

A Rest for the People of God

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Preacher: Prof J.W.Fraser

[0 : 00] Hebrews 4, verse 9. There remove therefore a wrath to the people of God.

When he has entered into his wrath, he also has preached from his own wrath, as God did from him. Let us remove therefore to enter into that wrath, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

There are two things I want us to consider together, if we look at each popular portion of God's word. First, what I would call the remnant wrath.

The remnant wrath, not remnant, but the remnant wrath. That is the wrath that we need. And then secondly, how we are to enter into that wrath.

The expectation to enter into that wrath. You get it from verse 11. Let us labor, or help him, or save him, to enter into that wrath, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

[1 : 34] The first thing we shall come back to it, when we look at the wrath that remains, or the remnant wrath, is that it is God's wrath.

He has got a priority in that wrath. He has got a priority in that wrath. It is in his gifts today.

Ours indeed, in one aspect at least. It is his, by participation, and by example.

And then again, we have the words of Psalm 95 quoted, if they shall enter, or surely they shall not enter, into my wrath.

A marvel. A marvel. A marvel. A marvel. So this is not from wrath that we achieve for ourselves. Nor is it a wrath that any human agency can confer upon us.

[2 : 34] It is a wrath that lies in God's gifts to give. He gives it to some, he withholds it from others. He withholds it from others. He withholds it from the unbelieving.

Azotites in the wilderness, he said, surely they shall not enter into my wrath. So the works were prepared before the foundation of the world.

In looking at this wrath that we may use and endeavoring to see what it really is, I think we must bear in mind that the apostle here brought attention to two kinds of risks.

First, there is the risk of the seven. But if this was four in a certain faith of the seventh day in this life, and God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

There is one rest that is spoken of, the Sabbath rest of the seventh day. And it is very interesting that the word that is used in verse 9 is one that draws attention to the sabbathic relations of the rest that remains to the people of God.

[3 : 55] The remnant rest is a sabbathic rest. Because that is the word that is used in the original group. The two concentrators have not always been very accurate.

You have only been always very careful to draw distinctions that are there in the original languages. And they fail here. The word rest is merely a sabbathic.

A sabbatism. If you want to come here to the original word, a sabbatism. The remnant rest is a sabbatism to the people of God. The remnant rest is a sabbatism. The remnant rest is a sabbatism. And that is one of the rest that is spoken of here.

And the other rest is the rest of the land of promise. The rest into which Joshua led the children of Israel after the death of Moses.

A rest that he obtained after the cruel bondage of Egypt from Israel in the brick chains there.

[5 : 04] And also the weirdness of the wilderness from the hearts of the people were often discouraged because of the way. And finally, after they had met their enemies and defeated them in the land of Kedon, they took profession.

The land of the world measured out into the people, to the tribes and they entered into the rest of the land of promise. So, you see, there are two types of rest he mentioned.

One, the rest of the primordial sabbatism. And the other, the rest of the land of promise. We might call it the rest of whom.

This is my rest. Here will I overstay for I be lucky. Now, these two kinds of rest, though they are to be distinguished, have much in common.

They may have different antecedents, and yet they have a lot in common. But at the center, the rest of the trouble is rest after good work, after glorious work.

[6 : 25] God says that they were good. And in the seventh day, he rested from his work of creation in contemplation, so to speak, of that glorious work, of that good work.

Not because God was tired and exhausted, for God is never exhausted. But he rested with the rest of a contemplation and a right contemplation.

The rest of the seventh day. Now, the rest of the canon was a different antecedent.

It was, as we pointed out, after Egypt's bondage and the penal error in the Obani, when they wondered as a punishment for their unbelief and their failure to take God at his word.

Now, what have these rests got to do with the remnant rest that is set before us here?

[7 : 29] The rest that remains for the people of God. For the true Israel. So that is the significance of the word people here.

It is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word for the true people of God. A people that God took for its own possession.

But then, it is a question for the new Israel and the true Israel. Here I think that it partakes this verse that we need.

It partakes both of the Sabbath day rest, but it is called a Sabbath day rest, and it also partakes of the homeless of the land of Canaan.

It partakes of the self. Both teachers, they partake of the self. Because the first was God's gift to the human race.

[8 : 35] A gift that was redirected to Israel at Sinai. And a gift that has been continued in the Christian Church in the Lord's name.

And don't you be led astray by even some evangelicals who would say that the fourth commandment is passed, that the Sabbath is an old Mosaic institution and is no longer relevant to the present day.

The Sabbath has got an eternal significance. Because there is a very definite eschatological aspect about the Sabbath.

Now, you may say, what do you mean by eschatological? Well, it's a worldview that speaks of the last thing. The eternal consolation of all things.

If only the rabbis were asked, what was the world-become like? Now, the world-become was what we would call the unseen world.

[9 : 35] The rabbis called it the world-become. When they were asked what the world-become was like, they said it's like a Sabbath. And indeed, Augustine, one of the fathers of the Church, in his confession, ends with much the same thought.

That the Sabbath speaks of that eternal blessedness. The same thing of a lasting blessedness is the rest of the Sabbath. His idea was that after the epoch of six days, there came a seventh day, an endless Sabbath.

When that blessed Sabbath should begin the endless day that made no night. For it's not said that the Sabbath, the evening and the morning, were the seventh day. It has got no evening, it's got no night.

It is the last that goes on eternally. So then we may say that the rest that we made partakes of the Sabbath rest, that is a census on a holy contemplation of what has been good work.

And I think that is the significance of the verse 10, which common people have found kind of difficult. For he that has entered into his rest, that is God's rest, H with a capital, yes.

[11 : 07] He that has entered, the man who has entered into God's rest, he also ceased for me to end work. Now that is good work, as God did from him.

And it's not to be interpreted as some commentators would have us understand, that this refers to, as cessation from the works of sin.

In other words, that we lay over our evil deeds, the fruitful works of darkness, that we cease from these works, and that we then rest in the righteousness of Christ.

Now, for it is true that we must cease from our works and rest in Christ's righteousness, I do not think that that is the significance of the verse here. Verse 10, for he that has entered into his rest, he also ceased from his own works, as God did from him.

Because God's works were good works. And he would have something that was completely incompatible here, comparing my evil works, the cessation of evil works, with the cessation of the good work of creation.

[12 : 26] Rather, I think, we have the clue to the interpretation of verse 10, in words you will find in the Revelation of the angel, a holy speaks of the saints ceasing from their labor, when they enter into God's heaven, they cease from their labor, and their works be following.

That is, good works. They cease from their labor, and their works be following. So the deed that has entered into God's works, the works that God gives, he also has ceased from his own works.

His labors are finished, I have sought a good fight, I have filled my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is made up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me in that day, and not only to me, but also to all those that love his appearing.

But then the Aramalist West partakes of the second, a rest that we read of here, that is the rest that Joshua gave to the children of Israel when he led them into the land of promise.

And they took possession of the land. From the West End, in their home. That's the point of it.

[13 : 55] They had the refreshing rest on the way. For example, when they came to Eden, where there were seventy palm trees, and there was lots of water, they certainly were refreshed there.

But they couldn't see of Eden. This is home. It wasn't. It was just a staging place on the way home. That's when they came to the E.K.

And they came to the land of promise. They came to God's land. They came to the land of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. They came to the cabinet land. They came to the world. And I think that is behind the attitude of many Israelis today.

Not all of them, of course, but many Israelis, when they feel reluctant to give up a square yard of the parasite that they professed. Israel came home.

This is the point of it. And they were to go no more. That is to say, if they had been obedient to the word of God.

[14 : 57] But because they were not obedient to God's word, they were taken out of God's good land and went into exile after judgment and a punishment for their sins.

Now, what will interest the rest of the seven things in its merely physical aspect?

And the rest of Canaan, looked upon as a profession of the land of promise, did not fulfill all that was involved in and envisaged by God in his rest.

After a prophet says, For if Joshua had given them rest, then did he not ask a word of spoken of another day. But he speaks of another day.

For he says, if they shall enter into my rest, So there remains another rest for the people of God. Partaking in its character of the Sabbath rest of the seventh day, when God blesses them all his work.

[16 : 10] Partaking also of the rest of the land of promise, when Joshua brought the people in and gave them their inheritance. That means, these rest were for the most part outward rest.

physical things. That there is a spiritual profession. And this is what the remnant rest is. So you may say that this rest that we need can be lifted upon in a few of things.

One, I'd a pleasant profession. But you see, isn't it called the rest that remains?

Ah yes. But you must realize that in the context, it remains in relation to reality.

The Sabbath rest of the seventh day, and Joshua's given the people rest in the land of sin, it remains even above these two. That doesn't mean to say that it is entirely future.

[17 : 20] It remains in relation to these other two, and is a present reality. So what we have read, in the, I think the previous chapter, is that we which believe do enter into his rest.

That not we which believe no one day enter into his rest. No, we which believe do enter into his rest. That is, we still have this spiritual stuff, and all it is conveyed.

We feel about spiritual inheritance in a land of promise. Oh, not in Palestine, or Canaan, but in Christ. And there is where we find the rest that remains.

It's a rest in Christ. For there we find the Sabbathism, that we rest in him, and in his work.

And there we find the rest from the toil and the moil of this life, from the sin and the misery of this fallen world, from Egypt's dandies, and the wilderness penal error.

[18 : 39] Come out in me, he says, all you that labor and the heavy laden, and I will give you rest. The rest that remains, my friends, is in Christ.

And even now, we may experience it. At least, we may have a large installment of that rest.

When we rest in him as our lovegivenness. When we rest in him as our love. And when in the words of the Apostle, we are made to sit with him even in the heavenly places.

Our citizenship, say the Apostle, our famous Apostle, is in heaven. Where is our citizenship is? It's in heaven. Our business address may be in this world.

It may be in Leeds, or in Edinburgh, or in Bangkok, or wherever else it may be. Our business address may be in this world, but our domicile is in heaven.

[19 : 43] That's our home address. And even now, we have been raised up in Christ Jesus, and made to sit with him in the heavenly place. And then, of course, this rest is not complete.

This remnant rest is not complete. And so we take in what in Boxster's rest is called the same everlasting rest.

The rest of glory and communion, unbroken of heaven itself. And this is the true home of the believer.

This is the consolation devotedly to the believer. This is the end of Jesus' hope for his people. In my Father's house are many demonstrations.

I go to the clearer place for you. And if I go and to the clearer place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself. But where I am, there you may be also.

[20 : 48] The fulfillment, the confirmation of his redemption and his full salvation.

For his people shall be made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God through all eternity. And all toil and labor will be passed.

And all tears and suffering will be over. And the Lamb that is in the midst of the soul, he shall feed them, and shall lead them and be living faintly to the water.

And God himself shall wipe away all tears out of their eyes. No more fear death, out of their eyes. Because there will be no more need for weakness.

No more sorrow. No more sin. No more grief. But life and felicity and joy and life unbroken throughout eternity.

[21 : 54] Very neighbor, therefore, as sub of rest to the people of God. Now, more briefly, I want to look at the practical side of things here, the expectation to enter into this rest.

But it's also neighbor to enter into that rest that any man fall after the same example of unbelief. Once again, let me stress, the faith rest is God's gift.

My rest, he says. This is my rest. If they tell him to enter into my rest. My good to give. My comfort to show.

Then you say, but if it is God's gift, how is it that we must labor to enter into it?

Well, let me say, we are not to labor, you think, of seeking to earn it as a reward of our worth. But let me remind you that this rest will not fall into your love like an over-light pear hanging over our wall.

[23 : 17] Jesus said, try to enter into the straight deep. So, there are diligence with the Apostle to make the calling of the election sure.

The Apostle here warns the New Israel, the Hebrew Christians, that some of their forefathers could not enter into the land of promise because of their unbelief and disobedience.

They say it is the profession of what was God's gift. And so, my friends, even though it is God's gift, yet we must give all diligence, show all zeal, hasten and not delay, and labor to enter into that rest.

Strive to enter in at the straight deep. Just as Asa and Joshua failed to enter in, and indeed it had to fight to obtain.

I just say to me, but is that not contradictory again? Certainly paradoxical, but not contradictory. The psalmist says, their sword did not get the land, their bow did not save them, but God's right hand on is countering for he gives them favor.

[24 : 41] Yet they had this one. But fighting by themselves, they never got anywhere. He fought alone without God's help at Eli, and a handful took them to flight.

The taking of Jericho was an indication of how the work they had been in the land. It was by the blowing of the trumpet of the priest that the world fell down, not by the buttering rams of Joshua's army.

And yet, they had to do their bits, as we say. How then must we, leader, to enter into this rest? How are we going very quickly to be possession of it, of God's gift to us?

Well, first and foremost, by faith and obedience. Also, faith is through disobedience due to unbelief. So we see, they could not enter in because of unbelief and their carpenter's stolen away from it.

Let us therefore see it as a promise in rest of us, of entering into this rest, any of you should still become sure of it. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, let any man fall, that is fall dead, after the same example of unbelief, unbelief, and just obedience.

[26 : 07] unbelief. My friends, we must maintain our faith. We must feed it on the promises of God.

We must nourish it, not looking at the things of time and sense and appearances, for they are all of those God's promises. But we must look away to those promises from time and say like Judson of Burma, who had far more faith than the missionary committed in America, the Saint Amant, when he was having no success in Burma, and they were going to recall the missionary.

He wrote back and said, the Cape Cure is as bright as the promises of God. So let's look away from the discouraging thing around us, and discouraging the kids, and believe that what God has said, he is able to perform.

We must nourish our faith on the promises of God. We must feed it upon the word of God and prayer. Remember that faith is not something exercised once and for all.

Faith in Jesus Christ, as the the transference from death to life, in the first act that makes a man a Christian, is certainly done once and for all, it's a critical act, it's decisive.

[27 : 36] But the Christian life is a life of faith. daily, hourly, continually, we must believe and keep on believing, to the very end. So we live by sin and no pressure. And faith must issue an obedience.

These two go together. The common twin, faith and obedience. No man can say he believes, he judges also obey. For to believe and obey, there is no other way to preach God, to enter into our inheritance.

And then, also, to labour and to enter into his wealth, we must watch over our daily living. See when he says the apostle, that he walks circumspectly, not as serious but as wise, with any time because of labor evil.

And my friend, it's all the more necessary, is a luxe and a sloppy, marrying such as us. So that we've got easy going Christians today, even easy going evangelicals.

to Jericho. Do not conform to this world, says the apostle, but be ye transformed by the healing of your mind, proving that they are good and acceptable and the perfect will of God.

[28 : 55] And Peter tells us, something else that we should do, only as we labour in Jesus Christ. To their ability, he says, to make their calling of the election sure, and to your faith adversely, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patient endurance, and to patient endurance, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

For these things be in you and abound, they shall make you fruitful in the true knowledge of God. This exercise in addition, adding to our faith, these six other virtues, is a great exercise indeed.

to, in labouring, to enter into that reign. And so, I will repeat a few things. There shall be ministered unto you an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

An abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. But let me finish. I will say, asking the question which some of you may be asking, but how shall we enter anything that we're seeing now?

Today, the apostle here is speaking to those who already have entered into, let's say, the first installment of that reign.

[30 : 28] We would believe, he says, they'll enter into that reign. and we must strive, our labour, to enter into it fully, into the full inheritance of the heavenly kingdom. But how do we feel outside? Is there any way in which we can enter into that reign?

Perhaps someone will say, it's all right for the people of God, but how can I, who may be outside the people of God, if there are chance for you to enter into that reign? To find rest in Christ? To find rest at last in heaven? Ah, yes there is. He says, come unto me. Come unto me. All you that labour on the heavenly kingdom, and I will give you rest.

If any man says, let him come unto me and rest. Come unto me. And you not say, give me the people of God. Who may be outside the people of God? But how can I, who may be outside the people of God? If there are chance for you to enter into that reign?

To find rest in Christ? To find rest at last in heaven? Ah, yes there is. He says, come unto me. Come unto me. All you that labour on a heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

If any man says, let him come unto me and rest. and to come to Christ. It's simply to believe in him and to receive him as our salvation.

[31 : 32] To come to Christ is to lay our work upon him for our salvation. It's simply to believe in him with the reflection of faith and trust. Come upon me and I will give you rest.

Take my work upon you and learn of me and give your find rest to your soul. For my work is easy and my burden is light.

Let us pray.