

Believe and Then Rest

This study is the second one in a series that deals with a warning that is given to everyone. The first study in this warning section, Hebrews 3:16-19, was titled, "You are Partakers if You Hold Fast." In that study everyone was challenged as to whether or not they were Christians. Maybe you are wondering if you are a Christian? Maybe you are hoping you are a Christian and that you will go to heaven. Maybe you have not yet asked Christ to save you from your sins, or maybe you have rejected Jesus. Whoever you are, this second study is for you. Regardless of who you are, you have been blessed by God. God has provided for each one of us. It doesn't matter who you are. God has blessed you. That is the message of scripture.

THE UNBELIEVING ISRAELITES.

We discovered in our study of the book of Acts that God blesses us. He provides seasons. He provides our food. He provides all that we need. He takes care of us. We have discovered that the Israelites were blessed by God as well. God blessed

them in many different ways. He protected them, guided them, and cared for them. God did a lot of different things for these folks. What is amazing is that every time a difficult moment came, God provided for them. When they needed water, food, felt lonely, discouraged, or were fearful, God helped. Every time a difficult trial occurred, they complained against God.

We cannot help but remember how we have reacted on occasions. As we go through life, God provides for us. But invariably when the more difficult moments occur in our

life, we get upset or angry with God because He did not make life nice, easy, and comfortable for us. We want everything really nice. We want a life free of trials and difficulties. We are like spoiled children. Little children get upset if they are served spinach instead of ice cream. Little children would prefer ice cream for every meal!

The Israelites were not any different. They sinned again and again. They got angry and disobeyed God. In Numbers 14:22 we are told that they complained against God. They did this ten major times (see the last study). Each time they rebelled against God, and each time their hearts grew colder. Each time they grew more distant from God, and their faith in God diminished.



We are told in Hebrews 3:12-13 that their unbelieving hearts were hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Their sin was unbelief. In verse 13 we saw that God was dealing with the Israelites from the time that they left the land of Egypt until they reached the promised land.

Ten major times they sinned against God. Ten major times they struggled in their relationship with God, and the tenth time was the worst time.

GOD'S PROMISE OF REST. On one occasion they were ready to go into the promised land. They were right at the border and getting ready to go into the promised land. It was the land where they would finally rest from their wanderings, but then something bad happened.

Let's listen in on a conversation between Moses and God in Exodus 33:14. Moses is on Mt. Sinai and he is talking

with God.

And He said, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest." Exodus 33:14 (NASB)

God is speaking. God is talking to Moses. In verse 15 Moses speaks,

Then he said to Him, "If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here." Exodus 33:15 (NASB)

God makes two important statements in this verse. First, "My presence is going to be with you, and then I am going to give you rest." At first that does not seem to be terribly significant. But when we look at another passage, we will start to understand the importance of verse 15.

In Deuteronomy 12:8 Moses tells the Israelites,

You shall not do at all what we are doing here today, every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes; for you have not as yet come to the resting place and the inheritance which the Lord your God is giving you. When you cross the Jordan and live in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around you so that you live in security, then it shall come about that the place in which the Lord your God will choose for His name to dwell . . . Deuteronomy 12:8-11 (NASB)

In verse 10 Moses quotes God who says that when Israel crosses the Jordan River and goes into the promised land, He is going to give them rest - R-E-S-T. Notice, God promised to give them rest!

In Joshua 1:13, Joshua urges the Israelites to . . .

Remember the word which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, "The Lord your God gives you rest and will give you this land." Joshua 1:13 (NASB)

What we have discovered in these three passages is that when the Israelites entered the promised land, God was going to give them rest. They would have rest from their enemies, rest

from their weariness and rest from their journey. The promised land was intended to be a place of rest.

REST DENIED DUE TO UNBELIEF. In Deuteronomy 12:8, we are told the Israelites were about to enter Canaan, the place of their rest. Twelve spies went and checked out the land, returned, and ten of the spies reported, "Oh it is a really great place, a wonderful place, but we are going to get killed if we go there."

Then what did they do? They looked at their circumstances and thought back to the past. Most likely, they remembered their disappointments with God. In their selfishness they trusted themselves. In the past they felt that God had not provided exactly what they were hoping for. Now their hard, unbelieving hearts did not think about God. It appeared to them to be a logical decision. Therefore, they acted as if they were on their own. As a result of unbelief, they were afraid to enter the Promised Land and they were not able to go into the Promised Land. Moses records that God forced them to wander for forty years before the nation of Israel could enter the land, and the unbelieving generation died in the wilderness. They never entered the land.

It is sad that as a result of repeated trials they struggled in their relationship with God. Their unbelief in God was a sin, and that sin kept pulling them farther away from God.

In James 1:2 we read,

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:2-3 (NASB)

Do you know what happened when the Israelites had a trial? They were like us. When we have a trial, we can react in one of two ways. We can either trust God in the trial, or we can complain, get bitter and sin like they did. There are only two ways you can respond to a trial. Either you complain or you take joy and rejoice in the trial. The other option is to pull farther away from God.

We either draw closer or pull farther away. Those are the only two choices. The purpose of a trial is to bring you closer to God and not to draw you farther away. That is what hap-

pened to these folks. While it appears these folks made a logical decision, that is only because they had drawn farther away from God. They were actually guilty of unbelief. They were not trusting God, and they made a bad decision.

In Hebrews 3:19 we have discovered that the Israelites were not able to enter the Promised Land because of their unbelief.

So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief. Hebrews 3:19 (NASB)

They were not able to go into the Promised Land because they did not believe God. That was horrible. They made a bad decision and so they ended up wandering in the wilderness for forty years before they arrived.

APPLICATION OF ISRAEL'S UNBELIEF.

Our study starts with Hebrews 4:1. This is the beginning of the second part of the warning.

The first part of the warning was an illustration about Israel. God used the Israelites as an example to prepare us for the second part of this warning which is directed to us. It was directed to those who were reading the letter of Hebrews and it is also directed to us today.

Let's see God's message for us.

Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. Hebrews

4:1 (NASB)

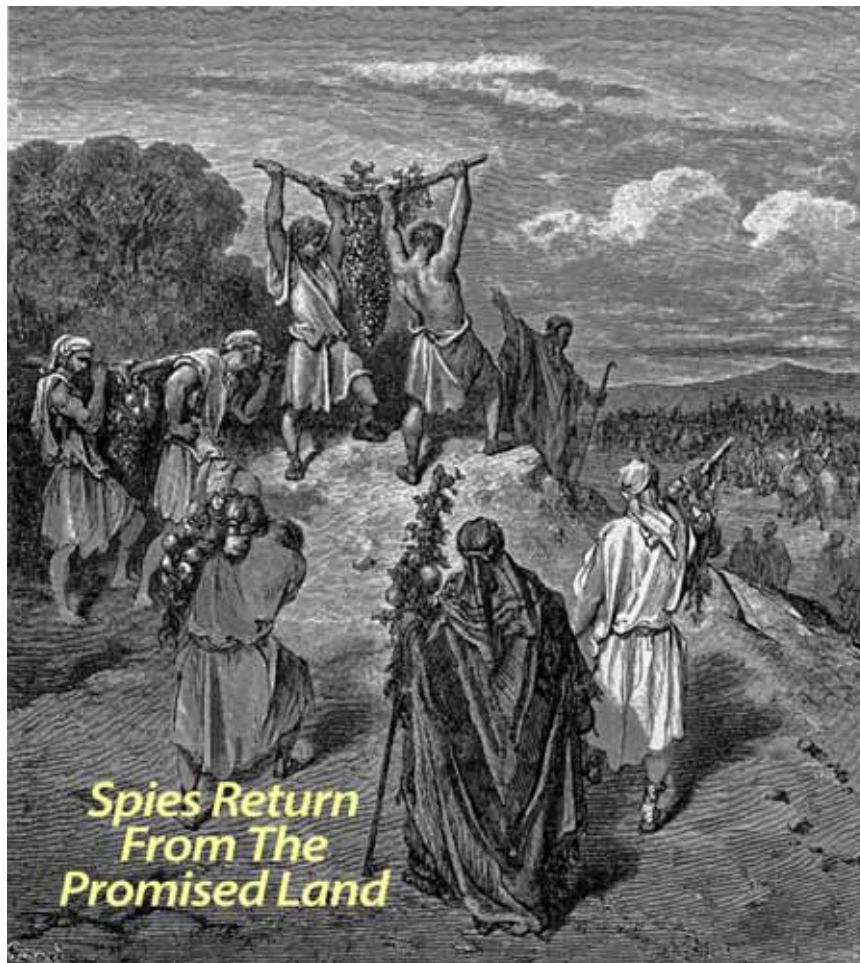
The author of Hebrews encourages us to be fearful. He has already told us about the Israelites who were fearful of entering the land due to unbelief. Now we are warned, "Let us be fearful." We are to be in a state of fear also so that while a promise remains, we do not fail to enter rest too! We need to be concerned that we might not enter "His rest." Notice

what the author of Hebrews is talking about. He is not talking about rest in the Promised Land. He is talking about a different kind of rest - "His rest." Now you might say, "What does he mean by rest? What is he talking about?"

Verse 2 starts to answer the question.

For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Hebrews 4:2 (NASB)



He says, "We have had good news preached to us." The good news is the gospel of Jesus Christ. We saw earlier in Hebrews 3:14 that he was talking about Christ. His topic is Christ. In fact, chapter 3 is about Moses and Christ and the latter part of chapter 3 is all about Christ. Therefore, when he talks about good news, there's good news about who Jesus Christ is.

In 1 Corinthians 15 we are told what the good news is.

Here is verse 1,

Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel . . . 1 Corinthians 15:1a (NASB)

The gospel means good news,

. . . which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:1b-2 (NASB)

Then he goes on to talk about how Jesus died and rose on the third day. That is good news.

He says in Hebrews 4:2, "We have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word that they heard did not profit them." They heard about a promised land that was great. They heard about a promised land that was flowing with milk and honey. The land provided abundant food and water and provisions. It would take care of them. They had great news and we have had great news. Then he says, "For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word that they heard did not profit them because it was not united by faith."

CALL TO ENTER INTO HIS REST. The implication is that we have a problem believing. The message is that faith responds to the good news given by God and then one can enter into His rest. Now you might ask, "What does He mean by His rest?" Verse 3 gives us more insight.

For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "As I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter My rest, Although His works were finished from the foundation of the world." Hebrews 4:3 (NASB)

The verse contrasts the opening statement to the middle of the verse which quotes Psalm 95:11. At first we are told that those who believe enter His rest and that is contrasted to Israel's absence of faith in God. Faith is the key. By faith one

enters into rest. When faith does not exist, one cannot enter into rest.

Now what does the author of Hebrews mean by "although His works were finished from the foundation of the world"? First, He is saying that the Father had already finished His work and then He rested. If one has already finished his/her work, then he/she rests, right? When you and I have a task and then we finish the task, what do we do? We usually rest.

The author of Hebrews is saying that God had already rested in the past from His work, which included His plan and preparation for the believer's eternal rest in heaven. In other words, we have an opportunity to enter into His rest just as the Israelites had an opportunity to rest in the Promised Land; but they did not get that rest. They did not rest in the Promised Land. Why did they not get there? They did not get there because of unbelief. The point is that unbelief will keep us from eternal rest or eternal life.

Verse 4 helps us understand verse 3. In verse 3, the author left his readers hanging and verse 4 will help us.

For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS" . . . Hebrews 4:4 (NASB)

He just quoted Genesis 2:2.

. . .and again in this passage, "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST." Hebrews 4:5 (NASB)

You may ask, "Why does he repeat Psalm 95:11 again in verse 5?" It is important to realize that this entire passage is about rest. The emphasis is rest. The Israelites had the opportunity to enter the Promised Land which was their rest. In contrast, God is talking to us about "His rest" or "My rest" and there is an opportunity for us to enter "His rest." The author of Hebrews is playing off the theme of rest. The Israelites had an opportunity to enter a rest, their rest, but not "His rest." Their rest was not God's rest. It was not "My rest." They did not get into "My rest." The Israelites had an opportunity to enter into rest (Joshua 1:13). The author does not say they entered into "His rest," God's rest, or "My

rest" because the opportunity for rest that they had was the Promised Land.

GOD IS SPEAKING TO US. Now I would like to just pick on a little word in verse 4. Notice the word "somewhere." The first time I read that word I thought, "Wait a minute. Is he saying that he did not know where this verse was in the Old Testament? Did he really not know the Old Testament scriptures and so he just said, "Well somewhere I remember this . . . ?"

Stop and look at this passage. Here we will find that the author does not tell us who the prophet of old was who wrote these Old Testament passages, except one time. Look at Hebrews 1:5 which says,

For to which of the angels did he ever say . . . Hebrews 1:5 (NASB)

. . . and then he quotes an Old Testament passage of scripture. Then he says, "And again," and he quotes a passage.

Then in verse 6,

And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, . . . Hebrews 1:6 (NASB)

Once again he quotes a passage but does not tell us who the author is. In Hebrews 1:13,

But to which of the angels has He ever said . . . Hebrews 1:13 (NASB)

. . . and he does not tell us who wrote the verse in the Old Testament. Or how about chapter 2, verse 6,

But one has testified somewhere, saying . . . Hebrews 2:6 (NASB)

. . . and he just quotes the scripture passage and does not tell us who wrote it. In Hebrews 2:12 he says, "Saying..." and then quotes a passage. Then in Hebrews 2:13 the author quotes another passage and just continues this way all the way through the book of Hebrews. He does not tell us who the authors of these Old Testament passages are, except for

one time.

Now notice what happens in verse 7,

Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE . . ." Hebrews 4:7a (NASB)

The whole point is that God is speaking. God speaks through David.

. . . after so long a time just as has been said before, TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS." Hebrews 4:7b (NASB)

. . . and he quotes another passage. He does not tell us who the authors of the Old Testament passages are in the book of Hebrews except for one time, and that is here in verse 7. We have to ask the question why? I believe the author wants us to understand that God is the one who is speaking to us throughout this book. 2 Peter 1:20-21 teaches that every book of the Bible has two authors: the Holy Spirit plus a human author. There are two authors of every book in the Bible. But here in Hebrews the human authors are normally ignored because we are to understand that the message is from God. The point is, the Holy Spirit wants us to know that God is the one speaking. God is talking to us. That is what He is trying to tell us.

THE MEANING OF "GOD RESTED." Now return to verse 4,

For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS" . . . Hebrews 4:4 (NASB)

But what does it mean that God rested? You ask the question, "Did God not rest? Doesn't scripture say that on the seventh day God rested from all of His works?" The answer is, "Yes!" Now may I ask an important question? Does this mean God is not doing anything anymore? Does this mean

He just quit? He is resting? He has His feet up, figuratively speaking, on some sofa, has lain back and is reading some book or doing something like that?

Look with me at John 5:17, a great passage. Jesus is talking and says,

But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working." John 5:17 (NASB)

Do you know what Jesus just said? He said that God the Father is working! God the Father is not resting! He is doing things! God the Father is working! Now you say, why did God rest then in the Old Testament? Does that mean He got tired? No! Isaiah 40:28 tells us that God neither slumbers nor sleeps.

God does not get tired. So we have to ask the question, "Why is the Holy Spirit telling us that God rested on the seventh day?" In what sense did God rest? God rested from His decrees and creative acts. That is the message. God made the world. God made the universe. God made the heavens. God made angels. God made man. God made everything that is on the earth and then finally God rested.

But God did not quit. God is still working, Jesus says, God did not need the rest. What He is saying is that God rested from His creative acts - from His decrees. The plan of salvation was part of the creative decrees. God planned it all out. You say, did He really do that? Yes, He sure did. In fact, God planned heaven. He did that all in the past.

How do we know that? Look at Matthew 25:31. Jesus is talking,

But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you

clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me." Then the righteous will answer Him, "Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink?" Matthew 25:31-37 (NASB)

Jesus has just said that the kingdom has been prepared from the foundation of the world in time past. When God rested, He had finished planning the kingdom. He planned everything, including heaven too, because when the judgment is over, some people will go into the eternal heaven and some do not go into heaven.

Look at verse 46,

These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. Matthew 25:46 (NASB)

Jesus is talking about judgment. Here we discover some go into eternal life and on into heaven. That is what happens to those of us who are Christians. Do you see that it is all planned before the foundation of the world? When God rested, He rested from all of His creative acts and decrees.

Remember in John 14:2 Jesus says that in my Father's house there are many "rooms"? Heaven has already been planned. When God rested, He rested from the decrees related to the plan of salvation. "His rest" or "My rest" had already occurred and so all that is left is for us to enter into "His rest."

It is important that we are also told it is "My rest." This implies that He will be there too! It reveals where He is going to be. I often make the comment that I am looking forward to the day when I can be with Him and see Him face-to-face. You know what that means for us? We are going to be with Him in His rest. It is His rest and it is going to be our rest too!

SEEKING REST ACCORDING TO OUR PLANS. Now verse 6,

Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience . . . Hebrews 4:6 (NASB)

The author now repeats the key parts of verses one and two. In verse 1 he had urged us to be fearful lest we do not enter into rest. Those who have heard the gospel about Christ have heard the good news. In verse 2 we were told that the Israelites who heard good news failed to enter because of disobedience. They were not able to get there because of unbelief.

In Numbers 14:39-40 we are told,

When Moses spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, the people mourned greatly. In the morning, however, they rose up early and went up to the ridge of the hill country, saying, "Here we are; we have indeed sinned, but we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised." Numbers 14:39-40 (NASB)

These folks were unbelieving and when they were told that they were not going into the Promised Land, they mourned. All of a sudden they had a change of heart and decided that they would go up to the hill country after all. They said, "We are ready to go."

Now watch verses 41-42.

But Moses said, "Why then are you transgressing the commandment of the LORD, when it will not succeed? Do not go up, or you will be struck down before your enemies, for the LORD is not among you. Numbers 14:41-42 (NASB)

These folks were fickle. One time they are not going to trust God and then all of a sudden when they discovered that God would not let them enter the Promised Land, they flipped and said we are ready to go. Then Moses said that they would be defeated if they tried to enter the land. They were not going to be successful.

That is exactly what happened. They were defeated in their attempt to enter the Promised Land. They were disobedient and unbelieving people. Both go together. They had good news preached to them, but they failed to enter - not only because of a lack of faith but also due to disobedience.

Next, verse 7,

He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS." Hebrews 4:7 (NASB)

The emphasis of this verse is time -- today. Today is the day.

Today is the opportunity, and the author quotes Psalm 95:7-8, "Did you know that today is the day?" He is writing to the readers and today we are reading it. Today is the day! Today is the day of salvation, and we are encouraged not to harden our hearts. The Israelites had hardened their hearts. Due to unbelief, they missed their opportunity to enter their rest. We have an opportunity to enter His rest. Today is the day to decide. Today is the day to respond.

HOW TO OBTAIN THE TRUE REST. The author now



jumps ahead to the time when the remaining Israelites actually entered the Promised Land. Verse 8,

For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. Hebrews 4:8 (NASB)

This is a great statement. Remember the unbelieving Israelites who did not get into the Promised Land? Those who did not enter were everyone twenty years and older. They wandered for forty years in the wilderness and all died. Once the unbelieving Israelites finally died, the rest of the Israelites were allowed to go into the Promised Land. Who was able to go into the Promised Land? The ones who had been less than twenty years of age and their children. Joshua led them into the Promised Land.

Verse 8 says, "For if Joshua had given them rest..." Who is them? Those whom Joshua led into the Promised Land. There were many who died in the wilderness, and verse 8 is talking about those who did get into the Promised Land.

Now watch this: Some people did not enter their rest. Some people actually made it. They got into their rest. Then verse 8 says, "For if Joshua had given them rest..." The implication is that they really did not get the real rest. They entered into a human rest, a physical, worldly rest, but they did not get a real rest. "He would not have spoken of another day after that" if Joshua had given them the real rest. He is saying that Joshua did not give them the real rest.

There is another rest. Verse 9,

So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. Hebrews 4:9 (NASB)

The point is there is yet a rest in the future for those who believe in Christ. There is an ultimate rest. There is a true, lasting rest, and it is for the people of God.

Colossians 2:16-17 says,

Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day -- things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. Colossians 2:16 (NASB)

Here we are told that the Sabbath was not the real thing. It is a shadow of something to come. The Sabbath is a shadow of "His rest," "My rest," the real rest, the ultimate rest and how do we get there? We get there by faith.

THE BENEFIT OF HIS REST. Let's read verse 10.

For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Hebrews 4:10 (NASB)

What has he been talking about? Here is a summary. The Israelites had an opportunity to enter their rest. Because of unbelief, most of them did not get there. Only a few were able to get into the rest, but it was not the final rest. The real rest is in the future. There is an opportunity for us to enter His rest because it is both present and future.

The writer says, "For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works just as God did from His." Every Christian who trusts Christ for forgiveness of sins rests from trying to be good enough to get into heaven. We rest because Christ has totally forgiven our every sin - past, present and future. We can rest in Christ. But there is also a future rest. When we finally die and leave this world and enter heaven, we are going to have real rest. It is going to be a great rest: no more sickness, no more disease, no more physical fatigue. We can forget our old bodies that just do not seem to work properly for us anymore. It is going to be a great rest. It is going to be a wonderful rest. Revelation 14:13 speaks of our future rest.

And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them." Revelation 14:13 (NASB)

CALL TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST. In verse 11 the author changes gears all of a sudden and really socks it to us.

Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience. Hebrews 4:11 (NASB)

We are urged to enter the heavenly rest that the Father has prepared for us. The author ignores the Father's sovereign role in salvation. Just as Christ did throughout His ministry, he now appeals to us to respond. He connects unbelief and disobedience. Doubting God is an act of disobedience. Do you trust God or are you guilty of disobedience? He urges us to not be like the Israelites but to believe in God, that is, in Christ.

All too often when we look at the next two verses, we get a funny idea about what they mean. Verse 12 talks about the Word of God. He is not really trying to give us a tutorial on the Word of God. Instead he is using what we know about the Word of God to make a point.

What is his point? Let's look at verse 12.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Hebrews 4:12 (NASB)

The purpose of the passage is to remind us that God knows what you are thinking. God knows your heart. God knows what decisions you have made. God knows whether or not you are a believing person or an unbelieving person. God knows everything about you. You cannot hide from God. That is the primary thrust of the verse. Therefore, are you a Christian or an unbeliever? Whatever your answer, God knows the truth!

Verse 13 reminds us that we cannot hide any secrets from Him.

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Hebrews 4:13 (NASB)

The message of verses 12 and 13 is that when you come before God, God will know whether or not you really believed in Him or not. Remember how the Israelites responded when they were told they were not going to get into the Promised Land because of unbelief? They responded by saying they were going to go up to the land anyway. Moses replied, "Oh,

I warn you to not go because you are going to be defeated," but they went ahead and experienced defeat.

Unfortunately, some people try to enter His rest - heaven - in their own way. Some people try to get into the ultimate rest by their own effort. They think if they will just try hard enough, they can go up to the hill country and get in. We cannot deceive God. He knows exactly who you are, what you are, what is going through your mind, and whether you believe in Him or not.

CONCLUSION. The Israelites thought they were going to get into their rest on their own, but God said you are not going to get there because you did not believe in Me. It is amazing how faith in the Christian life can be so easily misunderstood. We are to walk by faith. Doesn't that sound familiar? The saints are to walk by faith. Faith is a part of a Christian's life. We come to Jesus by faith. Then we are to walk by faith. We are to live by faith.

In Romans 1:18-20 we read the following,

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. Romans 1:18-20 (NASB)

God is taking care of us. God revealed Himself in nature, in the world, in stars, in planets and in the way He takes care of us.

Romans 2:1 says that God also reveals Himself in another way. He says,

Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. Romans 2:1 (NASB)

Then the Holy Spirit goes on to talk about the fact that God

has put in our conscience a sense of right and wrong and that we are without excuse. God has made Himself known to us. We are without excuse.

This section in Hebrews is a warning. It has been a warning about our relationship with God. If you are a Christian, if you have really put your faith in Jesus Christ, you have a place of rest. There is a place of rest for us. A day is coming in the future when we will really get a chance to have rest. Watch it -- lasting rest! And we will rest with Him in His rest. He calls it "My rest."

If you are not a Christian and you have doubts, maybe you have second thoughts, maybe you are unsure, then read the following true life event.

A sailor and a miner lost control of the row boat they were maneuvering above a waterfall. The swift waters started hurling them to their destruction and someone from the shore flung a rope to the two as they were tossed from their

boat into the pounding current. At that same instant, a floating log shot by. The sailor grabbed the rope and hung on, but the miner saw the log and wrapped himself around it, ignoring the rope. The man grasping the log was born irresistibly along to his destruction and the other man was pulled to shore safely.

We have a choice. You can either grab onto the log or grab onto the rope. I urge you to grab onto the rope that is faith in Jesus Christ. The rope to hang onto is Jesus Christ. It is the only way to avoid destruction. It is the only way to avoid hell. It is the only way to avoid wandering aimlessly in a wilderness and then dying and never getting to heaven --- "His rest."

Today is the day of salvation - not tomorrow but today. Today is the day. Let's pray.