

THE INHERITANCE REST

Sunday Morning: July 8, 2001

Text: Hebrews 3:7-13 "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, 8. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9. When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 10. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways. 11. So I sware in my wrath, **They shall not enter into my rest.**) 12. Take heed, 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 To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Verse 12 tells who he is talking to. He is not talking to the average child of God. He is talking to those in the family of God who are seeking to enter into the kingdom the kingdom of heaven. To those who able to see the potential of ruling and reigning with Christ. This warning is to those who have this desire.

We think of a brother as one who is strong. One who has purpose, that is doing the will of the Father. Jesus defined a brother as one who is bent on doing the will of the Father, because it is those who do the will of the Father that will rule and reign with Christ. They are the ones who according to 2 Timothy 2:15 "Study [be diligent] to show [present] thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." want to be approved before God. Those who are ashamed will not lose their salvation, but they will lose the honor and glory that could have been theirs had they taken heed to the warning of Hebrews chapter three and many other passages as well.

He is talking to brethren.

I will bring this out later, but I want to emphasize this now so you can be aware of it as we go along. In Hebrews 2:17 "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God . . ." we see that we have a merciful and faithful high priest. In Hebrews 3:1 "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;" he is exhorting the *brethren* who are *holy* and *partakers* of the *heavenly calling* to consider Christ *as the Apostle and High Priest of our confession*. In Hebrews 4:14 "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession [confession]." Sandwiched between the verses about our high priest we have the exhortation to brothers to *take heed, hold fast, harden not your hearts* and to *hold stedfast to the end*. The only way that you can do all of these things is with the help of our High Priest Jesus Christ.

If you want a hard heart, stay away from the throne of grace. If you want a stiff neck avoided our High Priest. What that mean is that you are not in prayer appropriating the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ for fellowship and cleansing. You are not obtaining grace to help you when you begin to pull away for the Lord.

You can't begin to understand the book of Hebrews without appreciating the fact that this book is steeped with references and illustration from the Old Testament. It takes the Old Testament to help us to understand this book. The Old Testament is dealing with God's chosen people Israel. Their behavior and the consequences for disobedience were not fun and games. When they

were doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, they were blessed. When they did evil in the sight of the Lord, they were in trouble with their enemies.

WRITTEN FOR OUR LEARNING

Romans 15:4 "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

The things written before the book of Romans and Hebrews was the Old Testament. It was written to encourage us. To encourage us to do what? First of all to be patient or better persevere. The word comfort is not a good translation. It should be translated "exhortation". We need to be challenged and encouraged in our race for the prize. I would hate to have a tract coach, during a race, that would say "Hey, John, take a break, relax, here is a lawn chair, have a seat." We need some one to tell us to keep on. I know it hurts, but it is not time to quite. The Holy Spirit is doing that to day, but you have to be listening with a soft heart.

EXODUS TO DEUTERONOMY

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 "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; 2. And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;"

This verse is just an extension of Romans 15:4. It focuses in on the historical period of time that is covered by a good portion of the book of Hebrews.

PURPOSE

1 Corinthians 10:11 "Now all these things happened unto them **for ensamples**: and they are written **for our admonition**, upon whom the ends of the world [ages] are come."

"Now all these things happened unto them;" to whom does the word *them* refer to in this verse? "Them" is a reference to the fathers of verse one. They are the ones who began by faith to cross the Red Sea and then made shipwreck of the faith after the crossed over.

The things that happened unto them happened unto them for ensamples or types for us who live today. Types are like printers type in the old days when they set type using lead. You take the lead type and look at it is backward and the letters are pointing in a different direction. When you take the tape and stamp it in ink and place it upon paper, then it is easy to read. You take the inked type from the Old Testament and stamp it on the New Testament, you say, Ah ha, that is what that means. The Old Testament is a type to help us to understand New Testament truth.

This verse continue by saying that the Old Testament types were written for our admonition and warning, our encouragement. This encouragement is for those who are living at the end of the ages. The word *world* should be translated *ages*. How many ages are there in the Bible? There are seven millennial ages and were are living in the sixth millennium age. We are living in what the Bible calls the sixth day, or the sixth millennium. Living in the sixth day is significant. On the sixth day, in the wilderness wondering, what were the children of Israel allowed to do? They were allowed to gather a double portion of manna. Daniel referred to our day when he said that knowledge shall increase. We are living in a time when a double portion of the word of God can be gathered from the Word of God. We are living in a unique period of time. God is opening His Word in a special way. I am astonished where I am to day in the study of the Word in comparison to where I was 40 years ago. I did not know very much when you get right down to it. I had a few things and a good foundation. I had some men that crossed my path to help me lay that foundation, then the Lord built upon that foundation.

ADMONITION

Hebrews 3:7-8 "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if **ye** (brethren, v. 12) will **hear his voice**, **8. Harden not your hearts**, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:"

This verse is dealing with the children of Israel who came out of Egypt, who wondered forty years in the desert, in the wilderness. Before they began the forty year wondering in the wilderness they were tested. We are exhorted in this verse not to provoke the Lord as the children of Israel did. They did not believe Joshua and Caleb's testimony about the land flowing with milk and honey. They hardened their hearts and we are warned not to harden our hearts. In Numbers 14 we find that the children of Israel sinned ten times. They actually sinned more than ten times, but the number ten is a number of ordinal completion. Then ten sins are not listed but those ten sins were sins of distrust in the Lord. The tenth time at Kadeshbarnea was one time too many. We are warned and admonished not to harden our hearts but to hear his voice. When? Every day! To day! That is not tomorrow. That is not yester day either. That is to day. That is why Bible reading is so essential. If you are not reading your Bible every day, you are not getting the admonition and encouragement you need to keep your heart soft. The longer you avoid the Word of God, the harder your heart will become, the stiffer your neck will become; and you will grow cold in your confidence that God will take care of you in tough times. When should you start reading your Bible? Next week? No. To day!

WARNING TO BRETHREN

Hebrews 3:12 "**Take heed** [present active imperative], **brethren** (2:11,13 children), lest there be in any of you an **evil heart of unbelief** [no faith, lack of confidence, stop pleasing God], in departing from the living God."

The phrase *take heed* is in the present tense and it is an imperative. An imperative is a command. It means to see and the command is to the brethren. These brethren are the little children of Hebrews 2:11, 13.

This *take heed* is self examination of ones heart. Out of the heart are the issues of life and if you have an heart of *unbelief* or lack of confidence in the Lord you have an evil heart. If we have an evil heart we will depart from the living God. The word *unbelief* is *faith* with the negative *a* before it, and that means *no faith*. When there is no faith, there is no pleasing God. I never really associated an *evil heart* with lack of faith. That association really stuck in my thoughts. If I am not walking by faith I have an evil heart. If a man has an evil heart there is no telling what he will do. We need to be encouraged to see if we have an evil heart, and we do that with self examination of our confidence in the Lord taking care of all of our needs.

HIGH PRIEST

Hebrews 3:1 "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, **consider the Apostle and High Priest** of our profession, **Christ Jesus**;"

We have been looking at verses 7 through 12. These verses, as I have pointed out already, are sandwiched between verses referring to Jesus Christ being our high priest. With out our high priest it would impossible for us to respond in obedience to these exhortations and commandments.

GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Hebrews 4:14 "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession."

This verse helps us to appreciate that we have someone in the heavens to encourage us to *hold fast*. He is able to encourage us to *hold fast* because he was able to *hold fast*. Verse 15 tells us that he can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. The children of Israel were in the desert and were thirsty and hungry. When was Jesus Christ in the desert? When was Jesus Christ thirsty and hungry? You can't fast for 40 days and not be thirsty and hungry. I am thankful to know that he knows what it means to be hungry and thirsty and under attack of the devil. When we call out to him in our need, he can relate to these basic problems that can come upon us.

HIGH PRIEST OF GOOD THINGS

Hebrews 9:11 "But Christ being come an high priest of **good things to come**, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;"

What is the high priestly ministry for? I think this is significant. This verse in Hebrews 9 and verse 11 gives us some insight into one of the purposes of the high priestly office of the Jesus Christ. This verse tells us that he is an high priest of *good things to come*. What are the good things that are coming? The kingdom of the heavens. This ministry has to do with the rest and our inheritance.

THE GOOD THINGS

Hebrews 9:15 "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions [transgressors] *that were* under the first testament, **they which are called** might receive **the promise** (rest, 4:1) of **eternal** [age-lasting] **inheritance**."

The good things that are coming are revealed in verse 15. As high priest Jesus Christ is the mediator of the New Testament which became a legal document when he died. This new testament was written so that the saved, who are called, who have transgressed can be redeemed and being redeemed, can receive their inheritance. This inheritance pertains to the good things that are coming.

We are not talking about salvation. Hebrews is not a book dealing with the common salvation, but a book that is dealing with the so great salvation. This so great salvation was what Jesus Christ was teaching when he came to the nation of Israel. This so great salvation is a reference to the kingdom of the heavens offered to the nation of Israel only at the beginning. If you try to apply the book of Hebrews to the common salvation you will have to put faithfulness on the part of the one trying to be saved and stay saved.

As our high priest, Jesus Christ will help us to do what is needed to enter into the rest offered to the people of God. He will make it possible for us to receive the reward of our inheritance.

THE REST

Hebrews 4:1 "Let us (brethren) therefore **fear**, lest, a [the] **promise** [age-lasting inheritance, 9:15] being left us of **entering into his rest**, any of you should seem **to come short** [lack, Mark 10:21] of it."

This verse is addressing the brethren. Brethren are the saved that Jesus Christ is not ashamed of. The promise has the definite article before it. This definite promise is that of entering into his rest. It is a promise that you can see and taste, but fail to enter into, just as the fathers suffered because of their disobedience. Paul knew of the fear of the Lord in 2 Cor. 5:11. We should have

a wholesome fear of not entering into the rest that God has offered to his brethren. That rest is the millennial reign of Christ.

COME SHORT

Hebrews 12:15-17 "Looking diligently lest any man **fail** [come short] of the **grace of God**; lest any root of **bitterness** springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled; **16.** Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat **sold his birthright**. **17.** For ye know how that afterward, when he would have **inherited the blessing**, he was **rejected**: for he found **no place of repentance**, though he sought it carefully with **tears**."

We need to fear lest we fall short. If we fall short of the grace of God, what does that mean? We will not be able to serve God with reverence and Godly fear. Hebrew 12:28. If we do not have the fear of the Lord we are going to be like Esau. If we do not learn the fear of the Lord we will despise our birthright, thus lose our inheritance. By the time we find out we have lost our inheritance, there will be no changing the mind of the Lord.

In Hebrews chapters three and four the subject is the rest and our entering into that rest. When you look at the children of Israel in Exodus through Joshua, they were headed for the rest of God. Another name for that is *the land flowing with milk and honey*. Entering into the land flowing with milk and honey only to begin a warfare. Did you know that if we expect to rule and reign with Christ we have to win the war. Our enemies just like the enemies in the land of Israel, in type. The enemies of the children of Israel were trying to keep them from possessing the land that they lived in. They were trying to deny the children of Israel the inheritance that God promised them. Did you know that the Devil and his angels possess the land in the heavenlies today? Even though Jesus Christ is over them, they are in charge in the heavenlies. They are the principalities and powers that are over the kingdoms of this earth. They want to hold on to those positions, therefore they are trying to defeat us. How are they trying to defeat us? By hardening our hearts. By making us stubborn in stiffening our necks. They want us to doubt the Lord and his Word and become disobedient. You submit to their efforts, you are out. You are going to seek what you lose, because of rebellion, with tears. Just like Esau sought the blessing from his father with tears. Esau was not begging his father to let him be in the family, but to be blessed with the blessing of the first born in the family. What Esau lost was his inheritance and the blessing of being over his brother and others in the family. If you have not learned the fear of the Lord, you will not fear the consequences of losing your inheritance in the land flowing with milk and honey which is a type of the kingdom of the heavens.

ENTER THE KINGDOM

Hebrews 4:3-5 "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**. **4.** For he spake in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise, And God did **rest** the seventh day from all his works. **5.** And in this *place* again, If they shall enter into my **rest**."

What rest did God enter into on the seventh day? The rest was not a time of restoring His strength. God does not get tired. Look in Isaiah 40:28 "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" The rest that God entered into was a rest from his enemies. Satan must have opposed Him while he was creating the earth and man to rule over it. Adam was to be the new ruler over the earth replacing Satan and his angels. Satan opposed that work and could not

defeat the effort of God to restore the heavens and the earth that became without form and void because of the fall of Satan. Joshua 21:44 "And the LORD gave them **rest** round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their **enemies** before them; the LORD delivered all their **enemies** into their hand." During the millennial reign of Christ our enemies will be in captivity.

The rest of the kingdom of the heavens was a work that was finished before the foundation of the world. The plan of the seventh day millennial kingdom has been in place for about six thousand years. This plan has been kept secret until the Lord brought it to light in his ministry to the nation of Israel. This is confirmed in Matthew 13:35.

MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM

Matthew 13:35 "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the **foundation** of the world."

It was through parables that the Lord kept this mystery of the kingdom of the heavens a secret from most of the nation of Israel during his ministry. This secret was revealed to those who had ears to hear, his disciples. Matthew 13:10-11 "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? *11*. He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."

INHERIT THE KINGDOM

Matthew 25:34 "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the **foundation** of the world:"

Those who have been blessed by the Father will be prepared to enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens. The kingdom of the heavens will be inherited by those who have done the will of the Father. Entering into the rest of Hebrews three and four is the entering into the kingdom of the heavens to rule and reign with Christ.

We will pick up here next Sunday, Lord willing. See message dated July 15, 2001.