

Letter to the **Hebrews**



Lesson 4-Entering God's Promised Rest by Faith

Focus: Hebrews 4:1-16

- **How can we enter into God's promised Rest for us? (v.1-5)**
 - The Children of Israel during the time of the Exodus had failed to enter into God's promised rest. Many of them died in the wilderness instead. "Therefore" since the promise remains to us, let us not doubt and be as that. Let us not fear to move forward in faith according to God's leading. Let us not fail to receive and to accept His promise of salvation and rest that He has been offering us through Jesus Christ.
 - (v.1-3) The way that we hear God's word and respond to it is very important. Some people hear it and then choose to go their own way and ignore God's truth for their life. Others hear it, take it to heart, obey it, and are converted. The latter response is the only proper one that **will bring us true rest, joy, and happiness for the long run of our life and also for eternity!** (See Acts 17:1-5, 10-12 for example). "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Psalm 19:7), if we are willing to heed it and to follow it in faith. **Revelation 1:3** tells us that **there is a blessing**, not merely for those who only hear the word of God, but **for those hear and respond positively to the word of God, by faith!** **James 1:22** says that we should be "doers" of the word, and not hearers only, who deceive themselves. Jesus explained that the wise person will build upon the rock of His word by doing His word, but the fool will not obey or follow it (e.g. Matt.7:23-27). ***When the gospel is preached to us, we must hear it with faith and be receptive of God's words so that our souls will truly be profited for now and all eternity!***
 - **By believing and trusting in God, we can enter His perfect rest!** In **Matthew 11:28-30** Jesus gives us His great invitation to rest. We should not let our hearts be troubled, but we should trust in Him and His plan for our lives (John 14:1-3). **In this world, we will have trials**, but we should be of good cheer for Christ has overcome the world. We can **experience His true inner peace** through all things! (John 16:33; Philippians 4:6,7). He does not give peace as the world gives (just very short lived and circumstantial), but He gives **peace that transcends** all difficulties or hardships of this world and looks to heaven by faith! (**John 14:27**). Through Christ, we will not only have peace in our hearts here on this earth, but we will have "peace with God" and a good relationship with Him (Romans 5:1). ***Those who do not believe or trust in God's word and His leading will not be able to experience that peace and rest!*** *It is something that comes only as we step out in faith to know and to follow God. However, we can truly taste of that peace as we begin seeking God by prayer and the reading of His word! Try seeking Him and you will see!*
 - (v.3,4) ***"...the works were finished from the creation of the world."*** As soon as sin entered into our world, God already had a plan to save us. From the very beginning! For,

He loves us! Jesus was the “lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8).

We merely must enter into that saving relationship by faith! It’s the only way to enter into that blessed rest in God! (ref. Mark 16:16; John 3:16-19).

- (v.4,5) God has done the work and He has finished it! We simply must enter into the benefits of that work by faith! God finished Creation and then rested on the Sabbath day (see Gen. 2:1-3). The work was already done! By the birth or rather, Creation of man upon the six day (as the final crowning act of the work), man was able to enter into God’s holy rest upon the Sabbath, and to enjoy the work of Creation that God Himself had done! Jesus Christ also cried out “it is finished” upon the cross, as He was dying there for our sins. Then He rested in the tomb upon the Sabbath day (John 19:30,31). **Therefore, the Sabbath also commemorates this great rest that we have in God.** It is not in our own works that we can depend or trust in (as Ephesians 2:8,9 says), but it is in the work which Jesus Christ has done for us upon the Cross, and now in heaven. We must fully trust in Him by faith and receive salvation and sanctification from Him (Heb. 4:14-16). In fact, after people experienced God’s plan to save from sin, **the Sabbath rest took on a double meaning; not only as a memorial of Creation, but also as a symbol of God’s power to save us from bondage and sin.** (See Exodus 20:8-11, Creation; Deuteronomy 5:12-15, Salvation or deliverance; John 8:32-36). **Therefore, Sabbath keeping is a sign of God, both as our Creator God—our Maker, and also our Savior, and the One who sanctifies us!** (See also Ezekiel 20:12, 20).
- **There were a number of people who needed to enter into God’s true rest still (v.6-10)**
 - (v.9,10) **We are called to enter into God’s rest! This rest “remains” for the people of God! The Bible says we should “cease from our works” even as God did from His!** In observing the Sabbath day, and it’s rest, even as God himself did, then we are experiencing God as our Creator and our Savior! We are choosing to trust, not in our own works, but in God’s works for our salvation. By faith, we are experiencing salvation in Christ Jesus!
- **Let us follow God’s word and enter into His rest! (v.11-13)** *The word of God is powerful and transforms our lives. Let us follow it (John 17:17; Isaiah 55:10-13).*
- **Let us therefore put our trust and faith in the Lord who truly understands us (v.14-16)**
 - *Christ is our High Priest in Heaven! We should keep our faith strong in Jesus Christ! He is not one who cannot understand our weaknesses, but He is one who knows the struggles and weaknesses of being a human being! He became one of us and lived among us. He was tempted like we are, but was without sin. Being tempted is not a sin. Sinning or giving in to the temptation is a sin. **Let us come boldly to His throne of Grace to find mercy to help us in time of need!** Remember that God is a merciful God and His throne is a merciful throne! Jesus Christ has paid for all our sin by His blood! Let us come boldly before the Lord’s throne of mercy—do not fear, but come by faith to find forgiveness and mercy!*

Question (s) for the Heart:

Would you like to trust by faith in the great and loving God of mercy who will save us? _____