



SHARING SCRIPTURE

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Longing for More

For use: September 5 - 11

Texts: 1 Corinthians 10:1-11; Leviticus 4:32-35; John 1:29; Hebrews 4:1-11; Psalm 95:8-11

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" [1]

These words on a plaque in the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty have greeted droves of immigrants who came to America longing for something more—yearning to breathe free from the oppression of their homelands. The statue is our iconic national greeter, welcoming those oppressed masses. The promise of liberty draws multitudes yearning for something better for themselves and their families. The United States still stands as a beacon of hope to many who have no promise of liberty at home, and that's what lends power to the copper sculpture.

Like the weary travelers greeted by Lady Liberty, we have been trying to get back to the life and liberty of Eden. Humanity has longed for something more since Adam and Eve used fig leaves to try to regain the coverings of righteousness they lost when they sinned, and all this time later, the hope of heaven still draws our hearts and imaginations as we long for more than what we have here.

Sabbath is intended to be a slice of heaven on earth—an enticing appetizer, showing us that better days are coming. [Hebrews 4:1](#) reminds us that the promise of heavenly rest still stands, so we need to live for that promise today. Sabbath is a sample of that rest. As we enter into Sabbath rest each week, it's our privilege to experience God's presence in our lives more completely. By

setting aside our regular work stress, we are free to focus on God's love and the blessed hope that we will eventually gather with angels and worship God in person.

Sabbath is a hope, a home, a respite. The Sabbath is, like the Statue of Liberty, both a promise, and an enticement, of a better life to come.

~ Chuck Burkeen

[1] <https://www.nps.gov/stli/learn/historyculture/colossus.htm>

For Reflection

Connecting: Have you ever experienced oppression in your life, even in small ways? How did you endure it? What were you willing to do to achieve liberty from that oppression?

Sharing: [Hebrews 4:1-11](#) indicates that Sabbath is an example of our eventual, eternal heavenly rest. How is Sabbath a slice of heaven on earth for you?

1. I can set aside the worries and pressures of my daily work-life
2. I don't have to cook or clean for a whole day!
3. No one can tell me what to do on Sabbath
4. I have more time for Bible reading, prayer, and worship
5. Enjoying God's creation gives me a restful spirit
6. Other:

Applying: What organizations are you aware of that battle oppression in authoritarian systems in the world? Do an online search for contact info for some of these organizations. What can you realistically do to assist in their work?

Valuing: Have worldly concerns and activities crept into your Sabbath experience? Do you sometimes miss celebrating the sundown rituals, which mark the edges of the Sabbath? Take time this week to plan strategies to protect your next Sabbath from worldly interruptions—make it a good one!

Other Helpful Resources

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personally sign up for this free resource. They can do that by calling 800.272.4664 or by emailing us at creativeministryinfo@gmail.com.

Three decades ago, we created this resource for small groups and Sabbath school classes, and it continues to bless so many people worldwide. Thank you for your continued interest in these biblical themes and what they mean to your life and those people with whom you share it.

Paul Richardson
Executive Director

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