

# THE RETHINKING REST STUDY

**BIBLE STUDY LESSONS**

**ANOTHER:**



**Acknowledgements:** These lessons were originally created for a group study at a church where I pastored. While I taught the lessons, I had so much help from others gathering information, writing, and editing the content. A HUGE thank you goes out to **Julie Haupt, Jennifer Stair, and Lisa Hall** for their help in creating this study.

**Instructions:** The Rethinking Rest Study is a chapter-by-chapter study of the book, “Rethinking Rest: Why Our Approach to Sabbath Isn’t Working”. It was originally created in 2018 for a mid-week small-group study with 30-40 participants. I modeled that original class in the format used by Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) classes. Each week the participants completed their individual lessons prior to our meeting time. When we gathered, participants would first discuss their answers in small “discussion groups”. We then gathered everyone together and I presented my teaching. The teaching videos, and all the other resources for this study are available for free.

**To access all the resources for this study visit:**  
[RethinkingRest.com/Resources](https://RethinkingRest.com/Resources)



**Pre-Lesson Options:**

In the pre-lesson part of your study, you'll read and interact with relevant Biblical texts then explore those topics by thinking through some Bible study questions. With that foundation, you'll read the corresponding chapter in the Rethinking Rest book and interact with the endnotes for that chapter.

**Lesson Options:**

You can customize the Lesson part of your study a number of different ways. As a group you could discuss responses to the Bible study lesson. Or you could talk through the Group Discussion Questions. In addition, each lesson has three Class Videos (audio also available). Groups may want to watch one or more of the videos within the group setting, or assign them as Pre-Lesson or Post-Lesson activities.

**Post-Lesson Resources:**

The Post-Lesson Resources are designed to provide options to dig deeper into the ideas you've just studied. In this section you'll find links to books and articles, videos, and podcast episodes by leading experts and theologians that will help you further explore the content of each chapter.

## **CHAPTER 1 STUDY QUESTIONS**

*For additional study resources visit: [RethinkingRest.com/resources](http://RethinkingRest.com/resources)*

*Answer the following questions in the space provided. Where applicable, include the verses in which you find your answers. Since translations can vary, you are encouraged to consult at least two English translations.*



### **Answer the following introductory questions.**

1. This study will challenge you to reconsider your concept of rest. List some of the different ways people today might define rest.

2. In what ways do people seek rest?

3. How would you define rest?

### **Answer the following questions for Hebrews 4:8-11a**

4. a. To what OT passage does Hebrews allude when it suggests some people need to rest from their works, "... as God did from His?"

b. What do you think that instruction means?

5. Summarize Hebrews 4:8-11 in your own words.

### **Answer the following questions for Genesis 1:1-2:4**

6. From the description in Gen 1:2, what is the condition of the earth at the beginning of creation?

7. Make a list of what God created...

a. On days 1-3:

b. On days 4-6:

8. How does the author uniquely signify the completion of each of the first six days of creation?

9. From Genesis 2:1-3, describe what happens on the seventh-day of creation.

10. a. What repetitive element is missing in the description of this last day?

b. What might the absence of that element mean for the seventh-day?

11. What do you think it means that God “rested from all His work which He had done?”

12. From Genesis 3:14-19, & 22-24, describe the consequences of eating from the forbidden tree for each of the following characters:

a. The serpent:

b. The woman:

c. Adam:

## **CHAPTER 2 STUDY QUESTIONS**

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### **Answer the following questions for Exodus 16**

1. Shortly after freeing the sons of Israel from the slavery of Egypt, God introduced manna in the wilderness. From vv. 1-7, describe the events and instructions that lead up to the giving of the manna.

2. From vv. 22-36, describe how God integrated the giving of manna with the inauguration of Sabbath observance.

### **Answer the following questions for Exodus 20:1-17**

3. In this section, God incorporates the 7th-day Sabbath into the ten commandments. How does the fourth commandment (vv. 8-11) expand the Sabbath instructions given in Exodus 16?

4. Compare the sabbath commandment in Exodus 20:8-11 with the same commandment repeated in Deuteronomy 5:12-15. What similarities and differences do you see?

### **Answer the following questions for Leviticus 23**

5. This chapter outlines sabbath-day observances that the Israelites were to observe in addition to the weekly sabbath. Skim through the text and record what terminology is used to describe these additional days on the yearly calendar where work was prohibited. (see vv. 3, 7, 8, 21, 24-32, 35-39).

**Answer the following questions for Leviticus 25:1-22**

6. The Sabbatical Year is outlined in vv. 1-7. Give a short summary of the requirements and rationale of this year-long observance.

7. The next phase of Sabbath theology in the Old Covenant is the Year of Jubilee. Describe what was to happen every 50th year (see vv. 8-22) in the land of Israel.

**Answer the following questions for sections of the book of Joshua.**

8. In Joshua 1:10-18, describe how the idea of “rest” is expanded even more and connected to the Promised Land.

9. Near the end of Joshua’s life, the promise of rest had been achieved within the land. From Joshua 21:43-44 and 23:1-3, how is “rest” described in these passages?

**Answer the following questions for sections of the book of Hebrews 11:8-16**

10. This section discusses how Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob all died before “receiving the promises” (v. 13). As best you can describe from this short passage, for what were these biblical characters hoping to find?

## **CHAPTER 3 STUDY QUESTIONS**

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### **Answer the following questions for passages in Colossians & Hebrews.**

1. Paul introduces a concept of Old Testament "shadows" in Colossians 2:16-17.

a. What things in the OT does he suggest were mere shadows of "what is to come"?

b. What does Paul say is the "substance" of those shadows?

c. How do you understand the relationship of "substance" and "shadows"?

2. The book of Hebrews also presents Old Testament concepts as foreshadowing the more "excellent ministry" of Jesus. List the Old Testament concepts referenced as shadows in the following Hebrews passages.

a. 8:4-6 -

b. 9:27-10:1 -

3. a. In your own words, describe the relationship these passages (from Colossians & Hebrews) suggest between the "shadows" of the Old Testament and the ministry of Jesus.

b. How do you think this might change worship for believers today (vs. those in the OT)?

**Answer the following questions for passages in Hebrews.**

4. The author of Hebrews presents Jesus as “better” than several OT figures, ministries and concepts. From the following passages in Hebrews, list the different things to which Jesus is superior.

a. 1:1-4:

b. 3:3-6:

c. 7:11-28:

d. 8:6-7:

e. 9:22-24:

f. 11:13-16:

g. 12:22-24:

**Answer the following questions for Matthew 12.**

5. a. In verses 41-42, Jesus (twice) says “something greater than \_\_\_\_\_ is here”. Who does Jesus mention in these statements?

b. How might these statements be related to Jesus’ statement in Matthew 12:6?

6. What do you think Jesus means (in Matthew 12:8) when He says, “the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath?”

***Rethinking Rest Bible Lesson: Chapter 4 - “The Fulfillment of Rest”***



## **CHAPTER 4 STUDY QUESTIONS**

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### **Answer the following questions for Matthew 5:17-20**

1. In this section, Jesus shares some insight regarding the relationship of His ministry to the Old Testament Law and the Prophets. How do you understand Jesus' words in this passage?

### **Answer the following questions for Matthew 11:28-12:16**

2. a. Based on the ideas presented in this class about biblical "rest", how would you describe what Jesus is offering in Matthew 11:28-30?

b. From Exodus 33:12-15, what similarities do you notice in the conversation Moses has with God?

c. From 2 Samuel 7:8-13, describe in your own words God's promise of rest to David.

3. In Matthew 12:1-8, Jesus interacts with the Pharisees regarding the Sabbath commandment. What are some things you notice about what He says and does?



## **CHAPTER 5 STUDY QUESTIONS**

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**Answer the following questions for Hebrews passages listed.**

1. Hebrews 10:1-14 discusses Jesus' relationship to the Old Testament Law. After reading these verses, what is your understanding of Hebrews 10:9b which reads, "He takes away the first in order to establish the second"?

2. a. We started this study (in Week 1) with Hebrews 4:8-11. Returning to that passage again, how do you understand the statements about "rest" in vv. 8-9?

b. How have your ideas about biblical "rest" been confirmed/challenged so far during this class?

3. Read Hebrews 3:7-4:11. List the questions that come to mind.

4. The author of Hebrews quotes Psalm 95:7-11 several times in Hebrews 3:7-4:11. List the verses (in the Hebrews passage) that seem to originate directly from that Psalm.

**Answer the following questions for the Old Testament passages listed.**

5. a. Compare Hebrews 3:7-11 with Psalm 95:7-11. List some differences you notice between the two passages.

b. Why might there be differences in the way Hebrews quotes this portion of Ps 95?

6. Psalm 95:8 mentions two names, “Meribah” and “Massah”. Those names are mentioned in two Old Testament stories found in Exodus 17 and Numbers 20. Give a brief summary, in your own words, of the events of these “Meribah” and “Massah” stories.

a. Exodus 17:1-7 -

b. Numbers 20:2-13 -

c. What are some similarities and differences these stories share?

7. What conclusions or warnings are presented in Hebrews 3:7-4:11 that caught your eye as you studied this passage?

## **CHAPTER 6 STUDY QUESTIONS**

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**Answer the following questions for the Exodus passages listed.**

1. To explore the context for the events of Exodus 17 (Meribah & Massah), let's consider what happened just prior to that event. Briefly describe the events in the following passages.

a. Exodus 15:22-27 (the Bitter Waters of Marah) -

b. Exodus 16:1-30 (the Wilderness of Sin) -

c. Exodus 17:1-7 (Massah & Meribah) -

2. Hebrews 3:8-9 (through the quote of Psalm 95) instructs believers to not respond like the wilderness generation did when they "tested" God. From the same passages listed in the previous question, share what each passage says about "testing".

a. Exodus 15:22-27 -

b. Exodus 16:1-30 -

c. Exodus 17:1-7 -

3. Why might the “testing” in Exodus 17:1-7 be described differently than the other two passages?

4. Read Hebrews 3:15-19.

a. Who in this story “provoked” God and didn’t get to enter the Lord’s rest (the land)?

b. What are the reasons listed for why they were not able to enter?

5. In Numbers 20:8-13, there is different location (nearly 40 years later) that is given the name “Meribah”.

a. Who in this story is not allowed to enter the land?

b. What are the reasons listed for why they were not able to enter?

6. Hebrews 4:11 invites believers to enter God’s rest and to not follow the Old Testament characters’ “example of disobedience”.

a. What are some possible “principles” from this week’s stories that might help you respond differently than the Old Testament characters who were disobedient?

b. What are some areas (or episodes) in your life where you have lacked faith?

c. How has God provided for you even when you lacked faith?

d. How could you respond differently next time in this area?

## **CHAPTER 7 STUDY QUESTIONS**

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### **Answer the following questions for Hebrews 11:23-12:3.**

1. In last week's lesson, we learned that Moses did not get to enter "the land" due to his lack of faith (see Numbers 20:12).

a. Read Hebrews 11:23-29 and list the examples of "faith" credited to Moses.

b. What other people group is described by their faith in Hebrews 11:29?

2. a. Do you think the punishment of not entering the Promised Land is an indicator that these people also didn't get to enter heaven?

b. What biblical evidence would you use to support your opinion?

3. Read Hebrews 12:1-3. What encouragement and advice is given to believers about growing in their faith?

### **Answer the following questions for Luke 4:1-13.**

4. Read Luke 4:1-13. Like Moses and the "wilderness generation," Jesus spent a "period of 40" (days instead of years) in the wilderness. List some ways Jesus' "tests" are similar to the story in Exodus?

5. a. Contrast Jesus' responses to the way the wilderness generation responded to their tests (in Exodus 15-17).

b. What lessons can a believer learn from this comparison?

c. How might Jesus' example be applicable to the tests you are experiencing in your life?

6. Regarding Jesus' last temptation (Luke 4:9-12), Jesus quoted the first half of Deuteronomy 6:16 in his answer. What significance does the last half of that verse bring to Jesus' response?

**Answer the following questions for 1 Corinthians 10:1-14.**

7. In this passage Paul encourages believers to receive instruction from the wilderness generation's example. What instruction does Paul give that will allow a believer to enter God's rest?

**Answer the following summary question.**

8. a. According to Hebrews 4:7, what day is Sabbath rest available to the believer if they hear God's voice?

b. What's significant about that day?