

Rest in the Bible

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PLACE OF REST

Craig Smith

When I am troubled by news that I read
And all my resources seem less than the need
Stress and the trouble carry my peace away
When the path I should take just isn't too clear
And the pictures of failure begin to appear
Comfort will come if I humble myself and pray

REFRAIN:

There is a place of rest
During the long hard test
No need to worry
If I'll abide in Him.

There is a place of peace
Where all my fear will cease
If I'll abide, walk side by side with Him

When the goals and the visions looks so far away,
When the price that's required seems too much to pay,
Doubts rise to weaken the boldness that I once knew.
When the future seems dim
And the things that I heard
I seal my heart with the truth of His Word
Then the enemy's threats weaken and fade from view.

REFRAIN:

There is a place of rest
During the long hard test
No need to worry
If I'll abide in Him.

There is a place of peace
Where all my fear will cease
If I'll abide, walk side by side with Him

He is my Help
He is my Refuge
He is my Strength
When my world's giving in
He is the One Who comes to my rescue
He is my Lord and my Friend, my Friend

REFRAIN:

There is a place of rest
During the long hard test
No need to worry
If I'll abide in Him.

There is a place of peace
Where all my fear will cease
If I'll abide, walk side by side with Him

REPEAT REFRAIN:

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON REST

INTRODUCTION - Dear reader on this page you will find what I would refer to as a potpourri of commentary notes, quotes, anecdotes, illustrations, poems, hymns, etc that relate to the concept of REST in the Bible. While many of the comments relate primarily to the concept of REST in Hebrews 3-4 (especially Hebrews 4, the most concentrated teaching on REST in the entire Bible), not all the material relates directly to those two chapters. The avowed purpose of this page is to present a collection of materials that relate to Biblical REST so that you the reader might have a better grasp of this great truth which God has spoken but which seems not to be widely discussed and into which we too often fail to enter.

May God grant each us abundant grace to enter His rest in its full orb'd glory in Christ. Amen.

The respected Old Testament scholar **Walter Kaiser** wrote "In 1933 Gerhard Von Rad aptly observed that "Among the many benefits of redemption offered to man by Holy Scripture, that of 'rest' has been almost overlooked in biblical theology...." Forty years have not substantially changed that assessment of the situation. In fact, except for the brief and conflicting opinions delivered in commentaries on Hebrews 3 and 4 , only a few major articles in the journals and fewer graduate theses have been devoted to the concept of "God's Rest" in the last century. Most biblical theologies of the Old Testament and New Testament, biblical encyclopedias, theological wordbooks, Festschriften, and systematic theologies are ominously silent on the topic. ([Read the article below - The Promise Theme and the Theology of Rest - Bibliotheca Sacra Volume 130:518, April, 1973](#))

**Christ can make the rest of your days
Be the best of your days
If He is the Rest of your days.**

For a believer's life to make God pleasing music, music that plays on throughout eternity, one must learn to enter His appointed rest...

RESTS: 1 whole, 2 half, 3 quarter, 4 eighth, 5 sixteenth
(from Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th Ed)

Paradoxically there is no music during the 5 **rests** (variable length of rhythmic silence) depicted above, but there is no making of music without a rest! Beloved, in a sense our entire life is (or should be) characterized by intermittent '**rests**'. At such times we may be led to think we have come to the end of the tune! However, God is sovereign and it is not without divine design that He writes the music of our lives which includes His **rest**. It is for us to learn the tune, and at the same time not ignore His times of **rest**. His rests are not to be omitted, for to do so would disturb the melody. Let us remember that although there may seem to be no music in **rest**, there is no making of music without **rest**!

DEFINITION OF REST

The following definitions are an amalgamation of descriptions from English dictionaries as well as from various theological sources.

Rest is freedom from work, toil, strain or activity. **Rest** is the cessation of motion or action of any kind, and applicable to any body or being, as rest from labor, rest from mental exertion or rest of body or mind. A body is at rest, when it ceases to move. The mind is at rest, when it ceases to be disturbed or agitated. The sea is never at rest! (And many believers live their lives more like the sea than their Savior!)

Antonyms of rest include - restlessness, strain, toil, drudge, grind

Rest is cessation of work or movement in order to relax or recover strength.

Rest is freedom from anxiety or disturbance.

To rest is to dispose oneself at ease in order to relieve or avoid fatigue (cp spiritual "burnout")

In poetry, a **rest** describes a short pause of the voice in reading (Can we not apply this truth to our lives?)

In spiritual terms **rest** means primarily to cease from one's works with the idea of release from anxiety, worry and insecurity. This rest is offered to all and is freely available by grace through personal faith in Jesus Christ (Mt 11:28, 29, 30). Only in Christ is our soul fully and truly at rest. In this context **rest** means to be done with self-effort as far as salvation is concerned. It means the end of trying to please God by our feeble, fleshly works. In short, God's unmerited perfect rest is a rest in free grace which can only be entered into or appropriated by faith.

John MacArthur adds that...

Rest also means freedom from whatever worries or disturbs you. Some people cannot **rest** mentally and emotionally because they are so easily annoyed. Every little nuisance upsets them and they always feel hassled. **Rest** does not mean freedom from all nuisances and hassles; it means freedom from being so easily bothered by them (**Ed**: It means freedom in the face of whatever would disturb your rest!). **Rest** means to be inwardly quiet, composed, peaceful. To enter God's **rest** means to be at peace with God (Ro 5:1-note), to possess the perfect peace He gives (Is 26:3). It means to be free from guilt and even unnecessary feelings of guilt. It means freedom from worry about sin, because sin is forgiven. God's **rest** is the end of legalistic works and the experience of peace in the total forgiveness of God.

Rest can mean to lie down, be settled, fixed, secure. There is no more shifting about in frustration from one thing to another, no more running in circles. In God's **rest** we are forever established in Christ. We are freed from running from philosophy to philosophy, from religion to religion, from life-style to life-style (Jn 8:36). We are freed from being tossed about by every doctrinal wind, every idea or fad, that blows our way. In Christ, we are established, rooted, grounded, unmoveable (Col 2:7-note). That is the Christian's rest.

Rest involves remaining confident, keeping trust. In other words, to rest in something or someone means to maintain our confidence in it or him. To enter God's **rest**, therefore, means to enjoy the perfect, unshakeable confidence of salvation in our Lord. We have no more reason to fear. We have absolute trust and confidence in God's power and care.

Rest also means to lean on (**Ed**: Play [Leaning on the Everlasting Arms](#)). To enter into God's rest means that for the remainder of our lives and for all eternity we can lean on God. We can be sure that He will never fail to support us. In the new relationship with God, we can depend on Him for everything and in everything-for support, for health, for strength, for all we need. It is a relationship in which we are confident and secure that we have committed our life to God and that He holds it in perfect, eternal love. It is a relationship that involves being settled and fixed. No more floating around. We know whom we have believed and we stand in Him. ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#))

**Know Christ and you will know rest.
No Christ and there will be no rest!
... In this life or the one to come!**

Relation of rest to refreshment: Rest was built into the natural rhythms of life by the Creator, Who Himself rested on the seventh day of creation (Ge 2:1, 2, 3). The rest of God includes the crucial element of refreshment. **Exodus 31:17** tells us that God not only rested on the seventh day but also **"was refreshed"** (Hebrew = napas = renewal of energy of mind and body, Lxx = katapauo = to put to an end, give rest to) (Cp "refresh" in Ex 23:12, Pr 25:13, Ro 15:30, 31, 32-note, **[Do others find refreshing rest in your company beloved? cp 1Co 16:17, 18, 2Co 7:13, 2Ti 1:16-note, Philemon 7, 20] Acts 3:19, 20 [Where {Who} does true refreshment come from? What must we do to enter the times of refreshing?]**, Je 31:25NIV, Pr 3:7, 8 [fear of the LORD causes us to turn from evil and brings refreshment to our bones! **Beloved, if you are reading this and sensing a deep "inner gnawing", perhaps God is calling you to an attitude of reverential fear which might prompt you to turn away from evil and experience His refreshing!**] 1Sa 16:14, 23 = "evil spirit", ponder the power of God glorifying, Christ exalting, Word centered spiritual music to refresh! **Does your time in worship yield such "times of refreshing"? Why not?**).

MacArthur - God's rest is not essentially physical at all. Certainly, resting in God and trusting in His promises can relieve us of nervousness, tenseness, and other physical problems. But these are by-products of His rest. Many cults promise their followers happiness, wealth, and health in this life. The Bible does not. The rest God promises is spiritual, not physical. Whatever physical or earthly benefits the Lord may give us, His basic promise is to give us spiritual rest, spiritual blessing. Some of God's most faithful believers are the busiest, the hardest working, and sometimes even the most afflicted people imaginable. Yet they are in God's salvation rest. (Ibid)

Rest and the Redeemer (cp 1Cor 11:1, cp He 6:11, 12-note): Despite the fact that Jesus knew His time on earth was short and therefore very precious, He redeemed (cp Ep 5:16KJV-note) some of this precious time for rest and refreshment from His active life (Mk 6:45, 46, 47; Lk 6:12; 9:28). He also prescribed a similar pattern for His disciples (Mk 6:31-[see devotional](#)). **Are you following His example? Or is your life so hectic that you are failing to take time to come away by yourself and rest in Him and His Word? One wonders what the failure to heed our Lord's wise counsel has to do with the veritable epidemic of "spiritual burnout" in modern day evangelicalism?**

Many have a misunderstanding of **rest**, which in Scripture is not synonymous with inactivity per se. Yes, God rested on the seventh day from His work of creation, but thankfully He continued (and continues) to be active in providentially sustaining all that He has created. As Jesus taught "My Father is working (present tense = continually) until now, and I myself am working (present tense = continually)" (Jn 5:17). The point is that believer's rest into **His rest** (see **"My rest"** in Ps 95:11, He 3:11-note, He 4:3, 5-note) not be a state of uneventful inertia and inactivity. Even as God is dynamic and not static, so also is His rest which believers are called to enter (Today!). Although entering His rest in Hebrews 3-4 (He 3:11-note, He 3:18, 19-note, He 4:1-note, He 4:3, 4, 5-note, He 4:8, 9, 10-note, He 4:11-note) is primarily a call (for diligence - He 4:11) to enter His rest of salvation (justification, past tense salvation - see Three Tenses of Salvation), the application of this truth is that believers need to daily enter into His rest, experiencing communion with the One Who is the Source and Essence of rest, so that our souls are "re-energized", refreshed and satisfied in Him (Mt 11:28, 29, 30). Ponder the words of **Frances R Havergal's** beautiful hymn [Like a River Glorious \(click to play and ask yourself what brings "perfect peace and rest"?\)](#)...

Like a river glorious, is God's perfect peace,

Over all victorious, in its bright increase;

Perfect, yet it floweth, fuller every day,

Perfect, yet it groweth, deeper all the way.

Refrain

Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest

Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and REST.

Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,

Never foe can follow, never traitor stand;

Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,

Not a blast of hurry touch the spirit there.

Refrain

Every joy or trial falleth from above,

Traced upon our dial by the Sun of Love;

We may trust Him fully all for us to do.

They who trust Him wholly find Him wholly true.

Refrain

A FEW REFERENCES ON REST

1) Puritan writer Richard Baxter's work - [THE SAINTS EVERLASTING REST](#)

- [The Nature of the Saints' Rest](#)
- [The Hallway to the Saints' Rest](#)
- [The Splendor of the Saints' Rest](#)
- [The People Who Receive the Saints' Rest](#)
- [The Misery of Those Who Lose the Saints' Rest](#)
- [The Necessity of Seeking the Saints' Rest](#)
- [The Title to the Saints' Rest](#)
- [The Duty of Helping Others to Seek the Saints' Rest](#)
- [The Possession of the Saints' Rest is Not on Earth](#)
- [The Suburbs of Heaven](#)
- [Hindrances to a Heavenly Life on Earth](#)
- [How to Seek the Saints' Rest While on Earth](#)
- [Directions for Heavenly Contemplation](#)
- [Four Aids to Heavenly Contemplation](#)
- [How to Persevere in Heavenly Contemplation](#)
- [Heavenly Meditation](#)
- [Concluding Encouragements](#)

2) John MacDuff's devotional book - [HOSPICE OF THE PILGRIM - THE GREAT REST-WORD OF CHRIST](#)

- [Preface](#)
- [Passport at the Gate](#)
- [The Pilgrim Vision](#)
- [The Door of Entrance](#)
- [The Chamber Called Peace](#)
- [The Hospice of Trust](#)
- [The Divine Fatherhood](#)
- [The Resurrection and the Life](#)
- [Rest in Service](#)
- [Hospice Watchers](#)
- [Beyond the Valley](#)
- [The Gate Wide Open](#)
- [A Hospice in Mysterious Dealings](#)
- [Rest in the Crucified](#)
- [The Pilgrim's Security](#)
- [The Unknown Morrow](#)
- [Hospice Foundation](#)
- [Hospice of the Mourner](#)
- [Voices of the Glorified Rest-giver](#)
- [The Meek and Lowly Pilgrim](#)
- [The Reassuring Voice](#)
- [The Earthly and the Heavenly Hospice](#)

- [The Hospice Outlook](#)
- [The Pilgrim's Confidence](#)
- [The Final Welcome](#)
- [Misgiving Rebuked](#)
- [Rest of Forgiveness](#)
- [Fellowship with the Father and the Son](#)
- [Rest in the Holy Spirit](#)
- [Hospice of Prayer](#)
- [Final Rest and Beatific Presence](#)

3) John MacDuff's devotionally oriented work - [REST AND REFRESHMENT IN THE VALLEYS](#)

- [1. Divine Immutability](#)
- [2. All for Good](#)
- [3. The Sympathy of Jesus](#)
- [4. The Wind Tempered](#)
- [5. The Fatherhood of God](#)
- [6. Transcendently Able](#)
- [7. Right Guidance](#)
- [8. Higher Uses](#)
- [9. The Gracious Word](#)
- [10. A Reigning Savior](#)
- [11. Divine Leading](#)
- [12. The Farewell Gift](#)
- [13. The Compassion of Jesus](#)
- [14. The Lord Upright](#)
- [15. Full Satisfaction](#)
- [16. The Secret of Submission](#)
- [17. A Risen Christ](#)
- [18. The Creator and Redeemer](#)
- [19. Proof and Triumph of Love](#)
- [20. Future Unfoldings](#)
- [21. A Great Salvation](#)
- [22. Fears Quieted](#)
- [23. The Way Known](#)
- [24. Prayer](#)
- [25. Tender Dealings](#)
- [26. Sleeping and Waking](#)
- [27. The Return to Zion](#)
- [28. The Great High Priest](#)
- [29. Fatherly Chastisement](#)
- [30. God Unchanging](#)
- [31. Healing for All](#)
- [32. Divine Power](#)
- [33. Providence and Grace](#)
- [34. Transformation at Death](#)
- [35. The Incarnate Savior](#)
- [36. The Rebukes of Love](#)
- [37. The Unspeakable Gift](#)
- [38. Jehovah Jireh](#)
- [39. Glorious Attributes and Ways](#)
- [40. The Second Coming](#)
- [41. Imputed Righteousness](#)
- [42. Christ Ever the Same](#)
- [43. The Soul's Portion](#)
- [44. Hope](#)
- [45. The Supreme Rule of Jesus](#)

- [46. The Perpetual Presence](#)
- [47. Christ's Deity](#)
- [48. The Imperishable Gift](#)
- [49. The Recompense of Trust](#)
- [50. The Riches of God's Mercy](#)
- [51. Acceptance of the Little](#)
- [52. None Cast out](#)
- [53. The Blessed Hope](#)
- [54. The Divine Way Perfect](#)
- [55. Perseverance](#)
- [56. Delight in God's Law](#)
- [57. Christ the Propitiation](#)
- [58. Fullness of Joy](#)
- [59. Inviolable Security](#)
- [60. The Safe Deposit](#)
- [61. All Power of Jesus](#)
- [62. Help in Extremity](#)
- [63. Prevailing Intercession](#)
- [64. A Pardoning God](#)
- [65. A Gracious Message](#)
- [66. Perfect Trust](#)
- [67. God All Satisfying](#)
- [68. Salvation to the Uttermost](#)
- [69. Asleep in Jesus](#)
- [70. The Last Musing](#)

4) Sermons by C H Spurgeon

- [Hebrews 4:1,2 Fearful of Coming Short](#)
- [Hebrews 4:2 Profitable Mixture](#)
- [Hebrews 4:3 The Believer's Present Rest](#)
- [Hebrews 4:3 A Delicious Experience](#)
- [Hebrews 4:3 Rest](#)
- [Hebrews 4:9 Heavenly Rest](#)

5) Sermons by Alexander Maclaren

- [Hebrews 4:3 The Rest of Faith](#)
- [Hebrews 4:9, 10 Entrance Into God's Rest](#)
- [Hebrews 4:11 Man's Share in God's Rest](#)

6) Miscellaneous Sermons

- [Hebrews 3:7-19 Resisting A Rest - Deffinbaugh](#)
- [Hebrews 4:1-10 Defining Rest - Deffinbaugh](#)
- [Hebrews 4:11-16 Striving to Rest - Deffinbaugh](#)
- [Hebrews: Looking Unto Jesus - Goto Page 119 - Alderman](#)
- [Hebrews 4:9-10 The Sabbath Rest - James Hastings](#)
- [Hebrews 4:1-13 God's Rest and Man's Rest - S Lewis Johnson](#)
- [Hebrews 4:1-13 Entering Into God's Rest - John MacArthur](#)
- [Hebrews 4:1-13 Entering Into God's Rest - Study Guide - John MacArthur](#)
- [The Rest of Creation - John MacArthur](#)
- [Hebrews 4:1-12 The Rest of Faith - Phil Newton](#)
- [Hebrews 4:1-11 Be diligent to enter God's Rest - John Piper](#)
- [Hebrews 4:1-13 A Perfect Future Rest - Gil Rugh](#)
- [Hebrews 4:9 God's Rest - Chuck Smith](#)

7) On Site In Depth Commentary (some duplication of material on this page)

Hebrews 4:1; Hebrews 4:2; Hebrews 4:3; Hebrews 4:4; Hebrews 4:5; Hebrews 4:6; Hebrews 4:7; Hebrews 4:8; Hebrews 4:9; Hebrews 4:10; Hebrews 4:11

8) Journal Articles on Rest - Some of these are not free and require an annual subscription (\$50 for individual or less for a monthly pass) well worth the cost if you frequently consult theological journals - **Articles below in bold are the complete article available free online**

- [T K Oberholtzer The Warning Passages in Hebrews -Pt 2- The Kingdom Rest in Hebrews 3:1-4:13 - Bib Sac 145:578 \(April, 1988\)](#)
- [Paul House - The God Who Gives Rest in the Land: Joshua - SBJT 2:3 \(Fall 1998\)](#)
- [John Laansma - I Will Give You Rest'- The Background And Significance Of The Rest Motif In The New Testament - Tyndale Bulletin 46:2 \(NA 1995\)](#)
- [David A deSilva - Entering God's Rest: Eschatology And The Socio-Rhetorical Strategy Of Hebrews - TrinJ 21:1 \(Spring 2000\)](#)
- [Robert Owens - A Consideration of Work and Rest from the Perspectives of Justification, Creation, and Eschatology - FM 17:3 \(Summer 2000\)](#)
- [Randall C. Gleason - The Old Testament Background of Rest in Hebrews 3:7-4:11 - Bib Sac 157:627 \(Jul 2000\)](#)

SOME SCRIPTURES ON REST

The concept of rest has special meaning in Scripture for God is said to rest from His creative activity on the seventh day (Ge 2:2, 3) and the Sabbath as instituted for Israel was to be a day of rest (Ex 31:15). The Promised Land was to be allowed to rest every seventh year (Lev 25:4). The temple was to be the Lord's resting place among His people (1Chr 28:2; Ps 132:8, 14). Below are a few select Scriptures (some with commentary) that deal with various aspects of **God's rest** as it applies to believers today.

In the OT the concept of rest often meant **rest from war** as in several of the following passages. Notice that in Judges the land rested while the judge was alive (cp Jdg 3:11-note, Jdg 3:30-note, Jdg 5:31-note, Jdg 8:28-note), suggesting that when there was a degree of order and authority and righteousness, the Lord gave the land and its people rest.

Can we not apply that to our lives as NT believers? Do we not experience a sense of calm and absence of war when we are walking in righteousness, godliness and holiness when God is "on the throne" of our lives? And conversely, when we reject God's authority, do we not experience internal and often external (in the form for example of the disciplining hand of Jehovah) war in our spiritual lives? May God strengthen each of us with His Spirit in our inner man that we might be empowered by His grace to walk in holiness, so that we might experience His rest and peace in our lives. Amen.

Joshua 11:23 So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord had spoken to Moses, and Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Thus the land had **rest** (Heb = shaqat; Lxx = katapauo) from war.

Comment: Joshua 11:23 is a key verse in the book of Joshua. The idea here is that Joshua brought **rest** for Israel as a nation from **external enemies**, a thought repeated in **Joshua 14:15** (where "**rest**" = Heb = shaqat; Lxx = kopazo = to abate, stop, cease as of the wind Mt 14:32). Specifically the conquests of Joshua had brought about **rest** in the sense that the major battles to secure the land had been waged and won against the pagan kings, but there were still additional internal battles which would be necessary to fully drive out the pagan inhabitants (note God's instruction called for utter destruction of the pagan peoples and their evil influences - see Dt 7:1, 2, 3), something most of the tribes of Israel did not fully accomplish much to their dismay and detriment (e.g., read Jdg 1:19, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 [**see notes**] - observe the repetitive phrases synonymous with "**did not drive out**" - which also helps to explain how Joshua 11:23 does not contradict Joshua 13:1, which surely describes the land each tribe was to possess by driving out the inhabitants, a command most of the tribes disobeyed) To summarize, there was a general national external "**rest**" externally but internal enemies remained.

David Guzik commenting on Joshua 11:23: The end of this phase of conquest was a greater invitation to the cooperation of the tribes with God. (Quoting **Alan Redpath**) "*Much territory was yet to be possessed, but it was left to each tribe to possess what potentially it had received through the conquest of the whole people in*

*which it had taken part. Each tribe was to apply individually the lessons it had learned in united war if it was to possess its inheritance. That the tribes failed to do so was not a reflection on the power of God, but on the failure to take for themselves what Joshua had given and allotted to each one of them." In the same sense, Jesus has already defeated the enemy and conquered the land, but He also calls us into battle to gain what is ours. **Are there "Canaanites" in your life which are disturbing your "rest"?***

Judges 3:11-note Then the land had **rest** (Heb = shaqat; Lxx = esuchazo = to keep quiet, rest as in Lk 23:56) forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died. (The Hebrew word shaqat or "rest" is translated "**undisturbed**" in Jdg 3:30-note, Jdg 5:31-note, Jdg 8:28-note, all referring to a time of rest for Israel from external enemies, cp same idea in of a country [or city] undisturbed and at rest - 2Chr 14:1, 5, 6, 20:30, 23:21)

Judges 8:28-note So Midian was subdued before the sons of Israel, and they did not lift up their heads anymore. And the land was **undisturbed** for forty years in the days of Gideon.

Shaqat - to be still, quiet or undisturbed. It means to be inactive. To be in a state of tranquility, in the above passages this "rest" being the result of the absence of war, during which the land experiences a sense of safety and security. In Ru 3:18-note it describes the Kinsman Redeemer Boaz who would not rest until he had accomplished what he had promised Ruth (cf Ru 3:13-note). Scripture declares that righteousness brings true security and tranquility (Is 32:17); but also warns of the false security that comes to the unrighteous (Ezek 16:49). Isaiah 57:20 gives a great word picture of the meaning of shaqat in the description of wicked people who are like "the tossing sea" which "cannot be **quiet** (shaqat; Lxx = anapauo)". Jer 30:10 refers to the "**quiet**" (shaqat = "undisturbed" in similar context of Je 46:27) Israel will experience in the future when the Messiah saves them. Jehovah predicts He will be "pacified" (shaqat) in the future (Ezek 16:42)

Isaiah 14:7 "The whole earth is at **rest** (nuach; Lxx = anapauo) and is **quiet (shaqat)**; They break forth into shouts of joy.

Comment: The fact that Isaiah specifies "the whole earth" identifies this verse is a prophecy that has not yet been fulfilled, but which will be fulfilled in the millennium. The fact that there will be **rest** and **quiet** during this period supports the premise that one component of the **future rest** ([see discussion below](#)) God promises includes the glorious millennial reign of Christ. **Dr. John Walvoord** commenting on this verse states that

The oppression of Babylon will end in the time of millennial peace. (Walvoord, J. F. The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books)

Isaiah 62:1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not **keep quiet** (Hebrew = shaqat), until (time phrase - what follows has not yet been fulfilled so it is yet future) her righteousness goes forth like brightness, and her salvation like a torch that is burning.

Comment: In Isaiah 62:1 God says He will not "**keep quiet**" or **rest** until He accomplishes His intended purpose for Zion, which ultimately speaks of her redemption at the end of the **Great Tribulation**, which is terminated abruptly and gloriously by the return of the Messiah (cp Ro 11:26, 27-notes; see also the **Second Coming**), the event that marks the coronation of Jesus Christ as the King of kings and the inception of His 1000 year earthly **Millennial Reign** from His capital city, Jerusalem (Zion). For **Zion's sake** and base on His covenant promises to Abraham (especially the promise of land), God will finally bring righteousness (cp "bring in everlasting righteousness" Da 9:24-note) and peace and real rest to the land of Israel!

Commenting on Isaiah 60:1-22 **Dr John Walvoord** explains that...

God's future redemption of Israel will bring a glorious future. The glory will come from God Himself, and the nations will respond and come to the light (Is 60:1, 2, 3). The wealth of the world will accrue to them (Is 60:4, 5, 6, 7). Herds of camels will cover the land (Is 60:6) and abundant offerings will be offered on the altar (Is 60:7). **These predictions have not been fulfilled in history and anticipate the future Millennial Kingdom.** (Walvoord, J. F. The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books) (Bolding added)

Jeremiah 6:16 Thus says Jehovah, "**Stand** (a command not a suggestion) by the ways and see and **ask** (command) for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; **and you will find rest** (Hebrew = margowa) **for your souls**. But they said, 'We will not walk in it (cp He 3:18, 19).'

Comment: The **Septuagint (LXX)** translates this unique Hebrew noun **margowa** with the noun **hagnismos** which means purification, as when one makes something ritually acceptable or generally the process of being morally purified. The context of this passage indicates that "soul rest" is found in paying attention to the paths Jehovah has set out from ancient times, giving us timeless instructions on how we should walk and then we choosing to walk in that way. The implication is that [1] we must know these old paths and which implies we

must study His Word and [2] we must trust and obey that His path is best and we will experience the soul blessing of His rest.

Jeremiah 31:2 Thus says the LORD, "The people who survived the sword Found grace in the wilderness-- Israel, when it went to find its rest." (Read context - Note God's motivation for fulfilling this promise of future rest to Israel - Jer 31:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, especially Jer 31:3, compare also Je 30:24 with Je 31:1)

John Walvoord comments: "Following the rapture of the church, Jesus Christ will return to minister once again to His chosen nation, Israel. He will give the nation physical and spiritual rest during the **Millennium**." (Ed: As promised here through His prophet Jeremiah. (Theological Wordbook)

Thomas Constable has an interesting note: When the Israelites would seek rest from the attacks of their enemies (cf. 6:16; Ex 33:14; Dt. 3:20; Josh 1:13, 15; 22:4; Is 63:14), they would find it in the wilderness (cf. Je 2:2; Rev. 12:14, 15, 16). They will find refuge in the wilderness in the Tribulation, as they did following the Exodus (cf. Ex 14:5-23; 33:14; Nu 14:20). But Israel's ultimate rest will occur in the Millennium when they rest in the Promised Land. ([Constable Notes and Commentary](#))

KJV Bible Commentary: Jeremiah 31:1 continues the general theme of the glorious hope of a restored Israel and the establishment of a new covenant with them. The covenant to Abraham (cf. Gen 17:7) will finally be realized when God is God of all the families of Israel (Jer 31:1) ([Dobson, E. G., Charles Feinberg, E. Hindson, Woodrow Kroll, H. L. Wilmington: KJV Bible Commentary: Nelson or Logos](#))

Isaiah 30:15 For thus the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has said, "**Inrepentance** (Note the order - **What does this signify? What must we do to effect God's rest?**) and **rest** (Hebrew = nahat = calmness, quietness, freedom from oppression or strife, also used in Pr 29:9, Ec 4:6, 6:5, 9:17) you will be saved, in **quietness** (Hebrew = shaqat) and trust (faith in God and His trustworthy Word of Truth) is your strength." But (This word of contrast always marks a "change of direction" of thought, etc) you were not willing (not positively inclined, not yielding).

Isaiah 32:17 And the work of righteousness will be peace, and the service of righteousness, quietness (shaqat - calmness, rest; Lxx = anapausis = cessation) and confidence forever.

Psalms 37:7 **Rest** (command to rest! Hebrew = damam = to be silent or still) in Jehovah and **wait** (command) patiently for Him. Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carries out wicked schemes.

Spurgeon: Rest in the LORD. Rest in the Lord. What? Where? When? Why? How? This... is a most divine precept, and requires much grace to carry it out. To hush the spirit, to be silent before the Lord, to wait in holy patience the time for clearing up the difficulties of Providence -- that is what every gracious heart should aim at. "Aaron held his peace (Heb = damam)" (Lv 10:3KJV) "I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." (Ps 39:9KJV) A silent tongue in many cases not only shows a wise head, but a holy heart. **And wait patiently for Him.** Time is nothing to him; let it be nothing to thee. God is worth waiting for. "He never is before His time, He never is too late." In a story we wait for the end to clear up the plot; we ought not to prejudge the great drama of life, but stay till the closing scene, and see to what a *finis* the whole arrives. **Fret not thyself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass.** There is no good, but much evil, in worrying your heart about the present success of graceless plotters: be not enticed into premature judgments -- they dishonour God, they weary yourself. Determine, let the wicked succeed as they may, that you will treat the matter with indifference, and never allow a question to be raised as to the righteousness and goodness of the Lord. What if wicked devices succeed and your own plans are defeated! there is more of the love of God in your defeats than in the successes of the wicked.

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James Hervey: Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him. There are two words in the original, which express the privilege and the duty of resting on Christ: one implies such a state of acquiescence, as silences the clamors of conscience, and composes the perturbation (disturbance, disorder, uneasiness, anxiety) of the spirit; the other signifies the refreshment and repose of a weary pilgrim, when he arrives at the end of his journey, and is settled for life in a secure, commodious, plentiful habitation.

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James D. Burns :Take the case of one who, with a load above his strength, has been toiling some steep and broken path, when suddenly he finds it lifted off and transferred to another whose strength he knows to be more than equal to the task, and in whose sympathy he can securely trust. What would his feeling be but one of perfect rest, and calm reliance, and joyous freedom, as they went on their way together? And such is the

blessedness of rolling our care upon the LORD -- in weakness we are resting on superior strength (cp 2Co 12:9-note, 2Co 12:10-note), in perplexity and doubt we are resting on superior wisdom, in all times of trial and hard service we can stay ourselves on the assurance of his perfect sympathy. The literal meaning of the word **rest**, is be silent towards the LORD. With the eye fixed on Him let all unbelieving thoughts be stilled, such thoughts as rise and rankle in the querulous spirit when it sees only its troubles, and not God in them, when the mists of earth hide from its sight the eternal stars of heaven. Then like Jacob, it may say morosely, "All these things are against me" (Ge 42:36) or, like Elijah, despondently, "It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life" (1Ki 19:4) or, like Jonah, fretfully, "I do well to be angry." (Jonah 4:9KJV) In regard to all such dark and unbelieving suggestions, the heart is to keep silence, to be still and know that He is God (Ps 46:10); silent as to murmuring (Php 2:14KJV-note), but not silent as to prayer, for in that holy meditative stillness the heart turns to commune with him. **What is "resting in God,"** but the instinctive movement and upward glance of the spirit to Him; the confiding all one's griefs and fears to Him, and feeling strengthened, patient, hopeful in the act of doing so! It implies a willingness that He should choose for us, a conviction that the ordering of all that concerns us is safer in His hands than in our own.

A few practical remarks: **(1) Our "resting patiently" in the Lord applies only to the trials which He sends,** not to the troubles which even Christians often make for themselves. There is a difference in the burdens that come in the way of duty, and those that come through our wandering into other ways. We can roll the one upon the Lord, but with the other our punishment may be to be left to bear them long, and to be bruised in bearing them. **(2) The duty here enjoined is to be carried through all our life.** We all admit that patient waiting is needed for the great trials of life, but may not acknowledge so readily that it is needed as much for little, daily, commonplace vexations. But these are as much a test of Christian principle as the other. **(3) This resting in God is a criterion of a man's spiritual state.** It needs a special faculty of discernment, a new sense to be opened in the soul, before our fallen nature can understand or desire it.

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James Smith: Rest in the Lord.

- (1) **Rest** in the will of God, for whatever he wills is for your good, your highest good.
- (2) **Rest** in the love of God, and often meditate on the words of Jesus on this point, "Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved me." (Jn 17:23)
- (3) **Rest** in the mercy of God.
- (4) **Rest** in the word of God.
- (5) **Rest** in the relation thy God fills to thee; He is the Father.
- (6) **Rest** in the LORD as he is manifested in Jesus, thy God in covenant.

NEW TESTAMENT WORDS FOR "REST"

See the word study on each word for more detail...

1) Rest (373) (anapauo [word study] from **ana** = again, back, or even as intensifying the meaning of the verb + **pauo** = to cease or give rest) means (1) to cause someone to gain relief, refreshment, intermission from toil from toil (Lxx use = 1Chr 22:18, Mt 11:28, 1Co 16:18, 2Co 7:13, Philemon 1:7, 20) (2) in the middle voice meaning to take bodily rest, as in sleep (Mt 26:45, Mk 14:41, 6:31 **Septuagint - LXX** use = Ex 23:12) and (3) to rest upon an object in context referring to the Spirit of the Glory, even the Spirit of God, resting with refreshing power upon the suffering child of God, causing him or her to live a life which pleases God and toward which the world hurls its venom and hate. (1Pe 4:14-note).

When we're discouraged spiritually
And fear and doubt assail our soul,
We may just need to rest awhile
Before God heals and makes us whole
-Sper

2) Rest (373) (anapausis [word study] from from **ana** = again, back, or even as intensifying the meaning of the verb + **pauo** = to cease or give rest) describes a cessation of any motion, business or labor in which one is engaged. In short one meaning of anapausis is to stop an activity (cp Re 4:8 of not stopping praising God). Jesus offers us a rest that comes from inner tranquility (Mt 11:29).

3) Rest (2664) (katapauo [word study] from **kata** = down, here intensifying the meaning of + **pauo** = make to cease) means to cause to cease some activity (resulting in a period of rest), to make quite, to cause to be at rest, to grant rest. There is one NT use with the nuance of to restrain (Acts 14:18). Note that the verb **anapauo** can mean to rest inwardly, but not necessarily from a cessation of work as is expressed by **katapauo** [word study].

4) Rest (2663) (katapausis [word study] from **katá** = intensifies or "down" conveying sense of permanency + **paúo** = make to cease) describes literally a ceasing from one's work or activity. Thayer cites a use in the active sense of a putting to rest as used in the sentence "a calming of the winds". Metaphorically as used in the present verse, katapausis speaks of the spiritual fulfillment God provides for His people.

REST MODELED BY THE FATHER AND THE SON

God set the pattern for taking rest when "on the seventh day... He rested from all the work of creating that he had done" (Ge 2:2,3). Clearly God is omnipotent (Ge17:1; 35:11) and it follows that His rest was not the result of being worn out or tired. In fact His rest was associated with the completion of a task (with each day's "work" God concluded "it was good" - Ge 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). God's rest is a picture and a model given to us that we might understand our need for physical rest every seventh day (Ex 16:23, 24, 25, 26; 20:8, 9, 10, 11; Lv 23:3; Dt. 5:12, 13, 14, 15). It is also worth noting that God created the cycle of light and darkness to provide for daily rest for man as well as for all His creation (Ge 1:14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19). **How are you resting in these tumultuous times? Stay close to Christ and the promises of God in His Word so that your soul might enter His rest daily and weekly.**

Jesus, fully God and fully Man, experienced the need for physical rest and modeled the satisfying of this need. For example, He rested by the well at Sychar in Samaria while His disciples went to buy food (Jn 4:4, 5, 6), and He fell asleep in a boat crossing the Sea of Galilee (Mk 4:38; Luke 8:22, 23 - **Beloved, you may feel like you are in a "boat" being storm tossed, but if you enter His rest, rest assured, you can rest in Christ!**). When Jesus and His disciples were pressed by the crowds, He exhorted them to "Come with Me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest" (Mk 6:31). It follows that physical rest is a divinely ordained human need which we must heed lest we burn ourselves out in ministry or any other human endeavor.

It is interesting to observe that Scripture also speaks of physical death as rest. And thus we read of Jacob's request instructed Joseph not to bury him in Egypt: "When I **rest** (**Lxx** = koimao = fall asleep, cp 1Ki 11:43, 1Th 4:14-note) with my fathers, carry me out of Egypt and bury me where they are buried" (Ge 47:29, Ge 47:30NIV). God told Moses on the east side of the Jordan River, "You are going to rest (Dt 31:16KJV = "sleep"; **Lxx** = koimao = fall asleep) with your fathers" (Dt. 31:16). David's death was similarly described (2Sa 7:12; 1Ki 1:21 - both passages in the **Lxx** = koimao = fall asleep), and Job spoke of the "sleep of death" as **rest** (Job 3:13, 17 - rest = Hebrew nuach; **Lxx** = **anapauo**). **Beloved, does not this sure hope of future rest in Christ not buoyed your heart that is so often made downcast and despairing by the heavy load of the variegated toils and afflictions you daily experience?! "Rest" in this truth and let it encourage and refresh your soul.**

Scripture also uses the word **rest** to speak of the freedom from external turmoil and warfare. God through Moses promised after they entered the Land of Canaan, God "will give you **rest** from all your enemies" (Dt. 12:10; 25:19; Josh 1:13). When Joshua "took the entire land" and "gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions... the land had **rest** from war" (Josh 11:23, 24; 23:1). Although King David was a warrior, God gave him "**rest** (Hebrew = **nuach** = to pause, not only absence of movement but being settled in a particular place with overtones of finality, or of victory, salvation, etc) from all his enemies around him" (2Sa 7:1). Similarly, God gave rest to Asa (2Chr 14:6, 7; 15:15), to Jehoshaphat (2Chr 20:30), and to Nehemiah (Neh 9:28). **It should not go without our notice that God gave rest in each of the above situations when the principal recipients were obedient. Obedience (ultimately an act of faith) brings forth the peaceful fruit of His supernatural rest. Are you experiencing His rest today? If not, is there any act(s) of disobedience you need to confess and from which you need to repent? If so, beloved, don't delay. Today if you hear His voice, enter the soul satisfying quietness and rest of restored fellowship and communion in Christ!**

Rest is also used to speak of peace in the personal sense as we see in Job's perplexity about his difficult experiences writing, "I am

not at ease, nor am I **quiet** (shaqat = to be quiet, undisturbed, calm, at rest), and I am not at **rest** (Job 3:13, 17 - rest = Hebrew nuach; Lxx = **anapauo**), but turmoil (agitation, raging, trouble, trembling) comes." (Job 3:26). After Ruth reported to Naomi on Boaz's gift and words in the field, Naomi said that Boaz would not **rest** (he would not have an inner peace) "until the matter is settled today" (Ruth 3:18-note). In the psalms we read "Return to your rest (Heb = manoach = resting place, repose; Lxx = **anapausis**) O my soul, for the LORD has dealt bountifully (Ps 13:6) with you." (Ps 116:7). Spurgeon commenting on the psalmist's rest writes...

He calls the **rest** still his own, and feels full liberty to return to it. What a mercy it is that even if our soul has left its **rest** for a while we can tell it -- **"It is thy rest still."** The Psalmist had evidently been somewhat disturbed in mind, his troubles had ruffled his spirit but now with a sense of answered prayer upon him **he quiets his soul**. He had **rested** before, for he knew the blessed **repose** of faith, and therefore he returns to the God who had been the **refuge of his soul** in former days. **Even as a bird flies to its nest, so does his soul fly to his God**. Whenever a child of God even for a moment loses his peace of mind, he should be concerned to find it again, not by seeking it in the world or in his own experience, but in the Lord alone. When the believer prays, and the Lord inclines his ear, the road to the old rest is before him, let him not be slow to follow it. **(Ed: Beloved, if you are outside of God's supernatural rest today, your inner peace being greatly disturbed by distressing circumstances and/or "dysfunctional" people, may God grant you the grace to "preach" Ps 116:7 to your soul (cp Jer 6:16-see note above), trusting not in mind over matter but in the supernatural working of the Spirit to strengthen and sustain your inner man as you rest in Him.)**

Such spiritual peace as a result of faith in Jesus Christ and God the Father is what the Lord Jesus was offering when He said, "Come unto me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me ... and you will find rest for your souls" (Mt. 11:28, 29, 30)

As we labor for Christ and the glory of God,
May we also learn to **rest** in Christ and the grace of God.

As alluded to elsewhere in these notes Israel's promised physical rest (especially rest from war, from external disturbances) in Canaan, was illustrative and symbolic of spiritual salvation found only in Christ by grace through faith. The only way any individual, Jew or Gentile, can find spiritual rest is through confessing Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior (Ro 10:9, 10).

**REST TODAY
A LIFE...
NOT A LAND!**

When the writer of Hebrews describes the **rest** available to Israel in the OT, He is referring primarily to a **land**, the land of Canaan, the promised land of milk and honey (Nu 13:27, 14:8). The promised land is considered by many interpreters to be an earthly picture of what Jesus offers in the NT in the form of a spiritual (and physical) kingdom (cp Col 2:17-note). And so in the NT "**rest**" refers primarily to the promise of a **life** (in Christ, cp Col 2:3-note, Ep 1:3-note) and not to the promise of a **land**.

Some of the readers of epistle to the Hebrews were "leaning toward" Christianity or perhaps had even professed a belief in the Messiah, but had not yet expressed saving faith. This conclusion is based in part on the author's use of the conditional "**if's**", which introduce the subjunctive mood (the mood of probability - cp He 3:6, 7-note, He 3:14-note, He 4:7, 8-note), and also upon the warning passages in Hebrews such as in Hebrews 2:1-4 warning against neglect and Hebrews 3:7-4:13 warning against unbelief, etc.

To what event does the "40 years" refer to in Hebrews 3:9-note and Hebrews 3:17-note? (cp Nu 13:25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, Nu 14:11, 22, 23) The majority of the spies (10 out of 12, all except Joshua and Caleb) who went into Canaan "looked at their circumstances" (Nu 13:32, 33 - note the effect Nu 14:1, 2) instead of keeping their eyes on the promise of God (or better "the God of the promises") which Moses recorded in Nu 13:2...

"The land of Canaan which **I am going to give** to the sons of Israel" (Nu 13:2)

When Israel took their eyes off of God and His trustworthy promises (cp 2Pe 1:4-note), their **faith** began to turn to **fear** (as it always does!) And then they provoked God so that they were denied the very thing that He had initially promised but which was to be obtained only by faith, faith that obeys. The majority decision not to go into the land was evidence of Israel's disbelief and disobedience (Heb 3:18, 19-note). Their failure to believe was not ignorance but stubbornness and thus they were refused rest, instead wandering for 40 years in the wilderness.

What are the lessons we can learn from Hebrews 3-4?

1). **We must receive the promise of God's rest while it is still time: "Promise remains" is present passive meaning "caused to remain" but when God decides the time is over, it is over.**

Why fear? "Fear" in Heb 4:1 is aorist passive meaning because of what happened to Israel, take this to heart and let it cause you to tremble. This is not a reference to "reverential fear" but to a trembling fear that one might miss God's promised rest of salvation! This is a serious passage. **Dear reader, have you heard over and over what God has said about entering His rest of salvation by grace through faith in Christ and yet you have never heeded and embraced Christ** (Mt 11:28, 29, 30)? Then you are that very **"one"** in the phrase "any **one** of you" in Hebrews 4:1 who has come short of God's promised rest! Peter exhorted his readers (and by application all readers) to make sure of their calling and election (2Pe 1:10-note). The writer is saying that if you have failed to come in, the promise still remains, so enter in by faith. The writer is speaking to first century Hebrews readers who were wavering, perhaps professing the Messiah, but not yet truly believing in and possessing Messiah as the One Who brings the promise of rest, in the case of salvation, a rest from works carried out in an attempt to merit salvation. By way of application this same promise of the rest of salvation in Christ remains available to any unsaved sinner who reads this epistle. Paul would echo the urgency of the invitation to come on in declaring "now is **"THE ACCEPTABLE TIME,"** behold, now is **"THE DAY OF SALVATION"**" (2Co 6:2, quoting Isa 49:8).

**Now is the time; He bends His ear,
And waits for your request;
Come, lest He rouse His wrath and swear,
"Ye shall not see My rest."**

[\(Sing to the Lord Jehovah's Name - Isaac Watts 1719\)](#)

In Hebrews 4:1 the phrase **"seem to have come short"** (He 4:1KJV) means to essentially to be found to come short. The same verb *hustereo* is used by Paul in Ro 3:23 ("all have sinned and **fall short of** the glory of God"). When you "fall short" of something, you can miss it an inch or a mile, but you still miss it! So those in Ro 3:23-note have missed God's glory by a "mile". There are others who have missed it by only an "inch". E.g., the man in Mk 10:21 (context = Mk 10:17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27)

Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Jesus was telling the man in Mk 10:17 that in essence "you are **coming short** in just one thing"! Isn't it amazing how some people can come so close...they're in a good church, they know verses in the Bible, they have heard the gospel proclaimed clearly, they're "good" people, and yet still, **they lack one thing**...they have never confessed Jesus as Lord and Savior of their life (Ro 10:9, 10-note) and never entered into His salvation rest!

[Lord, I Believe a Rest Remains](#)
by Charles Wesley, 1740

Lord, I believe a rest remains
To all Thy people known,
A rest where pure enjoyment reigns,
And Thou art loved alone.

A rest where all our soul's desire
Is fixed on things above;
Where fear, and sin, and grief expire,
Cast out by perfect love.

O that I now the rest might know,
Believe, and enter in!
Now, Savior, now the power bestow,
And let me cease from sin.

Remove this hardness from my heart,
This unbelief remove:
To me the rest of faith impart,
The Sabbath of Thy love.

When you come so close and yet are still short, you might be so deceived (almost like a vaccination gives you an attenuated virus, so you cannot catch the real thing! Many persons I fear are "vaccinated" and have never experienced the "real thing!") and think that you have truly entered into Christ's rest, and this is why it is so important for us to continue to encourage one another daily while there is still time (cp He 3:13-note). Coming to Bible study means nothing if Christ is not in your heart (although one of the best places to meet Him of course is in the study of His Word!). You can know a lot in your head but the real issue is to make certain of your calling and election. Many will say to Jesus in that day "Lord, Lord" but He will say "I never knew you." (Mt 7:21-note, Mt 7:22-note). Many have and will continue to come so close to salvation and yet miss Christ by a mile (and an eternity!), for they never really knew Him as proven by the fact that they have never experienced a indisputable "before/after" change in their conduct or lifestyle! (cp 2Co 13:5)

2). God has a way for us to enter His rest:

First you must hear (Heb 4:2-note...have had good news preached). When you hear Ro 10:17-note occurs so that when God's word is spoken to my heart, faith is energized. We have to respond, to believe, to be fully persuaded to the point that I am willing to wholly commit. Jesus explained this truth to Nicodemus...it's not enough to "know" but you must "believe". Faith comes from hearing. What is the response? Mt 16:24 Jesus said ""If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." We come on His terms not ours. The fullest expression of faith is obedience. James says that if you say you have faith, show me your works. You don't get saved by works but the works prove that you are saved. When you hear, faith is energized but one still has to respond to what God said. "United" in He 4:2-note describes the "mixing" of that faith in an inseparable union.

3). We must humbly receive His rest:

"Enter that rest" is present tense expressing the idea that we continue to enter that rest and middle voice is our own choice. So the rest of God does not cease when you enter into salvation.

"Finished" = we entered into something that was a finished work from the foundation of the world...all that was necessary has been provided. But you never find a person who has entered into the rest of God who goes around bragging about it. Ps 40 describes a man in miry clay (which was to keep the animals from getting out and the harder they tried to get out, the deeper they sank). We are like that helpless animal, crying out from our helpless estate and He inclined His ear unto us and delivered us from the miry clay, setting our feet upon the rock, placing a new song in our heart. A true realization of the sovereignty of God in salvation and the fact that you have just become a part of His plan humbles the person who has just become a part of His finished work.

Man was made to enjoy His rest: Genesis 1:24-31: describes God's creation activity on the 6th Day.

Genesis 2:1-2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. 2 And by the seventh day God completed His work which He had done; and He **rested** on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

Comment: "**Rested**" is the Hebrew verb **shabath or shavath** [07673] to repose, (intrans.) to desist from exertion, cease, leave off (Job 32:1; Je 31:36; Hos 7:4), rest; to come to an end; to keep or celebrate the Sabbath (Lv 23:32, a cognate acc. construction), observe the sacred day (considered by some a homophonous root); to be ended, (trans.) to sever; to put an end to (war, Ps 46:9; contention, Pr 18:18), have an end (Ge 8:22; Is. 24:8; Lam 5:15); to destroy; to cause to rest, let rest; to bring to an end, abolish; to cease to exist (Je 31:36), to remove, take away (Ex. 12:15; Lv 26:6; Ps 119:119; Is 30:11; Jer 7:34; Ezek 23:27, 48; 30:13; 34:25). The primary idea of shavath appears to be to sit down or to sit still. It describes men (Ex. 23:12; 34:21) and land which lies fallow (Lv 26:34, 35 cf. Lv 25:2).

Shabath is the opposite of laboring or toiling (Ge 2:2, 3; Ex 31:17). The traveler rests (abstains) from traveling (Is. 33:8). The elders rested from the gate (i.e., did not go to the forum to the Sabbath). The seventh day "put a stop to" the week's work. Other related meanings of shavath are: to put away (Ex 12:15), to put down (2Ki 23:5), to be lacking (Lv. 2:13), and to eliminate (Lv 26:6). The most basic meaning is found in Ge 8:22. There will be no "interrupting" (cf. 2Chr. 16:5). Finally, God was not tired in Ge 2:2, 3. Shavath may imply rest, but not in every case. God's work was completed, and, therefore there was no need to continue. He did not need to rest like a weary man; He only "stopped" His creative activity.

Shabath/shavath - 63 verses in the **NAS** - Ge 2:2, 3; 8:22; Ex 5:5; 12:15; 16:30; 23:12; 31:17; 34:21; Lev 2:13; 26:6, 34f; Dt 32:26; Josh 5:12; Ru 4:14; 2Ki 23:5, 11; 2Chr 16:5; Neh 4:11; 6:3; Job 32:1; Ps 8:2; 46:9; 89:44; 119:119; Pr 18:18; 22:10; Isa 13:11; 14:4; 16:10; 17:3; 21:2; 24:8; 30:11; 33:8; Je 7:34; 16:9; 31:36; 36:29; 48:33, 35; Lam 5:14, 15; Ezek 6:6; 7:24; 12:23; 16:41; 23:27, 48; 26:13; 30:10, 13, 18; 33:28; 34:10, 25; Da 9:27; 11:18; Hos 1:4; 2:11; 7:4; Amos 8:4.

NAS renderings of Shabath/shavath = brought to an end(1), cease(21), ceased(7), ceases(3), did away(2), disappear(1), do away(1), eliminate(3), gone(1), hear... more(1), lacking(1), left you without(1), made an end(1), make an end(1), no*(1), observe(1), observe the rest(1), put a stop(3), put an end(3), puts an end(1), remove(2), removed(1), rest(3), rested(3), silence(1), stop(2), stopped(1).

Then God rested on the 7th Day the first day of man's existence on earth was experiencing God's rest. Man was created in the finished work of God's rest. Adam and Eve lived totally dependent on God...that is rest. No anxiety, no fear, etc, but from Gen 3 on you see a restless man after he sinned. When you see a sinful man apart from God, he is restless.

4). The Rest in Heb 4:6-7 is graciously offered only for a time

In He 4:6-note "some" may be referring to Jews. Ro 11:5-note refers to a remnant of Jews getting saved and the time is still open. 2Co 3:14, 15

But their minds (referring to Jews) were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart.

But the writer is saying there is still opportunity. There is still a remnant so don't go back under the Law, because when Moses is read there is veil over your heart and you will shut down the very opportunity you have to enter true rest, when the veil is taken away (2Co 3:16). "Through David" probably refers to the Psalms. Heb 4:7-note "fixes" means that He places a boundary on the day.

5). When we enter salvation, we have entered His eternal rest:

In Hebrews 4:8-note he refers to Joshua to emphasize that Canaan was not the ultimate rest. Jesus is our Sabbath rest. Mt 11:28 Jesus said: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Find a person who has not entered His rest and you've got a religious person who is as miserable as you can find. We can partake of Christ's life as our very life as we are willing to take His yoke upon us, yielding to Him. This is the crucified life of Gal 2:20-note. And this life in His rest is not passive, because He will wear you out. But now it's not you from now on but all Him. His rest is ceasing from self-effort. Ps 46:10-note "Cease striving and know that I am God."

Three tenses of God's rest: (1) Salvation = rest from the penalty of sin (no condemnation) and we don't have to "do" something to make sure we're in. (2). Sanctification: Where daily we continue to enter His rest by abiding in Him, with the result that we are resting from the power of sin in our life. We all have a war going on inside: spirit against flesh. When I chose to remain at the Cross, He will give me rest. Gal 5:16 says when we obey (walk by) the Spirit, then we will not carry out the desire of the flesh, but can rest from that fleshly desire. Have you ever tried to overcome sin in your own power? Have fun! You won't last long. Instead, just get up tomorrow and acknowledge that the victory is not me overcoming anything because all my self-effort make me weary and heavy laden. The victory is Jesus overcoming me. "Lord Jesus, I just want to look at You today. Whatever happens I'm just trusting You. You be my life. You live Your life through me." What is that life? Peace, just as the angels announced : "Peace on earth. Good will toward men." Relax. Rest. (3) Finally believers will rest when we are freed from the presence of sin in glory, the ultimate rest.

**Abide in Him
ENTER HIS REST**

**REST FROM
A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

REST		
PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
God's Sabbath Rest	Salvation Rest	Millennium
Israel's Canaan Rest	Submission Rest	Heaven

The table above (the historical **past, present, future**) should not be confused with the **three tenses of salvation** (See **Three Tenses of Salvation**) -- (1) **Past tense salvation** = justification by faith = "**Salvation Rest**" in the table. (2) **Present tense salvation** = sanctification = "**Submission Rest**" in the table - Submission rest is descriptive of the "rest" believers experience as

they surrender or yield to the control of the Holy Spirit, ceasing to try to live the Christian life in their own strength. This surrender is a moment by moment, day by day, choice. Each trial, each temptation, each test, provides an opportunity for our **old flesh** to rise up and take control (with loss of the sense of "rest", cp similar idea in phrases like the "peace of God", "clear conscience") or to choose to allow the Spirit to control us and empower us through the trial, temptation or test (remembering 1Co 10:13-note). It is not simply a passive "letting go and letting God", but an active working out of our salvation in fear and trembling (Php 2:12-note), fully confident (walking by faith, not sight - 2Co 5:7) that God's Spirit in us will give us the desire and the power to be "victorious" in the moment of decision (Php 2:13-note, cp Jn 6:63, Ro 7:6-note, Ro 8:13-note). This description is the essence of the process of sanctification, of learning to walk by the Spirit (Ga 5:16-note), filled with (controlled by) the Spirit (Ep 5:18-note), keeping in step with the Spirit (Ga 5:25NIV-note). As we conduct ourselves in such a worthy manner pleasing to the Lord (even motivated by our sure hope of an even greater future rest), we will experience the reality of God's rest ("Submission Rest") in this present life. **May our Father graciously grant each of us both the desire and the power through His grace and His Spirit to continually experience His presence and His rest, for our good and His glory, all possible through the finished work of His "resting" (interceding) Son, Christ Jesus. Amen.**

Warren Wiersbe offers the following interpretation of the concept of **rest** in Hebrews 3-4...

The **Canaan rest** for Israel is a picture of the **spiritual rest** we find in Christ when we surrender to Him. When we come to Christ by faith, we find **salvation rest** (Mt 11:28).

When we yield and learn of Him and obey Him by faith, we enjoy **submission rest** (Mt 11:29, 30). The first is "**peace with God**" (Ro 5:1-note); the second is the "**peace of God**" (Php 4:6-note, Php 4:7-note, Php 4:8-note).

It is by believing that we enter into **rest** (He 4:3); it is by obeying God by faith and surrendering to His will that the **rest** enters into us. ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor or Logos](#))

Alternatively, one might also look at **rest** from the perspective of the **Three Tenses of Salvation** (Wiersbe addresses only the first two).

REST FROM A SOTERIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

ANOTHER INTERPRETATION OF REST IN HEBREWS 3-4

PAST TENSE SALVATION	PRESENT TENSE SALVATION	FUTURE TENSE SALVATION
Rest of justification	Rest of sanctification	Rest of glorification

Some commentators feel that the writer of Hebrews is describing primarily **past tense salvation** (e.g., see **Cole's sermon favoring "past tense salvation"**) and that his goal is to make certain that any Hebrew readers who are waffling between Judaism and Christianity would make the choice (today) to enter into the **spiritual rest** and **peace with God** found in justification by faith (Ro 5:1-note). Clearly without **past tense salvation** his readers can experience no **spiritual rest** for their souls, either in this life or the one to come. Others feel that the writer is addressing both **past and present tense salvation**, albeit with the emphasis still being on making certain that the Hebrew readers enter the **rest of past tense salvation**. Finally, a number of commentators feel that the writer is speaking of the **rest** that the believer will experience in eternity future when our salvation is consummated in glorification. (See related topic **Three Tenses of Salvation**) To reiterate, from the line of reasoning (and purpose) of the epistle of Hebrews (e.g., the warning passages, etc), it is clear that the writer desires to be absolutely clear with his vacillating Hebrew audience that they only have "**Today**" to enter the rest of salvation found only in faith in Messiah.

And so it is possible to interpret God's "**rest**" in Hebrews 4...

(1) The salvation **rest** associated with placing one's faith in Christ (see Mt 11:28, 29, 30 - past tense salvation). In the context of the entire epistle, this appears to be the primary meaning, that is, of coming to Jesus by faith and entering His **salvation rest** where self effort is replaced (or at least can and should be replaced) by Spirit initiated and empowered effort.

(2) The sanctification **rest** of those who are believers in Christ (present tense salvation), and who are living their Christian life in the power of the Spirit, keeping short accounts, and thus experiencing the "peace of God". This aspect of rest is that which is associated with sanctification, our day to day living out of the Christ life. Ray Stedman speaking of those who have entered this salvation rest by faith explains that tragically many believers experience breakdown in their Christianity (not referring to a loss of salvation but a loss of joy and sense of His presence and power) under the pressures of stress or responsibility because they try to work out their salvation in their power (cp Php 2:12-note, Php 2:13-note) and have not learned to "operate out of rest". ([Stedman, Ray: The Rest Obtained Is New-Creation Rest](#))

Hebrews 4:3 supports the premise that **rest** is something we must enter into the the first time (salvation rest by grace through faith) but is also a daily entering (also by grace through faith) into God's rest in the process of sanctification, that growth in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2Pe 3:18-note). So how does Hebrews 4:3 support this premise? Note that the verb **enter** is in the **present tense**, which indicates as believers we are in the process of entering. We are continually entering into His rest, day by day, even moment by moment. Even our experience as believers bears this out, for what believer when he or she has committed sin and fails to confess quickly, does not sense an inner "restlessness" and loss of peace. On the other hand when we can say as Paul said "I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience" (2Ti 1:3-note), we are surely experiencing some of the fruit of entering into His rest. There is another sense in which we are in the process of entering God's rest, for there is the sure hope of the **future rest** when we enter into the **Millennium** (see below) and then finally into the New Heavens and New Earth, where "there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." (Re 21:4-note) Surely this describes in part the ultimate rest into which we are entering.

(3). Some who believe in a literal 1000 year kingdom (see **Millennium** - one aspect of future tense salvation - see #4 for the other aspect) feel that the **rest** that is promised to Israel (and applies to all believers) will be partially fulfilled in the reign of Christ on earth ("the Messianic Age"), the "rest" of which Isaiah records...

Then it will come about in that day (when Messiah takes His throne in Jerusalem after the **Great Tribulation** - see **Daniel's Seventieth Week** - and the defeat of the Antichrist) that the nations will resort to the root of Jesse (the Messiah), Who will stand as a signal (a banner lifted up to be a rallying point) for the peoples; and His **resting place** (LXX uses the related word **anapausis**) will be glorious. (Isaiah 11:10; cp Isaiah 14:7- [see note](#))

(4). The **rest** associated with the **New Heavens and New Earth** where righteousness dwells forever (future tense salvation). John alludes to this rest writing...

I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may **rest** from their labors, for their deeds follow with them. (Re 14:13-note)

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The **KJV Commentary** emphasizes that...

Rest involves more than mere inactivity. It is that which follows the satisfactory completion of a task. Salvation rest is the gift reckoned to the believer resulting from Christ's finished work. Heaven (**Ed**: See #4 above) and **millennial** rest is the reward of the believer's labors for the Lord (Re 14:13-note). Hebrews 4:11 records the warning one more time: Do not miss through unbelief what God has promised. ([Dobson, E. G. Charles Feinberg, E Hindson, Woodrow Kroll, H L. Wilmington: KJV Bible Commentary: Nelson or Logos](#))

REST FROM A SCRIPTURAL PERSPECTIVE

SUGGESTION: Read through these passages in context (click links for passage in context) to give you a good sense of what God says about "rest".

KINDS OF REST

◆ Rest (cessation) from God's six days of creation: Ge 2:2-3; Ex 20:11; Heb 4:4, 10

- ◆ rest from labor (i.e., on certain days in Israel's calendar)
- ◆ on the Sabbath day: Ex 16:23; 20:10, 11; 31:15; Dt 5:12, 13, 14; Lk 23:56
- ◆ on the sabbatic year for the land: Ex 23:10, 11; Le 25:1, 2, 3, 4
- ◆ on the first and last days of the feast of unleavened bread: Le 23:5-8
- ◆ on the day of Pentecost: Le 23:21; Nu 28:26
- ◆ on the day of the feast of trumpets: Le 23:24, 25
- ◆ on the day of atonement: Le 23:27, 28
- ◆ on the first and last days of the feast of tabernacles: Le 23:39
- ◆ on the year of jubilee (fiftieth year): Le 25:11-12
- ◆ on certain days for the feast of Purim: Es 9:17-19:
- ◆ rest in Israel's promised land: Ex 33:14; Jos 1:13; 1Ki 8:56; Heb 3:18, 19:
- ◆ rest from Israel's national enemies: Dt 12:10; 25:19; Jos 23:1; 2 Sa 7:11; 1 Ch 22:9

SPIRITUAL REST

- ◆ offered by Jesus: Mt 11:28, 29
- ◆ entered by faith: Heb 4:1-11
- ◆ rest from earthly labors through death: Re 14:13 (cf. Re 6:11)

NEED FOR REST

- ◆ as refreshment from labor: Ex 20:8, 9, 10, 11; 31:12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
- ◆ as a refuge from trouble: Ps 55:6, 7, 8
- ◆ as relief from anxiety of mind and spirit: Ec 2:22, 23; 2 Co 2:13
- ◆ as recuperation from fatigue: Mt 8:24; 26:45
- ◆ as periodic relaxation from ministry to people: Mk 6:31
- ◆ as release from severe turmoil of life: Job 3:20-26; Is 14:3

PROVISION OF REST - MEANS OF

- ◆ through the presence of the Lord: Ex 33:14
- ◆ through the Lord as Shepherd of His people: Ps 23:1, 2, 3
- ◆ through a proper relationship to the Lord: Ps 37:3, 4, 5, 6, 7
- ◆ through resting in the Lord: Ps 37:7
- ◆ through the Lord's salvation: Ps 116:5, 6, 7, 8
- ◆ through the Spirit of the Lord: Is 63:14
- ◆ through walking in the Lord's ways: Je 6:16
- ◆ through coming to Christ: Mt 11:28, 29
- ◆ through a company of believers: Ro 15:32
- ◆ through ministry from other believers: 2Co 7:5, 6, 7

PROVISION OF REST - RECIPIENTS OF

- ◆ Israel: Is 14:3; 32:18; Ezek 34:15
- ◆ believers in Christ: Mt 11:28, 29; Heb 4:3:

REJECTION OF:

- ◆ Is 28:12; 30:15

LACK OF REST:

◆ Dt 28:65; Job 3:26; Ps 22:2; 95:11 cf He 3:11, 18; Pr 29:9; Is 23:12; Je 45:3; La 1:3; 5:5; Mic 2:10; 2Co 7:5; Re 14:11

VARIOUS OTHER USES OF REST

- ◆ rest at midday: 2Sa 4:5
- ◆ man of rest (i.e., Solomon): 1 Ch 22:9
- ◆ a grave as a resting place: 2 Ch 16:14
- ◆ rest in death: Job 3:11, 12, 13, 16, 17; Da 12:13
- ◆ Zion as God's resting place: Ps 132:13, 14
- ◆ poverty through overindulgence in rest: Pr 6:10, 11
- ◆ value of rest: Eccl 4:6
- ◆ glorious resting place of Messiah: Is 11:10
- ◆ the whole earth at rest: Is 14:7 (cf. Je 50:34)
- ◆ resting place for animals: Is 34:14; 65:10; Ezek 25:5; Zeph 2:15
- ◆ a sword at rest: Je 47:6
- ◆ seeking for rest: Mt 12:43

(Adapted from The NASB Topical Index. 1998 La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation)

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NAVE'S TOPIC REST

Days of, Ex. 23:12; 34:21.

The annual feasts added rest days, Lv 23:7, 8, 21, 25, 28, 30, 31, 35, 36; Nu. 28:18, 25 26; 29:1, 7, 12, 35. Recommended by Jesus, Mark 6:31, 32; 7:24. with Mt 8:18, 24.

Heavenly: 2Th 1:7

Spiritual: Mt 11:29; Heb. 4:1-11

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NELSON'S TOPICAL BIBLE INDEX: Rest—peace and quiet

A. Descriptive of:

Physical relaxation - Ge 18:4

Sinful laziness - Mt. 26:45

Confidence - Hab 3:16, 17, 18, 19

Completion of salvation - He 4:3, 8, 9, 10, 11

B. Need of:

Recognized in God's Law - Ex. 20:10, 11

Recognized by Christ - Mk 6:31

Longed after - Ps. 55:6

Provided for - Re 6:11

Enjoyed after death - Job 3:13, 17; Re 14:13

C. Source of, in:

Christ - Mt. 11:28, 29

Trust - Ps. 37:7

Returning to God Is. 30:15

D. Disturbance of, by:

Sin - Is 57:20

Rebellion - Is. 28:12

Persecution - Acts 9:23

Anxiety - 2Co 2:13

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ISBE Entry for **rest** - [nuach] [**menuchah - word study**], “cessation from motion,” “peace,” “quiet,” etc.; [anapausis, katapausis]): “Rest” in the above sense is of frequent occurrence, and is the translation of several words with various applications and shades of meaning, chiefly of the words given above. It is applied to God as ceasing from the work of creating on the 7th day (Genesis 2:2,3) ; as having His place of rest in the midst of His people in the temple (1Chronicles 28:2; Ps 132:8, 14); as resting in His love among His people (Zeph 3:17, the Revised Version margin “Hebrew, ‘be silent’ “). The 7th day was to be one of rest (Exodus 16:23; 31:15; see [Sabbath](#)); the land also was to have its rest in the 7th year (Lev 25:4f). Yahweh promised His people rest in the land He should give them; this they looked forward to and enjoyed (Deut 12:9; Joshua 11:23). “To rest on” often means to come upon to abide, as of the Spirit of Yahweh (Numbers 11:25f; Isaiah 11:2), of wisdom (Pr 14:33), of anger (Ec 7:9). There is again the “rest” of the grave (Job 3:13, 17, 18; Isaiah 57:2; Da 12:13). Rest is sometimes equivalent to trust, reliance (2Chr 14:11, the Revised Version (British and American) “rely”). Hence, rest in Yahweh (Ps 37:7, etc.); “rest” in the spiritual sense is not, however, prominent in the Old Testament. In the New Testament Christ’s great offer is rest to the soul (Matthew 11:28). In Heb 4:1ff, it is argued from God’s having promised His people a “rest” — a promise not realized in Canaan (He 4:8) — that there remains for the people of God “a Sabbath rest” (sabbatismos, He 4:9). For “rest” the Revised Version (British and American) has “solemn rest” (Exodus 16:23; 31:15, etc.), “resting-place” (Ps 132:8, 14; Isaiah 11:10), “peace” (Acts 9:31), “relief” (2Cor 2:13, 7:5), etc. (Orr, J., M.A., D. D. The International standard Bible encyclopedia : 1915 edition)

REST IN QUOTES, ILLUSTRATIONS, HYMNS

HYMNS THAT MENTION REST/RESTING

- [Hymns with the word "resting" - 232 hits \(Feb. 2015\)](#)
- [Hymns with the word "rest" - >2600 hits \(Feb. 2015\)](#)

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Illustration of Rest in a Sailboat - Perhaps you, like I, have spent some time in a sailboat. Relying on the boat to keep us afloat, we slide across the water propelled by a gentle breeze. Yet within the confines of the shores, I had the opportunity and responsibility of guiding the rudder to determine the direction of travel. Is that not similar to living within the will of God? **As Christians we must rest upon God to sustain us**, and upon the breath of his Spirit to empower us. Yet within his moral boundaries, we each have the opportunity and responsibility to determine our course. - Steve Prieb

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Bible teacher William Evans comments on Psalm 23:2: “He makes me lie down in green pastures.” - It is generally recognized as being a very difficult thing to get God’s people to thus lie down. They will do almost anything and everything else but that. They will run, walk, fight, sing, teach, preach, work, in a word do almost anything and everything except seek seasons of quiet and periods of retirement from secret communion with God and quiet soul nurture... We do not like pauses...From the rush into the hush Jesus calls us.— William Evans, The Shepherd Psalm

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Spurgeon on Rest - Do not tell me that there is no rest for us till we get to heaven. We who have believed in Jesus enter into rest even now. Why should we not do so? Our salvation is complete. The robe of righteousness in which we are clad is finished. The atonement for our sins is fully made. We are reconciled to God, beloved of the Father, preserved by his grace, and supplied by his providence with all that we need. We carry all our burdens to him and leave them at his feet. We spend our lives in his service, and we find his ways to be ways of pleasantness, and his paths to be paths of peace. Oh, yes, we have found rest unto our souls! I recollect the first day that I ever rested in Christ, and I did rest that day. And so will all of you who trust in Jesus as I trusted in him.

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Oswald Chambers on Rest - "And I will give you rest." Rest means the perfection of motion. "I will give you rest," that is, "I will stay you." Not—"I will put you to bed and hold your hand and sing you to sleep"; but—"I will get you out of bed, out of the languor and exhaustion, out of being half dead while you are alive; I will so imbue you with the spirit of life that you will be stayed by the perfection of vital activity." It is not a picture of an invalid in a bath chair, but of life at such a pitch of health that everything is at rest, there is no exhaustion without recuperation.

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A W Tozer on Rest - You will never have inward peace until you have acknowledged your guilt. This is something you cannot dodge and evade, because you have a conscience and your conscience will never let you rest until you get rid of the guilt!

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Someone has defined a football team as 22 men on the field desperately in need of **rest**, and 1000's of folks in the stands in desperate need of exercise! Many of God's choice servants are in desperate need of **rest**! Are you resting, resting in Him, abiding in the Vine or still striving in your own strength in the futile attempt to grow spiritual fruit?

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God on Rest - Specifically "My rest" - This phrase occurs 4 times in Scripture (Ps 95:11, He 3:11, He 4:3, He 4:5). It is the very rest God Himself enjoys and which He Himself makes available to us by grace through faith. This phrase is difficult to fully comprehend because it is not just a relaxation of tensions, but a rest that is qualitatively the same rest the Omnipotent God enjoys and is willing to share with us! This truth should motivate a deep love for Him and a strong desire to walk in a manner which is pleasing to Him

God's rest is a "working rest" for even though He finished His creation work and rested, this did not a cessation from work, but rather the proper repose that comes from completing a work. Jesus emphasized His Father's ongoing work

My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working. (John 5:17)

God's repose is an active rest if you will. Yes, He rests, but in his rest He keeps working.

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Stayed upon Jehovah Hearts are fully blest,
Finding, as he promised, Perfect peace and **rest**.
Frances Ridley Havergal

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I thank thee, Lord, that here our souls,
Though amply blest,
Can never find, although they seek,
A perfect rest,
Nor ever shall, until they lean
On Jesus' breast.
Adelaide Anne Proctor

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Anxiety is a word of unbelief or unreasoning dread. We have no right to allow it. Full faith in God puts it **rest**. -Horace Bushnell
(**Note:** Many but not all of these quotations are from a source I highly recommend if you enjoy using Biblically sound quotes [many quotes appeal to "emotions" but lack the sound doctrine of the majority of these quotes] [The Complete Gathered Gold A Treasury of Quotations for Christians by John Blanchard Book](#))

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To "wait on the Lord," and to "**rest in the Lord**," is an indication of a healthy, holy faith, while impatience is an indication of an unhealthy, un-holy unbelief. --Oswald Chambers

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There is no other upon which we can **rest** in a dying moment, but the Bible.- John Selden

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The Bible, as a revelation from God, was not designed to give us all the information we might desire, nor to solve all the questions about which the human soul is perplexed, but to impart enough to be a safe guide to the haven of eternal **rest**. - Albert Barnes

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Although we must still meet death, let us nevertheless be calm and serene in living and dying, when we have Christ going before us. If anyone cannot set his mind at **rest** by disregarding death, that man should know that he has not yet gone far enough in the faith of Christ. - John Calvin

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Faith is reason at rest in God. - C. H. Spurgeon

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True faith may be defined as the heart's rest in Jesus! -Anon.

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Where reason fails, faith can **rest**. - John Blanchard

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Faith can **rest** in what it cannot comprehend. - John Owen

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The one who has come to trust in the salvation of Jesus for his soul will be content to rest in the revelation of Jesus for his mind. - H. Enoch

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The grace of God which is in a real Christian will not allow him to be at rest in sin. A believer who has sinned is like a man who is required to be his own executioner. - Maurice Roberts

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How blest thy saints! how safely led! How surely kept! how richly fed! Saviour of all in earth and sea, How happy they who rest in thee! --Henry Francis Lyte

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It is very well to rest on God when you have other props, but it is best of all to rest on him when every prop is knocked away. - C. H. Spurgeon

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Who can measure the happiness of heaven, where no evil at all can touch us, no good will be out of reach; where life is to one long laud extolling God, who will be all in all; where there will be no weariness to call for rest, no need to call for toil, no place for any energy but praise. - Augustine

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Someone has observed, "In Christ we have a love that can never be fathomed, a peace that can never be understood, **arest** that can never be disturbed, a joy that can never be diminished, a hope that can never be disappointed, and a spiritual resource that can never be exhausted."

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Someone has said, "**The rest of your life depends on the rest of your nights**"

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Psalm 4:8 - Someone has said, "**The rest of your life depends on the rest of your nights**" During World War II, an elderly woman in England had endured the nerve-shattering bombings with amazing serenity. When asked to give the secret of her calmness amid the terror and danger, she replied, "Well, every night I say my prayers. And then I remember that God is always watching, so I go peacefully to sleep. After all, there is no need for both of us to stay awake!"

If anxious thoughts keep you awake, ask the Lord to quiet your heart and give you the faith to be able to relax and let Him solve the problems that disturb you. That's what David did when he was in trouble, for he wrote, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety" When you realize your heavenly Father is watching over you, you can find sweet rest. —H. G. Bosch

Because God never sleeps,
we can sleep in peace.

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Someone once outlined the words of Isaiah 26:3 this way:

"You—a precious God.
Perfect peace—a priceless possession.
Whose mind is stayed on You—a present focus.
Because he trusts in You—a powerful faith."

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The believer who is confident of God's providence, who rests in His grace, and who relies on His Holy Spirit will experience the miracle of His quieting peace. —H. G. Bosch.

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In Moody magazine, John H. Timmerman writes

In the back corner of my yard, partitioned by a rose bed and a 40-year-old lilac bush, rests a pile, 8 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 4 feet high—my compost pile. Old-fashioned chicken wire stapled to well-anchored stakes holds it in place. Into it I toss every bit of yard scrap and a heavy dose of kitchen scrap ... a bit of lime now and then, a good dose of dog droppings, and an occasional handful of fertilizer.

The compost pile burns hot, never smells, and each October yields about 70 bushels of fine black dirt, dark as midnight, moist and flaky, that I spread in the garden. ... Gardeners call it "black gold."—... It nurtures 80 roses and a half-dozen beds of perennials and annuals ...

Could it be that what nourishes my plants nourishes me?

Timmerman compares his compost soil, which grows rich and fertile as it sits for months, to his life and the need of his soul for rest. Daily life hands us all kinds of things—good and bad—scraps, lime, and even "dog droppings." But as we take Sabbath rest, these things are transformed. Godly rest can turn the difficulties of daily life into a rich resource for spiritual fruitfulness.

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Rush is destructive of **rest**, and pace of peace. --Thomas Adams

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The glory of the incarnation is that it presents to our adoring gaze not a humanized God or a deified man, but a true God-man—one who is all that God is and at the same time all that man is: one on whose almighty arm we can rest, and to whose human sympathy we can appeal. -- Benjamin B. Warfield

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We must not seek rest or ease in a world where he whom we love had none. Horatius Bonar

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You made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless till they rest in you. - Augustine

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Rest is not a hallowed feeling that comes over us in church; it is the response of a heart set deep in God.

Anon.

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Though round me the storms of adversity roll,
And the waves of destruction encompass my soul,
In vain this frail vessel the tempest shall toss,
My hopes **rest** secure on the blood of the Cross.

—Anon.

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The will of God is not a burden to carry, but a pillow **to**rest on! —Hannah W. Smith

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How can I look to be at home in the enemy's country, joyful while in exile, or comfortable in a wilderness? This is not my rest. This is the place of the furnace and the forge and the hammer. C. H. Spurgeon

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Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him; fret not thyself. Psalm 37:7

Most of us are inclined to think that the pressures upon us are the greatest. The Psalmist would have had ample reason to feel that way. Hunted by his enemies, forsaken by his friends, maligned by his critics, David offers some wise spiritual advice in Psalm 37. While waiting at the counter to check the delay on a flight home, I overheard a perturbed passenger say to the ticket agent, "If you had told me sooner, I wouldn't have lost my cool." It was rather obvious that whatever he had lost, it was still missing! I confess I thought of regrettable occasions when I too had acted in a similar fashion.

The little trifling things that plague our spirits should not be allowed to irritate us to the point of impatience and fretfulness. Certainly we must not let it be followed by bitter complaint. Three times over, the Psalmist uses the phrase, "Fret not thyself" (Ps 37:1, 7, 8). There is something we can do about it. We must avoid succumbing to the circumstances and the frustrations, lest we add to this human tendency toward fretfulness.

What is the antidote for this? "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." The Berkeley Version translates this, "Be still before the Lord and resign yourself to him." The hymn-writer says,

"Moment by Moment I'm kept in His love;
moment by moment I've life from above;
looking to Jesus till glory doth shine;
moment by moment, O Lord, I am Thine."

We do not have to lose our "cool." A simple "moment by moment" faith which recognizes that "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord" will keep us from fretting.

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[Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee](#)

Jesus! the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence **rest**.

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Saved to the Uttermost

Saved to the uttermost; Jesus is near;
Keeping me safely, He casteth out fear;
Trusting His promises, now I am blest;
Leaning upon Him, how sweet is my **rest**.

—Kirkpatrick

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Not So in Haste, My Heart

Not so in haste, my heart!
Have faith in God and wait;
Although He seems to linger long,
He never comes too late.

He never cometh late;
He knoweth what is best;
Vex not thyself in vain;
Until He cometh, **rest**.

Until He cometh, **rest**,
Nor grudge the hours that roll;
The feet that wait for God
Are soonest at the goal.

Are soonest at the goal
That is not gained with speed;
Then hold thee still, my heart,
For I shall wait His lead.

—Bradford Torrey

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I walked life's path with "Worry,"
Disturbed and quite unblessed,
Until I trusted Jesus;
Now "Faith" has given rest.

— G.W.

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Patience may sometimes seem bitter, but its fruit is sweet! —Rousseau

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In the Philippines the driver of a carabao wagon was on his way to market when he overtook an old man carrying a heavy load. Taking compassion on him, the driver invited the old man to ride in the wagon. Gratefully the old man accepted. After a few minutes, the driver turned to see how the man was doing. To his surprise, he found him still straining under the heavy weight, for he had not taken the burden off his shoulders. Christ offers **rest** to all who will trust him completely.

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To Christians, every sunset is an exclamation point given to us by God the Creator to end the day. It's as if the Lord were saying, "*Set aside your worries. Rest from your labors. Forget about those disappointments. I am still here, taking care of My universe. I am in control. I have not changed. Look up beyond the sun to Me and be at peace.*" —D. C. Egner

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Though I do not know the reason,
I can trust, and so am blest;
God is love, and God is faithful,
So in perfect peace I **rest**.
—Anon.

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Someone prayed as I met the test
Of temptation fierce and strong;
I felt God near, He gave me **rest**;
Somebody prayed, I know.
Someone prayed when my faith was dim
And when Satan pressed me sore,
God answered them, gave strength within;
Somebody prayed, I know.
—Mrs. M. Spittal, alt.

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A certain ungodly tavern keeper who was very fond of music decided to attend one of John Wesley's Methodist gatherings in order to hear the singing. He had resolved, however, not to listen to the sermon, and therefore sat with his head down and his fingers in his ears. But when God wants to speak to a soul, He can make His voice heard even if He uses means that may seem strange to us. As the man stubbornly refused to listen, a fly lit upon his nose. For a moment he moved his hand to drive it away, and in so doing, nine words of the sermon were brought to his attention: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." From that moment the man had **no rest in his soul**. He came to the next meeting, listened eagerly to the Gospel, and was saved. Have you heard the Savior's voice? "Hear, and your soul shall live!"

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Living for the Lord, serving Him each day,
Best prepares the soul for the stormy way;
Then as trials come, tempting to despair,
We can rest secure, safe within His care.
--DJD

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If I gained the world but not the Savior
Were my life worth living for a day?
Could my yearning heart find rest and comfort
In the things that soon must pass away?
-- Olander

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Once my life was full of effort,
Now 'tis full of joy and zest;
Since I took His yoke upon me,
Jesus gives to me His rest.
- Simpson

><>><>><>

Into His hands I lay the fears that haunt me,
The dread of future ills that may befall;
Into His hands I lay the doubts that taunt me,
And rest securely, trusting Him for all.
- Christiansen

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Here we rest in wonder, viewing
All our sins on Jesus laid,
And a full redemption flowing
From the sacrifice He made.
-- Shirley

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Though much in nature sings God's praise,
And reason's light is well possessed,
Still man needs Revelation's rays
To find in Christ eternal rest.
— G. W.

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Mt 11:28

From nature we can learn a lesson about the importance of rest. Built into the life of every tree are stages of dormancy. In his book *As a Tree Grows*, W Phillip Keller points out that in northern climates the dormant phase is in the winter, and in the tropical regions it is during the hot, dry season. "It is important to understand," says Keller, that dormancy is not death. A tree may appear to be dead, it is true. The leaves of deciduous trees will be all stripped off in the fall, leaving a stark skeleton. The tree is nevertheless very much alive—but at rest." He added that this dormancy is immediately followed by a period of active growth. The dormant phase is a rebuilding and reconditioning for the upsurge of vigorous activity ahead.

Some Christians think that inactivity is a waste of time. They see the occasional lulls that come into life as being unproductive. But that is not necessarily the case. Notice what Christ did for His disciples after they had finished a strenuous period of evangelistic activity He led them into the wilderness to rest so they could be restored for further service. —D. C. Egner

Time in Christ's service requires time out for renewal.

Not many wise has the dear Savior chosen,
Not many noble shall enter His rest;
Foolish, despised ones are heirs to His mercy--
Simple in faith, by His grace they are blest. --HGB

Genesis 2:2 - IN large type running the full length of the page were these words: Even God Took a Day Off! The writers were referring to the seventh day of creation, when God rested from all His labors.

The magazine advertisement stopped me short and made me think. I had never thought of the seventh day as a "day off" so that the Lord could get rested. But it does underscore the work-rest principle that began in Genesis and runs throughout the entire Bible.

In the Old Testament, Israel was commanded to honor the seventh day by not doing any work. The Sabbath was to be a day of recovery as well as a day of sacrifice and worship. The land was to be left idle every seventh year—a principle modern agriculture has found to be essential for maximum yields. And in the New Testament, we read that the Lord Jesus led His disciples to a quiet place after a prolonged preaching tour so they could rest (Mark 6:31).

This new insight caused me take a look at my own schedule and make some adjustments. When our calendars are crammed with activities, and especially when Sundays are the most hectic of all, we need to slow down and take time to rest. The Bible calls for it, and our bodies and emotions desperately need it. Think of it this way: If it was important for God to do, how much more so for us?—D C Egner

Lord, Speak to Me

O give Thine own sweet **rest** to me,
That I may speak with soothing power
A word in season, as from Thee,
To weary ones in needful hour.

O fill me with Thy fullness, Lord,

Until my very heart overflow
In kindling thought and glowing word,
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.

O use me, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where,
Until Thy blessed face I see--
Thy **rest**, Thy joy, Thy glory share.
-Frances R Havergal

LOONS" OR "EAGLES - be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 - When I was a lad, my father was my "authority" on the world of nature. One day as we were talking about those birds from which we get the expression "crazy as a loon," he mentioned that without any wind blowing it was almost impossible for them to take off and fly. I took his word for it, but it didn't seem to make sense to me until one evening some time later when my brother and I were out fishing. Not a breeze was stirring, and the surface of the small lake was like glass. The quietness of the moment was suddenly broken by the loud flapping of wings. Evidently we had scared "Mr. Loon," and he decided to get out of there. Yet, despite his heroic effort, he just skimmed along the surface of the water unable to gain altitude. Reaching the other side of the lake, he still wasn't high enough to clear the trees, and, executing a fancy turn, he came back toward us still flap-ping his wings with all his might. We held our breath as he reached the opposite shore, barely missed the treetops, and disappeared from view. He had made it — but what a struggle! Re-calling that experience, the thought came to me: what a contrast there is between that struggling loon and the majestic eagle which ascends high in the heavens with wings outstretched, gliding effortlessly to new and thrilling heights. The flapping loon and the soaring eagle portray two kinds of Christians. There are some dear souls who seem to be always "flapping" without making much headway, while others can truthfully and joyfully sing with the hymn writer, "New heights I'm gaining every day." The latter are those who have learned to wait upon the Lord, have renewed their strength, and hence "mount up with wings like eagles" (Isa. 40:31).

Do we have a Spirit-filled life? Do we rest upon the Lord and let Him work through us? I wonder, when others see us, are they reminded of flapping loons or soaring eagles?

Higher Ground

[\(listen to beautiful vocal\)](#)

I pressing on the upward way,
New heights I'm gaining every day;
Still praying as I onward bound,
"Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

I want to scale the utmost height
And catch a gleam of glory bright
But still I'll pray till heav'n I've found
Lord lead me on to higher ground

Refrain

**Lord, lift me up and let me stand,
By faith, on Heaven's table land,
A higher plane than I have found;
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.**

My heart has no desire to stay
Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
Though some may dwell where those abound,
My prayer, my aim, is higher ground.

Refrain

I want to live above the world,
Though Satan's darts at me are hurled;
For faith has caught the joyful sound,

The song of saints on higher ground.

Refrain

I want to scale the utmost height
And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I'll pray till Heav'n I've found,
"Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

Refrain

--J. Oatman, Jr., alt.

RESTING upon the "wind" of God's Spirit, one may soar to heights unattainable by "flapping" the "wings of human endeavor."
(See related principle of Vertical Vision stimulating Horizontal Living!)

Jeremiah 50:6 - F B Meyer Devotional related to Rest -

These words may often be said of us. A time of emergency arises; the necessity for instant and vigorous action seems overpowering; we fail to see what course to adopt — and immediately we get flurried and excited; we run from one to another; we lose our sleep. All our earnest resolutions to abide in Christ and live in his fellowship are forgotten. We have forgotten our resting-place.

Or we are in the midst of a great campaign of work From morning to night we are plunged in a mass of calculations and activities. There is no time to take our meals, much less to obtain opportunities for prayer and fellowship with God. Our rooms without, our souls within, are littered with the symptoms of the many absorbing interests which are monopolizing our attention. We have forgotten our resting-place. Or, perhaps, it is a time of great temptation. Hour after hour the foe returns to the attack. We have done our best to withstand him; but have hit out without precision, have fired at random. Again, we have forgotten our resting-place.

The place where we lie down to rest is under the shadow of the Cross. Whilst we remain there, we are perfectly safe and blessed. Return unto thy rest, O straying sheep! Back to the arms of Jesus, where only such frail ones as thou art are safe.

I knew a man, who had to bear a thousand crosses belonging to others, and who grieved himself into an illness because others did not love God as He deserves, till all at once his own foolishness and sinfulness struck him to the heart. He could do nothing then but cast himself and them into the endless depths of the love of God; and he ended by having rest in his heart, and a song on his lips.
(Our Daily Homily)

Hebrews 4:9 - Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily

There remaineth therefore, a Sabbath rest for the people of God. (r.v.)

There is a rest for weary souls — God speaks of it as his Rest. He entered it, we are told, when He had finished his work; and beheld it to be very good; and ever since the door has been standing open for the travel-stained, weary children of men to enter it. To every other creation-day there were evening and morning, but not to this; it partakes of the nature of eternity in its timeless bliss.

Let us rejoice that this rest remaineth. — Of course, the Sabbath, which was and is a type of it, could not exhaust it. And Canaan, with its sweet plains and cessation of the wilderness wanderings, could not completely fulfill it; because centuries after it had been given through Joshua, in the Psalms God spoke of yet another day, as though his rest were still future.

The rest may be a present experience. — The word "remaineth" has diverted the thoughts of commentators who have supposed it referred to heaven. There is rest, sweet rest, there. But "remaineth" means "unexhausted, unrealized, by aught which has taken place." The rest is for us here and now. "We which have believed do enter into rest." Where is it? In the bosom of Christ: "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." It is in ploughing the furrow of daily duty — "Take my yoke; ... and find rest."

This rest is compatible with great activity. — He that enters into the Divine rest is not reduced to quietism. On the seventh day the Creator rested from creation; but He works in providence. Jesus, on the seventh day, rested from Calvary; but He pleads in heaven. Cease from your own works, after a similar fashion; abandon your restless planning and striving; by the grace of the Holy Spirit better service will be produced. (Our Daily Homily)

Beyond the Castle - Timothy Smith

He is happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds his peace at home. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

All good kingdoms have clear boundaries, defined roles, common rituals, and widespread safety. Boundaries define where our kingdom ends and another begins. Families need clear boundaries to be healthy and successful. Again, you might start by setting a boundary regarding a family Sabbath—a designated time to break from routine for rest and reconnection. Tim Stafford explains the importance:

Rest is not a rule for us, then, something that we have to observe in a certain precise manner. Rather rest is a human need, like sleep and food—and even more, rest is an opportunity. The Scriptures say that God himself rested on the seventh day of creation (Gen. 2:2–3). That changes the whole concept of rest. God was certainly not tired or overstimulated. Why then did he rest? It must be for the same reason that he created the universe: because it was in his nature so to do. God rests, and we all can rest. Rest is built into the rhythm of existence, like the still between the waves. We honor God when we imitate his restfulness.

Toward developing your family Sabbath, here are a few guidelines in a simple acrostic: REST.

R: Relationships.

Structure the time for people, not production. The main idea is having enough time to rest, to enjoy each other's company, and to strengthen relationships with family members. We show honor to God and to family when we set aside time to be with them.

E: Escape from the routine.

Make your family Sabbath unique, fun, and anticipated. If an entire day is too much, start with, say, a two-hour block. If you're stuck for ideas, set some parameters with your kids and then ask for their input. Try serving special foods, light candles, use the china and crystal, and play music in the background during the meal.

S: Spiritual.

Include spiritual elements. Show how God relates to our lives and is concerned with the details of our existence. It doesn't have to be a long, drawn-out Bible study; center on a key idea with a verse or two, or a story.

T: Technology free.

Turn off TVs, computers, phones, iPods, stereos, PDAs, and everything else, then substitute with activities that renew you. I know of one family that on Saturday night goes to church and out to dinner, then on Sunday morning goes surfing together. None of them ever misses it, including the three teenagers!

A family that learns to rest is refreshing. What's fun for your family? What renews your family? Effective rest does not necessitate passivity. It's not about sitting in the living room staring at each other or at the walls. The anticipation of a family Sabbath and other routines facilitates a predictable pace for our family, helping to define who we are and who we are not. We strengthen our identity, we emphasize the principles we value, and we reinforce a sense of belonging. Consistent family traditions build family community, presenting a place where each family member is known, loved, and needed.

As Otis Ledbetter and I wrote in *Family Traditions*: We live in a hurried and transient culture, but the practice of traditions gives our children stability, dependability, and shared memories. These three qualities help people feel connected in relationship and community. This is critical in a rootless society. Traditions, by their very nature, are boundaries: "This is the way we do it. We don't do it that way." Predictable traditions increase our children's sense of personal security because they define a place to stand without being too rigid.

Hebrews 4:9 - Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily

Isaiah 63:14 -The Spirit of the Lord caused them to rest. (r.v.).

It is the noonday glare in Palestine. The sun's rays like spears of flame are striking down upon the parched sand-wastes, and all the land burns like a furnace. Away yonder is a sequestered glen, where mosses line the margins of streamlets and pools, and rich pasture keeps green in the shadow of the hills. Thither the cattle descend at noon. As the shadows creep down the mountain-sides they follow them, and presently the herd browses on the succulent herbage or reclines beneath the shadows of the spreading trees, while the brooks purl past clear and cool. Similarly Isaiah says God brought his people through the wilderness, leading them as a horse that might not stumble, and finally conducted them into the rest of Canaan.

But how fit an emblem is suggested of our Father's dealings with us. The scorching sun of temptation shines around us. The glare of publicity, the fever of money-making, the strife of tongues, torment the children of men. But for God's beloved ones there is a secret

place by Him, a green and verdant nook, watered by the river of God. Over its portals these words are written: "I will give you rest."

When once we learn to trust our Fathers unailing love, we are caused to rest. Notice that forcible expression: the Spirit of the Lord caused them to rest. Here is anew thought of the omnipotence of love. It can so reveal itself that it almost compels rest. Cause us to lie down, O Lord, we pray Thee! Job speaks of Him as giving quietness: and then who can make trouble? Seek quietness as his gift! Lo! there is a place by Him, in the mountain-shadowed valley of his care, where disquieted souls are at peace. Seek it! (Our Daily Homily)

F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - Devotional on Rest

Therefore I swore in My anger, Truly they shall not enter into My rest. Psalm 95:11

God's Rest has been waiting for man's entrance, since He rested from all the work that He created and made. To all other days there were evening and morning, but not to this. It does not consist in circumstances, or conditions of existence, but in disposition. It does not lie, as sacred poets have too often suggested, beyond the confines of this world — it is now, and here. Canaan is not primarily a type of heaven; but of that blessed experience which is ours when we have passed the Jordan of death to natural impulse or selfish choice, and have elected for evermore to accept, and delight in, the will of God.

Will you not take up this position today? Today! Oh that ye would hear his voice! To hear his voice speaking in the heart, in circumstances, and in nature, and to obey promptly, gladly, blithely, — this would bring the soul into the rest that remains unexhausted for the people of God. Are you hardening your heart against some evident duty to which you are called, but which you are evading? Are you hardening your heart to some appeal which comes to you through the ties of kinship and nature? Are you saying, "Can God subdue these Canaanites", instead of "God can"? Beware, for this is the sin of Massah and Meribah, which, being interpreted, means strife. Woe to those that strive with their Maker; let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. (Isa 45:9KJV) (**Ed:** Dear reader - In this paragraph Meyer seems to be placing the emphasis on the initial salvation experience, whereas in the following paragraph he clearly emphasizes the process of sanctification.)

Every one comes in the Christian life, once at least, to Kadesh-Barnea. On the one hand the land of rest and victory; on the other the desert wastes. The balance, quivering between the two, is turned this way by faith; that by unbelief. Trust God, and rest. Mistrust Him, and the door closes on rest, to open to wanderings, failure, and defeat. (**Editorial comment:** But not to loss of salvation if one is genuinely saved in the first place!) (Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily)

F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - Devotional on Rest

As the cattle which go down into the valley,
The Spirit of the LORD gave them rest.
So didst Thou lead Thy people,
To make for Thyself a glorious name. (Isaiah 63:14)

It is the noonday glare in Palestine. The sun's rays like spears of flame are striking down upon the parched sand-wastes, and all the land burns like a furnace. Away yonder is a sequestered glen, where mosses line the margins of streamlets and pools, and rich pasture keeps green in the shadow of the hills. Thither the cattle descend at noon. As the shadows creep down the mountain-sides they follow them, and presently the herd browses on the succulent herbage or reclines beneath the shadows of the spreading trees, while the brooks purl past clear and cool. Similarly Isaiah says God brought his people through the wilderness, leading them as a horse that might not stumble, and finally conducted them into the rest of Canaan.

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F B Meyer - Sabbath rest -

There is a rest for weary souls.— God speaks of it as His Rest. He entered it, we are told, when He had finished His work; and beheld it to be very good; and ever since the door has been standing open for the travel-stained, weary children of men to enter it. To every other creation-day there were evening and morning, but not to this; it partakes of the nature of eternity in its timeless bliss.

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F B Meyer Devotional on Rest

Now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side. (1Kings 5:4)

God is the Rest-Giver. When He surrounds us on every side with His protecting care, so that our life resembles one of the cities of the Netherlands in the great war— inaccessible to the foe because surrounded by the waters of the sea, admitted through the sluice— then neither adversary nor evil occurrence can break in, and we are kept in perfect peace, our minds being stayed on God.

**Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can enter, never traitor stand.**

Have you experienced the rest which comes by putting God round about you, on every side—like the light which burns brightly on a windy night because surrounded by its four panes of clear glass? Ah! what a contrast between the third (1Kings 5:3) and fourth verse: Wars on every side; Rest on every side. And yet the two are compatible, because the wars expend themselves on God, as the waves on the shingle; and there are far reaches of rest within, like orchards and meadows and pasture-lands beyond the reach of the devastating water.

Out of such rest should come the best work. We are not surprised to find Solomon announcing his purpose to build a house unto the name of the Lord. Mary, who sat at the feet of Jesus, anointed Him. Out of quiet hearts arise the greatest resolves; just as from the seclusion of country hamlets have come the greatest warriors, statesmen, and patriots. Men think, foolishly, that the active, ever-moving souls are the strongest. It is not so, however. They expend themselves before the day of trial comes. Give me those who have the power to restrain themselves and wait; these are they that can act with the greatest momentum in the hour of crisis. (Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily)

F B Meyer Devotional on Rest

A man of rest ... he shall build. (1Chronicles 22:9,10)

The men of rest are the builders of the most lasting structures Solomon builds the Temple, not David. Mary's deed of anointing, learned in much sitting at the Lord's feet, fills the world with its aroma. What is needed to make us men and women of rest?

First, a profound conviction that God is working.— Never despair of the world, said the late Mrs. Beecher

Stowe, when you remember what God did with slavery: the best possible must happen. This serene faith, that all things are working out for the best— the best to God, the best to man— and that God is at the heart of all, will calm and still us in the most feverish days. There is a strong and an experienced Hand on the helm.

Next, an entire surrender to His will.— God's will is certain to mean the destruction of the flesh, in whatever form He finds it; but it is our part to yield to Him; to will His will even to the cross; to follow our leader Christ in this, that He yielded Himself without reserve to execute His Father's purpose.

Thirdly, a certain knowledge that He is working within to will and do of His good pleasure.— What a blessed peace possesses us when once we realize that we are not called on to originate or initiate, nor to make great far-reaching plans and try to execute them; but just to believe that God is prepared to work through our hands, speak by our life, dwell in our bodies, and fulfill in us the good purposes of His will. Be full of God's rest. Let there be no hurry, precipitation, or fret; yield to God's hands, that He may mould thee: hush thy quickly throbbing pulse! So shalt thou build to good and lasting purpose. (Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily)

F B Meyer writes...

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First, a profound conviction that God is working (Jn 5:17, Jn 14:12). Never despair of the world, said the late Mrs. Beecher Stowe, when you remember what God did with slavery: the best possible must happen. This serene faith, that all things are working out for the best; the best to God, the best to man; and that God is at the heart of all, will calm and still us in the most feverish days. There is a strong and an experienced Hand on the helm.

Next, an entire surrender to His will. God's will is certain to mean the destruction of the flesh, in whatever form He finds it; but it is our part to yield to Him; to will his will even to the cross; to follow our leader Christ in this, that He yielded Himself without reserve to execute his Father's purpose.

Thirdly, a certain knowledge that He is working within to will and do of his good pleasure (Php 2:12-note, Php 2:13-note) -- What a blessed peace possesses us when once we realize that we are not called on to originate or initiate, nor to make great far-reaching plans and try to execute them; but just to believe that God is prepared to work through our hands, speak by our life, dwell in our bodies, and fulfil in us the good purposes of His will (cp Heb 13:20, 21-note). Be full of God's rest. Let there be no hurry, precipitation, or fret; yield to God's hands, that He may mold thee: hush thy quickly throbbing pulse!

**So shalt thou build
to good and lasting purpose.**

(cp Jn 15:16)

C H Spurgeon in Faith's Checkbook has a devotional entitled **'Work Is Done; Rest in Him'** - GOD has provided a Sabbath, and some must enter into it. Those to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief; therefore, that Sabbath remains for the people of God. David sang of it; but he had to touch the minor key, for Israel refused the rest of God. Joshua could not give it, nor Canaan yield it: it remains for believers.

Come, then, let us labor to enter into this rest. Let us quit the weary toil of sin and self. Let us cease from all confidence, even in those works of which it might be said "They are very good." Have we any such? Still, let us cease from our own works, as God did from His. Now let us find solace in the finished work of our Lord Jesus. Everything is fully done: justice demands no more. Great peace is our portion in Christ Jesus.

As to providential matters, the work of grace in the soul, and the work of the Lord in the souls of others, let us cast these burdens upon the Lord and rest in Him. When the Lord gives us a yoke to bear, He does so that by taking it up we may find rest. By faith we labor to enter into the rest of God, and we renounce all rest in self-satisfaction or indolence. Jesus Himself is perfect rest, and we are filled to the brim in Him. (Spurgeon, C. Faith's Checkbook)

Morning and evening: Daily readings (January 18 AM) - How different will be the state of the believer in heaven from what it is here! Here he is born to toil and suffer weariness, but in the land of the immortal, fatigue is never known. Anxious to serve his

Master, he finds his strength unequal to his zeal: his constant cry is, "Help me to serve thee, O my God." If he be thoroughly active, he will have much labour; not too much for his will, but more than enough for his power, so that he will cry out, "I am not wearied of the labour, but I am wearied in it." Ah! Christian, the hot day of weariness lasts not for ever; the sun is nearing the horizon; it shall rise again with a brighter day than thou hast ever seen upon a land where they serve God day and night, and yet rest from their labours. Here, rest is but partial, there, it is perfect. Here, the Christian is always unsettled; he feels that he has not yet attained. There, all are at rest; they have attained the summit of the mountain; they have ascended to the bosom of their God. Higher they cannot go.

Ah, toil-worn labourer, only think when thou shalt rest for ever! Canst thou conceive it? It is a rest eternal; a rest that "remaineth." Here, my best joys bear "mortal" on their brow; my fair flowers fade; my dainty cups are drained to dregs; my sweetest birds fall before Death's arrows; my most pleasant days are shadowed into nights; and the flood-tides of my bliss subside into ebbs of sorrow; but there, everything is immortal; the harp abides unruined, the crown unwithered, the eye undimmed, the voice unfaltering, the heart unwavering, and the immortal being is wholly absorbed in infinite delight. Happy day! happy! when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and the Eternal Sabbath shall begin. (Spurgeon, C. H.)

Henry Bosch tells the following story entitled "**Oh Rest in the Lord**" - Years ago the English steamer Stella was wrecked on a rocky coast. Twelve women put into a lifeboat, but the boisterous sea immediately carried it away. Having no oars, they were at the mercy of the winds and the waves, and they spent a fearful night being tossed about by the raging tempest.

They probably would have lost hope if it had not been for the spiritual stamina of one of the ladies, Margaret Williams, who was well-known for her work in sacred oratorios. Calmly she prayed aloud for Divine protection. Then, urging her companions to put their trust in the Lord, she encouraged them by singing hymns of comfort.

Throughout the dark hours her voice rang out across the water. Early the next morning a small craft came searching for survivors. The man at the helm would have missed the women in the fog if he had not heard Miss Williams singing the selection from Elijah. "Oh, rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him!" Steering in the direction of her strong voice, he soon spotted the drifting lifeboat. While many others were lost that night, these trusting few were rescued.

Rest is Not Cessation from Labor - A man named Frederick W. Taylor, may provide some answers. Taylor worked for a large steel mill during the Spanish-American War 1898.

He was an ambitious young executive and was one of the first to apply scientific methods—as then known—to study the productivity of manual labor. In those days there were no cranes to load steel bars onto railroad cars. It was backbreaking manual work and, after some experimentation, Taylor concluded that the men could do more work if they took rest pauses at definite intervals.

He induced some of the workers to try his new method. He offered a dollar a day more and flattered them by calling them his "high-priced men." Under this system, a whistle was blown after the men had carried iron for twelve minutes. At this whistle they were to sit down and rest. After three minutes' rest, the whistle was blown again as a signal for the men to resume work.

The result—the amount of iron carried increased from 12 and a half to 47 tons a day! This seeming miracle ushered in the era of rest pauses, the forerunner of today's coffee breaks.

LEARNING TO REST - Matthew 11:29 - Many Christians are anxious and troubled. Although they are experiencing the "rest" of salvation that accompanies the forgiveness of sins and are looking forward to the eternal "rest" of heaven, their souls are still in turmoil. Fearful and doubting, they seem to be continually burdened by life's problems.

A closer look at their anxiety can reveal the reason for their distress. Having never learned to rest in the Lord, they fail to experience the "quietness and confidence" (Isa. 30:15) that comes to those who daily fellowship with Him through Bible study and prayer.

An unknown author has penned a verse describing the problem:

We mutter and sputter, we fume and we spurt;
We mumble and grumble, our feelings get hurt;
We can't understand things, our vision grows dim,
When all that we need is communion with Him!

Don't let yourself become a victim of fruitless fretting. If you do, you'll lose the peace and joy that is your rightful heritage. Instead, set aside part of each day to talk with God, thanking Him for who He is and what He has done for you. Then, by reading His word and believing His comforting promises, your faith will grow stronger and a supernatural peace will flood

your soul.

Jesus said, "Come to Me,... and I will give you rest" (Mt. 11:28). Have you learned to rest in Him? -- Henry G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**When we put our problems in God's hands,
He puts His peace in our hearts.**

Let Up On The Throttle - Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while. --Mark 6:31

The Red Baron and his counterparts in World War I flew planes that were not equipped with throttles for slowing down or speeding up. As you can imagine, constant full speed took its toll on the life of the engines, and takeoffs and landings were always an adventure. Veteran missionary pilot Bob Griffin described those WWI aircraft in his book *Cleared For Takeoff*.

In contrast to those planes, Bob flew an aircraft with a throttle and a tough Lycoming engine that came with these instructions: "Takeoff power (full power) may be used for only a maximum of 5 minutes." The pilot was instructed to back off from full power as soon as possible. Trouble was ahead for those who ignored the warning.

God did not create us to run at full speed all the time. We may race for a while with open throttle through our Christian lives, packing our time with one activity after another, but if we don't slow down occasionally we are headed for burnout or a crash landing.

During an especially busy time, Jesus urged His disciples to "come aside ... and rest a while" (Mk. 6:31). We too need times of rest not only for physical renewal but also for spiritual refreshment through reflection, Bible reading, and prayer.

Are you running at full speed? Let up on the throttle. — David C. Egener ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

If our body, soul, and spirit
Are to function at their best,
Time is needed for renewal—
Time for leisure, time for rest. —DJD

Come apart and rest a while, or you may just plain come apart.

—Havner

Rest Easy - Read: Psalm 139:1-18 - Psalm 139:12 - For 18 years the routine is the same. Each night you make sure each child is asleep before turning out the lights and locking the door. You can rest easy only when you know that the family is safe.

Then that day comes when your oldest child leaves home. Perhaps to college as our oldest daughter did. Maybe to a hitch in the military. Or just across town to an apartment.

As much as you prepared for the day when it would happen, those first nights are the most difficult. Now when you lock the doors and turn out the lights, you no longer have the security of knowing where each child is. You no longer can rest quite as well--unless you trust God.

In Psalm 139, David provided some comforting words that can help all of us who have to say goodbye to our children as they go out on their own. We cannot escape God's presence. He is with us, and with our children, wherever we go. As a dad whose daughter is 300 miles away at college, I'm encouraged that when God turns out the lights at night, He is checking on my daughter.

Psalm 33:13 says, "The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men." That helps me rest easy--even when one of the children is out of the house. --J D Brannon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

How Gentle God's Commands

Beneath His watchful eye
His saints securely dwell;
That hand which bears all nature up
Shall guard His children well.

--Doddridge

Now I'm resting, sweetly resting,
In the cleft once made for me.
Jesus, blessed Rock of Ages,
I will hide myself in Thee.
--Mary James

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

by Horatius Bonar

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto Me and **rest**;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down Thy head upon My breast."
I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad;
I found in Him a resting place, and He has made me glad.

I Am Redeemed

by Fanny Crosby

I am redeemed, O praise the Lord;
My soul from bondage free,
Has found at last a **resting** place
In Him who died for me.

A little humor: Man's view: God made beast and man, then rested. Then He made woman, and no one has ever rested since, beast, man, or God. (Ed: I agree, it's probably a bit chauvinistic! I would not advise using it in your sermon!)

Meaning of the Unstrung Bow - According to a Greek legend, in ancient Athens a man noticed the great storyteller Aesop playing childish games with some little boys. He laughed and jeered at Aesop, asking him why he wasted his time in such frivolous activity. Aesop responded by picking up a bow, loosening its string, and placing it on the ground. Then he said to the critical Athenian, "Now, answer the riddle, if you can. Tell us what the unstrung bows implies."

The man looked at it for several moments but had no idea what point Aesop was trying to make. Aesop explained, "If you keep a bow always bent, it will break eventually; but if you let it go slack, it will be more fit for use when you want it."

People are also like that. That's why we all need to take time to rest. In today's Scripture, Jesus prescribed time off for His wearied disciples after they had returned from a prolonged period of ministry. And in the Old Testament, God set a pattern for us when He "rested from all His work" (Ge 2:3). Shouldn't we take His example seriously? Start by setting aside a special time to relax physically and renew yourself emotionally and spiritually. You will be at your best for the Lord if you have taken time to loosen the bow.

We Will Go Fishing - Philip Melancthon, the great Reformation theologian, once said to his friend Martin Luther, "This day you and I will discuss the governance of the universe." What Luther said in response was unexpected: "This day you and I will go fishing and leave the governance of the universe to God." Our Daily Bread, March-May, 1996, p. for May 18

I **rest** beneath the Almighty's shade,
My griefs expire, my troubles cease;
Thou, Lord, on whom my soul is stayed,
Wilt keep me still in perfect peace.
- Charles Wesley

A Rest Remaineth for the Weary

by Johann S Kunth

A rest remaineth for the weary;
Arise, sad heart, and grieve no more;
Though long the way, and dark and dreary,

It endeth on the golden shore.
Before His throne the Lamb will lead thee,
On heav'nly pastures He will feed thee,
Cast off thy burden, come with haste;
Soon will the toil and strife be ended,
The weary way which thou hast wended.
Sweet is the rest which thou shalt taste.

The Father's house has many a dwelling,
And there will be a place for thee.
With perfect love His heart is welling
Who loved thee from eternity.
His precious blood the Lamb hath given
That thou might'st share the joys of Heaven,
And now He calleth far and near:
"Ye weary souls, cease your repining,
Come while for you My light is shining;
Come, sweetest rest awaits you here!"

O come, come all, ye weak and weary,
Ye souls bowed down with many a care;
Arise and leave your dungeons dreary
And listen to His promise fair:
"Ye bore your burdens meek and lowly,
I will fulfill My pledge most holy,
I'll be your solace and your rest.
Ye are Mine own, I will requite you;
Though sin and Satan seek to smite you,
Rejoice! Your home is with the blest."

There rest and peace in endless measure
Shall be ours through eternity;
No grief, no care, shall mar our pleasure,
And untold bliss our lot shall be.
Oh, had we wings to hasten yonder—
No more o'er earthly ills to ponder—
To join the glad, triumphant band!
Make haste, my soul, forget all sadness;
For peace awaits thee, joy and gladness—
The perfect rest is nigh at hand.

Rest In Peace - A four-year-old and a six-year-old presented their Mom with a house plant. They had used their own money and she was thrilled. The older of them said with a sad face, "There was a bouquet that we wanted to give you at the flower shop. It was real pretty, but it was too expensive. It had a ribbon on it that said, 'Rest In Peace,' and we thought it would be just perfect since you are always asking for a little peace so that you can rest." - Source unknown

Carry Some Quiet Around inside Thee - "Carry some quiet around inside thee," the well-known Quaker, George Fox, used to say. "Be still and cool in thy own mind and spirit, from thy own thoughts, and then thou wilt feel the principle of God to turn thy mind to the Lord from whence cometh life; whereby thou mayest receive the strength and power to allay all storms and tempests." Source unknown

Now I lay my down to rest,
Tomorrow I have another test;
If I should die before I wake,
That's one less test I'll have to take.

Resting in Christ - Christ's Offer of Rest - In the Philippines I heard a local pastor use the following parable to illustrate Christ's offer of rest (Matt. 11:28) and the response of people who won't trust Him completely: The driver of a caribou wagon was on his way to market when he overtook an old man carrying a heavy load. Taking compassion on him, the driver invited the old man to ride in the wagon. Gratefully the old man accepted. After a few minutes, the driver turned to see how the man was doing. To his surprise, he found him still straining under the heavy weight, for he had not taken the burden off his shoulders. - Larry Chell

Look ...

- Look around and be distressed.
- Look inside and be depressed.
- Look at Jesus and be at rest.

Corrie Ten Boom

><>><>><>

Fold Up the Tent

Fold up the tent!
The sun is in the West.
Tomorrow my untainted soul will range
Among the blest.
And I am well content,
For what is sent, is sent,
And God knows best.

Fold up the tent,
And speed the parting guest!
The night draws on, though night and day are one
On this long quest.

This house was only lent
For my apprenticeship—

What is, is best.
Fold up the tent! Its tenant would be gone,
To fairer skies than mortal eyes
May look upon.
All that I loved has passed,
And left me at the last Alone!—alone!

Fold up the tent!
Above the mountain's crest,
I hear a clear voice calling, calling clear,—

“To rest! To rest!”
And I am glad to go,
For the sweet oil is low,
And rest is best!
John Oxenham

In a word this saint greatly used by God had found the secret - HE HAD LEARNED TO REST!

Hudson Taylor learned that holiness did not come by striving but by resting in the Holy One of Israel.
Not by DOING but by ABIDING

In Chapter 1 of "Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret" ([Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret](#) or [Here](#)) we read this poem which sound like the inviting words of our Lord Jesus...

Bear not a single care thyself,
One is too much for thee;
The work is Mine, and Mine alone;
Thy work—to rest in Me.
Selected.

[Here is a link](#) to a 30 part youtube reading of the book '**Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret.**'

In Chapter 5...

I am indeed proving the truth of that word, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." (Isa 26:3KJV) My mind is quite as much at **rest** as, nay more than, it would be if I had a hundred pounds in my pocket. May He keep me ever thus, simply depending on Him for every blessing, temporal as well as spiritual. (Howard Taylor. Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret)

In Chapter 8...

One of their warmest friends and helpers was the ex-Buddhist leader, who was a cotton merchant in the city. This Mr. Ni, though long resident in Ningpo, had never come in contact with the Gospel. He was deeply earnest, and as president of an idolatrous society spent much time and money in the service of "the gods." But his heart was not at **rest**, and the more he followed his round of religious observances the more empty he found them to be...

"I have long sought the Truth, but without finding it. I have traveled far and near, but have never searched it out. In Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, I have found no **rest**. But I do find **rest** in what we have heard tonight. Henceforth, I am a believer in Jesus."

In Chapter 10...

In great spiritual agony, I wandered out on the sands alone. And there the Lord conquered my unbelief, and I surrendered myself to God for this service. I told Him that all the responsibility as to the issues and consequences must **rest** with Him; that as His servant it was mine to obey and to follow Him, His to direct, care for and guide me and those who might **labor** with me. Need I say that at once peace flowed into my burdened heart?

Then and there I asked Him for twenty-four fellow-workers, two for each of the eleven provinces which were without a missionary and two for Mongolia; and writing the petition on the margin of the Bible I had with me, I turned homeward with a heart enjoying **rest** such as it had been a stranger to for months, and with an assurance that the Lord would bless His own work and that I should share in the blessing...

The conflict ended, all was peace and joy. I felt as if I could fly up the hill to Mr. Pearce's house. And how I did sleep that night! My dear wife thought that Brighton had done wonders for me, and so it had.

In Chapter 14...

This last sentence, I think I now fully endorse. To let my loving Savior work in me His will, my sanctification, is what I would live for by His grace. Abiding, not striving nor struggling; looking off unto Him; trusting Him for present power; ... **resting** in the love of an almighty Savior, in the joy of a complete salvation, "from all sin"—this is not new, and yet 'tis new to me. I feel as though the dawning of a glorious day had risen upon me. I hail it with trembling, yet with trust. I seem to have got to the edge only, but of a boundless sea; to have sipped only, but of that which fully satisfies. Christ literally all seems to me, now, the power, the only power for service, the only ground for unchanging joy.

How then to have our faith increased? Only by thinking of all that Jesus is and all He is for us: His life, His death, His work, He Himself as revealed to us in the Word, to be the subject of our constant thoughts. Not a striving to have faith ... but a looking off to the Faithful One seems all we need; a **resting** in the Loved One

entirely, for time and for eternity.

We do not know just how the miracle was wrought; but, "As I read, I saw it all," Mr. Taylor wrote. "I looked to Jesus, and when I saw—oh, how joy flowed!"

He was a joyous man now [Mr. Judd recorded], a bright happy Christian. He had been a toiling, burdened one before, with latterly not much rest of soul. It was **resting** in Jesus now, and letting Him do the work (**Ed: Read that sentence again!**)—which makes all the difference. Whenever he spoke in meetings after that, a new power seemed to flow from him, and in the practical things of life a new peace possessed him. Troubles did not worry him as before. He cast everything on God in a new way, and gave more time to prayer. Instead of working late at night, he began to go to bed earlier, rising at 5 A.M. to give time to Bible study and prayer (often two hours) before the work of the day began.

It was the exchanged life that had come to him—the life that is indeed "No longer I." Six months earlier he had written, "I have continually to mourn that I follow at such a distance and learn so slowly to imitate my precious Master." There was no thought of imitation now! It was in blessed reality "Christ liveth in me." And how great the difference!—instead of bondage, liberty; instead of failure, quiet victories within; instead of fear and weakness, a **restful** sense of sufficiency in Another. So great was the deliverance, that from that time onward Mr. Taylor could never do enough to help to make this precious secret plain to hungry hearts wherever he might be. And there are so many hungry hearts that need such help today that we venture to quote at length from one of his first letters on the subject. It was to his sister, Mrs. Broomhall, whose burdens with a family which grew to number ten children were very real and pressing...

McCarthy, who had been much exercised by the same sense of failure but saw the light before I did, wrote (I quote from memory):

"But how to get faith strengthened? Not by striving after faith, but by **resting** on the Faithful One."

As I read, I saw it all! "If we believe not, he abideth faithful." I looked to Jesus and saw (and when I saw, oh, how joy flowed!) that He had said, "I will never leave thee."

"Ah, there is **rest!**" I thought. "I have striven in vain to **rest** in Him. I'll strive no more. For has not He promised to abide with me—never to leave me, never to fail me?" And, dearie, He never will...

The sweetest part, if one may speak of one part being sweeter than another, is the **rest** which full identification with Christ brings. I am no longer anxious about anything, as I realize this; for He, I know, is able to carry out His will, and His will is mine. It makes no matter where He places me, or how. That is rather for Him to consider than for me; for in the easiest position He must give me His grace, and in the most difficult His grace is sufficient. It little matters to my servant whether I send him to buy a few cash worth of things, or the most expensive articles. In either case he looks to me for the money and brings me his purchases. So, if God should place me in serious perplexity, must He not give much guidance; in positions of great difficulty, much grace; in circumstances of great pressure and trial, much strength? No fear that His resources will prove unequal to the emergency! And His resources are mine, for He is mine, and is with me and dwells in me...

And now I must close. I have not said half I would, nor as I would, had I more time. May God give you to lay hold on these blessed truths. Do not let us continue to say, in effect, "Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above)." In other words, do not let us consider Him as far off, when God has made us one with Him, members of His very body. Nor should we look upon this experience, these truths, as for the few. They are the birthright of every child of God, and no one can dispense with them without dishonoring our Lord. The only power for deliverance from sin or for true service is Christ.

And it was all so simple and practical!—as the busy mother found when she too entered into this **rest of faith**.

"But are you always conscious of abiding in Christ?" Mr. Taylor was asked many years later.

"While sleeping last night," he replied, "did I cease to abide in your home because I was unconscious of the fact? We should never be conscious of not abiding in Christ."

I change, He changes not;
The Christ can never die:
His truth, not mine, the **resting** place;
His love, not mine, the tie.

It was an experience that stood the test, as months and years went by. Never again did the unsatisfied days come back; never again was the needy soul separated from the fullness of Christ. Trials came, deeper and more searching than ever before, but in them all joy flowed unhindered from the presence of the Lord Himself. For Hudson Taylor had found the **secret of soul-rest**. In this experience there had come to him not only a fuller apprehension of the Lord Jesus Himself and all He is for us, but a fuller surrender—yes, indeed, a self-abandonment to Him...

May God help you to live Christ before these little ones, and to minister Him to them. How wonderfully He has led and taught us! How little I believed the **rest** and peace of heart I now enjoy were possible down here! It is heaven begun below, is it not? ... Compared with this union with Christ, heaven or earth are unimportant accidents.

Oh, it is joy to feel Jesus living in you [he wrote to his sister, Mrs. Walker, on the same journey]: to find your heart all taken up by Him; to be reminded of His love by His seeking communion with you at all times, not by your painful attempts to abide in Him. He is our life, our strength, our salvation. He is our "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." He is our power for service and fruit-bearing, and His bosom is our **resting place** now and forever.

In Chapter 17...

The secret of his own strength was not far to seek. Whenever work permitted, Mr. Taylor was in the habit of turning to a little harmonium for refreshment, playing and singing many a favorite hymn, but always coming back to—**Jesus, I am resting, resting, in the joy of what Thou art; I am finding out the greatness of Thy loving heart.**

One of the eighteen evangelists, Mr. George Nichol, was with him on one occasion when some letters were handed in to his office, bringing news of serious rioting in two of the older stations of the Mission. Thinking that Mr. Taylor might wish to be alone, the younger man was about to withdraw when, to his surprise, someone began to whistle. It was the soft refrain of the same well-loved hymn:

Jesus, I am resting, resting, in the joy of what Thou art ...

Turning back, Mr. Nichol could not help exclaiming, "How can you whistle, when our friends are in so much danger!"

"Would you have me anxious and troubled?" was the quiet reply. "That would not help them, and would certainly incapacitate me for my work. I have just to roll the burden on the Lord."

Day and night this was his secret, "just to roll the burden on the Lord." Frequently those who were wakeful in the little house at Chinkingiang might hear, at two or three in the morning, the soft refrain of Mr. Taylor's favorite hymn. He had learned that, for him, only one life was possible—just that blessed life of **resting** and rejoicing in the Lord under all circumstances, while He dealt with the difficulties, inward and outward, great and small

From the above record of his spiritual life, it comes as no surprise that [Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting](#) was one of **Hudson Taylor's** favorite hymns... play this hymn as you ponder the words...

[Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting](#)

by Jean Pigott

Vocal by Steve Green

Jesus, I am resting, resting,
In the joy of what Thou art;
I am finding out the greatness
Of Thy loving heart.
Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee,
And Thy beauty fills my soul,
For by Thy transforming power,
Thou hast made me whole.

Refrain

*Jesus, I am resting, resting,
In the joy of what Thou art;
I am finding out the greatness*

Of Thy loving heart.

O, how great Thy loving kindness,
Vaster, broader than the sea!
O, how marvelous Thy goodness,
Lavished all on me!
Yes, I rest in Thee, Belovèd,
Know what wealth of grace is Thine,
Know Thy certainty of promise,
And have made it mine.

Refrain

Simply trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
I behold Thee as Thou art,
And Thy love, so pure, so changeless,
Satisfies my heart;
Satisfies its deepest longings,
Meets, supplies its every need,
Compasseth me round with blessings:
Thine is love indeed!

Refrain

Ever lift Thy face upon me
As I work and wait for Thee;
Resting 'neath Thy smile, Lord Jesus,
Earth's dark shadows flee.
Brightness of my Father's glory,
Sunshine of my Father's face,
Keep me ever trusting, resting,
Fill me with Thy grace.

Refrain

The Promise Theme and the Theology of Rest **Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.**

- [The Promise Theme and the Theology of Rest - Bibliotheca Sacra: Volume 130: Page 135](#)
- See Dr Kaiser's recommended book which can be borrowed - [The promise-plan of God : a biblical theology of the Old and New Testaments](#)

In 1933 Gerhard Von Rad aptly observed that "Among the many benefits of redemption offered to man by Holy Scripture, that of 'rest' has been almost overlooked in biblical theology..." Forty years have not substantially changed that assessment of the situation. In fact, except for the brief and conflicting opinions delivered in commentaries on Hebrews 3 and 4, only a few major articles in the journals and fewer graduate theses have been devoted to the concept of "God's Rest" in the last century. Most biblical theologies of the Old Testament and New Testament, biblical encyclopedias, theological wordbooks, Festschriften, and systematic theologies are ominously silent on the topic. The question is why?

While reasons may vary, the overriding cause lies in the sheer difficulty of the concept. Added to this obstacle are the problems of one's hermeneutical posture and his solution to the authoritative boundaries placed by the biblical writers on the lines of continuity and discontinuity found between the two testaments. But it is for precisely this reason that expositors of Scripture should be willing to re-examine once again this neglected biblical concept, for it promises to provide another clue to contemporary readers as to how the two testaments are related to each other.

The Promise Theme

Promise Theology in Genesis

No other theme provides such a comprehensive insight into the plan and program of our Lord in both testaments as the “promise.” Beginning with the promise of a victorious “seed” in Genesis 3:15, the content of this single, all encompassing theme builds. A constellation of terms is used in the Old Testament to teach that the promise is God’s “word,” “blessing,” and “oath,” to his chosen “seed,” while the New Testament focuses the now enlarged picture by limiting the terminology to that of God’s “promise,” epangelia. Both testaments can also depict the promise doctrine under one of the most ubiquitous formulas in the canon: “I will be your God, you shall be my people, and I will dwell in the midst of you.”⁵

Basically the promise consists of three elements: first, a “seed” or a line of heirs culminating in a chief heir par excellence which is promised to Eve, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 3:15; Gen. 12:3, 7; Gen. 13:14–16; Gen. 15:4, 5, 13, 18; Gen. 16:10; Gen. 17:2, 7, 9, 19; Gen. 21:12; Gen. 22:17; Gen. 26:24; Gen. 27:28, 29; Gen. 28:14); second, the land of Canaan which is given to the Patriarchs and their descendants forever as an inheritance (Gen. 12:1, 7; Gen. 13:15, 17; Gen. 15:7, 18; Gen. 17:8; Gen. 24:7; Gen. 26:2, 3; Gen. 28:13; Gen. 49:8–12) and third, the climactic element: that the Patriarchs are the recipients of these basic three elements: (1) Abraham’s seed through Isaac would by this heritage (Gen. 12:3; Gen. 18:18; Gen. 22:18; Gen. 26:4; Gen. 28:14). This last item Paul clearly calls the “gospel” in Galatians 3:8.

There were additional items in Genesis which elaborated on these basic three elements: (1) Abraham’s seed through Isaac would be countless as the stars and sand of the seashore, (2) they would be a great nation, (3) that kings would come from Abraham, Sarah, and Jacob, and (4) Abraham’s name would be great.

Promise Theology in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers

The Exodus narratives do not interrupt the promise; instead they perpetuate the same announcements already given to the patriarchs (Exod. 2:24; Exod. 3:13, 15, 16, 17; Exod. 4:5; Exod. 6:2–5; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 32:13; Exod. 33:1; Lev. 26:42, 45; Num. 10:29; Num. 14:23; Num. 32:11). But the new addition to the promise is this: “I will take you for my people” (Exod. 6:7). Already in Genesis 17:7–8 and Genesis 28:21 the first part of this tripartite formula had been promised, namely, “I will be your God.” Now the emphasis will fall on the fact that Israel will be Yahweh’s “son”, his “firstborn son,” a people for his possession. Herein lies the heart of the theological development of the promise in these three pentateuchal books (Exod. 29:45–46; Lev. 11:45; Lev. 22:33; Lev. 25:38; Lev. 26:12, 45; Num. 15:41). Of course the provision of the tabernacle introduces the third aspect of the tripartite formula: “I will tabernacle, dwell (sakan) in the midst of you” (especially Exod. 29:45–46; but also in Exod. 24:16; Exod. 25:8; Exod. 40:35; Num. 5:3; Num. 35:34). With this word one of the greatest formulas for the promise theme is completed.

Here began the heart of the Bible’s own story of progress. God promises to be something and to do something for a select people so as to bring blessing to all mankind and creation. Therefore, this article has as one of its foundations that the key category for understanding biblical revelation is the Bible’s own foundational concept, namely, the “promise.” If some object saying that the theme of covenant is more prominent, the response is simple there were many formal covenants, but the content of these covenants of redemption was at once single, continuous and eternal; hence the word to Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and Jeremiah (Jer. 31:31–34) is a united plan, but exhibiting many expanding and interlocking specifications in the progress of redemption. One such addition to the promise is the theme of “rest.”

The exciting potential offered in the theology of rest is that the Bible deliberately takes a word which is intimately involved in the physical inheritance of the land of Canaan which had been part of God’s promise to Abraham and uses it to include both a physical concept and a deeply spiritual meaning. The rest which God gives is at once historical (Canaan), soteriological (salvation), and eschatological (the kingdom and our reign with Christ). This is another beautiful illustration of the corporate solidarity of some of these themes in Scripture. Each step in the onward movement of such themes as the promise with its sub-themes such as the rest from God, the Messiah, and the Seed, points back to the beginning and to the ultimate goal intended by God. Each successive historical step harmoniously combines the beginning step in which the totality was programmatically announced with the end in which that totality shall be unfolded. Therefore, things combined in the promise stage were often disjoined in their actual historical fulfillment, but never in their ideological or theological connection. Each part implied the whole doctrine and the whole stood for each of successive participating steps as they were (and are) being enacted. This can be seen in an Isaac or a Solomon who epitomized the promised heir at that point in history, but then it was always with the tension expressed in Hebrews: “not yet” was the full realization accomplished.

The Theology of Rest

One of the new provisions added to the expanding revelation of the Promise theme was the provision of “rest” for Israel. So special was this rest that Yahweh would call it His rest (Ps. 95:11 ; Isa. 66:1). It is precisely this aspect of the Promise theme which provides that key link between the end of the book of Numbers and the time of David: the corresponding texts for this period of time being Deuteronomy 12:9–10 and 2 Samuel 7:1, 11.

But before the reader quickly assumes that the former is the promise of “the rest” and “the inheritance” of Canaan while the latter is

the historical fulfillment of that “rest” under David, he must come to terms with the historical midpoint in Joshua 21:44–45:

“The LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers; not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their power. Not one of all the good promises which the LORD had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass.”

But this only yields a conundrum. If Joshua fulfilled the promised rest, what is 2 Samuel 7:1 claiming? How often was this state of rest fulfilled? Not only must we work with Joshua and David as the fulfillers of the promise but even Solomon was included, for he was named the “man of rest” (1 Chron. 22:9; 1 Kings 8:56). Even later this same divine rest appears after periods of bloodshed and trouble in the reigns of King Asa (2 Chron. 14:5, 6; 2 Chron. 15:15) and King Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:30).

Even the repeated notices of “rest” in Judges (Judg. 3:1, 30; Judg. 5:31; Judg. 8:28) reflect saqat periods which were not the permanent rest promised in the nuah group of words. The same saqat type is observed in Joshua 11:23 and Joshua 14:15 where the land is given this type of “rest” from war. It is a temporary lull in the continuous surge of the restless sea, Isaiah 57:20, a “respite” from days of trouble, Psalm 94:13. This type of rest must be separated from what God calls “My Rest.”

Nevertheless, there still are a number of nuah types offered at different times.

No wonder the Psalmist says the invitation to enter into God’s Rest is still open (Ps. 95:11). And that was where the writer of Hebrews boldly announced that the “today” of the ancient promise was still open even in his day. Therefore, that ancient aspect of the promise doctrine can be ours by faith even now in these “last days.”

The Rest Vocabulary

The Hebrew root nuah, “to rest” supplies the majority of the words for this concept. Whenever the hiphil stem of this root is followed by the preposition le plus a person or group, it usually assumes a technical status. The resulting form in some twenty instances is heniah le. This rest is a place granted by the Lord (Exod. 33:14; Deut. 3:20; Josh. 1:13, 15; Josh. 22:4; 2 Chron. 14:5), a peace and security from all enemies (Deut. 12:10; Deut. 25:19; Josh. 21:44; Josh. 23:1; 2 Sam. 7:1, 11; 1 Kings 5:18 [1 Kings 5:4]; 1 Chron. 22:9, 18; 1 Chron. 23:25; 2 Chron. 14:6; 2 Chron. 15:15; 2 Chron. 20:30; 2 Chron. 32:22 - probable reading?) or the cessation of sorrow and labor in the future (Isa. 14:3; Isa. 28:12).

The noun is menuhah, “resting-place,” “rest.” Here again this form also assumes a technical usage. Perhaps the earliest instance was in Jacob’s blessing Issachar with a land which would be a good resting-place (Gen. 49:15). The geographical, material, and spatial association of this rest are strong in Deuteronomy 12:9; 1 Kings 8:56; 1 Chronicles 22:9; Isaiah 28:12; Micah 2:10, consequently there is the frequent association of the maqom theme. It is “a place” where Yahweh would “plant” his people Israel so that they could dwell in their own place without being disturbed any more, for example Deuteronomy 1:33, 2 Samuel 7:10.

In spite of all the emphasis on the promised land as the rest of God for Israel, the spiritual element also is prominent in this noun form. This finds expression whenever this rest is connected with the themes of the ark of God or the temple. Rest is where the presence of God stops (as in the wilderness wanderings, Num. 10:33) or dwells (as in Palestine, Ps. 132:8, 14; Isa. 66:1; 1 Chron. 28:2). It was for this reason, no doubt, that David stressed the aspects of belief and trust for this rest in Psalm 95:11. As with the verb, so here again this rest is associated with Israel’s return to the land, Isaiah 11:15.

A related noun form is manoah. Out of its seven appearances, four should be included as part of our technical vocabulary: Deuteronomy 28:65 (a disobedient Israel would find no rest while being dispersed among the nations), Lamentations 1:3 (Judah did not find rest in Babylon), Psalm 116:7 (the Psalmist will return to God’s rest after his resurrection from the dead!), and 1 Chronicles 6:16 [1 Chron. 6:31] (a resting place for the ark).

The case built up from all the technical uses of the root nuah, is inescapable: God’s rest is the gracious gift of the land promised to the patriarchs with its attendant blessings such as the cessation of all hospital enemy action. It is also the place where the presence of the Lord dwells whether with the travelling ark or in the temple.

Rest as the Inheritance of the Land

One of the great ideas dominating the theology of Deuteronomy is that future moment when God will cause Israel to possess the land of Canaan. Possession, inheritance, and rest function almost as synonymous ideas here. Since the gift is as sure as the word of the promising God, therefore everything waits on this one “until”: “until the Lord has given rest...and until they also possess the land (Deut. 3:20).

Repeatedly, the emphasis is on the fact that Yahweh has promised the patriarchs this gift of the land (Deut. 1:8, 21, 35, 38 and 65 other times in Deut). But with this same promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Lord spoke simultaneously to Moses’ generation in the wilderness (Deut. 2:29 et passim). Canaan was to be Israel’s inheritance and resting place.

But this rest was also God's rest. If one misses this point, he will have the same problem that G. Von Rad had: "It is now quite clear that this notion that the land belongs to Yahweh as stated in Leviticus 25:23; Joshua 22:19 is of a totally different order from that of the promise of the land to the early patriarchs."

On the contrary, the land of Canaan was the (nahalah) "the inheritance of the LORD" (Exod. 15:17; 1 Sam. 26:19; 2 Sam. 21:3; 1 Kings 8:36), therefore it was His to give away. It was His "possession" (yerussah in 2 Chronicles 20:1 and ahuzzah in Joshua 22:19). Even more significantly, the people of Israel themselves were the "possession" of the LORD (Exod. 19:5; Deut. 4:20; Deut. 9:26, 29; Deut. 32:8, 9; 1 Sam. 10:1; 2 Sam. 14:16; 2 Sam. 20:19). This latter concept is never tied directly into the concept of God's rest, though the idea is relevant when the discussion turns to "heirs" and "joint heirs" in the "inheritance to come." At that point, suddenly the complex of ideas moves from a geographical fixation to again include a spiritual reality as well. This would tie in with the emphasis on the presence of the Lord in the nuah words discussed above.

The Later Development of the Theology of Rest

In spite of all the insights afforded the researcher into the preceding definitions and distinctions, the climaxing statements on any theology of rest are to be found in Psalm 95 and Hebrews 3:7–Hebrews 4:13.

Psalm 95

This psalm is one of a series of Psalms (Ps. 93—Ps. 100) variously designated as "Apocalyptic Psalms" or "Theocratic Psalms" (Delitzsch), "Millennial Anthems" (Tholuck), "Songs of the Millennium" (Binnie), "Group of Millennial Psalms" (Herder), "Second Advent Psalms" (Rawlinson), "Enthronement Psalms" (Mowinckel) and "Royal Psalms" (Perowne). Whatever title is used, there can be no mistaking that the theme is eschatological and that it depicts a time when the Lord alone is King reigning over all peoples and lands (Ps. 93:1; Ps. 96:10; Ps. 97:1; Ps. 99:1). Not only in the grand symphonic conclusion to these millennial psalms is there a song (Ps. 100) but the theme of a "new song" appears in Psalm 96:1 and Psalm 98:1 which, if it is not messianic by its very name, it is certainly such by content in Psalms 96 and Psalm 98. Indeed, the Lord comes to rule (cf. Ugaritic usage of sapat) the earth, the world and the people in it with righteousness and his truth (Ps. 96:13; Ps. 97:9).

Therefore, each of these psalms alike tells the story of a divine kingdom which is yet to be set up on the earth. It anticipates the universal outburst of joy which shall greet this future event. In order to accomplish this result, the psalms seem to group themselves in pairs, that is, Psalm 93 goes with Psalm 94; Psalm 95 with Psalm 96; Psalm 97 with Psalm 98, and Psalm 99 with Psalm 100. The pattern thus established is the announcement of the Lord's reign in the first of the pairs (especially in Ps. 93, Ps. 97, Ps. 99 and perhaps in Ps. 95's special order) followed by the outburst of praise to the Lord with that "new Song" (especially Ps. 96, Ps. 98 and climactically Ps. 100.)

Now the interesting point to be made in connection with our study is that the divine rest is set in the context of these psalms celebrating the second advent of our Lord. Participation in this kingdom of God, this rest of God, is to be made now on the basis of a decision in the present moment before those events connected with the second coming overtake anyone.

Therefore in this pair of psalms, a warning and exhortation to enter this rest appears between a triple invitation to praise the Lord based on the fact that He is the only King, Creator, and Shepherd (Ps. 95:1–7a), and the contents of the new song (Ps. 96:1–13). The connection then between Psalm 95 and Psalm 96 is just the inverse pattern found in Isaiah 2:2–5. There the exhortation of verse 5 [Isa. 2:5] follows the glorious announcement of the kingdom of God in verses 2–4 [Isa. 2:2–4], but our Psalm (Ps. 95:7b–11) warns before it breaks into the triumphant strains of Psalm 96 with its announcement in song of the final, universal reign of the Lord.

Once these connections are observed in Psalm 93—Psalm 100, it follows that the psalmist's understanding of "rest" is tied up with the events of the second advent. It also follows that the generation of the wilderness could have participated in this future kingdom or rest of God to some extent, but they refused to do so in unbelief; therefore they were twice the losers: temporally and spiritually, in that historic moment and in the second advent!

The picture that begins to emerge is one where this eschatological rest (the "inheritance" or land of Israel which figures in a central role in the kingdom of God) is entered into by faith in the historic present. As a token of His ability and willingness to finally do all that He has promised concerning this promise of the land made to the patriarchs, the Lord gave to Israel in the historic past the land of Canaan to Joshua. This was an "earnest" or "down payment" on God's final complete rest yet to come.

The Rest Given to Joshua

The problem arises if the Lord "swore in (his) anger" (Ps. 95:11) that not one of the evil generation should enter in the good land which he planned to give to the patriarchs (except Joshua and Caleb), how then did anyone arrive there in Joshua's day?

Scripture responds that it was "because Caleb wholly followed the Lord" (Deut. 1:36) as did Joshua, therefore they went in by faith.

Therefore as Numbers 14:7–9 teaches, they set a proper value upon God’s promised inheritance (it was “exceeding good”), they had a proper confidence in God (“If Jehovah delight in us, then He will bring us into the land”) and they feared the sin of rebellion (“only rebel not against Jehovah”). It also notes that the little children whom the older generation feared would become statistics and disaster victims, would instead receive the land by grace as a gift (Deut. 1:39).

But how is it possible to have this “rest” under Joshua (Josh. 1:13, 15; Josh. 11:23; Josh. 21:44; Josh. 22:4; Josh. 23:1) and yet not have it if it is to be connected with some everlasting kingdom-rest as argued from the millennial Psalm 95? Wasn’t Joshua living in the promised “rest home” (Exod. 33:14) and “inheritance” or “rest” (Deut. 12:9)? Why did God seemingly go back on His eternal word and resort to placing this rest safely out of everyone’s reach in the millennium?

The solution is along the same lines as observed in the case of the patriarchs themselves. Even though they were already living in Canaan, it still was as yet just a promised land to them. It is repeatedly called “the land of their sojourning” (Gen. 17:8; Gen. 28:4; Gen. 36:7; Gen. 37:1; Gen. 47:1; Exod. 6:4) and not their “possession.” That is how Stephen put it in his speech in Acts 7:4–5- “God removed him from there into this land...yet he gave him no inheritance in it...but promised to give it to him in possession and to his descendants...” Indeed, they did possess a small parcel of that land, their burial grounds, and this was simply an “earnest” or “down payment” on the whole land. In a similar way, Joshua, Caleb and the new generation received the land. The emphasis in Joshua 21:43–45 is still upon the promised word which hasn’t failed Israel, nor will it.

But on the matter of whether Israel will retain its privilege of remaining in the land, that is another matter. Israel had set before her the alternatives of “life and good, death and evil.” It was all to be decided on how she responded to one command: Love the Lord your God. The proof that she was doing just that would be seen by how she kept the Lord’s commandments (Deut. 30:15–20).

There was to be the crux of the matter-would Israel choose life? Would she live? Really live? Even live on the land which the Lord swore to give to their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?

This conditional “if” did not “pave the way for a declension from grace into law” as Von Rad suggests any more than the conditional aspect found in connection with the Davidic promise lowered it into a works salvation. On the contrary, the Davidic promise remains externally valid and immutable as the One who gave it (2 Sam. 7:13, 16; Ps. 89:27, 28, 35, 36; 2 Sam. 23:5; Isa. 55:3).

The “if” in the Davidic covenant (Ps. 132:12; Ps. 89:29–32; 2 Sam. 7:14b-15; 1 Kings 2:4; 1 Kings 8:25; 1 Kings 9:4–5) can only refer in those contexts to individual and personal invalidation of the benefits of the covenant, but they can never affect the certainty of God’s eternal oath.

Therefore the promise of the inheritance of God’s rest is protected even in the case of subsequent sins by the recipient’s descendants. It would not be a case of “slipping into Law” or even of “slipping from grace.” Neither the days of Joshua nor of David were any kind of blank check for their descendants to rest on their father’s laurels. The word of promise could also be theirs, if they would appropriate it by faith. If not, they were the losers, however, the promise was not thereby revoked, withdrawn or thereby nullified for any succeeding generation: rather that word was eternal!

As for the eschatological aspects of the rest theme in the millennial psalms of the Davidic period, the answer is that the promise of God is a single, eternal plan encompassing the end, beginning and all the points of history in between. Certainly the final triumph of the promised “Seed” and outreach of that salvation in its completed fulfillment awaits the second advent of the Messiah. Why then, should not this rest likewise participate? Was it not a part of the promise doctrine?

Rest in Hebrews 3:7–Hebrews 4:13

The synthesis of this study lies in the concluding word of divine revelation concerning the rest of God located in Hebrews 3:7–Hebrews 4:13. The scope of this subject is now almost breathtaking, for as Patrick Fairbairn observed,

“Not only does he [the writer to the Hebrews] thus connect believers under the Gospel with believers under the law in respect to the promised rest, but the promise itself he connects with the very commencement of the world’s history—with that rest of God which He is said to have taken, when He ceased from all His works ...”

There is however, the prior question of the writer of Hebrew’s hermeneutical approach. Is he guilty of a forced exegesis in which he is merely accommodating the old threats and promises formerly addressed to Israel for Christian readers? Is this piece of text in Hebrews a sample of the writer’s fanciful misapplication of Old Testament texts for Christian ears and eyes? Or has he just plain allegorized the Canaan Rest into some spiritual dimension or into a symbol of heaven?

Each of these charges fails to sustain its case in light of the Old Testament context of Psalm 95, the Old Testament usage of “rest” and the total message of Hebrews. Any one of the above suggested exegetical moves would have destroyed his message totally. This promise which was left to us concerning the divine rest (Heb. 4:1) is part of the promise which he argues is immutable (Heb. 6:7) and better than those of the Sinaitic Covenant (Heb. 8:6). Indeed, he is still looking forward to receiving the fulfillment of the

promise of the eternal inheritance (Heb. 9:15) made to Abraham.

If that inheritance was to be the firm possession of the land as Hebrews 11:9 most assuredly asserts, then the joint heirs of this promise with Abraham are not only Isaac and Jacob, but all who have received the same promise with him (Heb. 11:9; Gal. 4:28; Gal. 3:29; Matt. 5:5). Therefore the writer has no more intention of severing the physical and spiritual aspects of this rest than he has of isolating the promise of the geographical land of Canaan from the spiritual and material aspects of the kingdom of God. Both are germane to his argument.

The Number of Divine Rests.

It is common to observe in some commentaries on this passage that there are three or four rests mentioned in Hebrews 3:7–Hebrews 4:11. The list generally highlights three or four of the following:

1. The Divine Rest (Heb. 4:1–3, 10–11) or Rest of Faith
2. The Creation Rest (Heb. 4:4)
3. The Sabbath Rest (Heb. 4:4, 9) or the Rest that Remains (Heb. 6—Heb. 9)
4. The Canaan Rest (Heb. 4:8)
5. The Redemptive Rest (Heb. 4:10)
6. The Eternal Rest (Heb. 4:9)

While it is true that the writer does use the noun *katapausis* in Hebrews 3:11, 18; Hebrews 4:1, 3 (bis), 5, 10, 11, and the verb *katapauomai* in Hebrews 4:4, 8 along with the unique appearance of *sabbatismos* in Hebrews 4:10 to describe this rest, there is every indication that he conceives of a single rest from God. Indeed, there may be aspects of this divine rest which are more obvious at one period than another, but it would be unfair to the writer's point to subdivide this rest. In fact, everyone is startled at first when he suddenly introduces the "sabbath rest" into his argument. But even here he directly connects it with the "rest" under discussion.

It is not that the Sabbath is a type of the eschaton or of heaven, but it was the commencement of the divine rest which the Creator entered into after his six days of creative work. He had intended that man should also share this sabbath with Him, but then there was the Fall. Now the way back to this sabbath rest is made available in promise form and finally in the actual inheritance of all that was promised. Therefore, the rest is distinctively God's single rest.

The Present Offer of the Divine Rest.

Modern man can share in the ancient word made to Israel, for the promise "being left" (Heb. 4:1) "remains for some to enter it" (Heb. 4:6). Put it another way, the "sabbath rest" "remains" (Heb. 4:9), so "let's labor to enter that rest" (Heb. 4:11). Four times then the text emphasizes that this offer is still current and unfulfilled,

The way all men, past and present, can enter in is by believing the promise which is also called the "gospel" in Hebrews 4:2. The text explicitly notes that this "good news" was preached in the wilderness even as it is preached to us, but because they did not exercise "faith" in that announced word of promise, they never entered this rest (Heb. 4:2).

However, believers can and do enter that rest. They have believed and obeyed that promise (Heb. 4:3, 7; cf. on "believe" and "obey" John 3:36).

The Nature of the Divine Rest. This special rest which God called "my rest" is an important aspect of the emerging promise theme (*epangelias*, Heb. 4:1) in both testaments. Since Paul is bold to equate this promise with the gospel, especially the phrase "In thy seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Gal. 3:8), it is no wonder that our writer is also bold to proclaim that the wilderness generation also had the same basic gospel proclaimed to them (Heb. 4:2; cf. Heb. 3:17 for the antecedent of "as well as unto them"). Thus, the correlation of some aspects of "my rest," promise and gospel are explicit.

Added to this base is another correlation: the rest into which God entered at the close of creation is linked with the rest into which all creatures must enter before they can be perfected. But again, the entrance to this rest is gained once again by faith, thereby making the same point made in the promise, gospel, rest correlation made above.

Another question still insists on projecting itself into our thoughts, and it is the one that Franz Delitzsch posed and then answered.

But it may be asked, although the elder generation that came out of Egypt perished in the wilderness, did not the younger generation, under Joshua, actually enter into the promised rest? To this question the author has now to reply; for it is a mistake to maintain, as most commentators do, that he at once identifies the entrance into God's rest promised by Moses, with that which is the true counterpart of the divine Sabbath after the works

of creation. The entrance into rest which Moses promised was (as is expressed in a hundred passages, and as our author himself well knew) simply the taking possession of the land of Canaan. But things combined in the promise were disjointed in the fulfilment. It became manifest that the taking possession of Canaan did not cover the whole extent of the promise and did not exhaust it.

Therefore there was more to that rest than simply occupying the land of Canaan. It was that, indeed; but it was also combined with the whole extent of the spiritual aspects of the promise.

One can hardly do better than to view this "rest of God" in a way that involves a corporate solidarity of the whole rest with all its parts or as a collective single program which purposely embraces several related aspects realized in marked and progressive stages. From the initial divine rest inaugurated at creation to its final realization once again in that millennial reign of the world's new sabbath with the intervening periods of proleptical entrance by faith and the momentary inheritance of Canaan by Israel, it is all one piece; a single divine rest with related aspects. This is the thesis championed by George N. H. Peters:

The land of Canaan is called "rest," and it is God's "rest"... It is not typical of something else, for that would overthrow the covenant and its promises.... After a res[urrection] from the dead, an entrance into this "rest" is to be obtained. Thus e.g. Ps. 116 has "return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord dealt bountifully with thee.... I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." The identical "rest" promised is the one obtained after a res. The Jews thus understood the "rest" to denote the land, and the making of this rest glorious, etc., to mean that under the Messiah it would be renewed and beautified. Paul in writing to Jews does not contradict, but positively confirms this idea of the future inheritance, for instead of calling this rest the third heaven (as many unwarrantedly add), he (Heb. 3 and Heb. 4) quotes Ps. 95, and designates the same "rest" the Psalmist does into which certain ones could not enter, but fell in the wilderness. He argues that through unbelief we too shall be cut off, but through faith in Christ, and by the power of Jesus, we too shall enter in "His rest" according to the promise. ...The unity of the Spirit and Divine Plan required, employs the reasoning best calculated to establish them in the only true idea of the inheritance promised to the Patriarchs and to all God's people.

Conclusion

The rest of God is distinctively His own rest which He offers to share first with Israel and through them with all the sons of men who will also enter into it by faith. While there were antecedent aspects of that final rest to come, chiefly in the divine rest provided by the inheritance of the land of Canaan; because it was not accompanied by the inward response of faith to the whole promise of God, of which this rest was just a part, the land of Canaan still awaits Israel and the people of God. The rest of God, lost in the fall, again rejected by the older wilderness generation and subsequently by their erring children is still future to us in our day.

The dead will enter into its full enjoyment after their resurrection from the dead (Ps. 116:7), therefore it is not to be identified with heaven. Rather it is fixed by Isaiah 11:10 as being "in that day" when "the Lord will extend his hand a second time to recover the remnant of his people" (Isa. 11:11). In that eschatological setting, "his rest" (not "dwellings" as in RSV) shall be glorious. Then the Lord shall choose Jerusalem as His dwelling place, and this new David will say, "This is my resting place for ever" (Ps. 132:14).