

HEBREWS PART 3

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9.7.16

As usual, let's start with a brief resumé of The Book of Hebrews so far. We are assuming Paul is the author.

The first week ... The theme was **BETTER** Lots of things are better than they used to be.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 1 ... **A BETTER SPOKESMAN**

HEBREWS CHAPTER 2 ... **A BETTER MAN** ... Just like us ... He came to help us. He calls us brethren ... brothers and sisters

There are **2 Major Warnings** ...

1. **We must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.**
2. **How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation**

Last week ...

HEBREWS CHAPTER 3 ... **A BETTER HOUSE/HOME** ... We are God's home/building ... with Jesus as the Corner Stone and us as the Living Stones. Assembled together for God The Father to dwell in.

Hebrews Chapter 3 introduces "Rest": Katapausis (settling down)

Israel failed to go in, initially. They rebelled in the wilderness.

The "rest" pictured The Promised Land ... Canaan ... Freedom from sickness/war/lack/rebellion/provocation. God swore they were not going into their rest.

Paul warns us not to make the same mistakes.

Major Warning #3 (of 7)

Hebrews 3:12-13(NKJV)

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.** (*Sin is deceitful. It will seem like it is no big deal. You might say ... only this once ... only a little ... I can get away with this ... I'm in control ... I can stop any time ... It's just my personality ["I was born with a temper"] Don't harden your hearts ... become obstinate! ... stubborn ... difficult to reach).*)

Hebrews 3:16-19 (NKJV)

16 For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses?
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.** (*Their lack of faith preventing them entering in. They did not enter His "Rest"*)

HEBREWS CHAPTER 4 ... BETTER REST

Promised Land ... Great Rest (if) ... There would have been Peace ... Blessings ... God as King ... That was a Type/Foreshadow of something better (Better Rest) by which we mean Millennium. When Jesus comes back as King ... Freedom from sickness ... No more Disease ... No more Politics ... War ... Deception. Great "Rest" – better rest than of old. No more tears. That's a great rest that still lies ahead of us.

Hebrews 4:1 (NKJV)

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

Hebrews 4:11 (NKJV)

11 Let us therefore be diligent (*Greek: Be eager*) to enter that rest, **lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.** (*As that lot did!*)

So we can look forward!! God is building a home ... Building a family ... sons and daughters ... that's when it becomes that much more "real". That's the millennial rest that we are looking forward to.

We have an important WEEKLY REMINDER ... WEEKLY FORESHADOW ... **THE SEVENTH DAY SABBATH.** That brings us back to Hebrews 4:9.

We have spent time on Hebrews 4:9.

Hebrews 4:9 (NKJV)

9 There remains therefore a rest (a Sabbath keeping) for the people of God.

The word "rest" in this verse is sabbatismos! ... not Katapausis. It is only used once in the New Testament. This does not mean "rest" as in the other verses of this chapter. So ... using "Rest" in Hebrews 4:9 is misleading and may be deliberate. It means: TO KEEP THE 7TH DAY SABBATH.

Sabbatismos means: SABBATH KEEPING OR SABBATH OBSERVANCE OR SABBATH CELEBRATION.

Other Translations:

Hebrews 4:9 (NIV 1984)

9 There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;

Hebrews 4:9 (NET)

9 Consequently a Sabbath rest remains for the people of God.

Hebrews 4:9 (WYCLIFFE 1384)

9 Therefore the Sabbath is left to the people of God

Hebrews 4:9 (ESV)

9 So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God,

GEORGE LAMSA'S ANCIENT ARAMAIC BIBLE

9 it is therefore the duty of the people of God to keep The Sabbath".

The plain instruction is: KEEP THE SABBATH!!

Paul has explained about a Better Messenger ... Better High Priest ... Better rest to come (soon) ... Better Sanctuary ... Better Promises ... Better Covenant ... Better Sacrifice. It goes on and on. Paul makes it very plain here. Don't make any mistake about the 7th Day Sabbath ... It still remains as an observance or celebration for the People of God. It hasn't been replaced by anything "better". The Sabbath Day remains for the people of God.

Why should it be replaced? We know that it is one of the 10 commandments ... created by God at Creation Week. On the 7th day God rested. He was refreshed and He blessed and hallowed The Sabbath day.

In Hebrews 4:1-11 we can see 3 reasons (2 clearly) for 7th Day Sabbath Keeping and why it is important to us.

From Hebrews 4:1-11 I take it that the 7th day Sabbath:

1. Pictures the future ... That millennial rest. Verses 6, 11
2. Commemorates creation ... Verses 4, 10 (by keeping it). We enter God's rest when we cease from our works. How did God enter that rest? By ceasing from His works.
3. The Sabbath pictures the spiritual rest that believers have today ... we know that we don't have to agonise, strive, worry, fret ... to get salvation. We don't have to worry about our complete inability to do everything on our own. We have a Brother ... High Priest ... A Compassionate Father ... who have done all of the hard work. The Sabbath day reminds us of our present rest in the care of The Father (and High Priest)

Hebrews 4:3-11 (Anchor Bible Dictionary) affirms that physical 'Sabbath rest' (sabbatismos) is the weekly outward manifestation of the inner experience of spiritual rest (katapausis) in which the final...rest is...experienced already 'today' (4:7). Thus 'Sabbath rest' combines in itself creation-commemoration, salvation-experience, and eschaton [end-time]-anticipation as the community of faith moves forward toward the final consummation of total restoration and rest."

Hebrews 4:12-13 (NKJV)

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.** *(We haven't got any secrets! God sees our heart. He sees that we are weak)*

So ... read God's Word ... we might feel uncomfortable? God sees my heart? God sees my inner thoughts? It might be painful. We might think we are doomed. There is a danger of copying ancient Israel. The scriptures reveal our inner man ... if anyone is considering turning back ... they are in danger of drifting away from Jesus. The Word of God has sharp and powerful warnings. We have a great future ... "Rest" ... But what about our inability to get there!

Yet immediate encouragement!

Hebrews 4:14-16 (NKJV)

14 Seeing then that **we have a great High Priest** *(only revealed in the Book of Hebrews ... 10 times Jesus is identified as our High Priest)* who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, **let us hold fast our confession.**

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot **sympathise with our weaknesses**, *(feels for)* but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. ***(We do have a High Priest who can sympathise with our weaknesses. Jesus is our big Brother ... He can look after us ... His little brothers and sisters. Jesus understands ... He has been here ... He knows what it's like)***

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.**

Despite us :)) BOLDLY means that even though you are you ... and I am me ... we are Free and can have fearless confidence ... because our High Priest has gone before us. We receive MERCY which means we don't get what we deserve. There is GRACE to help in time of

need = We Do get what we don't deserve. We can come boldly to The Throne of Grace.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 5 ... **BETTER OBEDIENCE** ... which is necessary

Paul is going to continue the theme that Jesus is our High Priest.

Hebrews 5:1-4 (NKJV)

1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.

2 He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.

3 Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins.

4 And no man takes this honour to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was.

Up until this point of time ... the High Priest was a human being. He had to offer sacrifices for himself. The physical high priests represented the people to God. He had a breastplate on with 12 coloured stones representing the tribes of Israel. But wait a moment ... this wouldn't have made sense to the Hebrews ... The high priest came from the tribe of Levi and specifically ... The House of Aaron. Whereas Jesus came from the House of Judah.

Hebrews 5:5-8 (NKJV)

5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him:

**"You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You."**

6 As He also says in another place:

"You are a priest forever

According to the order of Melchizedek"; (who is he? See Psa 110 ... Where it hints that this is Jesus)

7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,

8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

Compare: **Matthew 26:36-39 (NKJV)**

36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there."

37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and **He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.**

38 Then He said to them, "**My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.** Stay here and watch with Me."

39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "**O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.**" *(Jesus knew what was coming. He was greatly distressed. The weight of this caused tremendous mental stress)*

Luke 22:44 (NKJV)

44 **And being in agony,** He prayed more earnestly. Then **His sweat became like great drops of blood** falling down to the ground.

Hebrews 5:9-11 (NKJV)

9 And having been perfected, **He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,**

10 **called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek," (quoting Psa 110)**

11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, **since you have become dull of hearing.**

Hebrews 5:12-14 (NKJV)

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. (*"Babe" ... sleep ... selfish ... cranky ... we don't want to be babies spiritually speaking*)

14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (*Milk is good ... for a baby ... in its place and time ... but we need more to grow to maturity*)

We need to get into the Word. We need to pick up the pace. Invest time. Go deep! Practice what you learn. Remember the old saying: A plane stays in the air if it goes forward. If we stop ... we drop! As Christians ... we need to move on.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 6 ... BETTER PROMISES

Hebrews 6:1-3 (NKJV)

1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, (*maturity ... completion*) not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

3 And this we will do if God permits.

Don't stand still. Don't go back! Let's go on. Don't keep sticking with the basics.

Major Warning #4

Hebrews 6:4-8 (NKJV)

4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,
5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, (they are "on the journey")
6 *if they fall away, (it has happened ... See * below. They were enlightened. They were begotten.) to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.

7 For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God;

8 but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

*(HCSB) who have fallen away
(NET) have committed apostasy

Not just an occasional sin ... or even lapse for a week or two. This is deliberate or extreme neglect and total disinterest. Treating God's Word and Jesus' sacrifice as of little importance.

Compare: Hebrews 10:26-31 (NKJV)

26 For if we sin willfully (not just now and again ... You by choice decide that you have had enough ... You willfully turn away from God) after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot,

counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people."

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

These are major warnings!!

Hebrews 6:9-12 (NKJV)

9 **But, beloved,** *(the only time it appears in the Book of Hebrews)* **we are confident of better things**

concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. *(Paul wants to encourage them again.*

The prize is so great. Being in God's Kingdom is such a great reward)

10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And **we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end,**

12 that you **do not become sluggish,** *(Same as "dull" in Heb 5:11)* **but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.** *(Don't be discouraged! Keep going! Imitate others [such as Abraham] Faith and patience ... faith and steadfastness ... we need both).*

Don't be discouraged ... God's promise is sure!

Hebrews 6:13-18 (NKJV)

13 **For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,** *(God wants us to believe promises. He goes out of His way! Even swears an oath)*

14 saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."

15 And so, after he had patiently waited, he obtained the promise.

16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. ([NASB] "an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute")

17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, (Hebrews 6:17 (AMPC) Accordingly God also, in His desire to show more convincingly and beyond doubt to those who were to inherit the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose and plan, intervened with an oath.)

18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

God wanted to convince Abraham of His promises. He wants us to believe His promises. God goes above and beyond. He knows that we have doubts. We look at our failures and other people's failures. He not only gives a promise ... on top of that ... He gives an oath. Once you take an oath ... people accept that. Well. God gave a promise ... and He swore. God is stretching out everything He has got because He wants us to believe Him.

Hebrews 6:19-20 (NKJV)

19 This hope (confident expectation ... not wishful thinking) we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, (An anchor gives us stability which is important in storms ... not blown this way and that) and which enters the Presence behind the veil, (the separation that kept us from God was now torn ... so that we can enter right before God's presence)

20 where the forerunner (scout ... gone ahead of us ... done the reconnaissance ... now others are to follow ... through the veil ... into the presence ... into the better sanctuary ... The Holy Place

in Heaven) has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.