

The Book of Hebrews chapter 4

Hebrews 4:1-16 (NASB)

Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. ^[2] For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Let's read Hebrews 2:2 in the New Living Translation

For this good news—that God has prepared this rest—has been announced to us just as it was to them. But it did them no good *because they didn't share the faith of those who listened to God.*

Romans 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing; hearing the (*rhema*) revelation of God.

^[3] For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, " AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," (*Psalms 95;11*) although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. ^[4] *For He has thus said somewhere* (don't be so concerned about quoting chapter and verse... Get the spirit of the Word) concerning the seventh *day*, " AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS"; ^[5] and again in this *passage*, " THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST."

Exodus 20:11 (ESV)

For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

^[6] Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience (*unbelief which causes disobedience*), ^[7] He again fixes (*appoints*) a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, " TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS." ^[8] For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that.

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We have to go look at Psalms 95 to see that David implies that there is still a “rest” that people can enter into...

So, the Writer to the Hebrews is saying that there were those who did not enter into the “rest” of God through their disobedience to the Word of The Lord to go and take the land that implies that there are those who are entitled to enter it if they walk in faith while “it is still Today”!

Let’s look at Psalm 95:1-11 (ESV)

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
[2] Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! [3] For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. [4] In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. [5] The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. [6] Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! [7] For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today, if you hear his voice, [8] do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, [9] when your fathers put me to the test and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work. [10] For forty years I loathed that generation and said, “They are a people who go astray in their heart, and they have not known my ways.” [11] Therefore I swore in my wrath, “They shall not enter my rest.”

David shows us that the way into “The Rest” of God is through Praise and Worship!

[9] There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. [10] **For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested (ceased, from his works, as God did from His (Genesis 2:2).** [11] Let us therefore be diligent (*labor*) to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through *following* the same example of disobedience.

**The “resting” or “ceasing” our own works is the key to “entering into God’s Rest” ...
The question is “How do we rest from our works?”**

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We need to first understand the Hebrew word “Rest” in Genesis 2:2, Exodus 20:11 and Psalms 95.

It does not mean to “stop working” ... God never “stopped working” and took a day off... No.

We could probably say that He “entered into a state of rest” looking at all He had done and enjoyed it. But that would not even do justice to the word “rest”...

Let’s look at it a little more deeply:

The word “rest” in both **Genesis 2:2** and **Exodus 20:11** is **shābat** or as we say; Sabbath. We naturally think of resting meaning to stop working...But, when we look at the word in Psalms 95:11 we see a different word used... David says that there is a “**menûchâh**” for us and this word speaks of a “**resting place**” or “**abode**”...

We are not being called to “**Keep the Sabbath**” as the Jews did with their “**interpretation**” of “The Sabbath” ... No... Even that was way over the top!

Jesus showed that the meaning of the Sabbath was that it was made for man so he could enjoy the works of his hands just as The Lord did!

Let’s look at how Jesus viewed the Sabbath...

Matthew 12:9-14 (ESV)

He went on from there and entered their synagogue. ^[10] And a man was there with a withered hand. And they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”—so that they might accuse him. ^[11] He said to them, “Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? ^[12] Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” ^[13] Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, healthy like the other. ^[14] But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.

So doing a good deed was “work” to the Pharisees but not to Jesus!

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Mark 2:23-28 (ESV)

One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. ^[24] And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" ^[25] And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: ^[26] how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" ^[27] And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ^[28] So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

We can see there through this situation that God's intention for the Sabbath was not to have a day to legalistically stop all work but actually to work if you need to do something necessary or good as long as you stay in a "place of rest" in your Soul!!!

Look at these words of Jesus and see what I mean:

Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV)

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you **rest**. ^[29] 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**. ^[30] For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The word is *anapausis* and it means "*intermission*"!

Look at it in Kenneth Wuest's translation of the New Testament:

Matthew 11:28 (WuestNT)

Come here to me, all who are growing weary to the point of exhaustion, and who have been loaded with burdens and are bending beneath their weight, and I alone will cause you to cease from your labor and take away your burdens and thus refresh you with rest. 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, for my yoke is mild and pleasant, and my load is light in weight.

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So, Christ shows us that the “rest” we need to “strive”, “labor, or be “diligent” to enter into is an “intermission” from the burdens we carry... not simply the physical ones that the Jews were so legalistic about but our spiritual and emotional ones!

This can only take place as our minds are “renewed” and we allow The Holy Spirit to “Lead us and Guide us” in all we do.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NKJV)

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; ^[6] In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall **direct** your paths.

The word “**direct**” means “**to make smooth and straight**”!

In other words, The Lord is letting us know that He will take away the harshness and difficulty of walking in His Will as we stop trying to do our own thing! Wow!

^[12] For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ^[13] And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

As we know, The Word is Alive...

Let's look at **1 Peter 1:22-23 (ESV)**

Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ^[23] since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, ***through the living and abiding word of God***;

But there is a big question I see here...

Why does the writer change gears here and talk about “The Word of God”???

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I think it is because the “rest” of God is all about the “thoughts and intents of the heart”!!!

[14] Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession (***profession or acknowledgment***). [15] For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are, yet* without sin.

So we see Jesus was without sin as the Scriptures prove:

Isaiah 53:9 (ESV)

And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Peter quotes this in **1 Peter 2:22 (ESV)** He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

[16] Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

This verse confirms that we are to approach The Throne of Grace to find “Mercy” and “Grace” in our times of need... We are again pointed to “The Rest of God” as a “state of being” ... A Spiritual Abode or Dwelling Place!