

## CHAPTER 10

### Resting and Sleep



What is sleep?

What is rest?

Is there a difference between sleeping and resting?

**Can a person rest without sleeping?** Can a person rest even though he is awake? Can a person rest without being in bed? When Jesus said, "Come unto me....and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28), what did He mean? Did He mean, "I will make you go to sleep"?

**Can a person sleep without resting?** What does it mean to sleep? What does it mean to rest?

Sleeping and resting are necessary for healthy living. In the last chapter we learned about food and eating and how our health depends on how and what we eat. Now in this chapter we want to think about rest and **sleep** and how important these things are.

**Sleep**



How much of your life do you spend in bed sleeping? About how much of every day do you spend sleeping?

Not everyone needs the same amount of sleep. Some gorillas sleep 14 hours out of 24 and some elephants sleep only two hours out of 24. Most people need more sleep than elephants and less sleep than gorillas. But everyone is different. There are some people who need no more than four or five hours sleep at night (such as Benjamin Franklin). Others need much more. The average adult needs about seven and a half hours sleep, but children usually require more.

How much sleep a person needs differs by a number of factors: age (we have already said that children need more sleep than adults), physical characteristics, physical energy used/needed, diet (fuel for the body like gas for the car), etc.

The way to tell if you have had enough sleep is to consider how you feel when you wake up. Test yourself:

Do you get out of bed in the morning full of **zip** and **pep** and **vim** and **zing** and **vigor**? Do you feel refreshed and **ready to go**? Do you jump out of bed and bounce down the stairs saying, "**Good morning everyone!**" If so, then you probably get enough sleep!

Here's another **test**: Do you wake up **long** before the rest of the family? Do you wake up **too** early? Then you may be getting **too much sleep!**

Here's one more **test**: Do you have to be **dragged** out of bed in the morning? Does your Mom need to call to you again and again to wake up? Are you **too tired** when morning comes? Is it because you did not get enough sleep?

### Problems When We Lose Sleep

God made us so that we need sleep. God did not want us to go and go and go and never stop. God made us so that we need to stop and rest and sleep.

When a person goes too long without sleep, this can lead to many problems. One problem is that losing too much sleep can lead to not thinking right. The mind can do crazy things. Here's an example: "An army unit in the South Pacific after fighting for eight days and nights with almost no sleep, suffered from mass **hallucinos**." **Hallucinos** is a state of mind in which a person sees visions or imaginary things that are not really there. People that are on the wrong kinds of drugs often have hallucinations (they are in a dream world in which they see things that are not really there). Sleep loss can do just what drugs do. If a person misses two or three nights of sleep he may become very irritable (getting angry about little things) and suspicious (not trusting others), and may even begin to hallucinate (see things that are not even there). Significant sleep loss can cause the same kinds of effects that LSD causes (LSD is a very powerful and harmful drug). Yes, not getting enough sleep can have a very powerful effect on the **mind**.

## To Sleep or Not to Sleep?

There is a time to sleep and a time not to sleep. It is very important to sleep! We need to sleep, but we need to sleep at the **right** times not at the wrong times.

According to Matthew 26:40-45, did the disciples sleep at the right time (see also Luke 22:45-46)? \_\_\_\_\_ When Jesus was being transfigured on the mountain, did Peter and James and John miss part of the action (Luke 9:32)? \_\_\_\_\_ They were overcome with sleep!

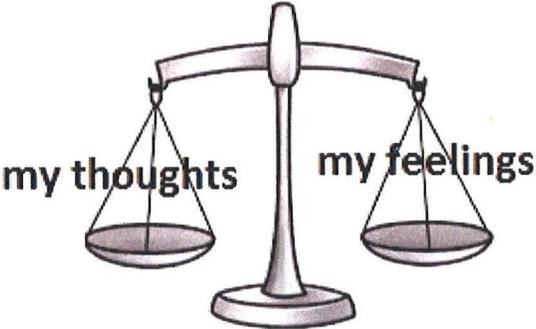
Can you think of some times when it would be wrong to sleep?

while driving a car \_\_\_\_\_  
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The Lord Jesus was a man (the God-man) and had a human body like we do. Did He ever need to sleep (see Mark 4:38)? \_\_\_\_\_

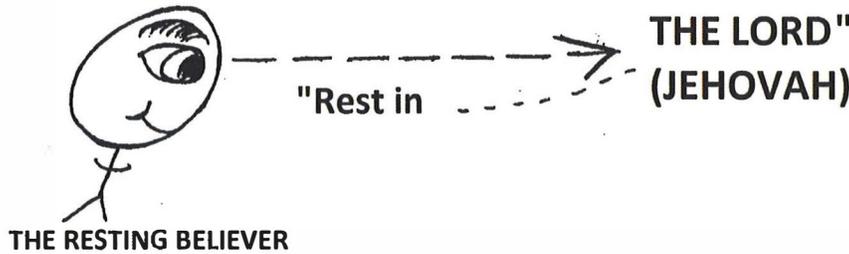
## We Need To Rest in the Lord

In Psalm 37:7 we read, "R\_\_\_\_\_ in the **Lord**." This is a command! God commands us to do this. What does it mean to **rest**? The word rest means "to be even, to be level, not to be off balance in our thinking." Think of a **scale**:

<p>What we are hearing, seeing, experiencing and feeling should be balanced with what we think. Our mind needs to rightly evaluate our reactions, and keep our feelings and emotions in check.</p>	
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As I hear and see and feel different things, I need to be careful not to let my mind get upset and troubled.

The word "rest" also means "to be quiet, composed (keeping calm in the middle of trouble-- Mark 4:38), to wait with silent patience and submission." It means to look in the direction of the **Lord (Jehovah)** and know that He will take care of everything:



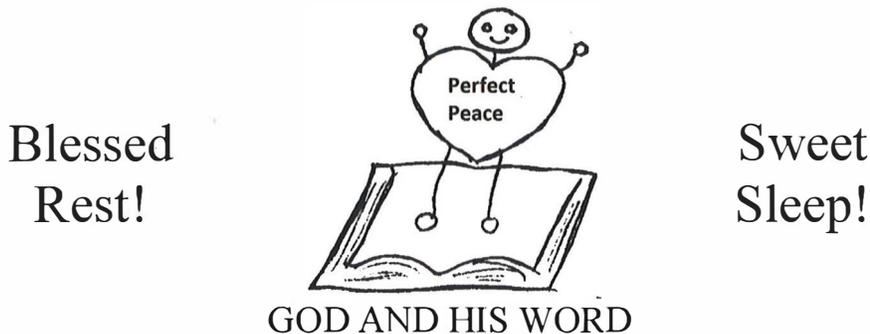
### We Need to Let the Lord Support Our Minds

The Lord our God must support (and continue to support) our minds (what we think). See Isaiah 26:3: "whose mind is \_\_\_\_\_ on Thee." Just as we stay on our bed when we sleep and the bed supports us and holds us up, so our mind is to stay on the Lord and He will support us and our thinking.

**Resting in the Lord** in the right way leads to **perfect P** \_\_\_\_\_ (Isaiah 26:3). **Not resting** or not enough mental resting means that we will not enjoy **God's peace**. Read Isaiah 57:19-21. According to verse 21, how much peace do the wicked have? \_\_\_\_\_

### We Need To Sleep

When we are trusting in the Lord and letting Him be our support we are able to be at peace on the inside:



Likewise, we can also be looking to our loving Lord to give us a good night's sleep. Some try to fall asleep by counting sleep, but the believer has a much better way. He can talk to the **Shepherd** (see Psalm 23:1— **Who is the Shepherd?** \_\_\_\_\_)!

What does God give to His beloved believer (Psalm 127:2)? \_\_\_\_\_ Our loving Lord is concerned about how we sleep. If we rest in the Lord, do we need to be afraid in the night (Proverbs 3:24)? \_\_\_\_\_ What kind of sleep does God promise to give (Proverbs 3:24)? \_\_\_\_\_ Is there a kind of sleep that is not very sweet and not very restful

(Proverbs 26:14)? \_\_\_\_\_ If we live well we should sleep well. The believer should wake up and be refreshed and know that his sleep was \_\_\_\_\_ (Jeremiah 31:26).

### No Need to Fear

As we go to sleep, there is Someone who will never go to sleep (see Psalm 121:3-5). Who is that? \_\_\_\_\_ The believer can have sweet sleep **knowing** that our God is always on duty, watching and keeping us! God is always wide awake! We can sleep well as we remember that He never sleeps!

As we go to sleep, do we need to be afraid of the dark? Is the room dark to God (Psalm 139:12)? \_\_\_\_\_ Do we need to be afraid of being alone (Hebrews 13:5)? \_\_\_\_\_ Do we need to be afraid of bad dreams (Psalm 91:2,4,5,10,11)? \_\_\_\_\_ Remember, a person cannot control his dreams. A person cannot say, "Tonight I choose to dream about taking a nice boat ride down the river and catching a large fish." No, we cannot choose the kind of dreams we have. Sometimes we have pleasant and happy dreams but sometimes we have nightmares. A nightmare does not mean that the person has been bad or done wrong. It is just our unconscious mind doing what it does and we cannot control it. Remember, it is just a dream and it is not something that really happened. If we learn to think correctly with our conscious mind, and if seek to think about the right kind of things during the day, this will help us even during our sleeping hours and perhaps make nightmares happen less often. Also, being careful what we read, watch, and think about before bedtime can help us fall asleep and sleep well.

### Beware of Sleep!

God gives warnings about sleep. Sleep should be man's friend, but sometimes it is man's enemy. Read Proverbs 6:4-11; 19:15 and 20:13. These verses are warnings to the **lazy person**. God is saying, "**Don't sleep when you should be doing something else!**" Sleep is needful and sleep is important. But we should not be sleeping when we should be working. If your Dad was to oversleep every other morning and tell his boss, "Sorry to be late again. I find it hard getting out of bed," how long do you think he would keep his job?

There is a time when we need to wake up and be alert (see Romans 13:11 and Ephesians 5:14). What if the soldiers are all asleep when the enemy comes? What if the baseball player is sleeping or daydreaming when the ball is hit to him? What if the student is daydreaming when the teacher asks him (or her) a question? God wants us to be alert and awake to live the way we should!

### Rest

To sleep sweetly (in a healthy way) is to be well rested. Then my body and I can act and think as God would have me to.

Don't **fight** and **fuss** when it is time to sleep. If you **fight** and **fuss before** you get into bed then you will have problems. As you get into bed your body is ready to rest, but what about your

mind and the "**You**" that is inside your body? Is your mind ready to rest? Are "**You**" ready to rest? **Is this good?** Will you rest well? If not, what can you do to fix this so that you are **resting** in the Lord?

See 1 John 1:9. What are you to confess? \_\_\_\_\_ Be honest and tell God what you have done that is wrong. **Return** to God (by confessing your sins) and then **rest** (Isaiah 30:15).

Talk to the Shepherd! **Praying** and **petitioning** (being specific about what is bothering you, telling God, talking it over with Him, giving the problem to God and to the Lord Jesus Christ, remembering what He did for you on the cross) is what God tells us to do in Philippians 4:6,7,9. This results in **peace** (the **peace of God for you** — verse 7; the **God of peace with you** — verse 9). Read from God's Word and talk to Him about His Word and what you are thinking about.

The more you grow, the more you know. The older you get, **the greater the need to rest** in the Lord. Why is this so? (Is your mind filled with more things as you get older?)

Where should we go to find rest (Matthew 11:28-30)? \_\_\_\_\_ Where is He able to lead us (Psalm 23:2)? \_\_\_\_\_ (waters of quietness and rest). See also Psalm 116:6,7. To find sleep we look for a place for our bodies to lie down. To find rest for our soul (the "**Me**" inside my body) what do we do? What can we encourage others to do?

God wants to give us **His rest!** God wants us to have **His peace** and **His strength**. God offered these things to the children of Israel (Isaiah 30:15), but the end of this verse says that they refused: "and ye \_\_\_\_\_" (Isaiah. 30:15). They did not want God's rest, and they did not want to come to the God of rest.

They would not! Have you been coming to God for rest?

As you open your eyes in the morning what do you need to know (Lamentations 3:22-23)?

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This word **compassions** (verse 22) means this: "God's pity, sorrow about our suffering, caring about our needs **even for** this day."

What can you do as you wake up in the morning?

Read a verse? Pray?