

This study was originally published in *Tapestry*, the magazine of LWML–Canada for group or personal study.

I NEED A REST

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Today's society is very fast-paced. With Sunday no longer a sacred day for many, activities run seven days a week. One can go shopping almost any time of the day or night, any day of the week. Television inundates us with coming events and programs we "can't miss." Even church activities can quickly fill up our calendars. Besides not getting enough refreshment in our lives with proper rest, we also lose out in our relationship with God. If we do not take time to stop and wait for Him to speak to us, direct us, and lead us, we are missing out on His best for us. Sometimes God uses times of waiting and rest for teaching us and helping build our faith for what lies ahead.

The Apostle Peter was an impetuous, active person yet he needed to take time to wait for the Lord's guidance. Read **Acts 10:9-20**. Peter took a break, to do what? What did he learn while waiting for God's guidance?

Read **Acts 10:34-48**. What dramatic results came about through the Holy Spirit working through Peter?

Paul and Silas were forced to take a break from their formal ministry work when imprisoned in Philippi. Read **Acts 16:25-34**.

What were Paul and Silas doing with their down time? What effect did their activities and attitude have on the jailer? What good came out of the waiting time for Paul and Silas?

David was anointed king of Israel as a young man but he didn't take the throne right away. Read **1 Samuel 23:7-14, 27:1**. What experiences did David have during his waiting time?

Read **2 Samuel 22:1-20**. How was David's faith strengthened while he waited to be king?

What did David learn at this time which made him a better king?

Hannah believed motherhood had passed her by. For her, the waiting time was not an easy or restful time. Read **1 Samuel 1:6-7, 10-11, 17-18**. What did Hannah experience during her waiting time (**vs. 6-7**)?

With whom did Hannah put her trust? What resulted from her patience and waiting time? See also **1 Samuel 3:19-21**.

Jesus Himself did not start His earthly ministry immediately. Read **Luke 2:52**. What did Jesus do in the time from His childhood until His ministry began?

Although Jesus is God, He still sought direction from His Heavenly Father. Scripture gives us a few examples of Jesus going off by Himself to pray as well as taking time to rest and refresh Himself. If we follow Jesus' example, what should be the goal of our down time?

If God calls you to wait for a time, how could that time be spent?

Although we must fight against society to do so, taking time to rest in the Lord is essential to our spiritual and physical well-being. Take a few minutes and examine your weekly schedule. Could more rest time be included?

How can you make positive changes in your schedule so you not only get the rest you need but also have time to wait on the Lord for His direction and guidance?

How can you take advantage of the waiting time God gives you?

Closing prayer:

Dear Lord, forgive me for the times I forget to rest in You and to wait for Your direction for me. Help me take time to stop and listen so I do not miss the best You have planned for me. Thank you for the example I have in Jesus and that, because of Jesus' death and resurrection, I have the assurance of eternal life with You. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.