



## **7: Our Sabbath Rest** (Hebrews 4:1-11)

Does the New Testament teach that we should obey the Old Testament command to “keep the Sabbath” or is there a deeper meaning? Today we discover how we find our Sabbath rest in Jesus.

### teachingnotes

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\* All Scripture is from CSB (Christian Standard Bible)

Some (e.g. Seventh Day Adventists) believe that we are breaking the command to honor the Sabbath (Ex 20:8; Deut 5:12) by worshipping on Sunday rather than the Biblical Sabbath (Friday evening through Saturday evening). Is that TRUE?

- The Jewish apostles of Jesus never stressed keeping the Sabbath commands to Gentile converts.
- Paul doesn't expect his Gentile audience to keep the Hebrew Sabbath.

**Colossians 2:16-17** Therefore, don't let anyone judge you in regard to food and drink or in the matter of a festival or a new moon or a **Sabbath day**. These are a shadow of what was to come; **the substance is Christ**.

Gentiles are not bound to keep Old Testament dietary laws, festivals, and Sabbath commands because **they point to something...Someone Better - the Lord Jesus**.

Yet, *there is a New Testament verse that DOES speak of a Sabbath that remains.*

**Hebrews 4:9** Therefore, a Sabbath rest remains for God's people.

What's that mean? Let's find out, as we discover the incredible, wonderful truth - that **Jesus is Our Sabbath Rest**.

**Catch the Context** We are warned NOT to be like the ancient Hebrews who **refused to believe God** and got locked out of the Promised Land rather than crossing into it. Chapter 3 ends with these words:

**Hebrews 3:19** So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

- **How we Behave shows Who We Believe**. We can say we trust God, but our behavior shows if that's true or not.
- Genuine disciples of Jesus don't just START the race - they FINISH the race, "*holding firmly until the end*" (Heb 3:14b).

❓ Have YOU *examined your faith to see if it's legitimate*?

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### **The Promise to enter His rest remains**

**Hebrews 4:1-2** Therefore, since **the promise to enter His rest remains**, let us beware that none of you be found to have **fallen short**. For we also have received the good news just as they did. But the message they heard did not benefit them, since they were not united with those who heard it in faith.

1400 years after the ancient Hebrews were turned away from God's Promised Land rest, **the promise to enter His rest remains** for the 1st century audience as well as for us (the 21st century audience).

- **Will we be like the crowd that followed the 10 unfaithful leaders** who refused to believe God would go with them into the rest of the Promised Land? OR **will we be like Joshua and Caleb**, who trusted God and were able to enter the rest of the Promised Land?

❓ *At the end of our lives, will we be found to have **fallen short** of God's **rest**?*

**Hebrews 4:3-5** For **we who have believed enter the rest**, in keeping with what He has said, *So I swore in my anger, "They will not enter My rest,"* even though His works have been finished since the foundation of the world. For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in this way: **And on the seventh day God rested from all His works.** Again, in that passage he says, *They will never enter My rest.*

**What REST is this referring to?** The Hebrews began their Sabbath gathering in the Synagogue reading Psalm 95 concluding with the phrase we continue to see: *"So I swore in my anger, "They will not enter My rest" (Ps 95:11).* This is speaking of the Promised Land rest.

That text from Ps 95 would then be followed by Genesis 2:1-3.<sup>1</sup> Now we know why the author of Hebrews quotes Genesis 2:2 on the heels of Ps 95:11, that **"on the seventh day God rested from all His works"**. *This is speaking of God creating the earth & everything in it, after which He RESTED. God didn't REST because He was tired.* Instead, **God rested**, meaning that His work of creation was complete.

🕒 The **Promise Land rest** and **God's Sabbath rest after completing creation** are symbolic of a more complete **FUTURE rest** that God intended for those who trust Him.

**Hebrews 4:6-7** Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news did not enter because of disobedience, He again specifies a certain day—**today**. He specified this speaking through David after such a long time: **Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.**

Beyond *the Promise Land Rest* (during the days of Moses) and *God's Sabbath rest* (at the end of creation) -the author of this sermon shows the 1st century Hebrews *the rest God offers is available to them* - **TODAY!** That **REST** is available for us! *This Sabbath rest is much more than entering into the Promised Land of Israel or taking a day to rest and refocus as we enter the upcoming week.*

**Hebrews 4:8-11** For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. Therefore, **a Sabbath rest remains for God's people.** For the person who has entered his rest has rested from his own works, just as God did from his. Let us, then, **make every effort to enter that rest**, so that no one will fall into the same pattern of disobedience.

*Didn't Joshua take them into the Promised Land? Didn't Joshua have them keep the Sabbath commands to rest every week?* Of course he did. Yet, **Joshua** was not able to give them the **rest** that God spoke about coming on **another day**.

While **Joshua** (Hebrew **Yeshua**) brought the people to the Promised Land, *he could not bring them into God's ultimate Sabbath rest.* Now 1400 years later, **a greater Yeshua** (Hebrew for Greek **Jesus**) **WOULD** bring His people into *God's ultimate Sabbath rest.*

This is the **Sabbath rest** that **remains** for **God's people** that we can **rest from our own works just as God did from His**. Again, this speaks to the **COMPLETION** of God's work.

✗ This doesn't mean God isn't working today. After all Jesus taught, *"My Father is still working, and I am working also."* (Jn 5:17)

✗ *Entering God's rest doesn't mean we sit back and RELAX.* We are to **make every effort to enter that rest** as we trust & obey, grow & mature, sacrifice & give, share the gospel, face persecution, serve others, & do good works.

✓ Entering God's Sabbath rest is **recognizing that we don't enter by OUR good works, but by the good & COMPLETED work of Jesus** - His perfect life & substitute sacrifice for our sins. Jesus breathed His last and said, *"It is finished"* - His work was complete - and we can **REST** in that, as we work for Him.

**Matthew 11:28-30** **Come to Me**, all of you who are weary and burdened, and **I will give you rest.** Take up my yoke and learn from Me, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and **you will find rest for your souls.** For My yoke is easy and my burden is light.

A **yoke** was a wooden frame that fit on the shoulders of animals to pull heavy loads or plow fields. This image became symbolic for laws or teachings that people submitted to. Jesus used this symbolism to communicate His frustration with religious leaders who 1) didn't practice what they preached and who 2) refused to help their disciples with the heavy load they put on them.

**Matthew 23:4** They tie up heavy loads that are hard to carry and put them on people's shoulders, but they themselves aren't willing to lift a finger to move them.

By contrast, Jesus was offering **rest** to anyone who is **weary and burdened** - those who are exhausted and tired of carrying a heavy load (e.g. daily difficulties, sin struggles, & unrealistic expectations).

<sup>1</sup> William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, vol. 47A, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1991), 100.

*This rest is not retirement, a ceasing of work.* Instead, it's *changing WHO you're working for!* We find rest for our souls when we submit to a Master who is lowly and humble, a Master who won't put too heavy a load and leave you to fend for yourself; a Master who lays down His life for His servants.

***BIG TRUTH: Our Sabbath Rest is found in following Jesus.***

***There is a God-shaped hole in your soul, and NOTHING ELSE will fit.*** What are you trying to plug in here?

☀ **Augustine** (4th century Christian leader)

*"You have formed us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in You".<sup>2</sup>*

**Matthew 11:28** Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and **I will give you rest.**

## ***FEET2FAITH***

1. ***Turn from sin and turn to Jesus.***
2. ***Open the Scriptures & obey what Jesus says.***
3. ***Seek like-minded Christians to journey together.*** Growth Groups at 10am; Ladies & Guys Group Wed @6:30.

## **heretoserveyou**

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- \* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), **Christy** (673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- \* Or call our **deacons & wives**: Alan & Christy Androski (464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (673-7952), Tim & Joni Hughey (464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (464-6717), Jim & Derita Pinkard (464-6188), Fain & Linda Poppell (464-1282), or Tom & Martha Waddail (973-0011).

<sup>2</sup> Philip Schaff, ed., *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, The Confessions of St. Augustine*, trans. J. G. Pilkington (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974), p. 45.