

Daily Devotional, May 31, 2021 Finding Peace and Rest in Time Well Spent

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Matthew 11:28-29 (NIV)

Writing on the topic of rest is not so easy when I, myself, struggle with making rest a priority. Resting is both necessary and biblical, but not always an action practiced by all of us. Time is valuable in our lives, and quite often, rest is not a major priority. In fact, it may not even be on our priority list at all. We get so caught up in the busyness of work, school, family, ministry, and more that we forget to take time to simply rest and sit in God's presence.

In the 19th chapter of 1Kings we find the prophet Elijah fleeing from Queen Jezebel. He is so burnt out and exhausted from his trudging through the desert that he asks the Lord to take his life instead of having to make the long journey to safety. In the previous chapter of 1 Kings, God had used Elijah to do mighty and powerful miracles for His glory, so why now does Elijah suddenly become very doubtful, depressed, and discouraged?

In verse 4, Elijah has travelled a full day into the wilderness and sits under the shade of a tree. There, he begins to try and reason with God as to why his life should come to an end. After much pleading, he eventually falls asleep. An angel eventually awakens him and supplies him with food. He then falls back asleep, awakens a second time and eats some more of the food, which energizes him enough that he is able to travel in strength for the next *forty days*.

God was faithful in meeting Elijah's needs in that moment. But before the provision came, Elijah complained and doubted God would take care of him despite the Lord's previous faithfulness to him. Elijah was operating out of a place of exhaustion and not rest, which made his mind weak and open to doubts, depression and deception from the enemy.

We tend to do this in our own lives don't we? We get caught up in our many tasks, responsibilities, activities, and commitments. It is good and healthy for us to be involved, and to have responsibilities. However, when we become involved in too much that we spread ourselves so thin, and we have no time left to rest and spend time with God. That's when problems begin to develop. Jesus said in Matthew 28 to "come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest". Not only do our bodies need physical rest, but also *spiritual* rest. Jesus says to come to Him, and He will give us the rest we need.

I urge you to take some time this morning just to sit in God's presence. Get rid of all distractions, and anxieties that you may have stored up for the day. Let God's Spirit refuel you through prayer and the reading of His word. God most definitely does delight in our work, and in our ministry, but God also loves when we simply spend time alone with Him sharing our hearts and meditating on His Word and thanking and praising Him!

Prayer: Lord, I am stressed. Help me to accept your invitation to come empty myself and receive the rest I need. Help me to willingly release my fear, my worries, my agenda, and my to-do list. Ease my tension and replenish my body. Silence the voices of doubt and replace them with Your words of truth. Remove the heaviness of my day and pour out your Spirit abundantly into my life. Fill me with Your peace, joy, and love. Fill me until I am consumed by Your grace, and may my life reflect the beauty of resting in You. In Jesus' name. Amen.