph M. Scriven

**Lord, show me how I missed the last provision so I can start to see the new provision you are giving me.** If you think you are missing something today, ask God to show you what you aren't thankful for from yesterday. Ask Him to show you what you are still low-key bitter about. Ask God to show you where you are still expecting an explanation, justification or an apology

**Where am I second guessing you, God?** Second guessing God will kill your chances at achieving sabbath rest. You cannot find rest in someone you don't trust. The enemy will hold you captive with that old pain, he will make us long for the bread and meat and we'll fail to recognize that we were eating them in chains.



## Lesson 2 – Rest In God's Ability Exodus 16

He is providing for you in the present. If you let the pain of trauma and unexplained pain convince you that God is not a provider, when He provides again, you will miss the manna. Let Him change your perspective on provision. He had a plan and wanted to show you his grace. He provided for you after a deep loss in your life. Sometimes he takes away and brings pain so you can see He is still a Provider. We walk around stepping over fresh manna because we have pain in our hearts and we don't really believe God is a provider, we believe God is a conditional giver. You don't know what manna looks like today because you don't recognize the deliverance of yesterday.

**God's faithfulness is the foundation of our rest.** When we rest in His ability, we are resting in His faithfulness. Inconsistency creates anxiety. God showed His people that He was faithful. Exodus 16:21 says they gathered morning by morning. Lamentations 3 reinforces this concept - steadfast is the love of the Lord, his mercies are new every morning. Even though the Israelites were hoarders who didn't trust Him, He remained faithful, and His faithfulness, consistency and character which is immutable, unchanging, never wavering, promise keeping - is what we rest on in sabbath lifestyle.

If you don't think God can be trusted, you will not be able to rest. You must believe that God is faithful and that He is consistent. You must be convinced of God's faithfulness. If you aren't convinced, you can do a proof test - just think of one time in your life that God didn't come through -if you think you found one, ask some people in your life and they will show you where He still came through. He never fails. Character creates our ability to rest. We not only struggle His provision, often we question we question His faithfulness.

**God will give you what you need in order for you to rest.** In Exodus 16:22 -30, God gave twice as much bread. God makes preparation room for Sabbath – He provided double what they needed to prepare them for rest. God makes room for your rest – do you create space it? We don't have to worry or doubt about provision during Sabbath because God will give you what you need when you have established a rhythm of rest with Him.

Notice that the same provision was given, but one was gathered in fear, the other in faith. One was gathered in doubt, the other in dependence. One went bad and the other did not. When we gather in fear and doubt, expect to see the provision spoil when it is not gathered in faith. **Why are you gathering? What is your intent?**

**Exodus 16:26 (NAS):** “Six days you will gather, but on the seventh day, the sabbath, there will be none.” God will stop your productivity so you can rest in His provision. How've you ever many times have you pressed through and kept trying and nothing is working? God will shut down the field when you are not living in faith. You will find yourself working more, getting less, and resting less. When you are ready to recognize that God is the only Provider, He will open the field again. It could be that the fruitless place in your life doesn't need more work, it needs more rest. Ignoring sabbath is counter-productive.

**The goal of Sabbath is to see, to stop and to savor. Exodus 16:28–30 (NAS):** Then the Lord said to Moses, “How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions? **See**, the Lord has given you the sabbath; therefore He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. **Remain** every man **in his place**; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.” So the people **rested** on the seventh day.

**See** – Take notice see how I take care of you. This is the same idea as Matthew 7. Often, we don't see - we feel and react, but if you open your eyes and see, then you will understand that the Lord provides and makes room for your rest.



## Lesson 2 – Rest In God's Ability Exodus 16

**Remain** every man in his place – the word means to dwell, abide, to tarry or inhabit. God wants us to be saturated in who He is– fully present – be done with your work and see what God is doing and savor it. Sometimes the key to our peace is declaring what God has already done that was good. See and savor the goodness of God. When we think about the goodness of Jesus, it changes our perspective and becomes the key to rest.

**In his place** – Rest where I have you right now. Who I am is bigger than where you are. God calls us to be fully present in our current place. It could be that God wants to see if you can rest where you are before He moves you. He wants to know if your rest is in Him, not your location. You can't say you love and trust God and question where you are. Trust God's sovereignty – and in the midst of where you are today, he can give you sabbath rest.

The people **rested** on the 7th day – finally. Step back and see what God is doing, see what God has done. We can forget so many things, we must recall and savor all the times that God protected us and provided for us. The world demands you strive and grind every day, and when you achieve, go for what is next - its never enough. God says the opposite – if you can see and savor, you would be surprised at what I can do while you are resting.

**There are consequences for ignoring the sabbath.** Exodus 31:12-14 teaches everyone who profanes . the Sabbath shall surely be put to death. The new covenant of grace grace keeps us from that consequence, but the heart of God and the seriousness of the matter has not changed. When you continue to work independently of God, the consequences are real. Jeremiah 29:11 was an encouragement for the children of Israel while in Babylonian captivity for 70 years, because they ignored the sabbath (**2 Chronicles 36:21**). Greed and

ignorance and their refusal to rest on God led to their captivity. The year of jubilee celebrates seven years of sabbath, but we can't experience jubilee without consistent observation of sabbath. **Could it be that you are in captivity today because you ignored the sabbath?** You cannot have sabbath rest unless you are willing to trust in the ability of God.

**Where am I doubting your faithfulness, Lord? Where am I doubting Your ability?** God always delivers, always rescues – rest is yours for the taking but you've got to rest in His ability and His alone.

### A Sabbath Rhythm of Work

**Exodus 20:8** - Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy.

**Leviticus 16:29** – In the seventh month on the 10th day of the month, in this day atonement is made, and you shall humble your soul.

**Exodus 23:10** – In the seventh year you shall let the land rest and lie fallow.