

HEBREWS — PART 2

AIMING FOR A BETTER REST

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Last week we started reviewing the Book of Hebrews.

There is a dispute over the identity of the author. Though Paul is a popular “choice”.

The text doesn’t clearly state the “readership/audience” — though ancient manuscripts were always “headed” as “To The Hebrews” — thought to be Jewish converts.

They were possibly tempted to go back to their Jewish ways — they had “cold feet”?

A KEY WORD FOR THE THEME OF THE BOOK IS: BETTER.
In every respect the Christian Way is better than the former!

Chapter 1 tells us of a BETTER MESSENGER.

It explains how **God Himself is speaking to us** in these latter days **by a BETTER MESSENGER — HIS SON** — the actual Creator of all.

Hebrews 1:1-2

1 **God**, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,
2 **has in these last days spoken to us by His Son**, **whom He has appointed heir of all things**, **through whom also He made the worlds**;

Hebrews 1:5

5 For to which of the angels did He ever say:
“You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You”?
And again:

**“I will be to Him a Father,
And He shall be to Me a Son”?**

Hebrews 1:13

13 But to which of the angels has **He** ever said:
**“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”?**

**JESUS IS NOW EXALTED TO THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY AT GOD’S
RIGHT HAND.**

**In view of the status of The Messenger — WE HAD BETTER PAY
HEED!**

CHAPTER 2 — A BETTER MAN!

Hebrews 2:1-4

1 **Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the
things we have heard, lest we drift away.** (Which you tend to do
casually)

2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,

3 **how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,**
which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was
confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

4 **God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders,
with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit,** according
to His own will?

2 MAJOR WARNINGS!

Hebrews 2:10-11

10 **For it was fitting for Him,** for whom are all things and by whom are all things, **in bringing many sons to glory,** to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, **for which reason He is not ashamed to call them
brethren,** (His siblings — His brothers and sisters — FAMILY!)

GOD IS BRINGING MANY SONS TO GLORY—RIGHT NOW! JESUS ACKNOWLEDGES US AS BRETHREN.

Hebrews 2:17-18

17 Therefore, in all things **He had to be made like His brethren**, **that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God**, **to make propitiation for the sins of the people**.

18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, **He is able to aid those who are tempted**. (A great Pioneer!)

JESUS IS OUR FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST — HE IS THERE TO HELP US!

CHAPTER 3 — A BETTER HOUSE (OR BETTER HOME)

Hebrews 3:1-2

1 Therefore, **holy brethren**, partakers of the heavenly calling, **consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus**,

2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house.

Jesus was “sent” — so is an “Apostle” and “High Priest” — mentioned 10 times in Hebrews (and only in Hebrews).

CONSIDER — FIX YOUR MIND ON — FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION ON THIS BETTER MESSENGER — A BETTER MAN — AN APOSTLE — A BROTHER.

Moses was a great leader and prophet. **JESUS IS BETTER!**

Hebrews 3:3-6

3 **For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses**, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.

4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.
5 And **Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant**,
for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward,
6 **but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are**
if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope
firm to the end.

Moses helped to build The House of Israel — the Old Testament House of God. **JESUS IS BUILDING A BETTER HOUSE —GOD'S MANY SONS ... COMING TO GLORY.**

Ephesians 2:19-22

19 Now, therefore, **you are** no longer strangers and foreigners, but **fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God**,
20 **having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,**
Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,
21 **in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,**
22 **in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.**

There is a new building project underway. **Jesus is a Master Craftsman — A BETTER BUILDER — of the new House of God!**

Hebrews 3:7-11

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: *(in Psalm 95)*
“Today, if you will hear His voice,
8 **Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,** *(in Meribah)*
In the day of trial in the wilderness,
9 Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me,
And saw My works forty years.
10 Therefore I was angry with that generation,
And said, ‘They always go astray in their heart,
And they have not known My ways.’
11 **So I swore in My wrath,**
‘They shall not enter My rest.’ ” *(Greek: “KATAPAUSIS”)*

“Today”. It’s always “TODAY”! Now!

The “House” of Israel were rebellious against Moses. We’d better not be rebellious against Jesus!

Ancient Israel endlessly provoked God. **They paid the penalty — did not enter God’s “Rest”.** (Greek: “KATAPAUSIS” — their settled rest in the Promised Land).

It might be a lesson for Jewish Christians who are getting cold feet? Or us —if we allow ourselves to drift away.

Hebrews 3:12-13

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

13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called “**Today,**” **lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.**

BEWARE BRETHREN. LEST YOU. So ... the warning is applicable to Christians.

Sin is deceitful. We may think that we can be casual — only sinning “now and then” — and can stop any time? “It’s not serious sin — it’s just my personality”?

Hebrews 3:14-19

14 For we have become partakers of Christ **if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,**

15 while it is said:

“Today, if you will hear His voice,

Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

16 For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? (**Except Joshua and Caleb**)

17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?

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

**WE MUSTN'T HARDEN OUR HEARTS! BE STIFF-NECKED.
OBSTINATE! WE HAVE TO BE HUMBLE!**

We must stick with our calling. “He that shall endure unto the end ...”

**God's “Rest” then (KATAPAUSIS) was the Promised Land.
Abundance ... peace ... The Good Life”.**

Its ultimate fulfillment — the Wonderful World Tomorrow in The Millennium.

A key problem was unbelief. They did not trust God — and wouldn't obey (Greek is APEITHEO — not persuaded).

CHAPTER 4 — A BETTER REST!

The English word “Rest” appears 9 times in Hebrews Chapter 4. But some “jiggery-pokery” is going on with the translation .

8 times it's KATAPAUSIS — Ancient Israel's Rest in The Promised Land — or Believers Rest in The Millennium.

But let's examine Hebrew 4:9 first.

Hebrews 4:9

9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.

The Greek here in this verse is: “SABBATISMOS” —NOT KATAPAUSIS.

This is not a fair translation? Bias?

Translators don't really want to find a New Testament command to keep the Sabbath Day. But that's exactly what we've got!

“SABBATISMOS” only appears once in the New Testament. But it has been found at least 5 times in other Christian writings.

The Anchor Bible Dictionary — Volume 5 commenting on Hebrews 4:9: “The words “Sabbath Rest” translate the Greek noun

Sabbatismos, a unique word in the New Testament. This term also appears in Plutarch for Sabbath Observance and in 4 post-canonical Christian writings ... for the Seventh-Day “Sabbath Celebration”.

So ... history shows it means Sabbath Observance or Sabbath Celebration.

Translating Hebrews 4:9 as “there remains a Rest for the people of God” is deliberately hiding The Truth.

Some modern translations are a bit better.

ESV & NIV: “There remains a Sabbath Rest for the people of God”.

LAMSA: “It is therefore the duty of the people of God to keep The Sabbath”.

Understanding Hebrews 4:9 helps in understanding the chapter (A BETTER REST).

Though we have **A BETTER MESSENGER — A BETTER HOUSE — A BETTER WAY — A BETTER PRIEST** ... not everything is over and finished. **The 7th Sabbath remains for the people of God.**

Hebrews 4:1-3

1 Therefore, **since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.**

2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but **the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.**

3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said:

“So I swore in My wrath,

‘They shall not enter My rest,’ ”

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

A Promise of Eternal Rest remains. But we need faith.

Hebrews 4:4-10

4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way:

“And **God rested on the seventh day from all His works**”;

5 and again in this place: “They shall not enter My rest.”

6 **Since therefore it remains that some must enter it**, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience,

7 again He designates a certain day, saying in David, “**Today**,” after such a long time, as it has been said:

“**Today, if you will hear His voice,**

Do not harden your hearts.”

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

9 **There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.**

10 **For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.**

By keeping the Sabbath-Day Rest (as God did originally — verse 4) ... we are “acting out” the ultimate Rest in The Millennium. As believers we can look forward to this!

Hebrews 4:11

11 **Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest**, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

BE DILIGENT TO ENTER THAT FUTURE REST!

Hebrews 4:12-13

12 **For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword**, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, **and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**

13 And **there is no creature hidden from His sight**, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

God’s Word is LIVING AND POWERFUL (context may be referring back to Psalm 95 ... where “The Holy Spirit said” — but undoubtedly true more generally).

THERE IS NO HIDING FROM GOD! GOD SEES IT ALL!! But that needn't make us uncomfortable — because of our Great High Priest.

Hebrews 4:14-16

14 **Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.** (DON'T GIVE UP!!)

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathise with our weaknesses, **but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.** (JESUS CHRIST CAN SYMPATHISE WITH OUR WEAKNESSES!)

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

Our High Priest is fully understanding. He's still got the tee shirt!

SO COME TO THE PLACE OF GRACE FOR HELP IN TIME OF NEED. COME TO THE THRONE —BOLDLY!

And we need a better understanding of what Jesus' role as our Great High Priest entails. Future chapters add much detail.