

Go Get Some Rest!

Sunday Morning, September 4, 2016

Labor Day – A Day Off! A time to BBQ and have fun! But what about rest? After all we're to rest from labor that day! This concept of a day of rest is nothing new. Some think it originated with the Ten Commandments, but actually this day of rest was created in the beginning along with the Heavens and the Earth.

This reality that "rest" was created is new to me. It was introduced to me by my wife, after she learned about it through the Ladies Bible Study here at Church called "Breathe" by Priscilla Shirer.

I questioned how this concept of "rest" being created was substantiated. After some research, I discovered a Jewish Scholar and Author by the name of Abraham Joshua Heschel who explains it this way:

"The words: 'On the seventh day God finished His work' (Genesis 2:2), seem to be a puzzle. . . . We would surely expect the Bible to tell us that on the sixth day God finished His work. Obviously, the ancient rabbis concluded, there was an act of creation on the seventh day. Just as heaven and earth were created in six days, menuha was created on the Sabbath. After six days of creation—what did the universe still lack? Menuha. Came the Sabbath, came menuha, and the universe was compete."

"Menuha, which we usually render with "rest" means here much more than withdrawal from labor and exertion, more than freedom from toil, strain or activity of any kind. Menuha is not a negative concept but something real and intrinsically positive. This must have been the view of the ancient rabbis if they believed that it took a special act of creation to bring it into being, that the universe would be incomplete without it. 'What was created on the seventh day? Tranquility, serenity, peace and repose.'"

The thought of tranquility, serenity, peace and repose being the essence of "rest" as God intended through His creation is a wonderful principle to uphold.

As I studied further, there are other forms of rest, three of which I'd like to look at in the Old and New Testaments.

These three principles of Biblical rest will help us grasp the importance of rest as God intended. These are:

- 1) Rest from pressures or anxieties of life
- 2) Rest from physical demands
- 3) Rest from our sins, that gives us peace with God. The ultimate rest found in Jesus.

First, let's look at our need to rest from the pressures of life, that is, burdens, demands or business.

(Matthew 11: 28 -29) Jesus Said

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

29 **Take** My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Come to Jesus for rejuvenation and refreshment.
Enjoy Him!

The word “come” is a deliberate decision to take action. In this case, to deliberately seek after Jesus.

God will teach and counsel us on how to handle the pressures of responsibilities, overwork, and the routine of life.

God tells us in verse twenty-nine that His yoke (directives) are easy and the weight of them is light.

When I go to the Lord about a burden that begins to consume me, I come to Him, explain my burden and ask Him for two things:

- 1) His counsel on the subject.
- 2) That He would carry the burden for me.

There's a wonderful peace, assurance and release from burdens, when we give these things to Him and seek His will. This is what it means to come to Jesus and yield to the yoke of His counsel. It is here that I have found burdens lifted and experience “rest” from the pressures of life.

Now, let's look at the second type of rest. The rest we need from physical demands.

(Mark 6: 30 – 31)

30 Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught.

31 And He said to them, “Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.

(Exodus 34:21)

“Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall **rest**; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.

Shaw-Bath

Cease from Work

Physical rest can come from many different sources. For me, it's taking a nap, taking a vacation or laying on a hammock at a campsite. For others, it may be quiet solitude while fishing or reading. You get the idea, take a break from normal routine.

Lastly and most importantly, let's now look at the ultimate rest found in Jesus. Rest from our sins, that gives us peace with God.

(Exodus 33:14)

And He said, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”

We find rest for our souls, when we seek God's presence. Hebrew: Nuach = quiet rest.

(Hebrews 4: 1 – 3)

1 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: “So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest,’” although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

True rest can only be found in God, provided through Jesus.

Greek: katapowsis – laying down and resting on Him.
Reposing down, abode, rest.

(John 13:23)

Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

We may use Labor Day as our celebration of the end of Summer and take a day off from work, but God’s day of rest was meant to relieve every stress we experience in our lives physically and spiritually.

Are you making regular physical, emotional, and mental times of rest in your days and in each week?

Have you found spiritual rest in Jesus? Have you taken on His yoke? Are you enjoying God’s tranquility and peace?