**Entering the Rest of God—Today!**

**Hebrews 4:1–13**

**Enter the Sabbath Rest**

1 Therefore,

*while* the promise . . . *still stands,* TIME #1

of entering his **REST**

**LET US FEAR**

\ lest any of you should ***seem*** Pres Act Subj

to have failed Perf. Inf.

to reach it.

2 For TIME #2

**good news came** to us [= we have had good news preached to us, NASB] cf. Heb 2:1–4

just as to them [= Israel in the wilderness]

but the message [*logos*] . . . did not **benefit** them,

they heard Those who didn’t listen

vs.

\ because they were not **united** by faith || cf. 1 Cor 12:24

with those who listened. Those who listened

**Enter the Sabbath Rest**

11 **LET US THEREFORE STRIVE** to enter that **REST**,

\ so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

12 For the word of God *is* *living* cf. Hebrews 1

and active,

sharper than any two-edged sword,

*piercing*

to the division of soul and of spirit,

of joints and of marrow,

and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

13 And no creature **is** hidden

from his sight,

but all are naked and

. . . *exposed*

to the eyes

of him

to whom we must give account [*logos*]

**We Enter Rest Through Faith**

3 For *we who have believed* **enter** that **REST**, 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.)

4 For he has somewhere **spoken** of the seventh day in this way: TIME #3

“And God **RESTed** on the seventh day from all his works.”

5 And again in this passage he said,

“They shall not **enter** my **REST**.”

**Today is the Day of Rest**

6 Since therefore

it **remains** for some to enter it, TIME #4

and those who formerly received the good news failed

to enter

\ because of disobedience,

7 again

he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

“Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.”

**A Greater Rest**

8 For

if Joshua had given them **REST**,

God would not have spoken of another day later on. TIME #5

9 So then,

there **remains** a Sabbath **REST** for the people of God, TIME #6

10 for *whoever has entered* God’s **REST** has also **RESTed**

from his works = as God did from his.

**What is the shape of this passage?**

* **What is the word that is repeated throughout?**
* **Where do we see “Rest”?**
  + 1x = Verse 1
  + 1x = verse 11
  + 4x = verses 3–5
  + 4x = verses 8–10
  + 0x = verses 6–7
* **What’s the action related to REST**

ENTER

* + 1x = verses 1–2
  + 3x = verses 3–5
  + 1x = verses 6–7
  + 1x = verses 8–10
  + 1x = verses 11

REMAIN

* + 1x = verse 1 (still stands)
  + 0x = verses 3–5
  + 1x = verses 6–7
  + 1x = verses 8-10
  + 0x = verses 11–13

**SHAPE**

**Enter the Sabbath Rest LET US**Hebrews 4:1–2 *Logos*

**We Enter Rest thru Faith** 4x Rest  
Hebrews 4:3–5 David

**Today is the Day of Rest >> Enter the Rest Today**Hebrews 4:6–7

**A Greater Rest 4x Rest**Hebrews 4:8–10 Joshua

**Enter the Sabbath Rest LET US**Hebrews 4:11–13 *Logos*

**William Lane’s Outline (*Hebrews,* p. 66)**

Enter His Rest (v. 1)

Psalm 95:11

Enter His Rest (v. 5) 3:1 – Consider Jesus

Disobedience (v. 6)

Psalm 95:7–8 3:6 – If we hold fast

Disobedience (v. 11)

3:14 – If we hold to our confidence

Supporting Reason (vv. 12–13)

Forceful Conclusion (v. 14) 4:14 – Let Us Hold Fast

**What do we learn about REST?**

1. Rest still stands (v. 1a)
2. You can miss this rest (v. 1b) – **What is that?**
3. How you miss rest (v. 2) – **How do you miss rest? (cf. v. 6)**
4. You enter rest by faith (v. 3)

**Places of Rest in the Bible**

* Eden
* Tabernacle
* Promised Land
* Christ
* Church

1. The rest is the Lord’s (v. 3b)
2. Israel didn’t enter rest (v. 3)
3. Rest goes back to the beginning ~ entering Eden (vv. 3–5)
   1. Not a new work
   2. Connection between Redemption & Creation –

**What is the relationship?**

* 1. Enter Rest ~ Enter his place

1. Rest remains (vv. 6, 9) – cf. v. 1
2. “Today” is the day of Rest – eschatological now (v. 7)
3. Rest is a place (v. 8)
4. Sabbath rest is for the people of God – **Who is this?** (v. 10)
5. It is possible to enter rest Today
6. We enter rest by repenting of dead works (cf. Heb 6:1; 9:14)
7. Anything else? Does rest mean no works? – It means no dead works, but now living work

Rest leads to life, life leads to good work in the land (cf. Heb. 6:10; 10:24)

**Verses 1–2**

* **What does it say about the word?**
  + The promise still stands
  + The message is the good news
* **What is the command?**
  + Let Us Fear . . .
* **What is the force / feel of this passage?**
  + It is a call to learn from the past . . .
  + He is speaking to a New Covenant people

**Verses 3–5**

* **What is repeated in these verses? What does it stress?**
  + Didn’t enter rest
  + Beware not to miss the rest
* **What is author of Hebrews doing with the return to Genesis 2:4?**
  + He is explain what this rest is . . . not when it is.
  + The seventh day is not a ordinance for seventh day

**Verses 6–7**

* **If this is the center of the section, what does that say?**
  + There remains a rest to enter. . . don’t miss it!
  + Today is the Day of Salvation
* **Do you see how he’s making his argument?**
  + He’s saying that after Israel missed the Rest of God, David is still promising a coming day of Rest
  + And this sets up his return to Joshua

**Verses 8–10**

* **What is the reference to Joshua?**
  + He led Israel into the Promised Land
  + But this rest was only temporary and maybe even typological
* **What is the relationship between Joshua and Jesus?**
  + They have the same name – *Iēsous*
  + They have the same ministry – to lead people into God’s place
  + One succeeded partially, but not fully – cf. Cyrus and Jesus

**Verses 11–13**

* **What does it mean to strive to enter the rest?**
  + Faith (v. 3)
  + Repentance (v. 10)
  + Patience (6:12)
  + Endurance (10:26­–39)
* **How does this verse relate to v. 1?**
  + Negative and Positive
  + Those who fear have nothing to fear
  + The fear of life without the Lord leads us to endure in him
* **In parallel with verses 1–2, what is “the word of God”**
  + The Gospel
  + It’s not just the Bible – its the Word of the Gospel
  + **Why does that distinction matter so much?**
* **What do we learn about the gospel?**
  + Is it possible to have the Bible without the gospel? – How?
  + Why do we need the gospel?
  + Is the thought of exposure encouraging or scary?
  + What is the goal of the gospel?
    - Rest
    - Dwelling in God’s Presence

**What about the Sabbath Rest??**

Thomas Schreiner, “God-bye and Hello: The Sabbath Command for New Covenant Believers,” in *Progressive Covenantalism,* ed. Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016), 159–88.

**Four Reasons the Sabbath is Not a Creation Ordinance**

* “First, if the Sabbath were truly a creation ordinance, it should have been required for the patriarchs, but we have already seen that it was not mandates. Instead, the Sabbath was instituted when Israel was constituted as a nation, and it was not authorized for Israel until after the exodus (Exodus 16)” (168–69)
* Second, everything found in creation is not mandatory for believers today. We are not required, for instance, to cultivate the land and work as farmers; and contrary to Adam and Eve before the fall, we must wear clothes (Ge 2:25). (169)
* Third, since everything in creation is not mandatory, how do we determine if we have in the creation accounts a command that applies to today?. . . Ultimately, we consider the entire canonical witness found in the Scriptures. In doing so, we have to pay attention to the progress of revelation and the covenantal shifts that have taken place along the way. It is instructive that when it comes to marriage and divorce [Matt 19], homosexuality [Rom 1:26–28], the role of men and women in the church [1 Timothy 2:11–15], and the eating of certain foods [Acts 15], the appeals to creation come from the NT, while in the case of the Sabbath, the reference to creation is found in the OT.” (169)
* Fourth, I conclude, therefore, that the appeal to creation in Exodus 20:8–11 functions as an analogy. The writer sees an analogy between God’s resting on the seventh day and Israel’s rest every Sabbath. Seeing the reference to creation as analogous fits with the face that the NT never appeals to creation relative to the Sabbath. The Sabbath rest points back to creation rest and is consummated in our rest in Christ” (170)

**Three Reasons the Decalogue is Not Universal Law**

* “First, the Decalogue represents the covenant stipulations for Israel, and the Sabbath is the sign of the Sinai covenant.”
* “Second, some of the covenant stipulations (actually nine of the Ten Commandments) still apply today; but they are required today because they are part of the law of Christ, not because they are part of the Decalogue.”
* “Third, we see the same phenomenon elsewhere in the OT law. We all know the command to love our neighbors as ourselves still applies today (Lev 19:18), for the NT regularly cites it as authoritative (Matt 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8). The next verse, however says that animals must not be crossbred and fields should be sowed with two different kinds of seed (Lev 19:19). Virtually no one thinks the latter commands are binding today. It is not surprising to find, then, two commands right next to each other where one continues to apply and another does not. Whether particular commands continue to be normative today must be established from the entirety of the biblical canon.” (170)

**Concluding Word**

* Rest is a place – the dwelling place of God
  + In Eden, this “rest” is found in Eden
  + After Sinai, this “rest” is found in Canaan and it’s in that context, that the seventh day is dedicated to worship. When the tabernacle is a physical structure, it makes sense that the people have a Sabbatical calendar (Lev. 23)
  + In Christ, the place of God is a person. Jesus becomes the tabernacle and hence the place of rest. The Gospels speak of this in multiple places (Matthew 11–12; Hebrews 3–4)
  + In Zion, the people of God are invited to find rest in Christ. And because we *are* the household of God, we don’t need to schedule a date for Sabbath – we have access to God at all times, and whenever the people gather to hear the Word of God, they are standing in the rest God has given.
    - Not Yet: In the future, we will enter the final rest. But . . .
    - Already: We have rest by means of faith in Jesus Christ. Rest is a ceasing of works to please God.
    - Nowhere are stipulations given for a Sabbath Day – the transference of the Sabbath to the Lord’s Day is an extra-biblical construction
    - The primary application of Sabbath Rest is gathering for worship – if the place where God is found today is in his house; then the command to enter rest is a call to gather for worship!
* Enter that Rest!
  + Stop trusting in your works
  + Look to Christ and rest in him

**What is main point of this passage?**

* Let us hold fast to our confession . . . (4:14)