



## The Book of Hebrews 3:11\_ Entering Into God's Rest

April 14, 2024

### **Holy Text: Hebrews 3:7-11 (Focus on verse 11)**

Last week, we put forward at least Ten ways we could avoid the error being warned against in these verses and keep a soft heart before our God.

Today, may we see clearly the author's intent: to warn God's people SO THAT they would enter into His rest. Indeed, that "there remaineth a rest for the people of God" (Heb 4:9) is a major biblical theme.

We see it first mentioned in Genesis 2:

**Genesis 2:1-3 (KJV)** *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he **rested** on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*

*Rested* here is *shâbath* in Hebrew. This became known as the Sabbath:

**Exodus 20:8-11 (KJV)** *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*

Sabbath in Hebrew is *shabbâth* which means "an intermission." It comes from a root word that means to "desist from exertion."

For most of Christian history, the Church has considered the first day of the week (or the LORD's Day, Sunday) as the "Christian Sabbath." This concept comes from Scripture:

**Matthew 28:1-2 (KJV)** *In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. 2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.*

**Mark 16:9 (KJV)** *Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.*

**Acts 20:7 (KJV)** *And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.*

**1 Corinthians 16:2 (KJV)** *Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

**Revelation 1:10 (KJV)** *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,*

The Christian Sabbath was a day where ordinary work and amusements ceased that we might rest in Christ. The Westminster Divines and Baptist Father's in their catechisms said it this way:

*Q. 58. What is required in the fourth commandment?*

*A. The fourth commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word; expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy sabbath to himself.*

*Q. 59. Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly sabbath?*

*A. From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian sabbath.*

*Q. 60. How is the sabbath to be sanctified?*

*A. The sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.<sup>1</sup>*

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*The sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs aforehand, do not only observe a holy rest all day, from their own works, words and thoughts, about their worldly employment and recreations,<sup>30</sup> but are also taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.<sup>2</sup>*

### **The Blessings of Rest**

From the beginning, by His own example and by His holy command, God designed His human creatures to want and desire, seek out, and be renewed and refreshed by rest!

This makes sense. God's gave man a command to work and take dominion:

**Genesis 1:26-28 (KJV)** *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

For six days of the week, man was to imitate His Creator, ruling over and subduing creation for God's glory. On the seventh day, man was to, and needs to rest. Why?

### **Because Rest Rejuvenates:**

1. Man get's tired spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

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<sup>1</sup> Westminster Shorter Catechism

<sup>2</sup> 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith

2. Spiritual rest is need to reset and refocus on our God, who He is and what He has done.
3. Emotionally rest is needed given the trials of life and the warfare to which every believer is called.
4. Rest provides perspective. Exhaustion makes everything seem worse. There is a reason everyone loves vacation!
5. Rest is in accordance with our design. Our bodies need sleep (rest) daily, and prolonged periods of rest in order to function.

**Biblical Rest declares to our soul that all is (or will be) well. It presupposes order and blessing. (Because who can rest in disorder and chaos?) It is often the fruit of much obedience to God, hard work and labor in His vineyard, and walking by faith not sight. Our earthy times of Household and Sabbath Rest is a promised blessing and points us forward to the *Great Rest* that is yet to come!**

### **The Three Types of Rest in Scripture**

1. **Earthy Rest**, or *Circumstantial Rest*, best represented by God's Old Testament promises to Israel for a Land of Promise.
2. **Emmanuel's Rest**, or the the *Rest Promised to the Church in Christ*. This is primarily a *spiritual* rest wherein are made meet (or fit) for the life to come through the LORD of Promise.<sup>3</sup>
3. **Eternal Rest**, or *Eschatological/Final Rest*, wherein we are with Jesus through death or the LORD's Return: The Last Promise fulfilled!

### **Entering Into Earthly Rest**

1. God's promises to Old Testament Israel were often circumstantial in nature: freedom from physical slavery and a land flowing with milk and honey. At the burning bush, here is what God said to Moses:

**Exodus 3:7-8 (KJV)** *And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; 8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.*

2. **IF** they were obedient, this rest would manifest in blessings they could see and experience: the defeat of their enemies, material/economic prosperity, and the building of their households and provision for subsequent generations:

**Deuteronomy 11:8-28 (KJV)** *Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it; 9 And that ye may prolong your days in the land, which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land that floweth with milk and honey.*

**10** *For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: 11 But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: 12 A land which the LORD thy God*

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<sup>3</sup> "The old covenant was a covenant of prosperity. The new covenant is a covenant of adversity whereby we are being weaned from this present world and made meet for the world to come." Charles Spurgeon

careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

**13** And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, **14** That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. **15** And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full. **16** Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; **17** And then the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

**18** Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. **19** And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. **20** And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates: **21** That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

**22** For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him; **23** Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves. **24** Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be. **25** There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the LORD your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you.

**26** Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; **27** A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: **28** And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

3. Earthy rest in the Old Testament was about prosperity and tangible blessing! Again, if they were obedient:

**Deuteronomy 28:1-8 (KJV)** And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: **2** And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God. **3** Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. **4** Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. **5** Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. **6** Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. **7** The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out

*against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. 8 The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*

4. All of these promises ultimately pointed to Christ, but one can say that blessing His people with temporal rest was certainly in the heart of God in the Old Testament. This is good news!

- God does care about the details of your life. He always has! God delights in blessing His children!
- Houses full of good things, wells digged, vineyards and olive trees, and eating until full are blessings as long as we don't forget God! (Deut 6:11-12)
- God's goodness in allowing earthly prosperity, if properly understood, should produce rejoicing! Indeed:

***Psalms 126:5-6 (KJV)** They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

### **Entering Into Emmanuel's Rest**

1. God's promises for New Testament Israel (or the Church) are decidedly spiritual in nature. Although our spiritual abundance is greater than the average the Old Testament saint, our call to suffering (according to God's will) is manifold and unescapable:

***Luke 9:23-24 (KJV)** And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. 24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.*

***John 16:33 (KJV)** These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

***Acts 14:19-22 (KJV)** And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. 20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, 22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*

***2 Timothy 3:12 (KJV)** Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

2. Of course, God still blesses us in visible ways, and if we follow the Scriptures, we tend to see these blessings manifest according to His will. We, as a congregation, work hard for and trust God to bring about:

- **Biblical Disciples walking in joy and the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 2)**
- **Biblically Healthy Households according to the Scriptures (Eph 5, Col 3, 1 Pet 3)**



- **Biblical Church Ministry, according to the Scriptures (Matt 16:18-19; Acts 2:42-47, all the epistles)**

3. But Emmanuel's Rest (or resting in Christ) is more about the internal than the external, rejoicing in the midst of life's trials by faith even as we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor 3:18) The biblical testimony is bountiful:

**Matthew 5:10-12 (KJV)** *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

**Acts 5:40-42 (KJV)** *And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. 42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (KJV)** *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

**Philippians 1:19-21 (KJV)** *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. 21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

**1 Peter 5:8-11 (KJV)** *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. 11 To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

### **Entering Into Eternal Rest**

1. God's promise to the Redeemed ones (Old and New Testament by faith) is Good News!  
**Mark 1:14-15 (KJV)** *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

**Luke 4:18-19 (KJV)** *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

2. Those who have been saved by grace through faith are given eternal life in Jesus Christ!

**John 5:24-25 (KJV)** *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. 25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.*

**John 10:27-28 (KJV)** *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

**1 John 2:24-25 (KJV)** *Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.*

**Romans 6:22-23 (KJV)** *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

3. And because of that, they, upon death, enter into Eternal Rest! Hallelujah!

**Revelation 14:12-13 (KJV)** *Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. 13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*

**Revelation 21:1-8 (KJV)** *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. 6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

### **Final Thoughts:**

God loves His children. He is kind to give us both earthly and Christ-based rest by His grace. He designed us to desire times of *reflection, refreshing, refocus, and rejoicing*. These things are ours by divine inheritance, particularly Emmanuel's rest. Praise God!

One day, our entire existence will be characterized by Eternal Rest: no more pain and suffering, everything in order and honoring God, rejoicing forevermore!

Repent and believe in Jesus Christ to obtain God's rest. And if you have, rest in Him.

Amen.