

HEBREWS: THE INFINITE SUPREMACY AND SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS CHRIST

V. Heeding Our Opportunity To Enter God's Rest

(Hebrews 4:1-11)

I. Introduction

- A. We live in an era of great need for an encouraging word amid man's discouraging spiritual failure, so a word from God on the infinite supremacy and sufficiency of His Son Jesus Christ is both desirable and fitting.
- B. The Epistle to the Hebrews provides it, and Hebrews 4:1-11 gives an encouraging admonition regarding our current opportunity to enter God's spiritual rest for us in our era. We view this passage for our edification:

II. Heeding Our Opportunity To Enter God's Rest, Hebrews 4:1-11.

- A. The author of Hebrews warned his readers not to fail to reach God's "rest" for them since the promise of entering God's "rest" still stands for our era of Church History, Hebrews 4:1 NIV, ESV, KJV.
- B. In the context, this "rest" had already been clarified by the author of the epistle as follows:
 1. The "rest" was initially ancient Israel's entrance into the Promised Land in reward for trusting and obeying God for their livelihood needs while that generation in the Exodus was in the wilderness, Hebrews 3:7-11.
 2. For the generation in David's era of Psalm 95:7-11 that is referenced in Hebrews 3:7-11, that "rest" was God's continued livelihood blessings in the land for trusting and obeying God versus turning to some false pagan god in the Gentile world. (The Mosaic Covenant, Deuteronomy 28)
 3. For the readers of this epistle, God's "rest" was temporal blessings for relying on the help that their High Priest Jesus Christ offered through prayer versus returning to a Judaistic cult, Hebrews 2:17-18; 3:6.
- C. The author claimed that the "good news" [not the Gospel of Christ's salvation here, Bib. Know. Com., N. T., p. 788] of God's blessing has come to us just as it did to the generation in Israel's Exodus, which news did not benefit that generation because they did not respond with faith to the good news preached to them, Heb. 4:2.
- D. However, for the readers who were believing (*hoi pisteusantes*, "[we] who believe," Ibid.) in Christ as Savior, God's news of entering His "rest" **for them** was their need to rely on the High Priest Christ to meet their needs in life versus returning to a Judaistic cult, Hebrews 4:3.
- E. The author of Hebrews then enriched the idea of God's "rest" by linking "God's Sabbath-rest at Creation with the rest that the Israelites missed in the desert," Ibid.; Hebrews 4:4-5.
- F. In making this link, the author in Hebrews 4:6-10 showed that the promise of God's "rest," a life of blessing for trusting and obeying Him, is **always** available to God's people as based on His establishment of His "rest" at Creation. This promise was extended to Israel's generation in the wilderness, it was extended to Israel's generation in David's day in Psalm 95:7-11 and it was extended to the readers of Hebrews in the Church era, not only with regard to salvation, but also to their walk, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Hebrews 4:5-9:
 1. The author of Hebrews labored to explain that though the former generation in the wilderness failed to enter God's "rest" of the Promised Land through disobedience, the offer of entering God's "rest" still extended to a later generation in David's era of Psalm 95:7 where the Psalmist exhorted his generation to heed God's voice to obey Him and not harden their hearts for blessing "Today," Hebrews 4:6-7.
 2. Had *Iesous* (this is the name for "Jesus," but it is also the name for "Joshua," the better translation in the context being "Joshua;" U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 754) "brought" his generation "to a completed rest" (*katapauo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 416-417) in the Promised Land, God would not have later spoken of another day of "rest" in Psalm 95:7; Hebrews 4:8.
 3. There thus remains a spiritual Sabbath "rest" of blessing for God's people, and he who enters it in our day has ceased from his own works for blessing as established by God's "rest" at Creation, Hebrews 4:9-10.
- G. The author of Hebrews then urged his readers to strive to enter the "rest" God promised for believers in Christ in the Church, to trust in Christ's High Priestly ministry versus returning to a Judaistic cult, that none of his readers miss God's blessing by the same kind of disobedience that plagued Israel in the wilderness, Heb. 4:11.

Lesson: As set by God at Creation, each generation of God's people has opportunity to enter God's "rest" of blessing for their era by abandoning their own futile works to trust and obey Him. God's "rest" for Israel in the wilderness was entering the Promised Land, it was God's continued provisions for David's generation and it was blessing for trusting in their High Priest Christ versus going back into dead Judaism for the readers of Hebrews!

Application: May we take advantage of the opportunity God grants us believers now to enjoy His blessing by trusting and obeying Him to be our All-Sufficient Provider instead of relying on our own futile works to that end.