

## Lesson Seven — The Second Warning, Part II

*Day One — Do Not Harden Your Heart*

*Day Two — An Evil and Unbelieving Heart*

*Day Three — Entering His Rest or Not Entering*

*Day Four — The Sabbath Day*

*Day Five — The Rest*

In last week's lesson, we covered the first part of the second of five warnings to *the holy brethren, who are partakers of a heavenly calling*. This week we will cover the remaining part of the warning, as the warning flows into Hebrews chapter four.

By now, you should have a fairly good handle on the subject matter of the second warning of Hebrews. You should know that our being a house for God and a companion with Christ depends on our *holding fast the confidence of our hope*. I trust that you understand what *the hope* is, and that the *hope* and the *rest* are interrelated.

This week we will want to spend some time looking at more detail concerning *the rest*. Hebrews 3:11 tells us that God swore in His wrath that *they* (the first generation of the Children of Israel) *should not enter His rest*. What does this mean? And why use this historical event as a warning to us? Is there a possibility that we may not be able to enter His rest?

Usually people tend to think that this rest refers to one of two things. People tend to think the rest either refers to a present rest in Christ, or to our heavenly eternal state...rest in heaven for eternity. It refers to neither. First, the warning clearly states that we are to strive toward (in a present sense) a future rest (4:1ff). Therefore it cannot be referring to a rest we are to partake in now. And as for striving to enter an eternal rest, our eternal life **is** eternally secure through the finished work of Christ! How then would this warning be applied to us today? How would we strive to enter something that is already secure for us? Based upon the context in the Book of Hebrews, we must see this rest as having to do with the coming Age, the Messianic Era.

By the end of this week, I hope you are sure of what this all means. I also hope you are in the habit of beginning each day of study in prayer. It is futile to come to the Scriptures without being submitted to the Holy Spirit. So be sure to stop and pray at the beginning of every day's study.

Having prayed, let's get started.

## Day One — Do Not Harden Your Heart

First, you will need to review the summary you wrote at the end of last week's lesson or the lesson itself. With that review it should be pretty easy to see that the second warning is straight forward. Read your reviews now.

Now, please read through Hebrews 3:1-4:13 one more time. Herein is the second warning. While reading it, watch the flow and the repetition of what the author says. Do that now.

Did you see anything new?

Let's go back now to the context. Verse 7 begins with the word *Therefore*. Check it out and watch the flow. This is the crux of the warning. Remember, unless otherwise stated, if the text is in all caps, it indicates that the passage is being quoted from the Old Testament.

### Hebrews 3

**7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, 8 DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS, 9 WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED *Me* BY TESTING *Me*, AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS. 10 THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID, 'THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART; AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS'; 11 AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.'"**

This passage is taken from Psalm 95, again something David wrote. He wrote it as a warning to his people. In the same way, the author of Hebrews uses this same warning as a warning to us. It is interesting to note that a generation of Old Testament people *subsequent* to the first generation were warned about the same thing about which we are warned. God must be serious about this warning for His people.

You will find the entire Psalm 95 in your Appendix. Study through it, and in the Psalm be sure to highlight the section of the Psalm which is quoted here in Hebrews chapter three.

How serious do you think God is about this warning that He should inspire it to be written to His people at two different times?

Do you remember what it meant that the first generation of the Children of Israel did not enter His rest? Briefly state what it was.

In speaking to the second generation, Moses spoke of the *rest* into which they were about to enter. Read the verses below and note how living in the land, entering into the rest, and possessing the inheritance are one in the same:

**Deuteronomy 3:20 until the LORD gives rest to your fellow countrymen as to you, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God will give them beyond the Jordan. Then you may return every man to his possession, which I have given you.'**

**Deuteronomy 12:10** “When you cross the Jordan and live in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around *you* so that you live in security,

**Deuteronomy 25:19** “Therefore it shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.

Can you think of how this would apply to us by way of this second warning in Hebrews? If you can, good for you. If you don’t see it yet, hang in there! It should become more and more clear.

We’ll pick it up here tomorrow.

## Day Two — An Evil and Unbelieving Heart

Pray for your study time today. Continue to ask the Lord for understanding.

Now the writer of Hebrews brings his readers’ focus back to themselves having used the Children of Israel as an example.

**Hebrews 3:12** Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. **13** But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called “Today,” lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Who is the writer speaking here to?

What is he telling them (us) to be careful about?

Given the context, relate what v. 12 has to do with the Children of Israel.

What does the writer tell his readers to do in v. 13?

What is the potential of the brethren? (Note the end of v. 13).

May I ask you a personal question? *What do **you** feel **your** potential is?* In other words, *What could happen to **you** if **you** do not hold fast **your** confidence and the boast of your hope firm until the end?* Be very specific in your answer, because **you** are the reader to whom the writer is addressing this warning!

Now continuing —

Hebrews 3

14 For we have become partakers <3353> of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance <5287> firm until the end; 15 while it is said, “TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN <4645> YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME.” 16 For who provoked *Him* when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt *led* by Moses? 17 And with whom was He angry <4360> for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient <544>? 19 And *so* we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief <570>.

\*partakers [companions] <3353>

\*We will use the word *companion* rather than *partaker*, as it gives us a better connotation of how the word is used in this epistle.

assurance <5287>

harden <4645>

angry <4360>

disobedient <544>

unbelief <570>

*Christ was faithful as a Son over His house — whose house we are if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end* (3:6). This warning is repeated to us in v. 14, with just a bit of variance from how it is stated in v. 6. *We have become partakers [lit., companions] of Christ if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end.* Compare both verses. What do you see?

It amazes me that this warning seems so important to the Holy Spirit that He prompted the writer of Hebrews to pen the essence of the warning a second time, only in slightly different words. It is almost as if He is saying, “In other Words, if you didn’t get it the first time, I am going to repeat it again...”

**Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me!**

## Understanding Hebrews — Pressing Toward Maturity

## Lesson Seven The Second Warning, Part II

From Hebrews 3:7-19, briefly state what the Children of Israel did in the provocation:

Who did this?

What was God's response to their actions?

What was their punishment?

Verses 18 and 19 is a result of what would happen to us if we acted out v. 12. Relate these verses together. What do you see?

Do you believe that that is a potential for you?

You had better believe it!

We must look closely at what it means to *not* be *able to enter His rest*. Beginning with 3:11 make a list of all the references which state the phrase *not enter my (or His) rest*.

I hope this is coming together for you. If it is, it should be blowing your mind. What an awesome thing the Lord has put before us. And we need to pay *much closer attention to it* than what we have been, *lest we drift away from it* and *neglect so great salvation*. How do we think that we would *escape* the *just recompense*?

The answer is, of course, we will not escape! Therefore...**pay closer attention — much closer attention!**

OK? See you tomorrow.

## Day Three — Entering Rest Versus Not Entering Rest

After you have spent some time in prayer today, please read Hebrews 4:1-13 from your sheets in the Appendix.

As we have already seen this warning is dealing with *the rest*. This passage is the heart of the warning. In v. 9 you see the phrase *Sabbath rest*. Look up the definition for this word.

Sabbath rest <4520>

Hebrews 4:1 tells us to *fear* if any one of us may seem to have come short of entering *the rest*, since there remains a promise of yet being able to enter. What hope this should be to us! And/or what fear it should evoke in us. *Hope* that we may yet enter! And *fear* that we, by our own choice of actions, fall short. (What a powerful choice! What awesome ramifications!)

Since verse two deals with the *good news* which has been *preached to us*, let me ask you something. Have you had the good news preached to you? In one sense you could say, “Of course I have!” Most likely you would not be doing any Bible study if you had not heard, received, and believed the gospel of grace — the good news that Jesus is your Passover Lamb and He died for you.

But let me ask you another question. Have you had the *full council of God’s Word* given to you? Paul spoke of the full council of God’s Word when he spoke to the elders in Ephesus in Acts chapter twenty. As you read through the following passage, pay special attention to the fact that he did not *shrink from declaring what was profitable* to them in v. 19, and the fact that the *whole council of God’s Word* consists of the gospel (noun) of the grace of God, and *preaching* (verb form of the same word used for gospel) *the kingdom of God* (vv.24-27). Then notice the word *inheritance* and whom the inheritance is among (v. 32). Think through what Paul is saying. You may even want to underline vv. 24-27 for particular attention. Read the passage below.

### Acts 20

**17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church.**

**18 And when they had come to him, he said to them, “You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; 20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, 21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**22 And now, behold, bound in spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. 24 But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.**

**25 And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will see my face no more. 26 Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am**

innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. 28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

32 And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. 34 You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my *own* needs and to the men who were with me. 35 In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

Paul would always preach the **gospel of grace** to a non-believer (v. 24), then would begin preaching to him about **the gospel of the glories of Christ** (v. 25, 27). Our gospel is like a two-sided coin. So was the good news given to Israel. Through the voice of Moses, God told the Children of Israel His means of redemption. The lamb must be killed, and the blood had to be applied. Having put faith in what God had said about the blood of the paschal lamb, they walked out of Egypt a saved, redeemed people. God's firstborn son. (And every generation thereafter was to celebrate the Feast of Passover annually as a remembrance of what God did for them. This annual celebration would afford every generation thereafter the opportunity to believe that death and shed blood is the means of God's redemption). In Egypt, they had believed the **gospel of grace**, so to speak. But they had yet to hear the **gospel of the kingdom**, or **the gospel of the glories**. That was to come in the wilderness at Mt. Sinai.

After they walked through the Red Sea, they were taken to Mount Sinai where they were given more good news. At Mount Sinai, they were told *why* they had been redeemed. They had been redeemed for a purpose — in order for them *to become a kingdom of priests*, God's own possession.

They were taught for the better part of a year about *this* good news (gospel) — about what God's plans were for them to be a kingdom of priests and to rule the nations with Him dwelling in their midst. But this good news, the second portion of the message, *did not profit them* (give them their inheritance in the land — their rest) because they did not unite it with faith. In their unbelief they said, "No" to God; they would not go into the Promised Land, and they wanted to turn back toward Egypt (see Numbers 13 and 14).

Well, guess what? We have had, through the pages of Scripture, the same good news (the gospel of the glories of Christ) preached to us, but how many have heard, listened, and believed? How many have united it with faith? Christians today only focus on one side of the Gospel, neglecting the other side of the good news.

Scripture deals with the complete gospel, not just one facet of it. We tend to look at just one facet — the gospel of grace. But once a person has believed this portion of the *good news*, he must be told of the reason for his redemption — to be a kingdom of priests in the heavenly realm of this kingdom (I Peter 2:4-5, 9). We have

## Understanding Hebrews — Pressing Toward Maturity

## Lesson Seven The Second Warning, Part II

read it so many times, Exodus 19:4-6. But now let us see how the New Testament relates the same desire of God for us —

**1 Peter 2**

**5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

**...9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**

In summary, Peter reflects the same idea as the second warning found in Hebrews. The warning is this: Don't do as Israel did by longing for the things of this world (Egypt), thereby missing the promise of the rest. Don't reject this facet of the good news as they did. They believed in what God said about the blood of the lamb, and they acted on their belief — they appropriated the blood. But subsequent to that, they had the good news preached to them concerning the promised land and their call to receive their inheritance in that land. They were to be *a kingdom of priests* (Ex. 19:4-6). But they did not unite the hearing of **this** good news with faith, and therefore, it *did not profit them*. Consequently, they didn't enter into the promise of that rest.

What about you? Will you unite the hearing of this good news with faith (believe what God says about it) and act upon that faith? I hope you do! It gives you something to meditate upon today.

See you tomorrow.

## Day Four — The Sabbath Day

Pray!

As the writer of Hebrews progresses on through this warning, he incorporates a very interesting (and possibly surprising) bit of information. He tells us **when** the rest will be. Hebrews 4:3, 4, 9 shows us that the rest will be *on the Sabbath Day*. Go back to the text of Hebrews chapter four (printed on your Appendix Sheet) and check out what it says. Without making any interpretation about it, write out what vv. 3, 4, and 9 say:

This continues to reveal to us, as all Scripture is progressive, that there was and is a very definite reason for God to place so much emphasis on the Sabbath rest. God had given very strict laws to Israel about the Sabbath. We have already looked at it in part when we studied Psalm 104 back in Week Two, Day Five of our study. The work of God in creation and His rest on the seventh day reveals more to us than just the fact that He rested on the seventh day. In fact, these very verses in Hebrews chapter four reveal that His seventh day rest is intricately tied together with a seventh day rest for the people of God.

The writer of Hebrews is not the only epistle writer who makes this comparison. The Apostle Peter referred to this Sabbath Day in his second letter. In the following passage, notice how Peter relates this day of rest back to Genesis chapter one, just as our writer does. And speaking of these same things, note what Peter wrote about the last days —



2 Peter 3

3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts, 4 and saying,

“Where is the promise of His coming? For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.”

5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God *the* heavens existed long ago and *the* earth was formed out of water and by water, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. 7 But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

8 But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! 13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, 15 and regard the patience of our Lord *to be* salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 16 as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. 17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

## Understanding Hebrews — Pressing Toward Maturity

## Lesson Seven The Second Warning, Part II

Peter speaks of the same things that the writer of Hebrews speaks about, the same things that Paul speaks about (II Pe. 3:15, 16). It is all looking forward to that coming Day. It can be no other day than the seventh day — our glorious day of rest.

*Therefore, let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.*

We'll close with this passage from Isaiah today:

### Isaiah 58

**13** “If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot from doing your *own* pleasure on My holy day, And call the sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the LORD honorable, And shall honor it, desisting from your *own* ways, from seeking your *own* pleasure, And speaking *your own word*, **14** Then you will take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And I will feed you *with* the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

We should be viewing our Sabbath Day in the same way, for the same purpose.

## Day Five — The Rest

Begin in prayer today. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you truth about *the rest* which awaits us, for that is what we will be looking at today.

First, we'll look at a few passages from the Old Testament. These verses deal with just what *the rest* was for the Children of Israel.

### Deuteronomy 3

**18** Then I commanded you at that time, saying, ‘The LORD your God has given you this land to possess it; all you valiant men shall cross over armed before your brothers, the sons of Israel. ...**20** until the LORD gives rest to your fellow countrymen as to you, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God will give them beyond the Jordan. Then you may return every man to his possession, which I have given you.’

### Joshua 1

**13** “Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, ‘The LORD your God gives you rest, and will give you this land.’

What is the rest connected with in these verses?

### Isaiah 11

**10** Then it will come about in that day that the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples; And His resting place [*lit.*, rest] will be glorious [*lit.*, glory (noun)].

What is *the rest* connected with in this verse?

## Understanding Hebrews — Pressing Toward Maturity

## Lesson Seven The Second Warning, Part II

Do you see that *the rest* is connected with the inheritance and the inheritance is the land?

Do you also see that *the rest shall be glory*? The passage literally reads, “And his Rest will be glory.”

In order to tie a few things together here, let’s do a quick review of Psalm Two in the Appendix. (We covered this Psalm in Week One.) Specifically, what does Jesus ask for in v. 8? (Write down as much detail as you can.)

Then read what Paul says about Abraham’s inheritance in Romans:

**Romans 4:13 For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.**

How is the inheritance described in the verse?

But notice how the author of Hebrews connects the inheritance of the world with the heavenly city in the following passage —

### Hebrews 11

**8 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.**

What city is connected with the inheritance in this passage?

Hebrews goes on to speak of something else about us in connection with this city.

**Hebrews 13:14 For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking *the city* which is to come.**

King David looked forward to this same city:

**Psalm 132: 13 For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His habitation.**

**Psalms 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion *in* the far north, The city of the great King.**

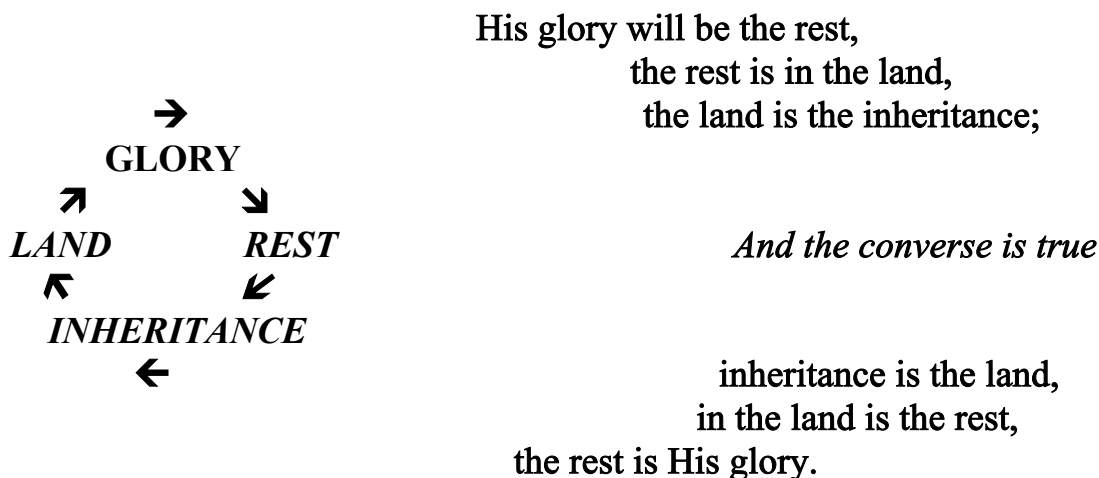
Now, tying this together with what we have learned in our second warning here in Hebrews chapters three and four, what do you think it would mean if you missed out on the rest? When answering this question, remember what Hebrews is dealing with...*the inhabited earth which will not be subjected to angels* (2:5). And remember, too, that the redeemed generation coming out of Egypt forfeited *their inheritance in the land*. So what is the potential for us?

One last verse —

**Matthew 25:34** “Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”

What is the inheritance as stated in this verse?

In closing today, I have a phrase which may help you in putting this altogether.



### And to enter the rest is to share His Glory.

We have covered the second warning of Hebrews in these past two weeks. As we end, will you put this warning into your own words on sheet in the Appendix entitled *The Five Warnings of Hebrews*. The remaining study time for today will be spent doing your commentary work. You may also use the time to be in review of what we have already studied, and you could spend some time one on one with the Lord praying in earnest for your own steadfastness.

Work on the Appendix sheet now. Then spend the remaining time wisely before the Lord.

If you are doing commentary work here is your assignment according to which book you are reading:

Arlen Chitwood's book [From Egypt to Canaan](#), read chapter five *The Sabbath Rest*, and chapter six *The Septenary Arrangement of Scripture*.

Philip Mauro's book [God's Pilgrim](#), read chapter seven *The Rest that Remaineth*.