

# The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews

## *Christ, Superior to Moses, Aaron, and Joshua*

### *Hebrews 4:1-16*

- I. THE CONCERN FOR REST (Hebrews 4:1-10)
  - A. The Fear of Some (Hebrews 4:1-2)
    1. The motivation of fear (Hebrews 4:1)
      - a. The identification of motivation—“therefore”
      - b. The reminder of motivation (Hebrews 3:7-19)
    2. The promise of rest (Hebrews 4:1)
      - a. The audience of the promise—“us”
      - b. The nature of the promise
        - (1) “Come unto me...and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).
        - (2) “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me...and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:29).
        - (3) In a basic sense, the word *rest* means to cease from works.
      - c. The responsibility of the promise
        - (1) Shown by the presence of fear
        - (2) Shown by the presented concern—“lest...any...should seem to come short of it
        - (3) Note: Pay attention to the change of pronoun usage...
          - a) “Let **us** therefore fear,”
          - b) “Lest, a promise being left **us** of entering into his rest,”
          - c) “Any of **you** should seem to come short of it”
          - d) In other words, all were to fear, but the danger of coming short of the promise did not apply to all.
    3. The historical appeal for rest (Hebrews 4:2)
      - a. The correlation of people
        - (1) “Unto us was the gospel preached,”
        - (2) “As well as unto them:”
          - a) At face value, this presents a complex scenario.
          - b) Some suggest that this is merely another proof that Old Testament people looked forward to the death, burial, and resurrection.
          - c) However, that is based on the assumption that the word *gospel* means death, burial, and resurrection. The Bible paints a different picture.
            - i) “He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor” (Luke 4:18) = “the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek” (Isaiah 61:1)
            - ii) “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good

things!” (Romans 10:15) = “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good” (Isaiah 52:7) = “Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!” (Nahum 1:15)

- d) Understanding that the word *gospel* means good or glad tidings unlocks other biblical statements.
  - i) The gospel preached to Abraham (Galatians 3:8)
  - ii) The gospel preached in the wilderness
  - iii) Neither of these gospels had anything to do with the gospel identified as the gospel of the grace of God involving the death, burial, and resurrection.
- b. The correlation of response
  - (1) The historical response
    - a) From some
      - i) “The word preached did not profit them,”
      - ii) “Not being mixed with faith in them that heard it”
    - b) From the minority—“howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses (Hebrews 3:16)
  - (2) The present response
    - a) Some will hear the gospel, but refuse to exercise faith in the gospel.
    - b) The minority will hear the gospel and believe on the Lord.

## B. The Certainty of Others (Hebrews 4:3)

- 1. The confidence of the apostle
  - a. “We which have believed”
  - b. “Do enter into rest”
- 2. The promises and provisions of the Father
  - a. His promise—“As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my” (see Psalm 95:11)
  - b. His provision—“although the works were finished from the foundation of the world”
    - (1) God here called the rest offered to believers as “my rest.”
    - (2) He then spoke of the rest He enjoyed in creation—“the works were finished from the foundation of the world” (see Genesis 1:31; Exodus 20:11).
    - (3) Since the beginning God’s desire has been the man would enjoy the rest enjoyed by the Lord after the six days of creation.
      - a) As seen in the garden in Eden
      - b) As seen in the institution of the Sabbath
      - c) As seen in the offer to enter the land of promise
      - d) As seen in the offer of salvation in Christ
      - e) As seen in the saints’ home in heaven
      - f) As seen in the coming millennial kingdom

## C. The Remaining Rest (Hebrews 4:4-10)

1. The pattern of all rest (Hebrews 4:4; see Genesis 2:1-2)
  - a. The reference of the rest
    - (1) “He spake in a certain place”; The phrase “certain place” was also used in Hebrews 2:6 to reference a passage quoted from Psalm 8.
    - (2) “Of the seventh day”
  - b. The identification of the rest
    - (1) “God did rest the seventh day”
    - (2) “From all his works”
2. The present concern for missed rest (Hebrews 4:5-6)
  - a. The concern referenced (Hebrews 4:5)
    - (1) The source—“in this place again”
      - a) The place here quoted (see Psalm 95:11)
      - b) Again—meaning that it has been quoted already (see Hebrews 3:7-11, 15; Hebrews 4:3, 5, 7)
    - (2) The quote—“If they shall enter into my rest”
  - b. The concern opened (Hebrews 4:6)
    - (1) The look back—“Seeing therefore”
    - (2) The hope available, both then and now—“it remaineth that some must enter therein,”
    - (3) The past failure
      - a) They to whom it was first preached
      - b) Entered not in because of unbelief
3. The warning given in David (Hebrews 4:7)
  - a. The return to Psalm 95—“again”
  - b. The limitation of Psalm 95—“he limiteth in a certain day... To day”
  - c. The human penman of Psalm 95—“saying in David”; Note: A good number of psalms contain the author’s identification within the subtitle. Though Psalm 95 did not, the Lord used Paul to tell us that it was David.
4. The unfulfillment in the conquest (Hebrews 4:8)
  - a. The leader of the conquest
    - (1) The average reader would move right through the name Jesus with little-to-no-thought.
    - (2) However, the presence of the name Jesus does two things.
      - a) It proves the honesty of the King James translators.
      - b) It preserves a prophetic reference to a future work of Jesus.
    - (3) The reality is that Hebrews 4:8 as well as Acts 7:45 both refer to Joshua of the Old Testament.
      - a) In Acts 7:45, we are reminded that the Israelites, under the leadership of Joshua, brought the tabernacle of witness into the possession of the Gentiles.
      - b) In Hebrews 4:8, we are reminded that Joshua was unable to give the Jews rest when he led them into the land of promise.

- (4) However, the accurate translation is Jesus.
  - a) The name Joshua, when taken from Hebrew to Greek, becomes the equivalent of Jesus.
  - b) The correct translation is Jesus; the correct interpretation is Joshua.
  - c) The problem with modern translations is that they cross the line of translation and seek to offer interpretations. At that point, the Bible ceases to be the Bible and becomes nothing more than a commentary.
- (5) In fact, the King James Bible was superior in that it preserved the literal translation and offered the antitype of Joshua's conquest in the land of Canaan.
- b. The forward look
  - (1) If Joshua's conquest was the final resting place
  - (2) God would not have afterward spoken of another day
  - (3) That being said, it becomes obvious that all previous rests are merely representative of the rest desired of the Lord
    - a) The rest in the garden in Eden
    - b) The rest enjoyed on the weekly Sabbath
    - c) The rest enjoyed on the year of jubile
    - d) The rest encountered when entering the land of promise
- 5. The promise of remaining rest (Hebrews 4:9)
  - a. Everything the Jews had ever experienced ended short of the intended expectations.
  - b. History told stories of failure and disappointment
    - (1) The garden
    - (2) The flood
    - (3) The bondage in Egypt
    - (4) The wilderness wanderings
    - (5) The various captivities
    - (6) The 400 years of silence
    - (7) The crucifixion of Christ
  - c. All that God intended for them was still ahead. In other words, in the midst of all their failures, God still provided a path to rest.
    - (1) Acceptance of Christ as Saviour
    - (2) Enjoyment of a heavenly home
    - (3) Entrance into the Lord's earthly and millennial rest
    - (4) Eternity
  - d. The potential remained...
  - e. The only potential obstacle...
    - (1) They would need to be the people of God.
    - (2) This would only come about by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ.
- 6. The likeness of the promised rest (Hebrews 4:10)
  - a. "He that is entered into his [God's] rest,"
  - b. "He also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."