

## OUR HIGH PRIEST

**Sunday Morning: July 29, 2001**

**Text: Hebrews 4:1-6** "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*. 3. 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. 6. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:"

We have been studying in the book of Hebrews and last Sunday we took a little detour to talk about faith and it's significance in the life of the believer. The Word of God is very plain "that the just shall live by faith." Faith is something that a child of God should have in his life. The only way that faith can be operative in you life if you are just.

The Children of Israel were not pleasing God. They were not pleasing God when they moved from the Red Sea throughout the wilderness travels to Kadeshbarnea where the spies went into the land. They had abandoned faith, in fact, we read in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of Hebrews that the next act of faith was when the walls of Jericho came down. During the 40 years in the wilderness they were not living by faith. There was miracles every day. God brought manna every day. There was a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day and their clothes did not wear out. God was leading them throughout the desert wonderings. When it was time to move the cloud moved from the Tabernacle they were to move in that direction.

I want to pickup on what was going in the lives of the Children of Israel and their wilderness experiences.

**Hebrews 4:1-6** "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*." The children of Israel departed from the faith.

### TAKE HEED, BRETHREN

**Hebrews 3:12** "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of **unbelief** [lack of faith], in departing from the living God."

This "Take heed" is a message to the brethren. This not a message to the lost. The brethren were being warned that departing from the faith is because of an evil heart. The warning to the brethren to "Take heed" was to stir up fear lest we miss entering into this rest, which is in type, the millennial rest of the kingdom where Jesus Christ will rule and reign for 1,000 years. And that is the seventh day rest.

We are exhorted to "Take heed." In fact this Greek word means to "see." It is in the present tense. It is in the active voice, therefore my responsibility. It is an imperative which means it is a command. This is one of the things we need to obey. He has commanded us to look, lest we have an evil heart in departing from the faith. Making shipwreck of the faith and departing from the living God.

## FAITH GIVES SUBSTANCE

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

I am including this verse to remind us that faith. If you have faith, the kingdom of the heavens has substance. It is real to you and to me. It is not something fuzzy out there, it is a fact. It is as real as the promises of God. Not only does faith provide substance to things that I hope for, because I hope to rule and reign with Christ in his coming Kingdom. Faith also provides evidence. The evidence that faith provides is the appropriate behavior to qualify to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. That includes faithfulness on your part as well as my part.

## THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM

**2 Timothy 4:18** "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly **kingdom**: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Paul saw the kingdom of the heavens by faith. It was real to Paul. In fact he confessed that the Lord would "preserve him unto his heavenly kingdom." His heavenly kingdom is not now, it is future. The kingdom is the millennial reign of Christ.

## EVIDENCE OF THAT KINGDOM

**1 Thessalonians 2:12** "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his **kingdom** and glory."

Evidence is a worthy walk of obedience and truth. Faith gave substance to the coming kingdom and the evidence of that faith was a worthy walk with anticipation.

## WARNING

**1 Corinthians 6:9-10** "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not **inherit** the **kingdom** of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, *10*. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall **inherit** the **kingdom** of God."

Here we have a warning of not entering into the coming kingdom of God. This is future, not present. If you live like this you might as well forget ruling and reigning with Christ. You can repent. We have already been over this before. The Lord is in the business of reconciling. He wants to restore those who have been called unto His kingdom and glory so they can rule and reign with him. Because of this, the Lord is longsuffering toward us, but if we have a tendency for these sins, and this is a short list. There is a longer list in Galatians 5. This list tells us that there is a possibility of not receiving our inheritance of ruling and reigning in the kingdom.

## ULTIMATE RESOURCE

**Hebrews 2:17-18** "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, to make **reconciliation** for the sins of the people. *18*. For in that he **himself hath suffered** being tempted, he is able to **succour** [help, aid] them that are tempted."

This verse gives us the ultimate resource to help us to enter into our inheritance, the kingdom of the heavens. He is our faithful and merciful high priest. He has been there, and he has done that, as they would say today, therefore he can reach out to us and help or aid with strength and encouragement. Because we live in a day where we get instant news, and instant grits, we want it now. We want peace now. We want joy now. There is no need to save to get what we want, we can get it now with plastic money. We need to be willing to be patient in waiting upon God to give us what we need. Do not expect instant gratification. There are times when He will respond instantly as in the case of Peter when he was about to drown when he slipped into the waves of the storm. The Lord was standing next to him on the water, and reached down and pulled him

out of the water.

### THE CHALLENGE TO US

**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."

The challenge for us today is to hold fast, be faithful. We need to be confident in the promises of God. We need to be rejoicing over the substance of the hope that faith provides. What is the substance? It is the hope of the kingdom. It is the hope of ruling and reigning. We need to hold fast to the hope with confidence being firm in this confidence unto the end of our lives.

### BE CONFIDENT

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

We are exhorted again to be confident holding stedfast to the end. We are to endure to the end. I am including a similar verse as Hebrews 3:6 because this has been repeated more than once in Hebrews chapters 3 and 4. Why do you think the Lord repeats them. Well, between verse 6 and verse 14 we have 8 verses and there is a possibility that by the time you read verse 14 you have forgotten what is in verse 6. We need to be reminded again and again even after just a few verses.

### TESTIMONIES

**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** (one word)."

We are reminded that we have "a great high priest," even though we read it in chapter 2 and verse 17 and chapter 3 and verse 1. Christ is our ultimate resource for enduring to the end with a firm stedfast hope. We are to *hold fast* our confession, not profession. The Greek word translated profession is ὁμολογία which means *one word*. Our confession is Matthew 6:33 "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." The one word is the kingdom of God which is the hope that is set before us as the land flowing with milk and honey was set before the children of Israel.

### HEAR THE PROMISE

**Hebrews 3:7** "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will **hear his voice**,"

Today we are not listening to the voice of God like we use to. We have more distractions than we have had before. You owned a radio and TV, but they kept at home. Now you can take the radio and TV with you. Society has a heart to listen to everything but the voice of God. We are exhorted to *hear his voice* which is the voice of hope.

### HEAR AND HARDEN NOT

**Hebrews 3:15** "While it is said, To day if ye will **hear his voice**, **harden** not your hearts, as in the provocation."

The provocation was the time the children of Israel were in the desert moving toward the promised land flowing with milk and honey. They were exhorted to hear His voice, but they would not listen. When we refuse to listen our hearts become hard. If we are not in the Word of God our hearts will become hardened. It is very important, not to just hear a sermon on Sunday, but to a daily time in the Word and a daily time in prayer.

### AGAIN, HEAR HIS VOICE

**Hebrews 4:7** "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."

We have been exhorted to hear his voice three time and not to harden our hearts twice. All of this in just a few short verses. We forget so quick. We need to be reminded so often.

### SEE THE SUBSTANCE!

**Hebrews 3:12** "Take heed [see, present active imperative], brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of **unbelief** [lack of faith], **in departing** from the living God."

The phrase "Take heed" can be translated "see". We need to see the substance that faith has produced. If we do not continue to see the substance of our inheritance it is not long before we are departing from the faith which is "departing from the living God."

### EVIDENCE OF THE SUBSTANCE

**Hebrews 4:11** "Let us labour therefore to **enter** into **that rest**, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

The evidence of the substance is "Let us labour". This word labor could be and should be translated "give diligence." Be faithful in doing what is needed to enter into the rest.

### HIGH PRIEST

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

Christ Jesus is our high priest. In the book of Joshua, Eleazer was the high priest and he and Joshua were the ones who gave the tribes their inheritance in the land. Jesus Christ is our high priest and he will be the one to give us our inheritance in the coming kingdom.

### HEIR OF GOOD THINGS

**Hebrews 1:2** "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath **appointed heir of all things**, by whom also he made the worlds;"

God the Father has appointed Jesus Christ the heir of all things.

### GOOD THINGS TO COME

**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;"

Christ is the high priest, just as Eleazer, of good things to come. These are good things.

### INHERITANCE

**Hebrews 11:20** "By faith Isaac blessed **Jacob** and **Esau** concerning **things to come**."

We are given further insight into what good thing that are coming in type. What was the blessing of Jacob and Esau? It was their inheritance and who would rule over who. Jacob was the second born and did not deserve to have the inheritance of the first born. Isaac place Jacob over Esau. The good things that are coming have to do with an inheritance that we do not deserve but desires for us to have.

### EXECUTOR OF GOOD THINGS TO COME

**Hebrews 9:15-17** "And for this cause **he** (our high priest) is the **mediator** [executor] of the new **testament** (His will, covenant), that by means of **death**, for the **redemption** of the **transgressions** [transgressors] *that were* under the **first testament** (Old Testament), they which are called might receive **the promise** of **eternal** [age, millennial age] **inheritance**. 16. For where a **testament** [covenant] *is*, there must also of necessity be the **death** (on the cross) of the **testator** (who made the covenant). 17. For a **testament** [covenant, His will] *is* of force **after** men are **dead**: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

Jesus Christ made a new covenant. This covenant is the New Testament. The New Testament has to do with what he wants done after his death. The New Testament is a document that the Holy Spirit, the third person to the God head, wrote. The New Testament was preconceived in the determinate counsel chambers of the God Head and written by the Apostles and others. The New Testament was to become a legal document giving instruction on how the good things that the Lord was given would be distributed to that have been called unto his kingdom and glory. Christ death on the cross made the New Testament a legal document. I Christ had not died to make a legal document, you and I could not take this document to the court of heaven to have it carried out under the law of heaven. This books is a legal document. Where? In the court of heaven, and it will be executed as it is written, according to His will.

### SHOWING US HIS REST

**John 16:13-15** "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever **he** (the Spirit of Truth) shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and **he will show you things to come**. 14. He shall glorify me: for **he shall receive** [things] **of mine**, and **shall show it** (those things) **unto you**. 15. **All things** that the Father hath are **mine**: therefore said I, that he shall **take of mine** (things), and shall **show it** (those things) unto you."

We see in John 16 that we are experiencing what the children of Israel experienced at Kadeshbarnea. The spies went in and spied out the land and brought back a good report of what it was like over on the other side. We have a spy and do you know who our spy is? It is the Holy Spirit of Truth. The Holy Spirit has been on the other side and he talking to us about it today. Jesus had been on the other side and taught about it while he was here, but we do not have him today. The Holy Spirit is ministering to us things that are on the other side.

What is the Holy Spirit showing us today? He is showing us the fruit of the land, the kingdom of the heavens. He is showing us precious truths out of the Lord last will and testament, the New Testament, concerning his coming kingdom and glory. In verse 14 the Spirit of truth will received things of the Lord. What things? Good things to come. The Lord tells the Holy Spirit to share the things to come with you and me. I read the passage in Hebrews 1:2 to show that Jesus Christ was appointed heir of what? All things. The Holy Spirit, as he has permission, is showing us those things that can be ours in Christ coming kingdom.

We are reminded again in verse 15 that all thing that the Father had have been given to the Lord and the Holy Spirit is taking these things and showing them unto us. Isn't neat that we have such a spy. Part of the God head is spying out the heavenly kingdom for us.

### DIVIDE HIS INHERITANCE

**Isaiah 53:12** "Therefore will I **divide him a portion with the great**, and he shall **divide the spoil with the strong**; because he hath poured out his soul unto **death**: . . . ."

This verse is talking about Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ will divide the spoil of Satan's kingdom over the earth with the strong. Who are the strong? They are those who are strong in the power of the grace of God. Those who are strong in His Word. He will divide the spoil with the faithful who are partaking of the fruit of the land and believing the evidence of that fruit of the land.

### THEY LOST THE SPOIL

**Hebrews 3:18** "And to whom sware he that **they should not enter into his rest**, but to them that believed [disobedient] not?"

The children of Israel lost the spoil of the land. They could not enter into His rest. Why were they denied entrance into the land a type of the kingdom of heaven, disobedience. If we become disobedient, we will be denied the spoils of Satan's kingdom of the heavens.

### THE PROMISED REST

**Hebrews 4:1** "Let us therefore fear, lest, a [the] promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

We have been promised a rest and that rest is to rule and reign in the coming kingdom of the heavens. We can come short of it. It is not a sure thing. Because it is not a sure thing we need to have a wholesome fear of not entering into the kingdom of the heavens.

### AS THE LORD SAID

**Numbers 13:27** "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."

We are short of time this morning so I will not speak in detail on the passages in Numbers. These verses in chapter 13 and 14 deal with the children of Israel at Kadeshbarnea. This is where they did not believe the spies. They wanted to stone Joshua and Caleb because they wanted to go in and possess the land. That's what happens to those who believe what the spy, the Holy Spirit, has said and try to encourage other to go in to possess the land.

### EXHORT ONE ANOTHER DAILY

**Hebrews 3:13** "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

### CALEB'S EXHORTATION

**Numbers 13:30** "And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."

Caleb had the spirit that we all need. "Let us go up at once and possess it." Let us believe what God has said and let's take what God has given us. Joshua and Caleb were the only two adults that left the land of Egypt that went into the land flowing with milk and honey.

### EXCEEDING GOOD LAND

**Numbers 14:7-9** "And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, *is* an exceeding good land. 8. If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. 9. Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the LORD *is* with us: fear them not."

### CALEB FOLLOWED FULLY

**Numbers 14:24** "But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring (be with him) into the land where into he went; and his seed shall possess it."

### THE WORD IS POWERFUL

**Hebrews 4:12** "For the word [logos, written word] of God *is* quick [living], and powerful [effectual], and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner [judge] of the thoughts and intents [or purpose] of the heart."

The written Word of God is quick or living. It is effectual, it works. It is sharper than a surgeon's scalpel that can only work on the joints and marrow of the body.

The living word of God can get into our thought life and into our intentions and convict us of the error of our way.

The word of God works on the soul and the spirit of a child of God. The soul is where we make the decisions of live. Will we obey? Will we be faithful? Will we endeavor to live by faith?

When the Word of God works on our spirit it is working on our zeal to please God as in the case of Joshua and Caleb. Caleb wanted to go up and possess the land AT ONCE. Caleb had a dedicated fervent spirit. The living effectual Word of God can change our hearts and our attitudes about the promised rest of His kingdom and glory.

### **HAS THE PREACHING BEEN PROFITABLE?**

**Hebrews 4:2** "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

We are so programmed that when we see the word "gospel" we think of the plan of salvation. The children of Israel did not need the plan of salvation. They had already been saved a long time ago way back in Egypt two and one half years before in type. This gospel here pertained to the land, promised to them, flowing with milk and honey. This gospel here as far as we are concerned is the gospel of the kingdom of the heavens where we will rule and reign with Christ. It was preached unto them as well as unto "us". The gospel of the kingdom was preached to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. The word preached did not profit them. They heard the message but they were not convinced that there was substance to the promise even though they had eaten the fruits of the promise. Faith was lacking.

I want to ask this question to all of us. Is the word preached profiting you? Is the preaching you hear making any difference in your life? That is the question that we really need to ask ourselves. If you have come to Grace Bible Church very long you have heard the gospel of the Kingdom. You have heard the common gospel of salvation, believe on the Lord Jesus and though shalt be saved. All the work had been done on the cross. We do not need to labor for that salvation. To rule and reign with Christ means we need to be diligent and faithful to the end. Our faith will be tested as in James 1:3-4 "Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4. But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." If we pass the test we will be complete and entire needing nothing. We will hear well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord ruling over much.

May the Lord help us to hear and not harden our hearts. May the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom encourage us in our faith that will put substance to the good things that are coming and a lifestyle of faithfulness as evidence of our faith.