

THE HOPE OF REST

Sunday Morning: July 15, 2001

Text: Hebrews 3:6-13 "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we **hold fast** the **confidence** and the **rejoicing** of the **hope firm unto the end**. 7. **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 swear 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** [no faith], 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."

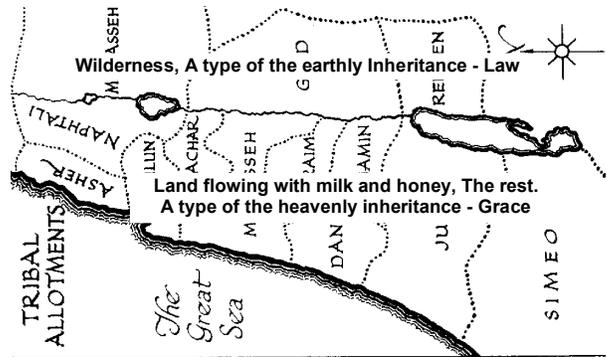
The Old Testament is a picture book to help us to understand the New Testament. If you do not have a good working knowledge of the Old Testament you will have difficulty understanding New Testament truth. God gave us the Old Testament to help us to understand what our responsibilities are in our life time.

ISRAEL IS A TYPE FOR US

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

The things that happened unto them are types for us. The word *them* is a reference to the nation of Israel. All those who came out of Egypt who were under the cloud and baptized unto Moses are types. The Old Testament is book of types that help us to understand New Testament truth.

I put a little map in the notes to help us to distinguish between the wilderness and the land flowing with milk and honey. Moses and Aaron and of the children of Israel who came out of Egypt who were 21 years and older all died in the wilderness. They did not enter into the land flowing with milk and honey. All those who were 21 years and older who came out of Egypt. That included Moses and Aaron the high priest. There were two who were in that age bracket that did go into the land and they were Joshua and Caleb.



I am emphasizing these things for this reason. These people who perished in the wilderness were not lost people. They were all saved. Moses was saved. Aaron was saved. He was the one who went into the holy of holies in the tabernacle. Moses was the one who spoke to God face to face. To live and die in the wilderness did not mean they were lost. What they missed was a better inheritance on the other side of the Jordan River, a good land flowing with milk and honey.

The land flowing with milk and honey on the West side of the Jordan river has to do with the rest. This rest is in type a heavenly inheritance. The wilderness is in type with an earthly inheritance. The reason I am bringing this out is this: When there is a new heaven there will be a new earth. That new earth will be underneath the New Jerusalem which is in heaven. There will be those in the New Jerusalem in the heavenlies and there will be saved people down here on the earth. An earthly inheritance is not a bad inheritance, it is just not as good as the heavenly inheritance.

Not everyone who is saved will be in the heavens. Not everyone who is saved will live here on the new earth. There will be a distinction or a separation. This distinction is shown in type in the wilderness and the land flowing with milk and honey West of the Jordan River.

HOLD FAST THE HOPE

Hebrews 3:6 "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we **hold fast** the confidence and the rejoicing of **the hope** firm unto the **end**."

We are exhorted in Hebrews 3:6 to hold fast the hope. The reason we are exhorted to hold fast the hope is that we can stop holding fast the hope.

Hope is not a sure thing. Many people want to make hope a sure thing in the Bible, but it is not. Common sense tells us that a hope is not a sure thing. For us to be exhorted to hold it firm unto the end is a good indicator that hope is not a sure thing.

Hebrews 3:14 "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we **hold** the beginning of our confidence **stedfast** unto the **end**;"

Most people begin strong and end weak or quit. This verse encourages us to begin strong and finish strong. To do this it takes confidence. Those came out of Egypt started strong, but they did not finish strong. They were griping and complaining every step of the way, except while they were crossing the Red Sea. God is not happy with his children who are complaining about the way things are. Have you ever been thirsty? Don't complain about it. Have you ever been hungry, don't complain about it. The children of Israel complained about everything it seems.

HOLD FAST FAITH

Hebrews 10:23 "Let us **hold fast** the profession of *our faith without wavering*; (for he is faithful that promised;)"

Another thing we need to hold fast to faith. What is faith? We know that faith is required if we expect to please God. Without faith it is impossible to please God in Hebrews 11:6.

FAITH

Hebrews 11:1 "Now **faith is the substance of things hoped** for, the evidence of things not seen."

The children of Israel at the beginning had hope for the land flowing with milk and honey, but that changed. They began with faith as they crossed the Red Sea, but after that faith did not put substance to the land flowing with milk and honey. If faith was working or operative, the land would be real to them, even though they had not seen it.

PLOW IN HOPE

1 Corinthians 9:10 "Or saith he *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: that **he that ploweth should plow in hope**; and that he that thresheth in **hope** should be partaker of his **hope**."

The point that I want you to get in this verse is that those who plow can see fields of grain. That is why the farmer is willing to work hard for the harvest. To walk behind a mule or an oxen. That is hard work.

My grandmother use to plow with a mule. She did not plow large fields but the garden. She plowed the garden with expectations of having an harvest of vegetables to be prepared and put on the table. Plowing is hard work, but it is worth it, and the blessings come when one perseveres to the end with plowing and planting of the garden.

NOT FIT FOR THE KINGDOM

Luke 9:62 "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and **looking back**, is fit for the kingdom of God."

What is expected of a man who puts his hand to the plow? He is expected to be faithful to the end. He is expected to finish the job. You start looking back you are not going to plow a straight furrow. The point I want to make is that if you are always looking back, you will not have your mind on the harvest or the blessing or the objective of your hard work. If you are not thinking about the vegetables that will come out of the garden there is a good chance you won't finish the job. If you are looking back, you are not fit for the land flowing with milk and honey. If you put your hand to the plow, you are to keep going.

LOOKING BACK

Exodus 16:1-3 ". . . on the **fifteenth day of the second** month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. 2. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: 3. And the children of Israel said unto them, **Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt**, when we sat by the flesh pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this **wilderness**, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

Two and a half months into the wilderness, what are they doing? They are looking back. By looking back they were not fit to enter the land flowing with milk and honey.

DEPARTED FROM THE FAITH

Hebrews 11:29-30 "**By faith** they passed through the **Red sea** as by dry *land*: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. 30. **By faith** the walls of **Jericho** fell down, after they were compassed about seven days."

The first act of faith when they left Egypt was crossing the Red Sea. When was the next act of faith? In the land flowing with milk and honey, at Jericho. What happened to faith from the time they crossed the Red Sea until they reached Jericho? They had made shipwreck of the faith. They were always looking back to Egypt longing for the flesh pots of Egypt. We are exhorted not to look back. They departed from the faith.

DEPARTING FROM THE FAITH

1 Timothy 4:1 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"

What are we listening to? Are we listening to the Word of God? Are we listening to other teachings that would encourage you to look back? If we are not listening to the Word of God we can depart from the faith. When we depart from the faith we stop pleasing God.

SHIPWRECK OF THE FAITH

1 Timothy 1:19 "Holding [ἔχω, present active, regard] faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:"

The word *Holding* is a present active of verb *echo* and can carry the meaning *to regard* or *to esteem*. Paul is telling Timothy to esteem faith. Have a high regard for faith. Faith will give substance for what you are hoping for. Faith will give evidence by your lifestyle. Those who do not esteem faith are going to depart from it. To shipwreck means that the ship sinks. How far can you go on a sunken ship? No, one sets sail on a sunken ship. When faith sinks you are going no place.

TAKE HEED, BRETHREN

Hebrews 3:11-12 "So I swear in my wrath, They (the parents) shall not enter into my rest.) 12. **Take heed, brethren**, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief [απιστια, no faith], in departing from the living God."

The word *They* is a reference to the parents that left Egypt who were 21 years old and older. The rest here is the land flowing with milk and honey.

The word unbelief is *faith* with an indefinite article *a* in front of it. This is simply not faith. With no faith they were not pleasing God. When you are not pleasing God you have an *evil heart*. When there is no faith you are not coming to God but departing from God.

The warning is to the brethren. Brethren are those who are focused upon entering into the land flowing with milk and honey which is a type of the kingdom of heaven. In essence it was Joshua and Caleb who demonstrated a spirit of confidence that the Lord would give them the land.

BRETHREN

Matthew 12:50 "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Brethren are those who are doing the will of the Father. These are focused and serious Christians who know what they want to do. These are those who learning what the Father's will is and doing it.

IN TYPE THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Hebrews 3:11 "So I swear in my wrath, They (the parents of the children of Israel) shall **not enter** into my rest.)"

The rest here again is not salvation but a type of the kingdom of the heavens. The kingdom of the heavens is the millennial reign of Christ. This land flowing with milk and honey was the better of the two inheritances. One inheritance was East of the Jordan and the better inheritance was West of the Jordan River.

DISOBEDIENT ISRAEL

Hebrews 4:6 "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and **they** (the parents) to whom it was **first preached** entered not in because of **unbelief** [disobedience]."

If you are not interested in entering into the better inheritance all you have to do is be disobedient. You are disobedient you are unjust. If you are unjust, you can't live by faith. The Bible is very plain in saying that it is the just that live by faith. You can't live in sin and live by faith.

PROPHESED BY DAVID AND JOSHUA

Hebrews 4:7-10 "Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. 8. For if **Jesus** (Joshua) had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. 9. There remaineth therefore a rest [Sabbath (7th) Day Rest, Millennial rest] to the people of God. 10. For he that is entered into his **rest**, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his."

David and Joshua spoke of the rest for the people of God. In the Old Testament there are many references to the nation of Israel having rest from their enemies. One place where rest is mentioned is in Joshua 23:1 "And it came to pass a long time after that the LORD had given **rest** unto Israel from all their enemies round about, . . ." Israel had not completely defeated it's enemies when this verse was written. They were not fighting them at this time, but they were still

living among the children of Israel. Hebrews 4:8 Joshua spoke of another day where there would be total rest from their enemies and that would be the Millennial day. The millennial day is the seventh day and that is what the word *rest* in verse 9 is referring to. The word *rest* should be translated *sabbath rest*. To day we are living in the sixth day and anticipating the Lord's return to bring us into the millennial age which is the rest of God.

THEY ENTERED NOT IN TO THEIR INHERITANCE

Psalms 95:7-11 "For he *is our* (the children of the fathers) **God**; and we *are the people* (the children of the fathers) of his pasture, and **the sheep** (the children of the fathers) of his hand. To day if ye will **hear** his voice, 8. **Harden not your heart**, as in the provocation, *and as in* the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9. When **your fathers** (who came out of Egypt) tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10. **Forty years** long was I grieved with *this* generation, and said, It *is* a people **that do err** in their heart, and they have **not known my ways**: 11. Unto whom I sware in my wrath that **they should not enter into my rest.**"

Notice that he is talking to the sheep of his pasture which I take to be brethren. The warnings found in Hebrews three and four are to the brethren, the ones who desire to enter into the rest or the millennial reign of Christ. The word *our* in verse 7 is a reference to the little children who enter into the land flowing with milk and honey. He refers to the fathers who perished in the wilderness in verse nine and 10. The characteristics of God's sheep are found John 10:27-28 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28. And I give unto them **eternal** (age-lasting, millennial age) **life**; and they shall never **perish** (as did the fathers in the wilderness), neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand."

NOT SEE THE LAND

Numbers 14:22-23 "Because **all** those **men** (the fathers of the little children) which have **seen my glory**, and my **miracles**, which I did **in Egypt** and **in the wilderness**, and have **tempted me** now these ten times, and have **not hearkened** to my voice; 23. Surely **they shall not see the land** which I sware unto their **fathers** (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:"

They saw the glory of the Lord and his miracles. Seeing the glory of the Lord and his miracles did not produce faith. Only the Word of God produces faith. The parents who came out of Egypt stopped living by faith after they saw the greatest miracle of parting of the Red Sea. Seeing miracles will not help you to obey. The fear of the Lord will encourage you to obey and to listen to the Lord.

THEY TASTED THE FRUIT

Numbers 13:26-27 "And they . . . **showed them the fruit** of the land. 27. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and **surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.**"

What was going on the first two and a half months of their pilgrimage was miracle after miracle. These miracles did not help their faith. Remember there were no acts of faith after the Red Sea. What kind of miracles was God performing. The pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day. Manna came every morning. Were these miracle? I would say they were. Do think miracles will make you live a better life? No! Maybe I should say "Yes" but only for a little time. Seeing God part the Red Sea did not give them confidence that God would provide them water when they were thirsty. The parting of the Red Sea did not help them to believe that God would give them food when they ran out of food after three days. Seeing signs, wonders, and miracles does not

please God, but living by faith. 1 Peter 1:8 "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:" I do not want to see Jesus while I am here on the earth. Because if I see Jesus here on the earth I can no longer live by faith. What you see eliminates faith and hope and the ability to please God is lost. They saw all of these things and it did not make any difference in the way they lived.

ONCE ENLIGHTENED

Hebrews 6:4-5 "For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5. And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,"

Hebrews 6:4-5 is a reference I believe of Numbers 13 and 14. There is where the children of Israel tasted of the fruit of the land flowing with milk and honey. They had the evidence right before them and in their mouths and they would not believe that God meant what he said when he promised the land to them in Egypt.

After they discovered that they had made a mistake by not believing the promise made to them they repented and tried to go into the land and God said, "No!"

NOT ENTER THE LAND

Numbers 14:30-31 "Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, *concerning* which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. 31. But your **little ones** [little children, LXX], which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and **they shall know the land** which ye have despised."

God said there would be no doubt as to whether they would enter into the land or not. They were not allowed to enter the land nor were they able to see the land. Only Moses and the 12 spies were able to see the land.

In verse 31 we have a reference to their *little ones*. In the Septuagint the Hebrew word translated *little ones* was translated into the Greek word παιδιον. This Greek word is translated little children in Matthew 18:3-4 "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Notice that it is the little children that will enter into the kingdom of heaven and they are the ones who can be great in that kingdom.

INHERITANCE

Deuteronomy 12:9-10 "For ye (the little ones, children) **are not** as yet **come** to the **rest** and to **the inheritance**, which the LORD your God giveth you. 10. But *when* ye go **over Jordan**, and dwell in **the land** which the LORD your God giveth you to **inherit**, and *when* he giveth you **rest** from all your **enemies** round about, so that ye dwell in safety;"

Moses tells the little children in Deuteronomy that while they were in the wilderness they were not yet entered into their rest. Rest will only come on the Western side of the Jordan and your enemies are subdued, then will you have rest and safety.

ENTER OUR INHERITANCE

Hebrews 4:11 "Let us labour [endeavor, give diligence, study], therefore to **enter** into that **rest**, lest any man fall after the same example of **unbelief** [disobedience]."

Notice the word *labour*. The word *labour* should be translated *give diligence*. You don't give diligence to be saved. You give diligence to have an inheritance. You give diligence to please God when that diligence is by faith. You believe to be saved and you give diligence to walk by faith and please the Lord.

GIVE DILIGENCE

Hebrews 6:10-11 "For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. **11.** And we desire that every one of you do show the same **diligence** to the full assurance of hope unto the end:"

The word *diligence* here in verse 11 is the same word *labour* in Hebrews 4:7. What is the evidence of *the full assurance of hope*? This evidence is found in verse 10, ministering to the saints. When we minister to the saint we are ministering to the Lord Matthew 25:40 "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me." According to Acts 13:1, 2 it is the teachers that minister to the Lord when they teach others.

HOPE SET BEFORE US

Hebrews 6:17-20 "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an **oath** (1. God cannot change): **18.** That by **two immutable things**, in which *it was impossible* for God to **lie** (2. God cannot lie), we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to **lay hold upon the hope set before us**: **19.** Which *hope* we have as an **anchor** of the **soul**, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; **20.** Whither the forerunner is for us entered, **even Jesus, made an high priest** for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

As the children of Israel were given a hope of something better than what they had in Egypt; we are given a hope of better things. Jesus was made an high priest after the order of Melchisedec for good things to come. Hebrews 9:11 "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, . . ." Those good things to come have to do with the seventh day rest which is the millennium. The millennium is the 1000 year reign of Christ over the earth. This hope of ruling and reigning with Christ is a hope that provides an anchor of our soul. This hope keeps us before our high priest for mercy and grace, Hebrews 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." If our hope is stedfast we will not be looking back after we have put our hands to the plow. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith will stir us to lay hold upon the hope that is set before us.

We need to believe the immutability or the unchangeableness of his counsel. The Lord is not going to change his counsel to us that have seen the hope of the faithful. The two things that are unchangeable are, first, God can not change. Second, God can not lie. There can be no better guarantee than this.

If God can not change nor lie when it comes to the promised blessing, he can not change or lie about the consequences of unbelief and disobedience. We can take courage though, because the Lord allowed Israel to rebel ten times before they were disqualified from entering into the land. The Lord is long suffering and patient as well as forgiving if we confess and repent before it is too late.

ENTERING INTO THE REST

2 Peter 1:10-11 "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give **diligence** [labor, endeavor, study] to make your calling and election sure: for if ye **do these things**, ye shall never fall: **11.** For so an **entrance** shall be ministered unto you **abundantly** into the everlasting **kingdom** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The word *everlasting* in this verse comes from the noun *age* which in the case is used as an adjective. When using a noun as an adjective, there are some difficulties in how it should be

translated. It seems good to translate this adjective *age* by using it in the translation. I translate it as *agelasting*. Other have translated it as *age abiding*.

The kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is described as an age. This age is the rest referred to as the Sabbath day rest in Hebrews 4:9. This rest is described as the land flowing with milk and honey in Exodus and Numbers. This land flowing with milk and honey is a type of the millennial reign of Christ. Ruling and reigning with Christ in his coming kingdom is a reward for *giving diligence to make your calling and election sure*. To make our calling and election sure we have to *do these things*. What are those things that need to be done?

THESE THINGS

2 Peter 1:5-8 "And beside this, giving all **diligence**, add to your faith **virtue**; and to virtue **knowledge**; 6. And to knowledge **temperance**; and to temperance **patience**; and to patience **godliness**; 7. And to godliness **brotherly kindness**; and to brotherly kindness **charity**. 8. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Here is a list of evidences that our hope has substance. The evidence of the substance is produced by faith. Without faith there will be no substance to the hope nor evidence that we believe that hope.

All of these things that we are encourage to do is beyond faith. Add to faith virtue which is moral excellence. We then add to *virtue*, *knowledge* of the word of God. To *knowledge*, *self control*. It is through the knowledge of the word of God that we can sustain self control. After *self control* we need to add *patience* or better *perseverance*. To *perseverance* we need to add *godliness*. To godliness we need to add brotherly kindness and to brotherly kindness love.

What have we been studying in Hebrews three and four? We have been studying that God has offered to us a better inheritance. That inheritance is in the heavenlies, in type, to the land flowing with milk and honey. If we want to enter into that inheritance it has to be done on the bases of faith. You can't live by faith if you are disobedient. We need to have a desire to stand in his presence approve and hear *well done thou good and faithful servant and to enter into the joy of the Lord* ruling and reigning with him in his coming kingdom.

Jesus Christ has become our high priest. He has entered into that within the veil in the heavenly tabernacle. What is the anchor change of our lives? The hope. When we by faith pull on our anchor chain, hope, which way do we move? Toward the heavenlies. The anchor chain can not break neither will the Rock move, both being *sure and steadfast*.

Have you put your hand on the plow? Don't look back. Give diligence to enter into the heavenly inheritance the Lord has offered to the saints and faith. May the Lord help us not to believe the lie that we can not make it, because we can, by the power of God and his grace. These things happened unto the children of Israel to help us to not err by departing from the living God.