

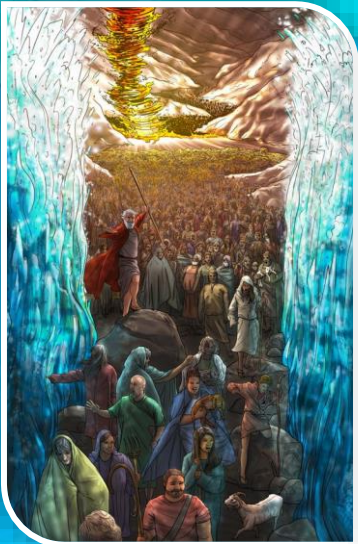
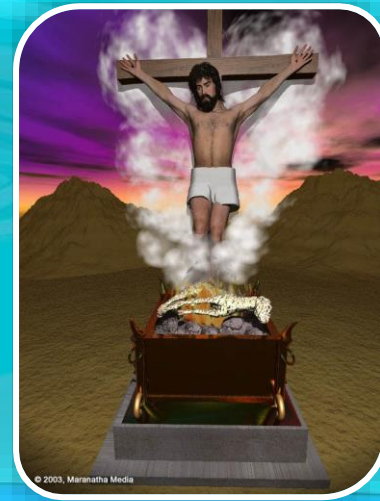
LONGING FOR MORE



Lesson 11 for September 11, 2021

The authors of the New Testament presented Old Testament stories as symbols of spiritual truths.

Paul presented the crossing of the Red Sea as a symbol of baptism. John the Baptist presented the animal sacrifices at the Temple as a symbol of Jesus redeeming us. In the book of Hebrews, the Sabbath in Creation and the conquest of Canaan are presented as symbols of the rest that God gives to His people.



A symbol of baptism. 1 Corinthians 10:1-4



A symbol of redemption. John 1:36



A symbol of rest:



Entering rest. Hebrews 3:7-4:3



Not entering rest. Hebrews 4:3-7



Future rest. Hebrews 4:8-11

A SYMBOL OF BAPTISM



“all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” (1 Corinthians 10:2)

THE SYMBOL

At the Red Sea, the people of Israel were leaving Egypt’s slavery and entering a new life of freedom under the cloud

God fed them with manna

They drank water that flowed from a rock

REALITY

Our baptism marks the end of sin’s slavery in our lives, and the beginning of a new life in Christ (Ro. 6:4, 11)

Jesus is the “bread of life” (Jn. 6:48)

Jesus is the “living water” (Jn. 4:10)

A symbol is an example that helps us to understand another thing or idea. There are many symbols in the account of Israel’s exodus. These symbols help us to understand spiritual truths.

For example, Paul said that the Sanctuary “was symbolic for the present time.” (Hebrews 9:9)

A SYMBOL OF REDEMPTION

"And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, 'Behold the Lamb of God!'" (Juan 1:36)

THE SYMBOL

The offender placed their hands on the lamb

They slaughtered the animal

The priest put some blood on the horns of the altar and spilled the rest

The fat was burned on the altar

The priest made atonement for the sin

REALITY

We confess our sins to Jesus

We acknowledge that Jesus died for our sins

The blood that Jesus spilled on the cross can redeem us

We surrender our lives to Jesus

Jesus makes atonement for our sins

What can we learn from the sacrifices depicted in Leviticus 4:32-35 which are a symbol of Jesus? Remember that blood is a symbol of life (see Lv. 17:11).



ENTERING REST

"For we who have believed do enter that rest," (Hebrews 4:3)



In Hebrews 3 and 4, Paul used symbols from the Old Testament to address the topic of rest.

God promised Israel that they will find rest once they possessed Canaan. However, only those who believed and persevered could enter that rest (Heb. 4:2).

We must fully trust and believe Christ's promises to enter His rest. Perseverance is key to be in communion with Him every day.

Where can we find these promises? How can we believe in them? How can we persevere? By reading the Word with faith (Heb. 4:2, 12).



NOT ENTERING REST

"So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'" (Psalm 95:11)

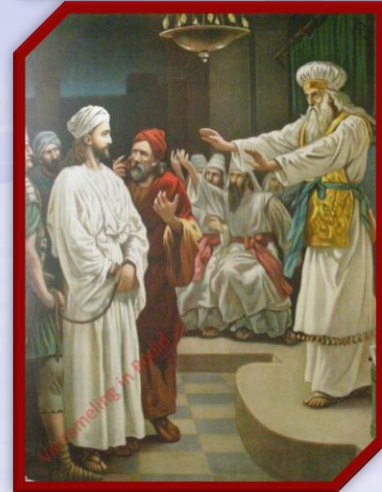
Paul's reasoning in Heb. 4:3-7 may seem confusing at first. How is God's oath related to the Sabbath and Creation?

We are talking about symbols. Paul presented the disobedience of the Israelites—which prevented them from entering Canaan—as a symbol of their rejection of Jesus as a nation. Since the beginning of Creation, God decided to give rest to all His children, but not all of them got it.

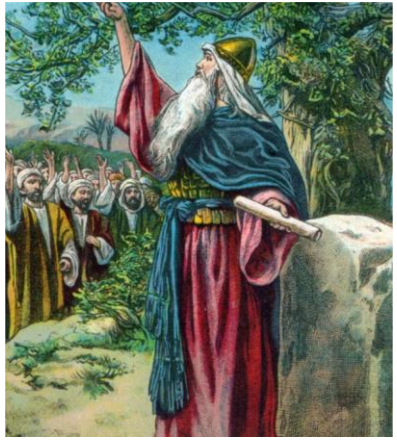


God promises rest for the soul. We get it when we fully surrender to Christ. Then our lives are gradually linked to God's eternal purpose (Is. 30:15; Jer. 6:16; Mt. 11:29).

We can still enter this rest, but it's urgent that we make a decision. The right moment to enter His rest is TODAY (v. 6-7).



FUTURE REST



“There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.” (Hebrews 4:9)

Read Hebrews 4:8. Didn't Joshua lead the people of Israel to rest when they entered Canaan? Wasn't that the rest mentioned in Psalm 95 which Paul is quoting? What is Paul talking about?

Let's go back to the symbols. There is a future rest linked to the Heavenly Canaan and to the Sabbath (v. 10-11).



This rest reflects God's rest in the first Sabbath ever. It means that we can rest from our work and trust in His salvation.

“The very best preparation you can have for Christ's second appearing [and therefore entering the Heavenly Canaan] is to rest with firm faith in the great salvation brought to us at His first coming. You must believe in Christ as a personal Saviour.”

(E.G.W., “Our High Calling”, December 28)



“We shall be saved eternally when we enter in through the gates into the city. Then we may rejoice that we are saved, eternally saved. But until then we need to heed the injunction of the apostle [Hebrews 4:1 is quoted]. Having a knowledge of Canaan, singing the songs of Canaan, rejoicing in the prospect of entering into Canaan, did not bring the children of Israel into the vineyards and olive groves of the Promised Land. They could make it theirs in truth only by occupation, by complying with the conditions, by exercising living faith in God, by appropriating His promises to themselves.”

E. G. W. (That I May Know Him, June 5)