Matthew 11:29 Commentary

Matthew 11:29 "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. (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: **arate** (2PAAM) ton zugon mou eph humas kai **mathete** (2PPAAM) ap' hemou, hoti praus eimi (1SPAI) kai tapeinos te kardia, kai heuresete (2PFAI) anapausin tais psuchais humon;

Amplified: Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle (meek) and humble (lowly) in heart, and you will find rest (relief and ease and refreshment and recreation and blessed quiet) for your souls. [Jer. 6:16] (Amplified Bible - Lockman)

Barclay: Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls;" (Westminster Press)

ESV: Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

NLT: Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (NLT - Tyndale House)

Phillips: Put on my yoke and learn from me. For I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls. (Phillips: Touchstone)

Wuest: Take at once my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find cessation from labor and refreshment for your souls, (Eerdmans)

Young's Literal: take up my yoke upon you, and learn from me, because I am meek and humble in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls

Matthew 11:29 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: arate (2PAAM) ton zugon mou eph humas kai mathete (2PPAAM) ap' hemou, hoti praus eimi (1SPAI) kai tapeinos te kardia, kai heuresete (2PFAI) anapausin tais psuchais humon:

- **My yoke**: Mt 7:24, 17:5 Jn 13:17, 14:21-24, 15:10-14 1Co 9:21 2Co 10:5 1Th 4:2 2Th 1:8 Heb 5:9)
- **Learn from Me**: Mt 11:27, 28:20 Lk 6:46-48, 8:35, 10:39-42, Jn 13:15, Acts 3:22,23, 7:37, Eph 4:20,21 Php 2:5 1Jn 2:6)
- **For I am gentle**: Mt 12:19,20 21:5 Nu 12:3, Ps 131:1 Isa 42:1-4 Zec 9:9 Lk 9:51-56 2Co 10:1 Php 2:7,8 1Pe 2:21-23)
- **You will find rest**: Mt 11:28 Jer 6:16 Heb 4:3-11)

Come...Take...Learn - Notice that there are three commands each calling for a choice to respond, to surrender to Jesus. Remember that surrender means to yield to the power, control, or possession of another, in this case the One Who is Himself Rest personified. We see a similar pattern in Romans 12:1, 2 where Paul calls for us to surrender our bodies to God as a living sacrifice, as a preparation for living out the Christian life as described in Romans 12-16.

Bear not a single care thyself,
One is too much for thee;
The work is Mine, and Mine alone;
Thy work—to rest in Me.
(Chapter 1 Introduction in **Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret**)

Take (142)(**airo**) literally describes lifting something up, taking up, raising, as taking up stones (Jn 8:59) or raising the anchor of a ship (Act 27:13). **Airo** can also mean to take up and place on oneself, to take up and bear or carry (compare Mt 4:6, Septuagint of Ps 91:12, my yoke - here in Mt 11:29, Lxx of Lam 3:27, a cross - figuratively in Mt16:24; literally in Mt 27:32). "We must come as disciples to learn, willing to be guided by His yoke - not merely to receive something." (Guzik)

Adam Clarke writing on Jesus' command to **take His yoke** remarks that this is indeed a...Strange paradox! that a man already weary and overloaded must take a new weight upon him, in order to be eased and find rest! But this advice is similar to that saying, Ps 55:22. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee; i.e. trust thy soul and concerns to him, and he will carry both

thyself and thy load.

Jamieson adds...Matchless paradox, even among the paradoxically couched maxims in which our Lord delights! That rest which the soul experiences when once safe under Christ's wing makes all yokes easy, all burdens light.

Yoke (2218) (**zugos/zygos** related to verb **zeúgnuni** = to join especially by a yoke, to bind) literally described a beam of balance that connected scales (see translation as scales or balances in Rev 6:5;Lev 19:36; Hos 12:7).

Jesus' command to **take** His yoke is a call to submission of our will to His good and acceptable and perfect will. It is a call to surrender our rights and all that we are to Jesus (compare Ro 12:1-note, Ro 12:2-note where Paul exhorts the saints to surrender themselves to God as living sacrifices). Just as the master would use the yoke to keep his oxen under control and to guide them to perform useful work, so too when we are yoked to Jesus, we are surrendering ourselves to His control and His guidance, so that He might lead us into the spiritual works that have been planned for us before the foundation of the world (see Eph 2:10-note).

John Walvoord explains...In exhorting them to take His "**yoke,**" Jesus was inviting them to discipleship. A pupil enrolling for instruction under a teacher is considered as coming under a "**yoke**." Instead of exchanging one burden for another, however, it is exchanging one which is onerous and crushing for one which is light and rewarding. There is an inner satisfaction and rest of soul in being a disciple of Christ which is unknown by the child of the world, who attempts to bear his own burden. (John Walvoord - Matthew Commentary - Chapter 11 The Growing Opposition to Jesus)

A W Pink writes that...the "yoke" is a figure of subjection. The force of this figure may be easily perceived if we contrast in our mind oxen running loose and wild in the field, and then harnessed to a plow where their owner directs their energies and employs them in his service. Hence we read that, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth" (Lam. 3:27), which means that unless youths are disciplined, brought under subjection and taught to obey their superiors, they are likely to develop into sons of Belial—intractable rebels against God and man...."Take My yoke upon you," by which Christ connoted: surrender yourself to My Lordship, submit to My rule, let My will become yours. As Matthew Henry rightly pointed out, "We are here invited to Christ as Prophet, Priest and King, to be saved, and in order to this, to be ruled and taught by Him." As the oxen are yoked in order to submit to their owner's will and to work under his control, so those who would receive rest of soul from Christ are here called upon to yield to Him as their King..."Take My yoke upon you": it is to be carefully noted that this yoke is not laid upon us by another, but one which we are to place upon ourselves. It is a definite act on the part of one who is seeking rest from Christ and without which His rest cannot be obtained. It is a specific act of mind: an act of conscious surrender to His authority—henceforth to be ruled only by Him. Saul of Tarsus took this yoke upon him when, convicted of his rebellion (kicking against the pricks) and conquered by a sense of the Saviour's compassion, he said, "Lord, what would Thou have me to do?" To take Christ's yoke upon us signifies the setting aside of my own will and completely submitting to His sovereignty, the acknowledging of His Lordship in a practical way. Christ demands something more than lip service from His followers, even a loving obedience to all His commands, for He has declared, "Not everyone that says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that does the will of My Father Who is in Heaven" And again—"Whosoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock" (Matt. 7:21, 24). (The Yoke of Christ - a pithy, even provocative discussion you might want to read)

MacDonald...Someone has suggested that if Jesus had had a sign outside His carpenter's shop, it would have read,

"**My yokes fit well**."

Learn from Me - Especially in combination with "**yoke**", this is "shorthand" for **become My disciple**.

Learn (3129) (**manthano** related to the noun **mathetes** = disciple, literally a learner! The shut mind is the end of discipleship!) has the basic meaning of directing one's mind to something and producing an external effect. **Manthano** refers to teaching, learning, instructing, and discipling. **Manthano** means to genuinely understand and accept a teaching, to accept it as true and to apply it in one's life. It was sometimes used of acquiring a life-long habit.

Richards has an informative note on **manthano** and the related word **mathetes**...

> In Greek culture prior to Socrates, **manthano** described the process by which a person sought theoretical knowledge. A **mathetes** was one who attached himself to another to gain some practical or theoretical knowledge, whether by instruction or by experience. The word came to be used both of apprentices who were learning a trade and of adherents of various philosophical schools. After the time of Socrates, the word lost favor with the philosophers, who were not at all happy with its association with labor.
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> But the concept of discipleship was most popular in the Judaism of Jesus' day. Rabbis had disciples who studied with them in a well-defined and special relationship. The need for training was intensely felt in the Jewish community, which believed that no one could understand Scripture without a teacher's guidance. A disciple in Judaism had to master--in addition to the Scriptures of the OT--the oral and written traditions that

had grown up around the Scriptures. Only after being so taught might a person become a rabbi himself or teach with any authority. This notion is expressed in the Jews' amazed reaction to Jesus' public teaching: "How did this man get such learning without having studied?" (Jn 7:15). Jesus taught with authority without having gone through the only process that the Jews felt could qualify anyone to teach.

Several aspects of the rabbi-disciple relationship in first-century Judaism are significant. The disciple left his home and moved in with his teacher. He served the teacher in the most servile ways, treating him as an absolute authority. The disciple was expected not only to learn all that his rabbi knew but also to become like him in character and piety (Mt 10:24; Lk 6:40). The rabbi in return provided food and lodging and saw his own distinctive interpretations transmitted through his disciples to future generations. So when Mark says that Jesus chose twelve men "that they might be with him" (Mk 3:14), he accurately reflects contemporary understanding of how future leaders should be trained. (Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency)

Charles Simeon describes out duty in learning from Christ...

With the teachableness of children—[Children receive with the most implicit submission whatever their teachers tell them. Thus should we learn of Christ: we should not bring our own preconceived notions to the Scriptures, or presume to try the mysteries of revelation at the bar of our own corrupt reason; but we should believe whatever God has spoken, and receive it simply on the authority of the speaker. Nor should the opinions of the wisest philosopher be of any weight with us, if they be clearly contrary to the voice of inspiration. (Isa 8:20)

With the diligence of students—[They who have a thirst for knowledge, are almost constantly employed in deep thought, and laborious investigation. Nor do they account any pains too great, if only they can gain that eminence and distinction, which superior attainments will ensure. Thus should we be occupied in pursuit of divine knowledge; reading the word, “searching into it as for hidden treasures,” meditating upon it day and night, and praying over it for divine illumination. While others are careful, and cumbered about many things, we should be sitting at the feet of Jesus (Lk 10:39-42)a and embracing all opportunities of religious instruction, whether in public or in private.]

With the obedience of devoted followers—[Earthly knowledge may be merely speculative: divine knowledge must be practical; it is of no use at all, any further than it purifies the heart and renews the life. Whatever we find to be the mind and will of God, that we must do without hesitation, and without reserve. As the reasonings of men are to be disregarded when opposed to the declarations of God, so are the maxims of men to be set at nought, when by adopting them we should violate a divine command. One single word, confirmed with THUS SAITH THE LORD, should operate more powerfully to the regulating of our faith and practice, than the sentiments and customs of the whole world combined.

Gentle and humble - These traits help us understand why His yoke is easy and his burden light, for He is not harsh nor filled with pride. He will not oppress us or given us a burden to great for us to carry. Jesus presented a striking contrast to His Jewish audience who were well acquainted with the Pharisees who were harsh and proud, the antithesis of Jesus! To be yoked with One who is gentle and humble is to also learn to take the lowest place.

Sweet Will of God
Leila Morris
(Dallas Christian Adult Choir)
(Version by Amy Grant)

Thy precious will, O conquering Saviour,
Doth now embrace and compass me;
All discords hushed, my peace a river,
My soul a prisoned bird set free.

Sweet will of God still fold me closer,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee.
Sweet will of God still fold me closer,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee

Gentle (Meek) (4239)(**praus** -- some sources state it originates from **paos** = easy, mild or soft) (**Click** study of related noun gentleness= **prautes**) describes those who are of a quiet, gentle spirit, in opposition to the proud and supercilious Scribes and

Pharisees and their disciples. We have a compound word ***gentleman***, which once fully expressed the meaning of the word meek, but in our modern society has almost wholly lost its original meaning.

As **Barclay** relates...

> It was the lack of that very quality which ruined Alexander the Great, who, in a fit of uncontrolled temper in the middle of a drunken debauch, hurled a spear at his best friend and killed him. No man can lead others until he has mastered himself; no man can serve others until he has subjected himself; no man can be in control of others until he has learned to control himself. But the man who gives himself into the complete control of God will gain this meekness which will indeed enable him to inherit the earth. (W. Barclay, The Gospel of Matthew The New Daily Study Bible Westminster John Knox Press)

MacArthur writes that...

> **Meekness** is the opposite of violence and vengeance. The **meek person,** for example, accepts joyfully the seizing of his property, knowing that he has infinitely better and more permanent possessions awaiting him in heaven (Heb. 10:34). The **meek person** has died to self, and he therefore does not worry about injury to himself, or about loss, insult, or abuse. The **meek person** does not defend himself, first of all because that is His Lord's command and example, and second because he knows that he does not deserve defending. Being poor in spirit and having mourned over his great sinfulness, the gentle person stands humbly before God, knowing he has nothing to commend himself. (MacArthur, J**:** Matthew 1-7 Macarthur New Testament Commentary Chicago: Moody Press)

As noted above the Greeks characterized meekness as power under control and in the case of the Spirit filled believer this means that he or she is under the control of God's Spirit. From a practical standpoint, the individual who is "**praus**" exhibits a freedom from malice, bitterness, or any desire for revenge. The only way to truly define meekness is in the **context of relationships** because it refers to **how we treat others.** A **gentle spirit** should characterize our relationship with both man and God.

Humble (5011) (**tapeinos**) means **low**, **not high**, **not rising far from the ground**. It speaks of one's condition as lowly or of low degree. It described what was considered base, common, unfit, and having little value. It pictures one brought low, as for example by grief. **Tapeinos** is descriptive particularly of attitude and social positions.

Wuest writes that **tapeinos**...The word is found in an early secular document where it speaks of the Nile River in its low stage in the words, "It runs low." The word means "not rising far from the ground." It describes the Christian who follows in the humble and lowly steps of his Lord. (Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament)

Larry Richards has some excellent comments on tapeinos writing that...In Greek culture, **tapeinos** and its derivatives were words of contempt. The Greeks saw man as the measure of all things. Thus, to be low on the social scale, to know poverty, or to be socially powerless was seen as shameful. Only seldom in classical Greek do these words have a positive tone, commending an unassuming or obedient attitude. Scripture, however, sees the universe as measurable only against God. Compared to him, human beings are rightly viewed as humble. Thus in Scripture **tapeinos** and its derivatives are nearly always used in a positive sense (exceptions are in 2Co 10:1; Col 2:18-note, Col 2:23-note). **Tapeinos** represents a person's proper estimate of himself in relation to God and to others. In this sense, Jesus himself lived a humble life, depending completely on God and relating appropriately to all around him (Mt 11:29). It is the humble, Jesus says, whom God will exalt in his good time (Lk 14:11; 18:14). While the thought of the OT about humility infuses the NT, we learn more about humility in the Gospels and the Epistles.

Humble in heart - Moses helps us understand this trait. He was described by God as "a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth." (Nu 12:3) What is Moses doing while Miriam and Aaron were criticizing him (Numbers 12:1-4)? Nothing. His first recorded words come in Nu 12:13 where he cries out, "O Lord, heal her!" It is at this point that we see Moses' greatness. Notice that Moses' mindset had certain effects (which can help us determine if we are meek)...

- He didn't fight back.
- He didn't answer his critics.
- He didn't get angry.
- He didn't seek revenge.
- He didn't argue or try to explain his actions.
- He didn't complain about his unfair treatment.
- Instead, he kept silent and let the Lord take up his cause.
- He only opened his mouth to pray for Miriam.

EUREKA!

I FOUND HIS REST!

You will find rest - Think of this **rest** as God's great treasure for believers who lay hold of it by trusting in Jesus. "**Find**" is the Greek verb **heurisko** (see below) from which we get our English word "***Eureka***!" (Translated "***I have found it***!"), an exclamation attributed to Archimedes upon discovering a method for determining the purity of gold. Although we don't hear this word much today, in the past it was a triumphant cry of joy on discovering or finding something one greatly values! "**Eureka**!" should be the cry of every weary, heavy laden heart that has discovered the priceless **REST** found only in the Son of God. **Have you found His Rest?**

HUDSON TAYLOR DISCOVERED THE SECRET!

Hebrews 4 gives us a clue as to how to we can "**find**" or discover Jesus' rest...

> Therefore (see what he has just stated in Heb 3:18, 19-note), let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His **rest** (**katapausis** = cessation of striving), any one of you should seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us (euaggelizo - "*gospeled to us*"), just as they (Israel in the wilderness wanderings) also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. For we who have believed enter (present tense - pictures believers as in the process of entering) that **rest**, just as He has said, " AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY **REST**," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. (Hebrews 4:1, 2-note, Heb 4:3-note)
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> **R Kent Hughes makes an interesting distinction between belief and trust**: Leon Morris says that **faith** here in Hebrews 4:2 is "the attitude of trusting God wholeheartedly." So we must understand that the opening line of Hebrews 4:3, which says, "Now we who have believed enter that **rest**," specifically means, "we who have **wholeheartedly trusted** enter that **rest**." Thus, it is spelled out in no uncertain terms that faith that pleases God is belief plus trust. Belief, the mental acceptance of a fact as true, will simply not bring rest to any soul. Acknowledging that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior of the world will not give us rest. Trust in Him is what gives rest to our souls. "Trust brings rest," says Alexander Maclaren, "because it sweeps away, as the north wind does the banded clouds on the horizon, all the deepest causes of unrest." First, trust in Christ's sacrificial death begins our rest by giving us rest from the burden of guilt for our sins and a gnawing conscience. Second, trust in his character as an almighty God and a loving Savior gives us rest as we place our burdens on him. Just as a child sleeps so well in his parents' arms, so we rest in God.

THE PRINCIPLE IS SO SIMPLE: THE MORE TRUST, THE MORE REST.

There is not a fretful soul in the world who is trusting. "The message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith" (Heb 4:2)—and so it is with us. Our **belief** or **unbelief** makes all the difference. Few have lived as stressful and frenetic a life as **J. Hudson Taylor**, founder of China Inland Mission. But **Taylor lived in God's rest,** as his son beautifully attests:

> Day and night this was his secret, "just to roll the burden on the Lord." Frequently those who were wakeful in the little house at Chinkiang might hear, at two or three in the morning, the soft refrain of Mr. Taylor's favorite hymn ["**Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art" - sung by Steve Green**]. He had learned that for him, only one life was possible—just that blessed life of resting and rejoicing in the Lord under all circumstances, while He dealt with the difficulties, inward and outward, great and small. ("Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret" - Online Book) (**Ed**: I would add that Hudson Taylor had learned to "Come", walking by faith, to Jesus in every circumstance - **May we be imitators of men like Hudson Taylor who by faith and patience inherited the rest promised by our Redeemer. Amen.** Hebrews 6:11, 12-note)

Fellow-Christians, there is a **rest** for you. It is not beyond your capacity. You can have it if you wish....

The verb "**enter**" (in Heb 4:3) is in the **present tense**, which means that as believers we are in the process of entering. There is a ***now*** and ***then*** to our ***rest***. ***Now***, in Christ, we have entered and are entering our ***rest***. Our experience of ***rest*** is proportionate to our trusting in Him. A wholehearted trust, for example, brings His ***rest*** into our souls in all its divine, cosmic and ideal dimensions. But there is also a ***future rest*** in Heaven—the repose of soul in God's ***rest***, forever joyous, satisfied and working—"work that never becomes toil nor needs

repose." (Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul, Volume 1 - R. Kent Hughes) (Bolding, italics and color added)

The following poem by **George Matheson** while not using the word "**rest**", I think does allude to how one enters the rest of the Savior...see if you agree...

Make me captive, Lord,
And then I shall be free;
Force me to render up my sword,
And I shall conqueror be;
I sink in life's alarms
When by myself I stand;
Imprison me within Thine arms,
And strong shall be my hand.

My will is not my own
Till Thou hast made it Thine;
If it would reach the monarch's throne
It must its crown resign;
It only stands unbent,
Amid the clashing strife,
When on Thy bosom it has leaned,
And found in Thee its life.
-George Matheson

Find (2147) (**heurisko**) means to learn the location of something, either by intentional searching or by unexpected discovery. **Heurisko** can also mean to learn something previously not known, frequently involving an element of surprise. In the present context we can discover Jesus' rest by coming to Him, trusting Him to fulfill His promise to give rest to our souls. And when we do, we'll shout "Eureka!"

Rest (refreshment) (372) (**anapausis** from **anapauo** ~ refresh, give rest, permit one to cease from labor in order to recover and collect his strength <> **aná** = again + **paúo** = cease, give rest) describes rest or inner tranquility (inner rest) while performing necessary labor. An inward rest while laboring, thus **anapausis** is not primarily the cessation of work with the resultant rest, but the restoration of lost strength and inner rest experienced simultaneously in the work.

Figuratively anapausis refers to spiritual rest here in Mt11.29 where the Lord promises **anapausis** while engaged in necessary labor. The focus seems to be upon restorative character of rest rather than mere cessation of activity. **MacDonald** in fact notes that Jesus' rest is "the rest that one experiences in the service of Christ when he stops trying to be great."

Compare - **anapausis** (372), rest with **anesis** (425), relief, relaxation.

Rest (Webster) - Cessation of motion or action of any kind, and applicable to any body or being; as rest from labor; rest from mental exertion; rest of body or mind. A body is at rest, when it ceases to move; the mind is at rest, when it ceases to be disturbed or agitated; the sea is never at rest. Hence,

Quiet; repose; a state free from motion or disturbance; a state of reconciliation to God; freedom from activity or labor; a state of motionlessness or inactivity; peace of mind or spirit; a rhythmic silence in music.

TDNT summarizes **anapausis** - a. "Cessation," "interruption"; b. "rest"; c. "place of rest"; d. "day of rest." Instead of the rest given by wisdom, Jesus offers true rest (b) with the gospel (Mt. 11:28-29). Without "cessation" (a) is the sense in Rev. 4:8, "place of rest" (c) in Mt. 12:43.

Moulton and Milligan record the secular example of "a septuagenarian (70 year old person who) pleads for "relief" (anapausis) from public duties and ...we read of the (rest) accorded to veterans...from military service....The essential idea is that of a respite, or temporary rest as a preparation for future toil....

R Kent Hughes comments on the "ideal" **rest** of God which is available to all believers noting that it "is a**working rest.** God finished his great work and rested, but it was not a cessation from work, but rather the proper repose that comes from completing a great work. Jesus referred to his Father's ongoing work saying, "My Father is always at His work to this very day, and I, too, am working" (John 5:17). **God's repose is full of active toil God rests**, and in His **rest** He keeps working, even now. (**Ibid**) (Bolding added)

J C Ryle - Rest is a pleasant thing, and a thing that all seek after. The merchant, the banker, the tradesman, the soldier, the lawyer, the farmer—all look forward to the day when they shall be able to rest. But how few can find rest in this world! How many pass their lives in seeking it, and never seem able to reach it! It seems very near sometimes, and they imagine it will soon be their own. Some new personal calamity happens, and they are as far off rest as ever. The whole world is full of restlessness and disappointment, weariness and emptiness. The very faces of worldly men let out the secret; their countenances give evidence that the Bible is true; they find no rest....But Jesus offers rest to all who will come to Him. "Come unto Me," he says, "and I will give you rest." He will give it. He will not SELL it, as the Pharisee supposes—so much rest and peace in return for so many good works. He gives it freely to every coming sinner, without money and without price....He will give you rest from guilt of sin....He will give you rest from fear of law....He will give you rest from fear of hell....He will give you rest from fear of the devil....He will give you rest from fear of death....He will give you rest in the storm of affliction. He will comfort you with comfort the world knows nothing of. He will cheer your heart, and sustain your fainting spirit. He will enable you to bear loss patiently, and to hold your peace in the day of trouble. Oh! this is rest indeed. I know well, brethren, that believers do not enjoy so much rest as they might. I know well that they "bring a bad report of the land," and live below their privileges. It is their unbelief; it is their indwelling sin. There was a well near Hagar—but she never saw it. There was safety for Peter on the water—but he did not look to Jesus, and was afraid. And just so it is with many believers: they give way to needless fear—are straitened in themselves. But still there is a real rest and peace in Christ for all who come to Him. The man that fled to the city of refuge was safe when once within the walls, though perhaps at first he hardly believed it; and so it is with the believer....Be advised, everyone of you who is now seeking rest in the world. Be advised, and come and seek rest in Christ. You have no home, no refuge, no hiding place, no portion. Sickness and death will soon be upon you—and you are unprepared. Be advised, and seek rest in Christ. There is enough in Him and to spare. Who has tried and did not find? A dying Welsh boy said, in broken English, "Jesus Christ is plenty for everybody." Know your privileges, all you who have come to Christ. You have something solid under foot and something firm under hand. You have a rest even now, and you shall have more abundantly...Let me speak to those who have come to Christ indeed. You are often cast down and disquieted within you. And why? Just because you do not abide in Christ and seek all rest and peace in Him. You wander from the fold: no wonder you return weary, footsore, and tired. Come again to the Lord Jesus and renew the covenant. Believe me, if you live to be as old as Methuselah, you will never get beyond this: a sinner saved by the grace of Christ. And think of the sinner's end. Rest in Christ—and so rest indeed! (Come Unto Me)

Wuest on REST - Rest. This is the single translation of two Greek words which speak of rest from two different points of view. These must be distinguished if the Bible student is to arrive at a full-orbed and clear interpretation of the passages in which each appears. **Trench** has the following on these words: “Our Version renders both these words by ‘rest’; anapausis at Mt 11:29, 12:43; and anesis at 2Cor. 2:13, 7:5; 2Thes. 1:7. No one can object to this; while yet, on a closer scrutiny, we perceive that they repose on different points of view. Anapausis from anapauo, implies the pause or cessation from labor (Rev. 4:8); it is the constant word in the Septuagint for the rest of the Sabbath; thus Ex. 16:23, 31:15, 35:2, and often. Anesis), from aniemi, implies the relaxing or letting down of chords or strings, which have before been strained or drawn tight, its exact and literal antithesis being epitasis (a stretching) … thus Plato…‘in the tightening (epitasis and slackening (anesis) of the strings!… ’ Plato has the same opposition between anesin and spoude (haste, speed); … while Plutarch sets anesis over against stenochoria (narrowness of space, a confined space), as a dwelling at large, instead of in a narrow and straight room; and St. Paul over against thlipsis (a pressure, oppression, affliction) (2Cor. 8:13), not willing that there should be ‘ease’ (anesis) to other Churches, and ‘affliction’ (thlipsis), that is from an excessive contribution, to the Corinthian. Used figuratively, it expresses what we, employing the same image, call the relaxation of morals (thus Athenaeus, 14:13: akolasia (licentiousness, imtemperance, any excess or extravagance) kai (και) (and) anesis, setting it over against sophrosune (good sense, sobriety, prudence). “It will at once be perceived how excellently chosen echein anesin (“let him have liberty”) at Acts 24:23 is, to express what St. Luke has in hand to record. Felix, taking now a more favorable view of Paul’s case, commands the centurion who had him in charge, to relax the strictness of his imprisonment, to keep him rather under honorable arrest than in actual confinement; which partial relaxation of his bonds is exactly what this phrase implies.…“**The distinction, then, is obvious. When our Lord promises anapausis to the weary and heavy laden who come to Him (Mt. 11:18, 29), His promise is, that they shall cease from their toils; shall no longer spend their labor for that which satisfieth not**. When St. Paul expresses his confidence that the Thessalonians, troubled now, should yet find anesia in the day of Christ (II Thes. 1:7), he anticipates for them, not so much cessation from labor, as relaxation of the chords of affliction, now so tightly drawn, strained and stretched to the uttermost. It is true that this promise and that at the heart are not two, but one; yet for all this they present the blessedness which Christ will impart to His own under different aspects, and by help of different images; and each word has its own fitness in the place where it is employed.” The noun anapausis is found in Mt. 11:29, 12:43; Lk. 11:24; Rev. 4:8, 14:11. The verb anapauo, which is of the same root, and which means, “to cause or permit one to cease from any movement or labor in order to recover and collect his strength, to give rest, refresh, to give one’s self rest, to take rest,” occurs in Mt. 11:28, 26:45; Mk. 6:31, 14:41; Lk. 12:19; I Cor. 16:18; II Cor. 7:13; Philemon 1:7, 20; 1Pet. 4:14; Rev. 6:11, 14:13. There are illustrations of the use of these words in the papyri. Moulton and Milligan report the use of anapausis in the case of a man over 70 who pleads for “relief” (anapausis) from public duties; also in the case of veterans who have been released from military’ service for a five years’ rest. They say that the essential idea of this word is that of a respite or temporary rest as a preparation for future toil. They report the use of the verb anapauo as a technical term of agriculture where a farmer rests his land by sowing light crops upon it. The word **anesis** is

found in Acts 24:23 (liberty); II Cor. 2:13, 7:5, 8:13; II Thes. 1:7. (Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English reader)

John Newton (Amazing Grace) notes that...

> The Greek word expresses something more than rest, or a mere relaxation from toil; it denotes refreshment likewise. A person weary with long bearing a heavy burden, will need not only to have it removed—but likewise he needs food and refreshment, to restore his spirits, and to repair his wasted strength. Such is the rest of the Gospel. It not only puts an end to our fruitless labor—but it affords a sweet reviving cordial. There is not only peace—but joy in believing....
>
> I have spoken something concerning the wearisome exercise of a conscience**burdened with guilt**: but by coming to Jesus and believing in him, an end is put to this. When we are enabled to view our sins as laid upon Christ, that those who come are accepted in the Beloved, that there is no more condemnation—but pardon, reconciliation, and adoption, are the sure privileges of all who trust in Him—O the sweet calm that immediately takes place in the soul! It is something more than deliverance....
>
> There is likewise a **rest from the power of sin.** In vain is this sought from resolutions and endeavors in our own strength. Even after we are spiritually awakened, and begin to understand the Gospel salvation, it is usually for a season rather a fight than a rest. But when we are brought nearer to Christ, and taught to live upon him as our sanctification, deriving all our strength and motives from him by faith, we obtain a comparative rest in this respect also. We find hard things become easy, and mountains sink into plains, by power displayed in our behalf...
>
> There is a **rest from our own works.** The believer is quite **delivered from the law** as a covenant, and owes it no longer service in that view. His obedience is gracious, cheerful, the effect of love; and therefore he is freed from those fears and burdens which once disturbed him in the way of duty. At first there was a secret, though not allowed dependence on himself. When his frames were lively—he was strong, and thought he had something to trust to—but under a change (and changes will happen), he was at his wit's end. But there is a promised, and therefore an attainable rest in this respect; a liberty and power to repose on the finished Work and unchangeable Word of Christ; to follow him steadily through light and darkness; to glory in him not only when our frames are brightest; and to trust in him assuredly when we are at our lowest ebb. Such is the present rest; in different degrees according to the proportion of faith, and capable of increase even in those who have attained most, so long as we remain in this imperfect state. (**The Present and Future Rest of True Believers**)

F W Robertson adds that the rest Jesus gives to our souls is **not a rest of inaction** "It is not the lake locked in ice that suggests repose, but the river moving on calmly and rapidly, in silent majesty and strength. It is not the cattle lying in the sun, but the eagle cleaving the air with fixed pinions, that gives you the idea of repose with strength and motion. In creation, the rest of God is exhibited as a sense of power which nothing wearies. When chaos burst into harmony, so to speak, God had rest.

Spurgeon adds that when you "Carry Christ's burden...your shoulders shall have rest. We do not mean sleep or idleness when we speak of *rest*: that is not rest, but *rust*.

Vine writes that **anapausis** means "cessation, refreshment, rest (ana = up + pauō = to make to cease), the constant word in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** for the Sabbath rest, is used in Mt 11:29; here the contrast seems to be to the burdens imposed by the Pharisees. Christ's rest is not a rest ***from*** work, but ***in*** work, "not the rest of inactivity but of the harmonious working of all the faculties and affections—of will, heart, imagination, conscience—because each has found in God the ideal sphere for its satisfaction and development" (J. Patrick, in Hastings' Bible Dictionary)

Anapausis - 5 times in the NT...

Matthew 11:29 "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.

Matthew 12:43 "Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking**rest**, and does not find it.

Luke 11:24 "When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking**rest**, and not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'

Revelation 4:8 And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and

night they **do** not **cease** to say, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME."

Comment: In this context anapausis means there is no cessation of activity in which one is engaged, which is the same sense in Revelation 14:11.

Revelation 14:11 "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no **rest** day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Comment: Rev 4:8 and Rev 14:11 highlight a dramatic contrast of **ceaseless praise** in worship of the Almighty versus **ceaseless punishment** for worshippers of the Beast! The beast worshipers may have ***rest*** (of a sort) during the brief time of the end, but will have ***no rest*** throughout eternity future. The saints often experience duress during our brief time on earth, but thereafter will "***rest*** (anapauo) ***from their labors*** (Greek = kopos = laborious toil which involves weariness and sorrow. Intense effort united with trouble and toil.)" (Re 14:13-note). Another contrast is seen in regard to the entity of rest - no rest in all eternity for those who reject Christ (Rev 14:11) and eternal rest (anapauo) for all who receive Christ (Rev 14:13). All men will be forever RESTLESS or RESTFUL (rest filled)! Dear reader, I pray you are in the latter camp! Amen.

Anapausis - 42v in the **Septuagint (LXX)** - Ge 8:9; 49:15; Ex 16:23; 23:12; 31:15; 35:2; Lev 16:31; 23:3, 24, 39; 25:4f, 8; Num 10:33; Ruth 1:9; 3:1; 1 Chr 22:9; 28:2; Esth 9:17; Ps 22:2; 114:7; 131:4, 8; Eccl 4:6; 6:5; 9:17; Job 7:18; 21:13; Mic 2:10; Isa 11:10; 14:3; 17:2; 23:12f; 25:10; 28:2; 32:17; 34:14; 37:28; 65:10; Jer 51:33; Lam 1:3. Here are some representative uses...

Genesis 8:9 but the dove found no **resting** (Heb = manoach = condition of rest; Lxx = anapausis) place for the sole of her foot, so she returned to him into the ark, for the water was on the surface of all the earth. Then he put out his hand and took her, and brought her into the ark to himself.

Exodus 16:23 (cp similar uses of anapausis in Ex 31:15, 35:2, Lv 16:31, 23:3,) then he said to them, "This is what the LORD meant: Tomorrow is a Sabbath (Lxx = sabbaton) observance, a holy **Sabbath** (Lxx = anapausis) to the LORD. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning."

Exodus 23:12 "Six days you are to do your work, but on the seventh day you shall **cease** (Heb = shabath = cease, desist; Lxx = anapausis) *from labor* so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female slave, as well as your stranger, may refresh (Lxx = anapsucho = to recover breath) themselves.

Leviticus 23:39 'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a **rest** (Heb = shabathon = time of rest; Lxx = anapausis) on the first day and a **rest** (Heb = shabathon = time of rest; Lxx = anapausis) on the eighth day.

Ruth 1:9-note "May the LORD grant that you may find **rest** (Heb = menuchah = resting place of peace and quiet; Lxx = anapausis), each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

Ruth 3:1-note Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek **security** (ESV = rest) (Heb = manoach = resting place of peace and quiet; Lxx = anapausis) for you, that it may be well with you?

Psalm 23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside **quiet** (Heb = menuchah = resting place of peace and quiet; Lxx = anapausis) waters (Hebrew = "waters of rests")

Spurgeon on *quiet* or *still* waters - What are these "still waters" but the influences and graces of his blessed Spirit? His Spirit attends us in various operations, like waters -- in the plural -- to cleanse, to refresh, to fertilise, to cherish. They are "still waters", for the Holy Ghost loves peace, and sounds no trumpet of ostentation in his operations. He may flow into our soul, but not into our neighbour's, and therefore our neighbour may not perceive the divine presence; and though the blessed Spirit may be pouring his floods into one heart, yet he that sitteth next to the favoured one may know nothing of it.

"In sacred silence of the mind My heaven, and there my God I find."

Still waters run deep. Nothing more noisy than an empty drum. That silence is golden indeed in which the Holy Spirit meets with the souls of his saints. Not to raging waves of strife, but to peaceful streams of holy love does the Spirit of God conduct the chosen sheep. He is a dove, not an eagle; the dew, not the hurricane. Our Lord leads us beside these "still waters;" we could not go there of ourselves, we need his guidance, therefore it is said, "he leads me." He does not drive us. Moses drives us by the law, but Jesus leads us by his example, and the gentle drawing of his love.

Psalm 132:8 **Arise** (command) O LORD, to Your **resting** (Heb = menuchah = resting place of peace and quiet; Lxx = anapausis) place, You and the ark of Your strength.

Ecclesiastes 4:6 One hand full of **rest** (nachath = quietness; Lxx = anapausis) is better than two fists full of labor and striving after wind.

Trench discusses the relationship between **anapausis** and **anesis**...

Anapausis from **anapauo** implies the pause or cessation from labor (Rev4:8); it is the constant word in the Septuagint for the rest of the Sabbath; thus Ex16:23, 31:15, 35:2, and often.

Anesis, from **aniemi** (**aniema** = to loosen, relax), implies the relaxing or letting down of chords or strings, which have before been strained or drawn tight, its exact and literal antithesis being epitasis (a stretching)… thus Plato… 'in the tightening (epitasis) and slackening (anesis) of the strings!…'Plato has the same opposition between anesin and spoude (haste, speed);…while Plutarch sets anesis over against stenochoria (narrowness of space, a confined space), as a dwelling at large, instead of in a narrow and straight room; and Paul over against thlipsis (a pressure, oppression, affliction) (2Co 8:13), not willing that there should be 'ease' (anesis) to other Churches, and 'affliction' (thlipsis), that is from an excessive contribution, to the Corinthian.

Used figuratively, anesis expresses what we, employing the same image, call the relaxation of morals (thus Athenaeus, 14:13: akolasia (licentiousness, intemperance, any excess or extravagance) kai anesis setting it over against sophrosune (good sense, sobriety, prudence).

ANAPAUSIS IN MATTHEW 11:28-30

(Trench goes on to say) **The distinction, then, is obvious. When our Lord promises anapausis the weary and heavy laden who come to Him** (Mt. 11:28, 29),

His promise is, that they shall cease from their toils; shall no longer spend their labor for that which satisfies not. (Ed: The corollary is that when you come to the Rest Jesus provides, you come to experience the purpose for which you were created and your "work" for Him and in Him is satisfying and of eternal value [see Jn 15:16 "your fruit should remain"].)

When Paul expresses his confidence that the Thessalonians, troubled now, should yet find anesis (relief as a cessation from some trouble or difficulty, relaxation) in the day of Christ (2Th 1:7 uses anesis), he anticipates for them, not so much cessation from labour, as relaxation of the chords of affliction, now so tightly drawn, strained and stretched to the uttermost. It is true that this promise and that at the heart are not two, but one; yet for all this they present the blessedness which Christ will impart to his own under different aspects, and by help of different images; and each word has its own fitness in the place where it is employed. (**Trench, R. C. - Synonyms of the New Testament - online**)

Anapausis describes an inward rest while laboring, whereas **anesis** indicates a relaxation brought about by a source other than oneself.

Rest for you souls is a quotation from **Jeremiah**...

Thus says the Lord, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find **rest for your souls**. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.' (Jer 6:16).

Comment: The same dynamic occurs today - if we refuse to come to Jesus, to take His yoke and to learn from Him, then we too will not experience the good way in which our soul finds His promised rest!

John MacArthur notes that the English dictionary has several definitions that are wonderful parallels for the spiritual rest that Jesus gives as we trust in Him...

First, the dictionary describes rest as cessation from action, motion, labor, or exertion. In a similar way, to enter God's rest is to cease from all efforts at self-help in trying to earn salvation.

Comment: As you read these definitions of rest understand that they apply not only to our initial salvation experience by grace through faith, but to our daily walk by the Spirit, a walk that is also by grace through faith. Too many followers of Christ think that now that they are justified, they can now rely on their self efforts to live the Christian life. Nothing could be further from the truth and undoubtedly accounts for many saints ceasing to diligently work out their salvation -- they have become weary and exhausted because they have trusted in self

not Savior nor His Spirit. In short, self reliance is a major gospel enemy. A supernatural life (which is by definition what the Christian life is to be) requires a supernatural Source of power, and that power is found only in the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Second, rest is described as freedom from that which wearies or disturbs. Again we see the spiritual parallel of God's giving His children freedom from the cares and burdens that rob them of peace and joy.

Third, the dictionary defines rest as something that is fixed and settled. Similarly, to be in God's rest is to have the wonderful assurance that our eternal destiny is secure in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. It is to be freed from the uncertainties of running from philosophy to philosophy, from religion to religion, from guru to guru, hoping somehow and somewhere to discover truth, peace, happiness, and eternal life.

Fourth, rest is defined as being confident and trustful. When we enter God's rest we are given the assurance that "He who began a good work in [us] will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6).

Finally, the dictionary describes rest as leaning, reposing, or depending on. As children of God, we can depend with utter certainty that our heavenly Father will "supply all [our] needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

Souls (5590)(**psuche** or **psyche** from **psucho** = to breathe, blow, English = psychology, "study of the soul") is the breath, then that which breathes, the individual, animated creature. However the discerning reader must understand that psuche is one of those Greek words that can have several meanings, the exact nuance being determined by the context. It follows that one cannot simply select of the three main meanings of psuche and insert it in a given passage for it may not be appropriate to the given context. The meaning of **psuche** is also contingent upon whether one is a dichotomist or trichotomist. Consult Greek lexicons for more lengthy definitions of psuche as this definition is only a brief overview. (Click an excellent article on **Soul** in the Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology; see also ISBE article on **Soul**)

AS SMART AS AN OX! - On one occasion F B. Meyer visited D. L. Moody in Northfield, Massachusetts. Moody, showing Meyer a team of oxen, said that whenever one of those oxen was being yoked in, the other, which might be on the far side of the farmyard, would come trotting up and stand beside the other one until it was yoked in also.

Meyer then made this encouraging application to us in our relationship to Christ: `Jesus stands today with the yoke upon His shoulder. He calls to each one and says, `Come and share My yoke, and let us plow together the long furrow of your life. I will be a true yokefellow to you. The burden shall be on Me.

When our burden seems heavy and our loads hard to bear, Christ has promised to lift our burdens and lighten our cares. That's how we find rest and peace in every area of life. —Richard W De Haan

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WALKING WITH THE GUIDE - As Sarah Smiley was preparing to descend a 5,000 foot Rigi Mountain peak in central Switzerland, her guide told her that she should let him carry her load. She agreed to give some of it to him, but she kept a few items. As they made their way down the mountainside, Sarah felt hindered by her load. Soon she had to stop and rest. When she did, her guide demanded that she give him everything except her Alpine walking stick. This time she agreed and transferred the load to his strong shoulders. Without the extra weight, she made the rest of the trip with ease. It was as if her Lord was trying to say to her, "O foolish, willful heart, have you indeed given up your last burden? You have no need to carry them, or even the right."

How often we are just like Sarah Smiley! When we face a difficulty, we carry the burden by ourselves. God invites us to cast all of our cares on Him, and He is strong enough to shoulder the burden. Let's take Him up on the offer. Our pathway will be easier and our steps lighter. —P. R. Van Gorder

Our work is to cast care.
God's work is to take care.

COME APART AND REST OR YOU'LL COME APART - Greek legend tells us that in ancient Athens a man noticed the great storyteller Aesop playing childish games with some little boys. The observer laughed and jeered at Aesop for this undignified behavior. Instead of replying, Aesop picked up a bow that he sometimes used for playing a stringed instrument. He unstrung it and laid it on the ground. Then he said to the critical Athenian, "Now, answer the riddle, if you can, and tell us what the unstrained bow implies." The man could not tell him. He had no idea what it meant. Aesop explained, "If you keep a bow always bent, it will break eventually; but if you let it go slack, it will be more fit for use when you want it."

Its like that with people too. That's why we need to take time to rest—when the bow of life can be relaxed. God "rested from all His

work" (Gen. 2:3). Shouldn't we follow His example? You can't do your best for the Lord if you don't rest a while. —P R. Van Gorder