

The Gift of Rest



Getting Started

How much sleep do you get every night? If you don't get enough, what keeps you awake?

Some people are proud of how little sleep they get. "I only need four hours a night!" Others feel guilty if they sleep too long. They feel like a long night's sleep might be a sign of laziness. Some people feel guilty if they take a vacation, or just relax for an evening. Have you ever felt this way? We really value hard work. It is easy to forget that rest is also valuable. Even God rested, after he finished creating the world. Rest is a gift from God, and he wants us to accept and enjoy this gift.

Improving Your Vocabulary

rod (n) - a stick used by shepherds to protect or discipline sheep

staff (n) - a long stick used by shepherds to aid them in climbing hills or in leading their sheep

banquet (n) - a big dinner with lots of food for many people

honored (adj) - respected; thought very well of

brim (n) - the top edge of a container

everlasting (adj) - lasting forever and ever; will never die

exhausted (n) - extremely tired

renewed (adj) - made new again; refreshed

yoke (n) - a frame for carrying loads

humble (adj) - not proud; putting others before yourself



Reading God's Word

Psalm 23:1-6

1 The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need. **2** He lets me rest in fields of green grass and leads me to quiet pools of fresh water. **3** He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths, as he has promised. **4** Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff protect me. **5** You prepare a banquet for me, where all my enemies can see me; you welcome me as an honored guest and fill my cup to the brim. **6** I know that your goodness and love will be with me all my life; and your house will be my home as long as I live.

Psalm 46:10 (NIV)

10 Be still, and know that I am God.

Isaiah 40:28-31

28 Don't you know? Haven't you heard? The Lord is the everlasting God; he created all the world. He never grows tired or weary. No one understands his thoughts. **29** He strengthens those who are weak and tired. **30** Even those who are young grow weak; young people can fall exhausted. **31** But those who trust in the Lord for help will find their strength renewed. They will rise on wings like eagles; they will run and not get weary; they will walk and not grow weak.

Matthew 11:28

28 “Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. **29** Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. **30** For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light.”

For further study, see Genesis 2:2; Jeremiah 17:21-27; and Hebrews 4.

Taking a Closer Look

1. How does God take care of us? What are some of the things he gives us?
(Psalm 23:1-4)

2. What will be with us all our life? (Psalm 23:6)

3. What do you think Psalm 46:10 means? How can we do this every day?

4. Isaiah 40:28 says God “never grows tired”. If this is true, why do you think he rested?

5. What can happen if we trust in the Lord for help? (Isaiah 40:31)

6. How does Jesus describe himself? (Matthew 11:29) How can we be more “gentle and humble” towards others?

Taking Action

1. Jesus says his load is light—but sometimes it feels heavy. How can we balance hard work for Jesus with periods of rest?
2. When people think of rest, they usually think of stopping activities and getting more sleep. But rest can also come from emptying our minds of all worries and focusing on something good. Try focusing on these Bible passages:

Psalm 3:5

Psalm 68:5-6

Psalm 136

Psalm 139:1-18

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

1 Peter 5:7

Memory Verse: Psalm 4:8

When I lie down, I go to sleep in peace; you alone, O Lord, keep me perfectly safe.

Review the Vocabulary

Discuss your answers to the following questions with a classmate.

1. Who do you **honor**? Why do you **honor** them?
2. Is anything in this world **everlasting**?
3. What **renews** you when you are **exhausted**?
4. Why is it important to be **humble**?



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