

Hebrews Chapter 3 Continued

Hebrews 3:11 "So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest."

“My rest”: The earthly rest which God promised to give was life in the land of Canaan which Israel would receive as their inheritance (Deut. 12:9-10; Joshua 2:44; 1 Kings 8:56). Because of rebellion against God, an entire generation of the children of Israel was prohibited from entering that rest in the Promised Land (Deut. 28:65; Lam. 1:3).

The application of this picture is to an individual’s spiritual rest in the Lord, which has precedent in the Old Testament (Psalm 116:7; Isa. 28:12). At salvation, every believer enters the true rest, the realm of spiritual promise, never again, laboring to achieve through personal effort a righteousness that pleases God.

The Lord wanted both kinds of rest for that generation who was delivered from Egypt.

Not only for the people then, but for the Christians now, there is a Sabbath of rest. Many call this Sabbath of rest for the Christian, the millennium reign of Christ. Notice in this next verse, there is a Sabbath for believers.

Hebrews 4:3 "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."

Revelation 20:6 "Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

I believe this 1000-year rest for the Christian will occur at the end of 6000 years of labor on the earth. In fact, I believe we are very near that time now. It has been just about 6000 years since Adam and Eve. God set everything up on this earth for 6 days of work and one day of rest.

It really does not matter whether that day is 24 hours long or 1000 years long. God does not measure time the same way we do. With Him 1000 years can be a day.

2 Peter 3:8 "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day [is] with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Verses 12-13: The second warning (see verse 7), begins here and is addressed to “brethren,” professing believers, lest any have unbelief in his heart and thus depart from God. This

“departing” (Greek apostenai), is the source of our word apostasy, which is a deliberate departure from God’s full revelation.

These Hebrew brethren were being tempted by an “evil heart of unbelief” to return to Judaism. To do so meant they would have to reject the fuller revelation they had received in Christianity and return to the incomplete revelation of Judaism. Thus, they are admonished to “Exhort one another daily”, with the truths that will strengthen their faith in Christ, such as the truths contained in this epistle.

Hebrews 3:12 "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

“Brethren”: This admonition is addressed to those having the same potential characteristics as the generation which perished in the wilderness without ever seeing the Land of Promise. They were unbelieving Jewish brethren who were in the company of the “holy brethren” (verse 1). They were admonished to believe and be saved before it was too late.

An evil heart of unbelief”: All men are born with such a heart (Jer. 17:9). In the case of these Hebrews, that evil manifested itself in disbelief of the gospel which moved them in the opposite way from God.

Mark 7:21-23 "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders." "Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:" "All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

We are born in sin, and all our life long, the lust of the flesh tries to draw us away from God. When we become a Christian, we become a new creature in Christ. The desire of our heart should be to please God. We may sin sometime or other and quickly repent, but it must not be the desire of our heart to sin. We must not have a sinful way of life.

Hebrews 3:13 "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

“Exhort one another daily”: Both individual accountability and corporate responsibility are intended in this admonition. As long as the distressing days were upon them and they were tempted to return to the ineffective Levitical system, they were to encourage one another to identify completely with Jesus Christ.

“Hardened”: Repeated rejection of the gospel concerning Jesus results in a progressive hardening of the heart and will ultimately result in outright antagonism to the gospel (6:4-6; 10:26-29; Acts 19:9).

“Deceitfulness of sin”: Sin lies and deceives, using every trickery and stratagem possible (Rom. 7:11; 2 Thess. 2:10; James 1:14-16). The Hebrews deceived themselves with the reasoning that their rejection of Jesus Christ was being faithful to the older system.

Their willingness to hang on to the Levitical system was really a rejection of the living Word (4:12), of the “living God” (verse 12), who through Christ had opened up a “new and living way” (10:20). Choosing the path of unbelief always leads only to death (verse 17; 10:26-29; 2:14-15; Jude 5).

2 Timothy 4:2 "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

John 9:4 "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

We are warned over and over in the Bible to make use of today, because we have no idea whether there will even be a tomorrow or not. Do not put off salvation, this might be your last opportunity. When Jesus returns, we are to be working trying to get one more into the kingdom.

Hebrews 3:14 "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;"

The exhortation is similar to (verse 6), as it repeats the theme of perseverance.

One's conversion to Christ, which occurred in days' past (“we are made partakers of Christ”), is proved to have been genuine by perseverance in the days to come (“if we hold ... our confidence stedfast unto the end”). This means that continuance in the faith is to test of the reality of one's faith in Christ.

Jesus' salvation is offered to everyone, but only those who take it, have it. Notice from this verse above, that we are not only to receive it, but to hold fast to it. This is what I call walking in the salvation the Lord has given us. It really is a daily struggle. Even Paul, said that at times his flesh got in the way.

Romans 7:19-20 "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."
"Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

This does not mean that Paul was a sinful man; it just means that once in a while his flesh (for a moment), would overcome his spirit. Paul lived as good as anyone could. He said, at the end that he had run the good race and had a crown of glory awaiting him. Paul had no desire in his heart to sin.

If we are a Christian, that should be the way we live, too. We should, all the time, desire to live a pleasing life to God.

Galatians 3:27 "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Christ is in us and we are in Him, if we are Christians. We are grafted in to the Tree of Life which is Jesus Christ our Lord.

Verses 15-19: The quotation from (Psalm 95:7-8), is repeated (verse 7). The first quotation was followed with exposition emphasizing "today" and the urgency that word conveys. This second quotation is followed with exposition emphasizing rebellion (verses 15-16), and presenting the theme of obedience by means of its antithesis, disobedience.

Four different terms are employed to drive the point of rebellion home: "provoked" (verse 16), "sinned" (verse 17), "disobedient" (verse 18), and "unbelief" (verse 19). This initial third of the writer's exposition of (Psalm 95:7-11), is summed up by the obvious conclusion that the Israelites who died in the wilderness were victims of their own unbelief (verse 19).

Hebrews 3:15 "While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."

Galatians 3:11 "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, [it is] evident: for, The just shall live by faith."

Provocation in this particular passage means irritation. Do not get irritated with God. Many times, when someone very close to you dies, you first get irritated at the one who died, and then wind up getting irritated with God about the death. For the natural man, this is a normal thing to do.

This is not a good thing for a Christian to do. God loves us and has our best interest at heart. He did not take your loved one to get even with you. Don't turn against God when you need Him the most. He is our Comfort. If there is ever a time to be irritated with anyone, we should be irritated with our own shortcomings.

Hebrews 3:16-17 "For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses." "But with whom was he grieved forty years? [was it] not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?"

We should learn a lesson from these Israelites. Every time a little hardship arose they blamed God. They angered God many times during the forty years they travelled through the wilderness.

The trip could have easily been made in less than 6 months, but they sinned over and over and God caused them to wander until all of those who had doubted that they could take the land had died off.

God forgave them over and over, just like He does us, but there was a day of reckoning and there will be one for us too. Someday, God will say that is enough. God is a forgiving God, but He is also a God of Judgment.

1 Corinthians 10:1-11 "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;" "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" "And did all eat the same spiritual meat;" "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." "But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness." "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." "Neither be ye idolaters, as [were] some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand." "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer." "Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

We see a strong warning in this that we are forewarned. These examples of how they failed should help us not make these same mistakes. Look now at the hope in Jesus.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God [is] faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear [it]."

God will help us, if we will let Him. Stay in the will of the Lord and you cannot fail.

Hebrews 3:18 "And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?"

The ticket into heaven, is faith in Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 11:6 "But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Hebrews 3:19 "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."

Mark 16:16 "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

This is just about as clear as it could be made, those who do not have faith in Jesus Christ will wind up in hell. To be saved, we must believe in our heart and confess with our mouth. One more time I will give my favorite Scripture on this.

Romans 10:9 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Live for God. Live your faith in Jesus Christ every day. Be a separated people for Christ.

Hebrews Chapter 3 Continued Questions

1. What did God swear in His wrath about these unbelievers?
2. What do many people call the Sabbath of rest for the Christians?
3. Blessed and holy is he that takes part in what?
4. How many years has it been since the time of Adam and Eve?
5. One day with God can be as a _____ years.
6. In Hebrews 3:12, what is the one word that makes the heart evil?
7. Where do evil thoughts originate?
8. What defiles the man?
9. When we are born again, what happens to us?
10. What is God going to judge?
11. How often are we to exhort one another?
12. How does our heart get hardened?
13. In 2 Timothy 3:13 we are instructed to do what?
14. The night cometh when no man can _____.
15. What are we to be doing when the Lord comes back?
16. Jesus' salvation is offered to whom?
17. What must we do to have it?
18. As many of you as have been baptized, have done what?
19. What are we warned not to do in Hebrews chapter 3 verse 15?
20. The just shall live by _____.
21. If we are to be irritated with someone, who should it be?
22. Who was God grieved with forty years?
23. God is a forgiving God, but He is also a God of _____.
24. How were the Israelites baptized on the way to the Promised Land?
25. Who was the spiritual Rock?
26. How many who had committed fornication died in one day?
27. Why did these things happen to these Israelites?
28. When temptation of great magnitude comes, what will God do for us?
29. Who will not enter His rest?
30. What is the ticket into heaven?
31. So, we see that they could not enter in, because of _____.
32. He that believeth not shall be _____.