

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

REST

The word REST is used throughout scripture to show God's love, peace, and comfort. God is very clear on wanting us to have a day of rest, He wants us to find rest in our souls, He makes us lie down in green pastures, and tells us to observe the Sabbath. He even tells us that His Holy Spirit rests on us. How good are you at resting?

DAY 1

OUR DAY OF REST IS HOLY

"A WORLD WITHOUT A SABBATH WOULD BE LIKE A MAN WITHOUT A SMILE, LIKE SUMMER WITHOUT FLOWERS, AND LIKE A HOMESTEAD WITHOUT A GARDEN. IT IS THE MOST JOYOUS DAY OF THE WEEK."

-HENRY WARD BEECHER

Genesis 2:2 - 2:3

New International Version

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

DAY 1

PRAY: Dear God, what a great reminder that even YOU rested! You created the entire world and everything in it and then You rested. Would You help me to remember that I was made in Your image and You want me to rest. And not only get rest, but rest in You, rest from the cares of the world and not strive to get things done or get ahead. How beautiful that You rested from all the work of creating and You called that day Holy. I praise You, Lord. Amen and Amen

REFLECT: Have you ever thought that God needs to rest? He stopped what He was doing and just got quiet and rested. Then Jesus tells us quite a few times in the Gospels, that He rested, He went away from the crowds to be alone with God. He was sleeping soundly when the storm came up in the ship. Rest is an important exercise for God, so much so that He made the day of rest a Holy day. The Bible says, "Be still and know that I am God." It doesn't say "Be busy and know that I am God." How often do you set aside a day to rest and call that day Holy?

DAY 1

ACT: Study all of the passages in scripture that talk about God and Jesus resting or when God forces us to rest. Notice the verses when Paul talks about the Holy Spirit slowing him down on his travels. God forced him to rest when Paul would rather have gotten to the next town. Include Psalm 23 where it says "The Lord makes us lie down in green pastures." He is making us rest. What would it take to truly believe God's important commandment to rest? Put rest into your schedule as a priority. Don't wait until He forces you to lie down.....

DAY 2

OBSERVE THE SABBATH AND REST

THE COMMAND IS "DO NO WORK." JUST MAKE SPACE. ATTEND TO WHAT IS AROUND YOU. LEARN THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO TO BE. ACCEPT THE GRACE OF DOING NOTHING. STAY WITH IT UNTIL YOU STOP JERKING AND SQUIRMING... RUTHLESSLY ELIMINATE HURRY IN YOUR LIFE.

-DALLAS WILLARD

Leviticus 23:3

New International Version

There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to the Lord.

DAY 2

PRAY: Lord, thank You that You have given us a day of rest. The Sabbath is a sacred day and I need Your help to observe it with rest. Help me to not work on Sunday (or any one day each week), to slow down and enjoy the day with You and my family or friends. I know that's good for me, but in our busy culture I need Your Holy Spirit to give me the discipline to do it. I pray this in Your name. Amen.

REFLECT: In this hectic world, stop and ponder when the last time was that you took a day off to just rest, with no work being done. The God who loves you, died for you, and knows what's best for you, asks you to stop one day a week and keep that day different, set aside for Him. It doesn't matter if it's on Saturday or Sunday, or even a day during the week if you work weekends. His purpose is to offer rest, for a whole day, away from the chaos of daily life, and think on Him. Do you trust Him? Why not obey Him in this most neglected commandment and allow your body weekly peace, calm, rest and restoration?

ACT: Do you keep the Sabbath Holy? If not, why not commit right now to start this week? Take Sunday off: no work, no packed schedule, no busyness. Choose this as a way to develop your spiritual discipline and take advantage of this amazing gift that God is presenting you and asking you to follow. He knows you so well that He's not just offering you the gift of rest, He's commanding it!

DAY 3

MY SOUL FINDS REST IN GOD

ONCE I KNEW WHAT IT WAS TO REST UPON
THE ROCK OF GOD'S PROMISES, AND IT
WAS INDEED A PRECIOUS RESTING PLACE,
BUT NOW I REST IN HIS GRACE. HE IS
TEACHING ME THAT THE BOSOM OF HIS
LOVE IS A FAR SWEETER RESTING-PLACE
THAN EVEN THE ROCK OF HIS PROMISES.

-HANNAH WHITALL SMITH

Psalms 62:1-2 & 5

New International Version

My soul finds rest in God alone; my
salvation comes from him. He alone is my
rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I
will never be shaken... Find rest, O my
soul, in God alone; my hope comes from
him.

DAY 3

PRAY: My dear Heavenly Father, I thank You that my soul can find rest in You. And I have rest because I know I am saved. You are truly my rock and my salvation. You promise me so many good things, it's almost unbelievable to fathom that You take personal care of me and protect me like a fortress and that regardless of what I go through, I will not be shaken. I praise You that yes, my soul finds rest in You, and my hope comes from You as well. This is incredible, and I am in awe of Your mighty promises and love for me! Amen.

REFLECT: Have you ever really realized and accepted the amazing and miraculous promises that God gives us? In this one verse He promises us that He will give our souls rest, that we are given salvation and eternal life from Him, and that He protects us and loves us so much that He is our rock, our fortress, and we will never be shaken. And then He tells us that we have hope because of Him. It's overwhelming and amazing. And the key to this verse is that it only comes from Him and through Him. His love is more than we can even fathom!

ACT: Write God a note thanking Him for all of His promises, protection, care, love, hope, joy, peace, wisdom, discernment, salvation and even the rest that He gives to us as a free gift. Then, just sit quietly and re-read your note and rest in the truth of His Word and His love for you. Do that until you truly feel rest in your soul! Then go start your day and see if it's different than any other day!

DAY 4

HE PROVIDES FOR US WHILE WE SLEEP

OUR REST LIES IN LOOKING TO THE LORD,
NOT TO OURSELVES.
-WATCHMAN NEE

Psalms 127:2

New International Version

In vain you rise early and stay up late,
toiling for food to eat—for while they
sleep He provides for those He loves.

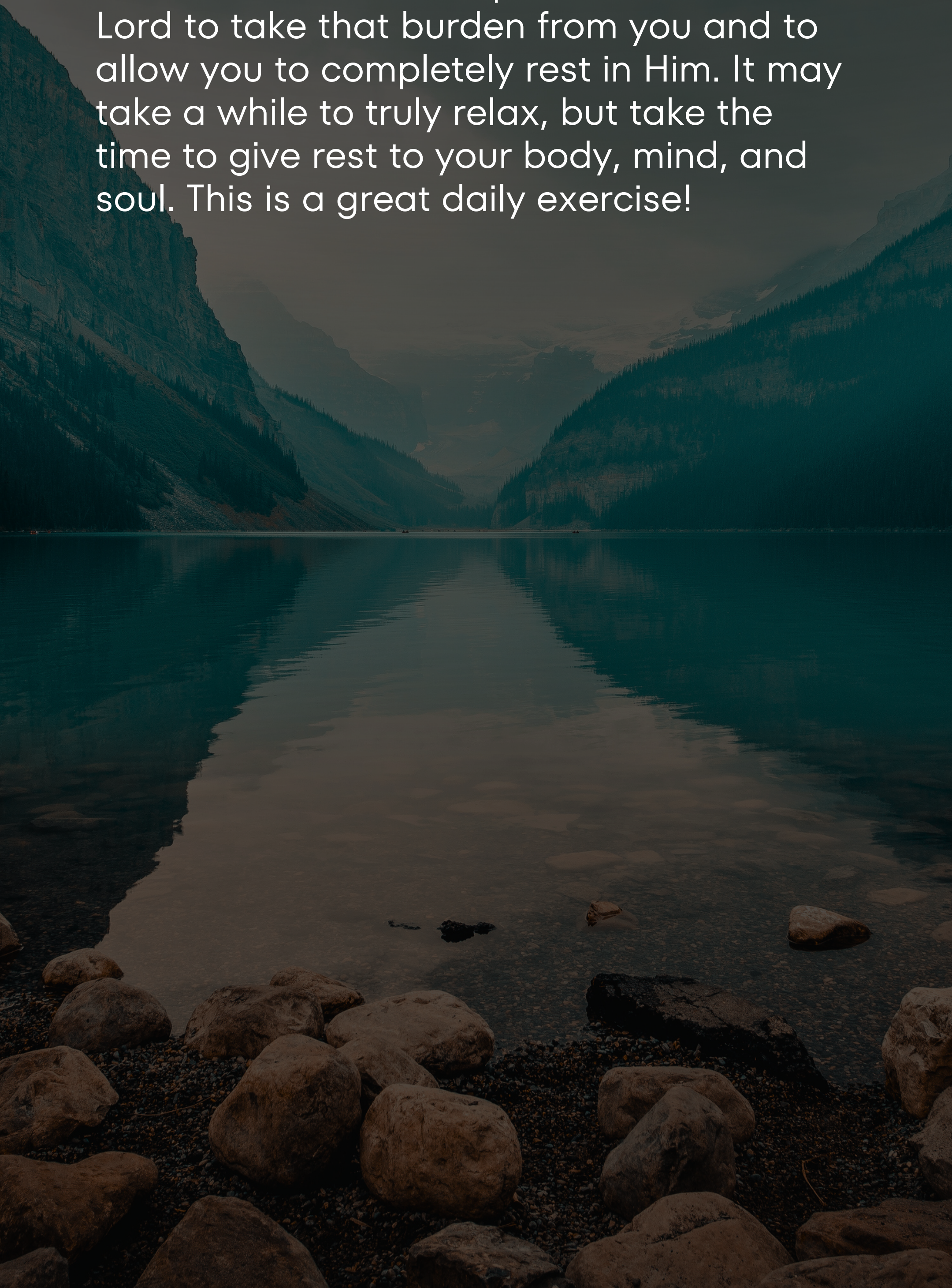
DAY 4

PRAY: Dear Lord, I don't want to live any moment of my life in vain. I don't want to strive constantly for success and money, nor toil endlessly for food to eat. Would You help me to rest in You so that You can take care of me and I don't have to rise early and stay up late because of anxiety in trying to survive? Help me to put my trust in You so that I may find rest, for You promise me that while I'm sleeping You will provide for me. I thank You in Jesus name, Amen.

REFLECT: Can you see how your faith in God actually makes a tangible difference in how you live your life? Do you live differently because you are a Christian? How much of your life do you still live in vain? How much striving do you do? Are you in survival mode, worrying about not making enough money to pay your rent or put food on your table? Can you believe that you can breathe, slow down, and trust God to supply your daily bread, to help you make that next deal at work, or to provide for your children to get through college? He promises us that while we are sleeping, He provides for us because He loves us so much! Do you really believe this promise to the point of actually experiencing rest during financial struggles or tough times?

DAY 4

ACT: Choose one thing that gets you uptight. Then stop and sit quietly, resting in the presence of the Lord. You might even want to turn on worship music. Ask the Lord to take that burden from you and to allow you to completely rest in Him. It may take a while to truly relax, but take the time to give rest to your body, mind, and soul. This is a great daily exercise!



DAY 5

REST FROM WORK

WORK IS A BLESSING. GOD HAS SO ARRANGED THE WORLD THAT WORK IS NECESSARY, AND HE GIVES US HANDS AND STRENGTH TO DO IT. THE ENJOYMENT OF LEISURE WOULD BE NOTHING IF WE HAD ONLY LEISURE. IT IS THE JOY OF WORK WELL DONE THAT ENABLES US TO ENJOY REST, JUST AS IT IS THE EXPERIENCES OF HUNGER AND THIRST THAT MAKE FOOD AND DRINK SUCH PLEASURES.

-ELISABETH ELLIOT

Hebrews 4:9-11

New International Version

There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

DAY 5

PRAY: God, we need to obey You and take the Sabbath rest, not only for ourselves, but to be examples of obedience to others. I pray for the Christians in Hollywood to make every effort to enter into the Sabbath rest, so that no one will perish by their disobedience. I know the work schedules of people working in film, TV, and music are arduous! So, please nudge the Christians to take the Sabbath rest so they can be a witness to the non-believers. Amen.

REFLECT: Work in Hollywood can be so demanding and so stressful that it seems impossible to rest one whole day of the week. It feels irresponsible and unfair to the other people on the set who are also working 7-day weeks. I used to be that way. My work demanded all of me, until I burned out! So, now, even in the pressure of Hollywood pace, I take Sunday for church and to rest with family, friends, or with a long nap. God truly knows what we need.

ACT: Are you following the Sabbath? What kind of witness are you to others because of your disobedience to God? Choose what you can change in your life to rest one day of your week. And would you pray for one Christian you know in Hollywood and ask the Lord to use them, through obeying the Sabbath, to lead others to Jesus. Ask the Lord to protect the Christians in entertainment from being a bad witness through their actions and that they will choose to rest on the Sabbath so no one perishes by following their example of disobedience.

DAY 6

GOD'S YOKE IS EASY AND HIS BURDEN IS LIGHT

THOU HAST MADE US FOR THYSELF, O
LORD, AND OUR HEART IS RESTLESS UNTIL
IT FINDS ITS REST IN THEE.

-AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

Matthew 11:28-30

New International Version

Come to me, all you who are weary and
burdened, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is
easy and my burden is light.

DAY 6

PRAY: Oh Jesus, I love these words that You tell all of us. You want us to come to You, knowing that we get weary and we are so often burdened. And You promise us rest! You understand that we can't handle our own stress, but You can. How beautiful that You tell us that You are gentle and humble in heart and we will find rest for our souls when we come to You. Thank You Jesus that Your yoke is easy and Your burden is light. Those are words to soothe my soul and give rest to my beating heart and weary bones. You are so unconditionally loving and I thank You that, through resting in You, I will find peace. Amen.

REFLECT: This is a pretty well-known scripture because it is powerful. Have you realized how personal Jesus is? He is aware of our emotional needs and He addresses our stress, anxiety, and burdens head on. Not only is He gentle and humble, He is an amazingly good communicator. He calls things out, talks about them directly, and gives us a solution to the problem. He knows our need for rest and peace. And He loves us so much that He offers to take our burdens from us. That's an incredibly loving and personal God!

DAY 6

ACT: What is burdening you? Have you given it to God? Have you been able to let go of it and pray for the Lord to take it from you, solve it, and give you rest? Take time to do that right now. And then every day this week, go to Him and pray the same prayer to give that burden to the Lord, who can take it from you and give you peace and rest. For with Him all things are possible! You don't need to be weary and burdened ever again...

DAY 7

THE SPIRIT OF GOD RESTS ON YOU

IN PLACE OF OUR EXHAUSTION AND SPIRITUAL FATIGUE, GOD WILL GIVE US REST. ALL HE ASKS IS THAT WE COME TO HIM... THAT WE SPEND A WHILE THINKING ABOUT HIM, MEDITATING ON HIM, TALKING TO HIM, LISTENING IN SILENCE, OCCUPYING OURSELVES WITH HIM – TOTALLY AND THOROUGHLY LOST IN THE HIDING PLACE OF HIS PRESENCE.
-CHUCK SWINDOLL

1 Peter 4:14

New International Version

If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

DAY 7

PRAY: God, I thank You that if I am ever persecuted because of loving You, I am blessed. May the one who insults me or persecutes me realize how much You love them and then chooses to embrace You and experience Your blessings. Lord, let all the people I love who don't know You come to believe in Your Spirit and feel You resting on them like a warm blanket. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen

REFLECT: We think of resting in God, but have you ever thought of God resting on you? Think of the times that you have been awkward, shy, or even afraid of being a Christian. Then imagine the Holy Spirit resting on you, comforting, and protecting you. Isn't that a warm, peaceful thought? Realize that at any given moment, you can rest in God and He is resting on you. Let that truth give you confidence and power in all circumstances.

ACT: Think of a time when you been teased, insulted, or even persecuted because you believe in Jesus. Now think of that time again and this time imagine God's Spirit of glory resting on you. Did you know that because God's Spirit rests on you, that He blesses you, especially in those moments of standing up for your faith? You never need to worry that you are different or not liked or weird because of your faith. Stand with confidence, knowing that you are blessed and that the Holy Spirit is resting on you. What a beautiful visual truth that is!