

There Remaineth a Rest

“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”

Hebrews 4:9

Preparatory Reading: Number 13; Numbers 14; Deuteronomy 1; Psalm 95; Hebrews 3; Hebrews 4.

Introduction:

1. The purpose of Hebrews is to show the superiority of Jesus Christ and Christianity to converted Jews, who were tempted by Old Testament religion and persecution to return to Moses and Jerusalem.
2. The context of Hebrews is the time of reformation, when the two covenants ran side by side before God destroyed the Jewish nation and gave the kingdom and sent the gospel entirely to the Gentiles.
3. Studying Hebrews 7 last week, we saw Paul progress from Gen 14 to David’s prophecy in Ps 110:4.
4. Hebrews chapters 3-4 require us to progress from Numbers 13-14 to David’s prophecy in Ps 95:7-11.
5. Prior to Hebrews 3, our beloved brother Paul has proved the deity and glorified humanity of Jesus.
6. There are two sections to Hebrews chapter 3, with the single division being between verses 6 and 7.
 - a. Verses 3:1-6 show the superiority of Jesus Christ over Moses, the great legislator of Israel.
 - b. Verses 3:7-19 use the provocation in the wilderness to exhort the Jews to faithful perseverance.
7. Rather than despise the generation in the wilderness, let us examine our own steadfastness and joy!
8. What is tempting you to give up or relax in your pursuit of Jesus Christ and full gospel living?

HEBREWS 3

1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

- A. When finding a *wherefore* in scripture, look for the conclusion that is being drawn by it.
 1. **Wherefore.** Introducing a clause expressing a consequence or inference from what has just been stated: On which account; for which reason; and therefore.
 2. Our brother Paul had shown Jesus superior to all prophets (1:1-3) and angels (1:4 – 2:16).
 3. He had also declared both Jesus Christ’s full deity (1:2-12) and full humanity (2:5-18).
 4. Partaking our nature and experiencing our temptations, He is a perfect helper (2:10-18).
 5. As *Apostle*, Jesus was the superior legislator; as *High Priest*, He was superior intercessor.
- B. When finding *consider* in scripture, identify the theme or theme and enjoy with great delight.
 1. The Holy Spirit directs us to *consider*: Deut 4:39; I Sam 12:24; Job 37:14; Ps 8:3; 48:13; 50:22; 64:9; 143:5; Pr 6:6; Eccl 7:13-14; Isaiah 5:11-16; Hag 1;5,7; II Tim 2:7; Heb 12:3.
 2. Paul intended us backward and forward to what he wrote, but emphasizing the forward.
 3. See the above conclusions from what had been written to enjoy the first two chapters.
 4. As *Apostle*, Jesus was the superior legislator; as *High Priest*, He was superior intercessor.
 5. The Lord Jesus Christ was superior to Moses as legislator and to Aaron as high priest!
- C. The audience Paul addressed was elected, justified, and regenerated Jewish children of God.
 1. He addressed them spiritually as *holy brethren* and *partakers of the heavenly calling*.
 2. Furthermore, he included them with himself as having made a *profession* of Christianity.
 3. Holiness, or sanctification, is eternal (Ephesians 1:3-4), legal (Hebrews 10:10-14), vital (Ephesians 4:24), practical (I Thessalonians 4:3), and final (I Thessalonians 5:23).
 4. Our calling is our appointment to eternal glory (I Thess 2:12; I Tim 6:12; I Peter 5:10).
 5. Knowing the audience has eternal life is helpful to grasp the text’s sense (3:6,14; 4:1,11).

- D. At this stage of Paul's progress in Hebrews, he identifies Jesus as *Apostle* and *High Priest*.
 1. Apostles are messengers like prophets; Jesus is greater than any of them (1:1-3; Mal 3:1).
 2. Jesus was more the Apostle of the Jews than of us Gentiles (Matt 15:24; Romans 15:8).
 3. The Jews knew the gospel message, but the Messenger was important also (John 1:17).
 4. Peter described Jesus Christ also as the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (I Peter 2:25).
 5. Paul had introduced Jesus Christ's office of high priest already in the preceding content.
 6. The Jews knew the nature and value of a priest better than most (Job 9:33; I Tim 2:5).
- E. Our profession, or our religion that we confess, is centered around the Lord Jesus Christ.
 1. These Hebrews had professed to be Christians, but they were tempted to return to Moses.
 2. Every believer needs to be baptized to answer God and declare for Christ (I Peter 3:21).
 3. We must never let anything detract, divert, or dilute our affection and attention to Him!
 4. Others, even the Old Testament people of God, may have leaders, but we have Christ!

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

- A. Having directed his readers to consider Jesus Christ in their Christian profession, Paul moves to the great deliverer, prophet, legislator, and champion of Israel – Moses of the Exodus.
- B. Paul by the Spirit now made a comparison of Christ to Moses, after prophets and angels, for the Hebrews considered Moses to be one of their greatest leaders and the greatest legislator, for it was under and by Moses they left Egypt, received the Law, and arrived at Canaan.
- C. Jesus Christ was faithful in obedient service to God, just as Moses was faithful in his duties.
 1. During His life, Jesus did everything the Father told Him to do (John 4:34; 8:29; 17:4).
 2. At the time of His crucifixion, He faced and finished death faithfully (Luk 22:42; 23:46).
- D. What is the *house* here mentioned? The people of God for whom Moses was responsible.
 1. Paul is not speaking of Moses' faithfulness in thought, word, or deed in a house building.
 2. Paul is not speaking metonymically of his faithfulness to his family of wife and children.
 3. Paul took these words from the Old Testament, though he did not quote (Numbers 12:7).
 4. He is speaking of the house of Israel, over which God appointed him (Ex 16:31; 40:38).
 5. Moses was ruler, shepherd, and lawgiver in the church of the Old Testament (Acts 7:38).
 6. We understand the house of God to be the church of God (Eph 2:11-22; I Timothy 3:15).
 7. Moses was faithful under the trying aspects of leading Israel from Egypt (Heb 11:23-29).
 8. Consider Moses' gifts, leadership, courage, faith, patience, intercession, and much more.
 9. Consider God's grace, for Moses was not fully blameless, but God counted him faithful.

3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

- A. The argument is quite clear – the architect or builder of a house is greater than the building.
- B. Paul had already said that Jesus Christ was crowned with great glory and honor (1:4-9; 2:9).
- C. Moses may have made the Hall of Faith (Heb 11), but Jesus Christ is high King of heaven!
- D. When Peter tried to give equal glory to Moses and Jesus, he heard a voice (Matthew 17:1-6)!
- E. The house of God, the people of God, the church of God, was built by the Lord Jesus Christ.
 1. The Lord Jesus was to gather God's people together (Gen 49:10; John 10:16; Eph 1:10).
 2. He is both the cornerstone and head of the church (I Cor 3:10-11; Eph 2:20; I Pet 2:6).
 3. He had declared, "I will build my church," and, "I will set it up" (Mat 16:18; Act 15:16).

- F. Moses was not the house by himself, for he was merely an important stone in it (I Pet 2:4-8)!
 - 1. Paul declared in 3:2 and 3:5 that Moses was merely a faithful person *in* God's house.
 - 2. The wording here indicates Jesus is greater than all the persons in the house combined!
- G. The use of *man* here, in italics, connected with the next verse is a proof of Christ's deity!

4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

- A. Every house on earth, both literal and metaphorical, has a chief human servant that labors.
- B. However, no laboring man can build a house without God blessing construction (Ps 127:1).
- C. Paul was a wise masterbuilder, but He did nothing beyond God's grace (I Cor 3:5-10; 15:10).
- D. Whether the Old Testament or New Testament houses, God through Jesus Christ built both.
- E. Comparing *this man* from the previous verse, Jesus Christ's deity is assumed (Cp Heb 1:8).

5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

- A. Paul admitted the truth to any Hebrew that Moses was *truly* very faithful *in* the O.T. church.
- B. But he was only a servant *in* that house, an example of who was coming (De 18:15; Ac 3:22).
- C. Moses delivered God's oracles and declared them, leading to Christ (Acts 7:38; Gal 3:23-24).

6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

- A. Paul pointed out the truth to any Hebrew that Jesus was both a *Son* and *over* His *own* house.
 - 1. Jesus Christ is not a *servant* like Moses in the house of God, but the beloved *Son* over it!
 - 2. Jesus Christ is not *in* the house like Moses as a member of it, but rather ruling *over* it!
 - 3. Jesus Christ does not serve like Moses in *God's* house, for the house is His *own* property!
 - 4. The entirety of God's kingdom, in heaven and in earth, is Jesus Christ's by inheritance!
 - 5. He had declared, "I will build my church," and, "I will set it up" (Mat 16:18; Act 15:16).
- B. Having proved His superiority to Moses, Paul used *Christ's house* to exhort to perseverance.
 - 1. Paul's continuing argument is the importance of continuing (2:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; etc.).
 - 2. The Jews were sorely tempted to return to Old Testament religion, so Paul exhorted them.
 - 3. The evidence of being in Christ's house is faithful and joyful perseverance through life.
 - 4. Only those who continue serving Christ confidently and joyfully are disciples (Jn 8:31).
 - 5. This text teaches evidence, not conditions, by the perfect *are*, not the future *shall become*.
 - 6. The *if* conditional statement is for evidence, as elsewhere (II Pet 1:10-11; Col 1:21-23).
 - 7. Continuing in the gospel is often in Hebrews (2:1; 3:14; 4:1; 4:14; 10:23,35-39; 12:15).
 - 8. It is also taught elsewhere (Acts 14:22; Romans 2:7; 11:22; Col 1:23; I Tim 2:15; 4:16).
 - 9. We cannot neglect joy in the gospel (De 28:47; Ps 37:3-4; Rom 5:1-5; 15:13; I Pet 1:6-9).

7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

- A. Paul began a new argument of exhortation to perseverance by building on the one just given.
- B. His argument continues in 3:12, with everything in between being a quotation from Ps 95.
- C. *Wherefore*, just as it is used in 3:1 above, draws a consequence or inference from the context.
 - 1. The word *wherefore* here is Paul's word, not part of the quotation used from Psalm 95.
 - 2. He had explained the evidence provided by holding fast, so he further exhorted them to it.
- D. The Holy Spirit gave the words of the Bible, so reading it is hearing His voice (II Peter 1:21)!

- E. The *To day* of this quotation and repeated often refers to the age of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
1. You will find this word from David expressing time repeated in 3:7; 3:13; 3:15; and 4:7.
 2. Observe that Heb 3:13 requires many days in the limited time period called “To day.”
 3. Observe that Heb 4:7 requires a specific age or time coming long after Moses generation.
 4. It is the acceptable time and day of gospel salvation that Paul taught (II Cor 6:1-2).
 5. Jesus Christ announced God’s acceptable time (Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:16-21; 19:42-44).
 6. The Jews had limited time before God’s judgment (Isaiah 55:6; Pr 29:1; Matt 24:32-51).
 7. The ministry of Jesus Christ was the last opportunity (Mat 21:33-44; 22:1-7; I John 2:18).
 8. Israel in the wilderness did not have forever to repent, believe, and obey (Num 14:40-45).
 9. The gospel age is synonymous with the “last days” (1:2) and the “world to come” (2:5).

8 *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:*

- A. These foolish and rebellious people chose to hear 10 faithless spies instead of 2 faithful ones.
- B. Solomon warned to keep your heart with all diligence, for you can backslide (Pr 4:23; 14:14).
- C. God may have tempted them with a few tall giants, but they tempted Him to show His wrath!
- D. It is called the provocation, because they provoked the great and dreadful God to great wrath.
- E. Every man, woman, or child that hears or reads the gospel makes a choice to harden or not.

9 *When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.*

- A. This is something you do not want to do to the living God – tempt Him to prove His anger!
- B. The horrible fate of dying in the wilderness prefigured the horrific destruction of Jerusalem!
- C. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, even as His people (10:31; 12:29).

10 *Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.*

- A. He was grieved? Was it pity? Did He suffer grief? Or was He wroth at them (Deut 1:34)?
- B. He accused that forgetful generation of having tempted Him ten times (Numbers 14:22).
- C. There errors were many i.e. complaining, golden calves, demand for quail, etc., etc., etc., etc.

11 *So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)*

- A. God will not offer blessings or mercy forever; He will at some point withdraw His kind offer.
- B. God swore in wrath against Israel, for He was wroth with them for their talk (Deut 1:34).
- C. Once God swears, hope is gone (Deut 1:34-46; II Chr 36:15-17; Pr 29:1; Is 55:1; Rev 2:21).
- D. He will do more than retract an offer; if the rejection is profane, He will curse with judgment.
 1. Israel “repented” and tried to take the land, but enemies defeated them (Num 14:39-45).
 2. Israel “repented” and tried to take the land, but they all died while lost (Num 14:11-38).

12 *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

- A. Paul’s argument began in 3:7 with *wherefore* and finishes here, with 3:7b-11 the quotation.
 1. If being part of Christ’s house or God’s kingdom requires perseverance, then hold fast!
 2. If a generation was lost in the wilderness due to unbelief, do not think yourself above it.
 3. We must take heed to this matter. It is not something to ignore or relax our guard against.
 4. You do not have to say, “I now worship Satan,” in order to depart from the living God.

5. Lot departed by moving near worldly Sodom; Solomon by marrying out of the Lord; Demas by preferring this present world to the things of Christ (Jas 4:4; I John 2:15-17).
- B. New Testament saints must also guard against an evil heart in departing from the living God.
 1. When the blessed God says something, we should believe it. Not believing it is very evil!
 2. All evil comes from our hearts (Genesis 6:5; 8:21; Prov 28:26; Jer 4:14; Mark 7:18-23).
 3. Backsliding in heart is what we must diligently oppose (Deut 29:19-20; Proverbs 14:14).
 4. While the evil heart is definitely in us (Jer 17:9), it can be controlled (Proverbs 4:23).
 5. When did you last pray for God to search and prove your heart (Psalm 139:23-24)?
 6. Men from Lot to Solomon to Demas have departed from the living God for fools' gold!

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

- A. A solution for an evil and departing heart is frequent *exhortation* by and from other saints.
 1. Sin is deceitful; deceit means believing a lie; therefore you need others to show you (Pr 11:14; 12:15; 15:22; 16:25; 18:17; 21:2; 24:6; Eccl 4:9-12; Rom 15:14; Jas 5:19-20).
 2. We assemble and spend time together to provoke to godliness (Hebrews 10:23-25).
 3. Those who do not assemble or barely assemble will never be great Christians. Never!
 4. Great men both take and give strength to others (I Samuel 23:16; Job 4:3-4; Rom 1:12).
 5. Emphasize weak and uncomely members (Rom 15:1; I Corinthians 12:22-24; Gal 6:1).
- B. Sin is *deceitful*, and the more you play with this lying vanity, you *harden* your heart to truth.
 1. How did three of Lot's girls choose judgment and two, incest? By moving near Sodom!
 2. How in the world did David get to the point of murdering a great friend? By adultery!
 3. We avoid all worldly friends, because they surely corrupt good manners (I Cor 15:33).
 4. Sin or an opening to the devil will not remain small (Gal 5:9; Eph 4:27; Hebrews 12:15).
- C. The timing here is important ... while *To day* ... the gospel day ... for judgment was coming.
 1. The text proves that more than one day is under consideration by using the word *daily*!
 2. See the comments on 3:7 for a detailed explanation that *To day* refers to the gospel age.
 3. The Jews had to follow Jesus Christ or be judged severely (Dan 9:24-27; 12:1-11; Mal 3:1-5; 4:5-6; Mat 3:7-12; 16:24-28; 21:33-46; 22:1-7; Luke 19:41-44; Heb 10:26-31).

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

- A. There is no evidence at all of eternal life in those who "accept Jesus" and live like the world.
- B. As in 3:6 above, believers prove with evidence their participation in Christ by perseverance.
- C. The true disciples of Jesus Christ are those who continue in faithful joy (Jn 8:31; Col 1:23).

15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

- A. The issue is timing! *While it is said* are Paul's warning words that the door would soon close!
- B. *To day* was not going to last forever! While being described as *To day*, do not neglect it!
- C. Once God swears, hope is gone (Deut 1:34-46; II Chr 36:15-17; Pr 29:1; Is 55:1; Rev 2:21).

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

- A. Psalm 95 provides the illustrative foundation of rejecting God's voice and provoking Him.
- B. Believing ten weak spies and not believing God is called the provocation for provoking God!
- C. Some did provoke by hearing and not believing, and some did not. Which side are you on?
- D. But not every one that came out of Egypt by Moses provoked him, for two believed by faith.
 - 1. Joshua and Caleb did not provoke God in the wilderness, and they both entered Canaan.
 - 2. This is in spite of modern Bible versions, including the NKJV, condemning all Israelites.
 - 3. Even faithful Moses missed God's rest because of unbelief at Meribah (Numbers 20:12).

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

- A. Here are rhetorical questions with easy answers. Who was God angry against for 40 years?
- B. Rejecting Canaan is the provocation: they provoked God, and God was grieved with them!
- C. Israel sinned by unbelief. God was grieved by their sin, so He killed them in the wilderness.

18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

- A. Here is another rhetorical question with an easy answer. Whom did God swear to kill?
- B. The unbelievers provoked the God of glory to wrath, and He swore against them (Deut 1:34).
- C. What was their capital crime? What brought capital punishment? They did not believe God.

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

- A. Paul's conclusion here focuses attention on the consequence of losing confidence and faith.
- B. Losing faith in God's ability and promises and thinking about going back will bring disaster.
- C. The Israelites God delivered from Egypt were not allowed to enter Canaan due to unbelief.

Conclusion:

- 1. What keeps you from believing and following God with all your heart like Joshua and Caleb?
- 2. The nation of Israel and their many sins are a great example to Gentile saints (Ac 7:37-44; Rom 15:4).
 - a. Remember that these rebellious Israelites were God's elect children (I Corinthians 10:1-5).
 - b. They ate and drank of Jesus Christ, which spiritual meat and drink is more than a mere metaphor.
 - c. God chose (Deut 7:6-8), chastened (Deut 8:5), begat (Deut 14:1), and loved them (Deut 33:1-3).
 - d. The elect can very easily be carnal, which is the sober lesson to learn (I Cor 1:2; 3:1-3; 10:6,11).
 - e. God had done great and wonderful things for them, but they forgot their God (Deut 32:15-20).
- 3. We must also guard against hardening our hearts against what we have heard and been taught.
 - a. Do you harden your heart because of mercy (Exodus 8:15; Psalm 50:21-22; Romans 2:4-5)?
 - b. Do you harden your heart with some idol you worship (Ezekiel 14:1-11; Philippians 3:8)?
 - c. Do you harden your heart with fools' gold (Psalm 69:22; Proverbs 1:32; Luke 12:16-21)?
 - d. You can harden your heart with any of the many delusions that the devil will put in your heart.
- 4. It is better to prove God's blessings than to prove His judgments (Deut 33:8; Mal 3:10; Rom 12:2).
- 5. What is God grieved with in our generation? In your family? In our church? Let us destroy such!

HEBREWS 4

Introduction:

1. Jesus Christ is superior to Joshua and left a glorious rest that exceeds the Sabbath or Canaan (4:1-14).
2. Jesus Christ is a glorious high priest, to whom we go boldly and confidently for empathy (4:15-16).
3. Paul's exhortation to hold fast our profession (4:14) continues his argument from 3:1,6,14; and 4:1.

1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

- A. What is the *therefore* here for? It draws a clear conclusion from the warnings of chapter 3.
 1. The introductory warning is that the evidence of being Christ's is perseverance (3:6).
 2. The heavy warning is God's wrathful oath against a generation for unbelief (3:7-19).
 3. Israel in the wilderness is an example of an evil, foolish choice against God (3:7-19).
 4. It was the sin of unbelief that kept Israel from realizing God's best and rest (3:18-19).
 5. Paul applied Psalm 95:7-11 and its warning to this New Testament gospel time (3:7,13).
 6. "To day" (3:7,13,15) and "while" (3:13,15) emphasize the short time remaining to them.
 7. Once God swears against unbelievers, they cannot enter into His rest (3:11,18-19).
 8. God's judgment on unbelievers missing His rest is far more than just missing it (3:9,17).
 9. We face an equal temptation to depart from our God through foolish unbelief (3:12-13).
 10. We are made partakers of rest in Jesus Christ through faith and perseverance (3:6,14).
- B. *Fear*? Is that a good thing for Christians? It is when God could swear in wrath against you!
 1. The end of Ps 95 was a warning example of what God would do to Christ's generation.
 2. God swore in His wrath that a generation would not see Canaan and would also die.
 3. Fear of ourselves is good (I Sam 2:30; Prov 14:16; 28:14; Rom 11:20-21; I Cor 10:12).
- C. The *lest* is not a doubt whether there is a promise of rest for us, but what will we do with it!
 1. The warnings should create fear in us ... if ... God has also given us a promise of rest.
 2. **Lest**. May be substituted by "that" when occurring after verbs indicating fear or concern.
 3. God asks us to hear His voice (3:15) and warns against apostasy by unbelief (3:12-13).
 4. Paul did not state or prove another rest in chapter three: he does so right here (4:2-9).
 5. Disbelief causes us to come short of gospel privileges, not eternal life in glory above.
 6. The following verses must be read carefully and the inductive reasoning observed.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

- A. The gospel, or the good news of God's rest in Christ, was preached to both them and us.
 1. We cannot think our situation different than old Israel's: we have an equivalent choice.
 2. They were not the only ones to hear the gospel of God: we have also heard it ourselves.
 3. God preached Christ to Adam (Gen 3:15), Abraham (Gal 3:8), and Moses (Deut 18:15).
 4. The word "gospel" is one meaning good news or glad tidings (Rom 10:15 cp Isaiah 52:7).
 5. God gave good news to Israel (Exodus 3:8; Deut 6:10-12; 8:1-18; 11:10-15; 32:1-14).
 6. The Hebrews were blessed with the scriptures (Ps 147:19-20; Rom 2:17-19; 3:1-2; 9:4).
- B. The gospel benefits believers (Romans 3:1-4; 9:6; 10:16; I Thess 2:13; Hebrews 3:16; 11:6).
 1. Faith in the gospel brings knowledge of God (Rom 10:1-4; I Cor 1:21), assurance (I John 5:13), duties (Acts 10:6), fellowship (I John 1:3-4), warnings of judgment (Ac 2:40), hope and peace (Matt 11:28-30; I Cor 15:19), and blessings (Matt 10:39).

2. Faith is the gift of God (I John 5:4); but we may have little faith (Matt 16:8; Luke 17:5), have faith without works (Jas 2:19), have faith that works (Gal 5:6), have our faith overthrown (II Tim 2:18), or add to our faith (II Peter 1:5).

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

- A. Saints in the New Testament enter into rest by faith according to God's glorious gospel.
 1. The rest of these chapters is not heaven, for it is a rest that we presently enter by faith.
 2. Our rest is proven by the sense of Psalm 95:7-11. Notice *as. As.* For the reason specified.
 3. Its interpretative sense is, "As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest."
 4. The "if" assumes a rest, "To day *if* ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts ..."
 5. Paul, by the Holy Spirit, interprets a positive condition from a negative condition.
 6. If unbelief keeps one from God's rest, then belief will bring entry into that rest of God.
- B. The rest is God's rest – "my rest" – a rest ordained by God for His beloved people (3:11).
- C. God began resting from His works after creation, but His offer was made much later (4:4-5).
 1. Paul proved from scripture that God began resting after six days (4:4 cp Genesis 2:2).
 2. God gave the Sabbath Day for a rest to the nation of Israel (Gen 2:3; Ex 23:12; Mk 2:27).
 3. Another rest is proven here by the timing of Psalm 95:7-11 coming long after creation.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

- A. Moses had recorded God's work of creation, which included a rest after His work (Ge 2:1-3).
- B. This certain place of Genesis came long before Ps 95:7-11, so there was another rest (4:3,5).

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

- A. Again, the apostle under inspiration makes reference to the words of David in Psalm 95:7-11.
- B. The offer of a rest, thousands of years after creation (4:3-4), proves there is yet a rest (4:6-7).

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

- A. Since Ps 95:7-11 properly understood includes a possible rest for believers, there is another.
 1. It was not the Sabbath rest of creation, for Psalm 95 comes long after the creation record.
 2. It was not the rest of Canaan's land, for Psalm 95 comes long after that rest as well (4:7).
- B. There is a rest after creation, but Israel missed the rest of Canaan due to their unbelief (4:6).
 1. *Therefore* concludes that the rest will definitely be entered by some believers sometime.
 2. This conclusion rests its weight on God's implied, conditional offer of rest – "if" (4:3,5).
 3. Most of Israel's first generation did not believe and missed God's Canaan rest (3:16).
 4. Since the first generation missed Canaan, does the offer apply to it for their children?

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

- A. Paul further argued that David recorded God's promise of rest in his time, long after Moses.
 1. The conditional offer of rest is for a limited, specific time by "to day" (Heb 3:7,13,15).
 2. Since David recorded the offer of rest, then it must refer to a "day" or time after David.

3. Paul added “after so long a time” to compare David’s time to that of Moses and Joshua.

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

- A. Since David’s offer came much later, then Joshua and his generation did not fulfill this rest.
- B. *Jesus* is the Greek translation of the Hebrew name Joshua of our Lord. Compare Acts 7:45.
 1. Consider Isaiah – Esaias, Elijah – Elias, Elisha – Eliseus, Hosea – Osee, and so forth.
 2. The English name John is Juan in Spanish, so the change here is not unusual at all.
 3. The Hebrew name of God’s Son is Joshua or Jehoshua – Jehovah is salvation (Matt 1:21).
 4. Consider Jehoshua (Nu 13:16). Jeho + shua = Jehovah + salvation. It is a glorious name!
- C. Canaan was a rest offered conditionally to Israel by God (Deuteronomy 12:9; Joshua 1:15).
- D. Joshua and Canaan did not fulfill God’s rest, since Psalm 95 was written 500 years later!

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

- A. Given the various but related facts given above, we conclude that God has left us a rest.
 1. *Therefore* draws a conclusion from the inductive reasoning Paul has used in this chapter.
 2. The Jews knew well that there was no other solution for David’s offer of rest in Psalm 95.
 3. The rest must be for God’s people, not God, since He began His rest long before (4:3-4).
- B. The rest remaining after creation and Canaan is the “world to come” of Jesus Christ (2:5).
 1. Jesus Christ provides rest from working for righteousness before God (Romans 10:1-5).
 2. Jesus Christ provides rest from doubts and fear of salvation (Rom 8:28-39; Heb 7:25).
 3. Jesus Christ provides rest from the spirit of bondage and fear (Romans 8:15; Heb 2:15).
 4. Jesus Christ provides rest from ceremonial bondage (Gal 4:9-11; Col 2:16-17; Heb 9:10).
 5. Jesus Christ provides rest from change and uncertainty (Heb 4:11; 12:27-28; Matt 28:20).
 6. Jesus Christ provides rest from ourselves and other sinners (Isaiah 11:1-10; Titus 3:3).
 7. Jesus Christ provides rest from worldly troubles (Rom 8; II Cor 4; II Thess 1:7).

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

- A. Based on the definition of rest, God’s people may cease from their own works for salvation.
- B. Again, the rest under consideration is the rest God planned for His people (3:11,18; 4:1,3,5).
- C. God’s rest was defined as His ceasing from His works, so it is with us in the gospel (4:3-4).
- D. The gospel of Jesus Christ calls on us to rest from our works (Isaiah 11:10; 28:12; Matt 11:28-30; Romans 4:1-8; 10:1-5; 11:6; Galatians 2:16; Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

- A. Since we may conclude we have an offered rest like Israel, let us work harder to enter it.
- B. *Therefore* connects the arguments from 3:7 to this point as to our obligation to enter the rest.
- C. While our objective is His rest, it does take diligent effort on our part to achieve that rest.
 1. Diligent effort is necessary to make our calling and election sure (II Peter 1:5-12).
 2. Christ’s kingdom requires striving and violence to enter (Matt 11:12; Luke 13:24; 16:16).
 3. Following Jesus Christ brings pain and opposition (Matt 16:24; Acts 14:22; II Tim 3:12).

- D. If we fail to take this offer of rest from God, we are just like Israel's rebellious generation.
 1. Israel's national history is an example of everything we should not do (I Cor 10:6-11).
 2. God delivered Israel and offered to bless them. Has He done less for us through Christ?
 3. Disbelief will cause us to come short of His rest, thus missing the benefits of grace.
- E. The entire lesson is of losing gospel privileges, not of losing eternal life in heaven's glory.

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- A. Jesus Christ is the Word of God, our high priest, and He is able to perceive any unbelief.
- B. The Word of God under consideration is God the Word, not the written scriptures (John 1:1).
 1. The Second Person in the Godhead is the Word (John 1:1-3; I John 5:7; Rev 19:13).
 2. The context is Jesus Christ and perseverance, not inspiration of scripture (3:6,14 cp 4:14).
 3. The Word of God is quick – or alive (Deut 32:40; I Timothy 1:17; 6:16; Rev 1:17-18).
 4. The Word of God is powerful (Psalm 89:19; Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 28:18; Eph 1:20-23).
 5. The Word of God is a sharp divider (Revelation 1:16; Psalm 139:14-17; I Thess 5:23).
 6. The Word of God is a discerner (I Chron 28:9; Jeremiah 17:10; John 2:24-25; Rev 2:23).
 7. Follow the connections and pronouns of the next two verses; Jesus is under consideration.
 8. There is not a mixed sense at all. The written word of God is not here, even indirectly.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

- A. All of creation is under the watchful eye of its Creator, Who is also our great high priest.
- B. Note carefully the connections and personal pronouns also proving the living Word of God.
- C. All things are naked before God's omniscience (I Samuel 16:7; II Chron 16:9; Job 26:6; 34:21-22; Prov 5:21; 15:3,11; Jeremiah 16:17; 23:24; 32:19; I Cor 4:5).
- D. God providentially sees all events (Matthew 10:29-31; Luke 12:6-7,22-30; Phil 4:6-7).
- E. If you do not have a believing heart full of joy for the gospel's sake, you are provoking Him.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

- A. Since our great high priest is the living Word of God, we should hold fast our profession.
- B. Since our great high priest is the Man Christ Jesus, we should also hold fast our profession.
- C. *Seeing then* is equivalent to therefore: it draws a conclusion from the context (II Peter 3:11).
 1. Jesus the Son of God is at God's right hand (Mark 16:19; Eph 1:20-23; I Peter 3:22).
 2. His office in heaven is that of intercessor (Isaiah 53:12; Rom 5:10; 8:34; Heb 9:24).
 3. If Jesus is truly the Word of God, He is a great high priest, and we owe him our loyalty.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

- A. A further proof for His excellent priesthood is His understanding of the human experience.
- B. The Lord Jesus Christ partook of our nature to be a very suitable and helpful priest (2:17-18).
- C. Priests are chosen from among men to be able to relate to their infirmities (5:1-2).

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

- A. Jesus Christ is on a throne (1;3,8,13; 4:14), but His throne is a throne of grace (4:15-16).
- B. *Therefore* concludes the grace of Jesus Christ is due to His human temptations (4:15-16).
- C. The throne is more than just prayer – it is everything of Jesus Christ (13:13).
- D. The throne of grace creatively fulfills the mercy seat (Exodus 25:17-22; Leviticus 16).
- E. Jesus Christ the great High Priest has opened up access to Almighty God ((Heb 9:6-10).
- F. With Jesus the Son of God as our Priest, we have our petitions granted (John 16:23-27).
- G. Jesus Christ is so great a high priest, we should come boldly (Heb 10:19-25).

Conclusion:

- 1. Jesus Christ and His gospel are far superior to anything Moses or Joshua could offer under the O.T.
- 2. We should not depart from the living God, for (a) God has left us a promised rest, (b) we will be judged for leaving it, (c) the Word of God knows our hearts, and (d) Jesus understands our infirmities.

For Further Study:

- 1. The web document, “What is the Word in Heb 4:12?” ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/questions/hebrews4-12.htm>.
- 2. The sermon, “While He May Be Found,” ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/pdf/while-he-may-be-found.pdf>.
- 3. The proverb commentary, “Proverbs 29:1,” ... http://www.letgodbetruer.com/proverbs/29_01.htm.