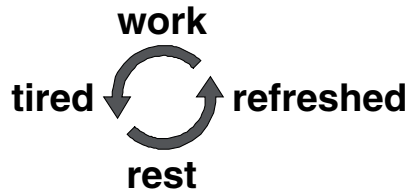


rest



Human beings and nature generally are designed for a cycle of work and rest. This operates on an hourly, daily, weekly and yearly basis.

● Peaceful sleep is a blessing from the Lord

* Psalm 3:3-6 * Psalm 4:7-8

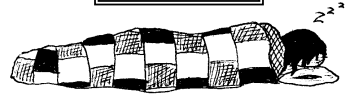
Why can we sleep in peace? _____

* Psalm 121 Who never goes to sleep? _____

* Proverbs 3:21-26

How can we sleep sweetly? _____

*I will lie down and
sleep in peace*



* Psalm 127:1-2 Don't overwork — it is God's will for us to sleep.

● Refreshment in the night

Sometimes God will use the night hours for our guidance and refreshment. What is happening in these passages?

Gen 28:10-17 _____

Ps 63:6-8 _____

Ps 119:62 _____

Ps 149:5 _____

Luke 6:12 _____

Acts 16:9-10 _____

● Hindrances to sleep

Sleep can be hindered by various factors - some good and some bad.

1 Sam 15:10-11 _____

Job 7:4-5 _____

Ps 132:2-5 _____

Prov 6:1-4 _____

Eccl 2:22-23 _____

Eccl 5:12 _____

SS 3:1 _____

Is 48:22 _____

Heartsearch

What is your sleep pattern like?

Do you sleep soundly?

Do you draw close to God at night?

Are there hindrances to your sleep?

● Sabbath

The word "sabbath" comes from a Hebrew word meaning to cease.

* Genesis 2:2-3

Who was the first person to keep a sabbath? _____

The idea of resting one day in seven was established by God at creation.

* Exodus 20:8-11

The principle of the sabbath day is so important that it is included in the Ten Commandments. Which number commandment is it? _____

What is special about the sabbath day? (v 8 and 11) _____

Maker's Instruction Manual: Section 4

• Maintenance

Careful maintenance will ensure that the human body and mind run smoothly.

An essential part of regular maintenance is to rest from work one day in seven.

What do you think this means?

To whom was the sabbath day devoted?

(v 10) _____

Who should rest on the sabbath?

* Luke 4:16

What did Jesus usually do on the sabbath?

* Mark 2:23-3:6

For whom was the sabbath made? _____

But who is lord of the sabbath? _____

What work is allowed on the sabbath? _____

Do you manage to take one day in seven off from work (this may be irregular if you have shift work or work in essential services)?

How do you spend your day off?

Think!

Could you do more to devote the day to God? _____

* Isaiah 58:13-14

What is the reward of those who keep the sabbath? _____

● Holidays in Israel

* Leviticus 23 * Numbers 28-29 * Deuteronomy 16

The Israelites had certain days to rest from work. These days were to remember God's deliverance and his continued provision for his people. Can you find the names of these feasts? Put a tick in the box for those which were compulsory.

14th-21st of first month _____ ☐

7 weeks (50 days) after first sheaf _____ ☐

1st day of seventh month _____ ☐

10th day of seventh month _____ ☐

15th-22nd of seventh month _____ ☐

What activities were carried out at these feasts?



How much holiday do you take a year?

How do you spend it?

Is there any way you could devote it more to God?

● Recreation and leisure

For some a holiday involves relaxing, for others it involves activity – a change is as good as a rest! What activities do you like doing to “re-create” yourself?

☐ rest ☐ cafes and bars ☐ cinema

☐ theatre ☐ television ☐ shopping

☐ reading ☐ chatting with friends

☐ visiting your family ☐ praying

☐ reading the Bible ☐ playing sport

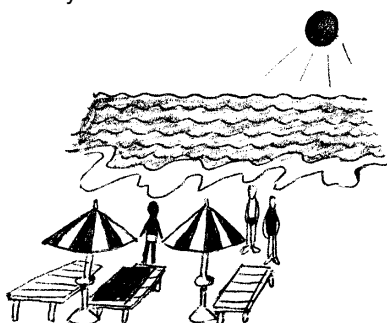
☐ hobbies ☐ sea and beach

☐ computing ☐ walking around town

☐ listening to music ☐ walking in the countryside ☐ watching sport

☐ visiting historic places ☐ going to large events ☐ travelling ☐ eating

Other _____



● Retreat

* Mark 6:30-32

Many find it helpful to spend some time quietly away from their busy routines to rest and review their aims and objectives in life. Have you ever done this? Could you organise it somehow?



● God's rest for our souls

God's rest is not inactivity but it is a state of peace knowing the love and security of God. You can be very busy but enjoying God's rest!

* Matt 11:28 Who can give you rest for your soul? _____

* Hebrews 3:7-4:11 What will prevent us entering this rest?

* Exodus 33:14

What will ensure God's rest? _____

* Psalm 23:2-3

What does God do for us as we rest? _____

* Isaiah 40:28-31

How can we renew our strength?

rest

extra thought and discussion

• Sabbath

For the Israelites in Old Testament times, the sabbath was more than a creation ordinance, it was also a special *sign of the covenant* between God and his people (Ex 31:12-18, Deut 5:12-15). The sabbath principle is also evident in the "sabbath year" when the land rested and the "jubilee year" (Ex 23:10-11, Lev 25, Deut 15).

By the time of Jesus, the Jewish leaders had developed the sabbath laws into a detailed list of petty rules which destroyed the spirit of the law. Jesus did not object to the principle of the sabbath but to the pedantic interpretation of the letter of the

law. To illustrate this he honoured the sabbath day but intentionally did things which infringed the burdensome rules of the religious leaders of his time.

There seems to be no constraint on Gentile Christians to keep the Jewish sabbath (Col 2:16) but the principle of one day's rest in seven stands as a God-given level of rest.

• Saturday or Sunday?

Because Jesus was raised from the dead on the first day of the week, this soon became a special day for Christians when they would meet together and break bread (Acts 20:7, 1 Cor 16:2). Early Jewish believers would also continue to keep the sabbath as the last day of the week (Saturday) but for Gentile believers the first day of the week (Sunday) became the day off from work and was eventually called the *Lord's Day*.