

THE INNER SABBATH



***The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Psalm 23:1-3 KJV***

What a wonderful thing it is for us to be able to come together with other believers each week and sing praises to God, offering our lives back to him in thanksgiving. To listen for some word from him that's fresh, helpful and new. To feast on the body and blood of the Lamb, as we break bread together. And hopefully go forth from our worship with a load of fresh bread for the people out there in the world beyond us. It's a privilege that many these days no longer have and for which all of us are grateful.

And yet, who of us does not feel frustrated, knowing that something's missing? Who of us is not aware of a lack of decisive action in our lives? A need for more power from God. More love ... clear, unpretentious love for each other and for people beyond our meeting place.

"Lord God, heavenly Father, what's missing?"

And the answer which comes from the Father may seem strange at first...

"If you yearn for more decisive action; more power, more love in your hearts---if you desire more of my joy, then be still ... inwardly still. Find the inward Sabbath which I have prepared for you. When you enter my inward Sabbath, my life will burst forth in your assembly in ways that you have never seen or heard. Healing will flow from your hands. Rivers of living water will pour from your mouths".

Find the inner Sabbath.

When God gave the law to Israel on Mt. Sinai one of the laws that he gave was,

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God and in it thou shalt not do any work.

God gave this command to Israel as a gift.

Not to make their lives miserable, not to add another burden to the burdens they already had, But to give them a day when they could put down their tools, turn away from their work, and come together in a mystery to the inner Sabbath which he had prepared ... the Sabbath where they could dwell not one day out of seven but seven days out of seven.

It was to be a blessing. And for many it was a rich blessing, a wonderful day, the opening to a Sabbath deep within that continued every day.

But, by the time we get to Jesus, the Sabbath law as it was practiced in Israel had been corrupted into a system of legalism, rules and regulations that one had to be a lawyer to figure out. How many steps you could take? What kind of food could be eaten or prepared? Whether you could light a fire or light a lamp, etc. And so Jesus takes the Sabbath law, as he does with every one of the laws from Sinai, and he gives it a new focus.

"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy."

What does this mean?



"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28

The same God who gave the sabbath law to Israel as a rich blessing now gives his Messiah, his Son, Yeshua, the Savior, to the world to be the door through which all people can find the inner Sabbath.

In fact, **he is the inner Sabbath.**

Interesting that we read in the very next verse following that passage,

At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck ears of grain and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath." He said to them, "Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law how on the sabbath the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is lord of the sabbath."

Matthew 12:1-8

The disciples have come to him, submitted to his yoke, and found rest. In that rest they have begun to taste true freedom. For them the Sabbath has become the doorway to freedom, not bondage. Freedom to walk through the grain field and pluck ears of grain and eat without guilt.

And he went on from there, and entered their synagogue. And behold, there was a man with a withered hand. And they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath?" so that they might accuse him. He said to them, "What man of you, if he has one sheep and it falls into a pit on the sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep. So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath." Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, whole like the other. But the Pharisees went out and took counsel against him, how to destroy him.

Matthew 12:9-13

Notice how often Jesus heals on the Sabbath day, makes an issue of healing on the Sabbath day. He heals this man on the Sabbath day. The man was healed at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath day and told to rise and take up his bed and walk. You don't carry your pallet on the Sabbath day ... that's breaking the Sabbath! But Jesus tells him to do it. He heals the man blind from birth on the sabbath day. He tells him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam; and the man comes back seeing.

Healings which takes place on the Sabbath are a sign that out of the inner Sabbath rest comes life, the resurrection power of God, to bring healing, joy, peace, forgiveness and salvation.

Jesus did not preach a word or perform a sign until he had himself first entered the Sabbath rest of the Father. Jesus was baptized at the age of 30, the Holy Spirit descended upon him, and then the Spirit drove him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

In the wilderness Jesus entered into the Sabbath rest of his Father.

Satan came and said, *"If you're the Son of God, command these stones be made bread ... take some initiative!"* Jesus answered, *"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"* He settled into the Sabbath rest of simply trusting his Father and doing only what he was told.

"If You're the Son of God, jump from this pinnacle for it's written, 'His angels shall bear you up in their hands lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus responded, *"It is also written, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.'"* Again he rested in his Father.

Then Satan showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them in a moment of time. "Here they are Jesus; this is what you came to take ... they're mine, and I'll give them to you without a fight if you'll bow down and worship me." *"Get out of here Satan! For it is also written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.'"* He settled down in the complete rest of dwelling in his Father, in his perfect will.

Jesus comes out of the wilderness and begins to exercise his ministry, but he always stays inside that inner Sabbath.

In the morning a great while before day he goes off to a lonely place and there he prays. And there in prayer *he returns to the Sabbath* and dwells at rest in the center of his Father's heart.

After he feeds the 5000 with the five loaves and two fish he withdraws into the hills by himself alone and *returns to the Sabbath*.

As he approaches the cross he enters into the Garden of Gethsemane ... he withdraws to be with his Father. *"Father, if there is some way this cup can be taken from me ... nevertheless, not my will but thine be done" ... back into the Sabbath.*

He hangs on the cross on the eve of the Sabbath ... dying *"Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit."* His *Spirit rests in the Father's hand*, His body comes to rest in the grave. His soul rests in the region of the dead where he preaches the gospel, we are told by Peter.

The Sabbath ends, and at the end of the Sabbath from that awesome, wonderful, beautiful rest Jesus rises up the Firstborn of the New Creation alive, never to die again, to bring life to this world such as it has never seen.

And if we are going to walk in his steps and do the things he calls us to do, we have to learn to follow him into the inner Sabbath rest of God.

The 23rd Psalm is a Sabbath Psalm. It's a Psalm of rest, refreshment and renewal. The central verse of the Psalm is,

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

And the paths of righteousness are to do the will of the Father - to walk in the footsteps of Jesus....

.... power, life, love, joy, to set the captives free.

To get to the paths of righteousness there are four steps:

Step one: ***"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."***

Step two: ***"He makes me to lie down in green pastures."***

Step three: ***"He leadeth me beside the still waters."***

Step four: ***"He restoreth my soul."***

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me."

Step number one: *"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."*



Our first step is to be absolutely confident that the Lord will provide for us whatever we need. One reason why we don't act decisively and manifest the power of God is that we're drained by anxiety. Worry that tomorrow will not be safe. Fear that things aren't going to work out as planned. Ambition to make tomorrow safer. And in the process we lose our strength. The one who teaches that the Lord is our shepherd is Jesus himself. He teaches us that the Father will provide everything we need in the physical realm and in the spiritual realm as we seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me."

Step number two: *"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures"*.. the symbol of rest.



Another reason why we are so ineffective is that we're burned out. We're half asleep always tired. Part of the reason may be that we don't get enough physical rest, but another part is that we're never at rest in our spirits.

When Jesus fed the five thousand he told the people to sit down. And "they sat down upon the green grass." "*He makes me to lie down in green pastures.*" ... here they sit, with their hands out, and they receive provision. That's exactly how we are to live all the time ... in the Sabbath rest ... inwardly.

He provides for us. Everything's going to be okay! ... Rest! ... Settle down! ... Be at peace!

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me."

Step number three: "*He leadeth me beside the still waters,*" ...a symbol of peace.



The first words Jesus speaks after his resurrection to the disciples, "***Peace be unto you ... peace be with you.***" And the room filled with peace. It was a living, shining peace..

Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart.... And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

We see Jesus asleep in the boat ... they're crossing Galilee. The storm comes up, but Jesus is so filled with peacehis Father's peace ... that he goes right on sleeping. The disciples panic, "Lord, save us, we perish!" He gets up. "Why are you fearful, O men of little faith? Peace be still" And peace sweeps down over that sea like a living thing and settles it like oil. That's the peace he gives to us if we follow him into the *inner* Sabbath and learn from him.

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me"

Step number four: "*He restoreth my soul.*"



Our pattern so often is that we receive a vision, we run with it for all we're worth, and then burn out. There's a long interval until we receive another vision ... run for all we're worth ... burn out again.

But in the kingdom of God the order is: - Vision - Action - Restoration

... all the time. Paul says, "Our outer man is wasting away, but our inner man is being renewed day-by-day"... constant renewal. And in that inner sabbath there ought to be a continuous building up ... healing of the tears and the wounds that come to us.

We're not promised no disruption ... there will be disruption..

We are not promised that there won't be violence against us.

But in the midst of it all ...there will always be healing and restoration.

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me how to live in the inner Sabbath."

So, how do we enter this Sabbath?

There are two basic places to enter the inner Sabbath of God.

The first is the gathered assembly...



One of the most blessed things about gathering in the name of Jesus, partaking of the body and blood of the Lamb in the breaking of bread, worshiping him in song, prayer and praise is that we are enabled to enter afresh into the inner Sabbath. We come to bring a blessing and offer something up to God, but we also come to find rest in him as we surround his cross together.

The second place where we find inner rest is in our daily time alone with God.



He gives us this time as a gift.. he provides an example in his own time alone with the Father – and he calls us to do the same. Go into a room, shut the door, go out in the woods, stand under the tree, wait by the river ... whatever ... just be alone with him. In order that, alone with him, we can enter into the Sabbath rest of God.

The harvest fields are ripe, people are responsive. But if we're going to reap the harvest effectively, we need to do it the way Jesus did it --- by dwelling constantly in our inner Sabbath.

"Come to me and learn...

- what it means that the Lord is your Shepherd...
- what it means to lie down in green pastures...
- what it means to walk beside the still waters...
- what it means to have your soul restored..."



And once we've come into that Sabbath rest of God and are dwelling there, life from the kingdom will burst forth and we will experience the power of his resurrection as never before.

Prayer: Lord, help us to make you our inner sabbath, to take your yoke upon us and learn from you how to truly live in your inner sabbath. Help us to be still and to open this precious gift to us. Help us to follow you into the paths of righteousness for your name's sake. May we know to the core of our beings as we follow you...that we will lack for nothing and that we are safe in all your all-knowing, tender hands. Help us to trust enough to lie down in green pastures...to allow your rest to enter us. Lead us to the still waters of your peace...to the peace that does keep us still, that allows us to settle into awe of you. And Lord may we allow you to restore our souls as we face our powerlessness, the discouragement, the disappointment, the despair, and the horrors of this sin sick world. And yes, Lord, as we accept and come into the inner sabbath you have for us, may life from the Kingdom and resurrection power burst forth in our lives stronger than it ever has before. Amen. Maranatha Mirror

Message: REB Unknown date but most likely after 1989 in Nova Scotia.

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Maranatha Mirror Messages

