

# Maranatha Mirror Message



## REST FROM UNREST



There was a time when the stars made music as they traveled in their courses like a giant choir out there in space, a time when the whole universe was filled with joy.

Until one day a seed of suspicion was sown among the stars; and each was told that other stars were trying to outshine it.

Suddenly the music stopped.

The festival of joy became a contest in vanity.

Some of the brighter more "intellectual" stars began to attract to themselves lesser stars who would say, "You're the brightest star in the universe! What a privilege it is to shine in your presence!"

Gradually the din of competition began to degenerate into a divided universe, descending, at last, into outright war.

Far off in one of the darkest regions of the universe, billions of light years away,

so far away from the other stars that only God knew it existed, was a tiny star, unaware that a tragedy had occurred.

This tiny star went right on shining to God's glory.

It had no thought of trying to outshine others.

It never felt neglected.

It just kept shining to the glory of its Creator.



And as it did, it created music that spread through the dark vastness until it reached the other stars.

When the music from this one little star was heard among the warring ones, some of the warring stars stopped their fighting and began to weep.

For the first time in centuries these weeping stars tasted inward peace.

They became so homesick for the blessedness they once knew that they gave up all thoughts of fighting and began to sing once more to the glory of God.

*“Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

*Matthew 11:28-30*

The rest Jesus is talking about is not the rest of idleness. The laborers standing idle in the marketplace were far more restless in their hearts than those who were working hard in the vineyard. Nor is the rest Jesus talks about a rut of boredom. There are people who get up in the morning, have their breakfast, go to work. They come home in the evening, have their supper, watch television until 10:30, have their cocoa, go to bed; get up in the morning have breakfast, go to work, come home have their supper, watch television have their cocoa, go to bed.

On and on and on, for what? That's not rest.

Nor is the rest, to which Jesus calls us, a cop-out. There are those who are forever quitting the rat race, not because they see it as a rat race, but because they are losing — so they pick up their marbles and go home. They think they are out of the rat race, but they are deceived—they still have no peace.

The rest to which Jesus calls us is the mysterious peace...  
which comes to a person when the heart is focused on God alone.



When the heart is settled---fixed on just loving him.

Most of us have no conception of how restless, how unsettled, seething, troubled and anxious we are within until we taste the rest which comes from God.

God's rest is inner peace, the end of the war within.

Once you have true rest, you can live with all kinds of pressure, you can work so hard that you're half dead at the end of every day---and still your spirit is never weary; your soul never faints.

**You go from strength to strength.**

**You mount up on wings as eagles.**

**You run and are not weary.**

**You walk and never faint.**

This is the rest Jesus enjoyed through all his trials. He was resting in his Father's will in the midst of slander, envy, threats, and anger. Jesus never lost his inner peace. Whether he was laboring in prayer, teaching, feeding the multitude, or healing the sick, he was inwardly at peace. Whether he was asleep in the storm-tossed boat, or hanging on the cross, inwardly Jesus was flooded with the Father's peace.

His spirit kept burning ---

like the star out in the darkness of space --- to the glory of his Father.

And this inward peace he longs to give to each of us.

***"Come to me all you who are inwardly laboring, who are heavy laden ... troubled, upset, confused and disturbed, and I will give you rest."***

The rest which Jesus offers us, even now, takes specific forms:

### **1. The Rest of His Lowliness... from the unrest of vanity**

If we will let him, Jesus will bring us from the unrest of vanity into the rest of his lowliness.

***"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am meek and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls."***

There can be no rest for us as long as we think that we have to "be something" in the eyes of men. How can there be peace, when inwardly we know how childish, how vain, petty and frail we are?

Yet we think we have to make the world around us see us as persons of distinction. At the same time there is the constant anxiety that a gust of wind may suddenly blow off our mask.



The thing which unsettled people concerning Jesus was that he was the only one in Israel who walked without a mask. Everybody had a mask.

Some masks were beautiful.

Some were hideous.

Some were angry.

Some were ugly.

But here's a man with no mask! What's wrong with him?!

*“Take my yoke upon you, learn from me how to live without a mask.”*

To live without a mask is not an external matter. It's a matter of the heart.

The minute you pull your outer mask off, another one will grow --- as long as your heart is enslaved to a *spirit of pretense*.

Your mask is a sign of a puffed up heart. It will be there as long as your heart is inflated.



Let your heart come down to size and the mask will disappear.

My heart comes down to size when I am willing to settle for shining with God's glory in whatever out-of-the-way spot in his universe he chooses to place me ---

--- when all I want to do is shine for him, like that star in the middle of nowhere.

When I am willing to do quality work, even when there is no one around to appreciate it.

When I am willing spend myself for his glory, do what needs to be done, even if there's no one to see my "sacrifice."

When I am actually able to praise God that he has put me where only his eye can appreciate what I am doing.

When I come to this place, I have peace.

## **2. The Rest of Trusting God...from the unrest of fear**

Jesus will bring us into rest if we allow him to bring us out of the unrest of fear into the rest of trusting God.

Whoever dwells in the  
shelter of the Most High  
will rest in the shadow of  
the Almighty. I will say of  
the Lord, "He is my refuge  
and my fortress, my God,  
in whom I trust."

**Psalm 91:1-2**



When the disciples cry out to him in the boat as it's about to sink, "Master, save us!" he calls them into the rest of faith.

*"Why are ye fearful, O ye, of little faith?"*

Perhaps there is someone reading these words who is anxious about tomorrow... about your health, your job, your family, your children ... in this dangerous world.

The Lord is saying to you, *"Fear not, only believe. Do your work well. Do everything that is within your power. Be wise as a serpent and innocent as a dove ... and leave the rest to your Heavenly Father."*

Know that your Father will watch over you.

He will not suffer your foot to be moved.



### 3. The Rest of Dwelling in His Mercy... from the unrest of anger

If we will let him, Jesus will bring us out of the unrest of anger into the rest of dwelling in mercy.

Many of us are so full of anger toward people who have wronged us, so full of blame toward those who put us in these "circumstances," we can't possibly have peace in our hearts.

How easy it is to remember the wrongs that have been done to us, while we pass blindly over the kindness we have received --- often from the same people! Think of the kindness which has been shown us---without strings. Think of the total strangers who appeared just when we were at our wit's end, who helped us with such grace! People who happened to "show up" people who spent time, effort, even money, helping us out of our predicaments --- and never asked for a thing in return.

Behind these people is a God who, like the Samaritan, appears out of nowhere to rescue us.

The God of all mercy!



And the incarnation of that mercy is Jesus, who takes the blame that should have been ours upon himself and washes it away with his own suffering!

Who ever since, has shown us nothing but mercy, if we have eyes to see it.

But the Lord Jesus wants to do more for us.

Not only does the Lord Jesus show us mercy,  
he wants to teach us how to  dwell  in mercy.



To bring us out of the kingdom of blame and anger...  
into the Promised Land of Rest, where mercy reigns.

#### **4. The Rest of a Concentrated Life ... from the unrest of wandering thoughts**

Jesus will bring us  out of the unrest of wandering thoughts  into the rest of a concentrated life

From where our thoughts are forever flying off into ten different directions to the place where we are focused --- where we are able to  concentrate on just loving God.

You're trying to pray. After the first ten minutes, your thoughts begin to wander. You have entered the realm of fantasy. You begin to rekindle old fires that should have been extinguished long ago. Suddenly you wake up and realize what's happening.

You cry out for help, and the Lord comes to you once again with a living Word, beside which those wandering thoughts become pale.

In a certain city there was a garden owned by a billionaire. In this garden were magnificent flowers that could be seen nowhere else on the planet. People crossed continents to see these flaming reds and beautiful blues, these blazing orange blooms. The flowers themselves were aware of how unique they were. After all, aren't we the most beautiful garden on earth? Don't people come from miles around to see us?

One day the flowers began to argue over which of them was the most glorious.

Three miles from the billionaire's garden was a slum. In the slum was an alley, which reeked of filth, flies, broken bottles, smelly cans, stray cats.

Yet one flower managed to push through the filth ... and bloom.



A little girl came wandering down the alley, covered in dirt from head to toe. When her eyes fell on that flower, her face beamed. And the flower beamed right back.

Do you think that flower ever had the slightest twinge of envy toward the flowers three miles away in the billionaire's garden?

If, wherever we find ourselves, we settle for simply living in God's love, focusing on his glory

--- everything around us will be touched with healing;

--- everything within us will be filled with rest.

The One who can teach us to live this way ...

is closer to you at this moment than the air you breathe.

***“Come to me, all you 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 shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”***

***Matthew 11:28-30***

**Prayer**

Magnificent, Perfect Lord, you who are closer to us than the air that we breathe... bring us into your rest. Bring us into the peace that comes from focusing on you with all our hearts, the peace which will keep our lives singing a beautiful song to you. A song that will cause others to sense your beauty and majesty. Lord save us from the unrest of our vanity, bring our hearts down to size so that the masks of pretense we wear disappear, and we are content to shine with your glory, wherever you put us. Loving Lord save us from the unrest of fear, into a faith that is all trusting, knowing all is well within your hands. Oh God of Mercy, save us from the unrest of anger, blame and bitterness, draw us into living your mercy where we will find true rest. Dear God, bring us out of our wandering thoughts, our confusion and help us to concentrate on loving you. And may we like the flower that blooms despite the filth and despair around it, beam with your radiance and glory bringing healing and rest to all who wander our way.

**Maranatha Mirror**