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## Introduction

Hebrews 3:7-4:16 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup>Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice,

<sup>8</sup>Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,

<sup>9</sup>Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years.

<sup>10</sup>Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.'

<sup>11</sup>So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.' "

<sup>12</sup>Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you *an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;*

<sup>13</sup>but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

<sup>14</sup>*For we have become partakers of Christ* if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,

<sup>15</sup>while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

<sup>16</sup>For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses?

<sup>17</sup>Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness?

<sup>18</sup>And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? (*God's purpose was not just to get them out of Egypt, but to get them into an inheritance, into His rest*)

<sup>19</sup>*So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

<sup>4:1</sup>Therefore, since a promise *remains of entering His rest*, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

<sup>2</sup>For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard *did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.*

<sup>3</sup>*For we who have believed do enter that rest*, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,' " although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

<sup>4</sup>For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works";

<sup>5</sup>and again in this place: "They shall not enter My rest."

<sup>6</sup>Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience,

<sup>7</sup>again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts."

<sup>8</sup>For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day.

<sup>9</sup>*There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.*

<sup>10</sup>For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

<sup>11</sup>Let us therefore *be diligent (make every effort, work) to enter that rest*, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

<sup>12</sup>*For the word of God is living and powerful (active)*, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

<sup>13</sup>And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

<sup>14</sup>Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

<sup>15</sup>*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize* with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

<sup>16</sup>Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

God promises Abraham 700 years in advance that the people of his seed will go through slavery in Egypt, but then will be brought out and taken to the promised land. And then God sends Moses to the people in captivity to bring them this good news, to preach the gospel to them about a promised land flowing with milk and honey into which they will go and enter. They will live in houses they did not build and eat from vines they did not plant. Great news!

It sounded too good to be true.

What happened? They came out of Egypt's captivity and in how many days did they reach Kadesh-Barnea? In 11 days (Deuteronomy 1:2). After 400 years of slavery, God wanted them in the promised land in 11 days. So, these spies go and inspect the land and then they come back and rebel against God saying they will not enter the land. And here in Hebrews 3, God says that "your parents tested me for 40 years. I did not test them, but they tested Me. For 40 years I tried to get these people to a country where they didn't have to work hard for a living, but they didn't want to come in." And then God says that "I have sworn that they shall not enter into My rest." Interesting! He did not say "you shall not enter Canaan, but you shall not enter My rest."

Then the passage says that Joshua led the people into the land of Canaan in the end. But if this land was God's rest (v. 4:8), then why would God have spoken to David later in Psalms 95:7-8 about another day, that is today, in which we should not harden our hearts? Therefore it is and still remains a rest for God's people, that is, for us who are born again, into which we are invited to enter.

I think we know a lot about faith, how it comes, how it works, what faith does, how faith catapults you into God's power, how faith leads you into God's promises, and how you need faith to receive all that God has given you. *But before faith does all these things in your life, before faith produces results in your life, there is one thing that faith will do first: faith will first lead you into God's rest.*

## What Is God's Rest?

God's rest is a place, a dimension, or a realm that we enter.



Genesis 2:1-3 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.

<sup>2</sup>And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

<sup>3</sup>Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

On the seventh day we see God creating a realm of rest into which He also invites man after creating him at the end of the sixth day. In the Garden of Eden was God's rest and man had work, but it was not hard sweaty work. Everything he did or worked, he did from a place and a realm of rest.

*In God's Sabbath, in God's rest, work and marriage were not done out of or under pressure, but out of pleasure. When man sinned, he destroyed that day of rest, or rather, stepped out of it. The realm of rest remained intact, but man came out of it and entered into hard work. Married life has become work. Why? Because they were no longer in that place of rest and peace. Marriage was designed for that rest, and so was work planned within that rest.*

## The First Man Who Re-entered Rest

John 14:10 (NKJV)

<sup>10</sup>Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; *but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.*

*Jesus was the first man to re-enter God's rest. He lived constantly in rest, allowing the Father to work through Him.*

The rest I'm talking about doesn't mean a pillow to sleep peacefully on for days and rest or a vacation where you relax. Physical rest is also needed, but that's not what we're talking about here. Jesus on the Sabbath, a day of rest, goes to a man who was lying on a pillow and says to him: take up your bed and walk.

Whenever the Bible speaks of rest it refers to a realm, a constant mental dimension from which Jesus operated. Do you think Jesus didn't work hard? You only need to read through the Gospels and try to make a chronological line of all His activities in one day and you will realize that He was not idle at all. But He was constantly in the realm of rest, in that zone of rest. You will never see Jesus in a petrified posture, scared, panicked, or impulsive. Jesus was annoyingly calm. Jairus comes and tells Him that his daughter is dying and Jesus is waiting and not in a hurry, and in the meantime the little girl actually dies. He does the same with Lazarus, His best friend. If we were in Jesus' place, when we heard of Lazarus that he was on

his deathbed, we would have started praying immediately and commanding death to leave. But Jesus did not do so, but simply said that “this disease is not unto death.” Then during the storm at sea, Jesus sleeps. Mary comes to the wedding in Cana alarmed that there is no wine at the wedding. The disciples come stressed that they have to feed the 5000 people. But Jesus is calm and unhurried in all these circumstances. How could Jesus be like that? *He was not so because He was God, but because He entered God's rest as man and not as God.*

Adam was not at all concerned about his existence or how to earn his living. Did you know that Adam never worked for food? Food just came to him, was given to him in the Garden of Eden.

Psalm 127:1-2 (NASB95)

<sup>1</sup>Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the Lord guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain.

<sup>2</sup>It is vain for you to rise up early, To retire late, To eat the bread of painful labors; *For He gives to His beloved even in his sleep.*

The point is not not to work, but not to work out of stress and fear that you won't have enough, or to prove something to people. *In all that you do, if you are under pressure and not under pleasure, then you have not yet entered God's rest.*

## What Is This Rest Anyway?

This rest is not a physical place, but a mental realm, as I said. Moving to another country or changing jobs will not take you to rest. *This rest is not calmness or ascetic silence or a quiet serene place.* This rest is not something similar to yoga.

The definition of God's rest - *A mental and emotional state of peace, assurance, and joy generated by the full trust in what God has spoken in His Word about all the situations and*

*problems you face TODAY, that they will all work out in your favor.* Rest is not the hope that it will all end one day when we reach life after physical death. The solution to any problem in your life has already been paid for by Christ on the cross, is included in Christ's sacrifice, and is available to you now.

*The peace that Jesus gives you works in the storm, in traffic, and in the cancellation of a flight. It is a working peace from the realm of God's rest.* Rest was created for man. *Healing, protection, prosperity is in God's rest. True faith is manifested through this rest.*

God is a gentleman. When you think you can do it, that you can increase your faith, that you can make it, He will take a step back. Jesus said: The Father works, therefore I heal.

You know, this passage in Hebrews about rest is usually read at funerals and alludes to the rest in the cemetery. But if we look carefully at the text, we will see that the people there, who died physically in the wilderness, did not enter God's rest. And because of this they died.

Once a pastor was sitting at a table with a friend of his. And while they were eating, the pastor gets a call informing him that the church building has been ransacked and all the very expensive audio and video equipment stolen. After finishing the call, the pastor quietly put down the phone and continued to eat. His friend, somewhat panicked, did not understand what was happening and asked the pastor how he could be so relaxed. To which the pastor replied: "The devil can steal my speakers and all the equipment, but not my peace. If I rest, I can get back as much gear as I want, but if I go out of rest, I've lost everything."

## Jesus' True Temptation

*The real temptation of Jesus was not actually to eat or to throw Himself from the temple, but to come out of his rest and prove to Himself that He is the son of God.* Do you have any idea how much time and energy it takes to prove something to someone? *Jesus never tried to prove anything to anyone or to justify Himself.* He was a regular carpenter for 30 years. I



think that says a lot.

You will become uncomfortable to people when you have nothing left to demonstrate or prove and you stop trying to build or maintain a reputation in front of people. You will no longer try to fulfill all people's expectations. You will become uncomfortable because you will set boundaries so that you do not come out of the state of rest. Sometimes you will have to say NO to some good things that you used to do. And a lot of people won't understand that and will talk bad about you. I am convinced that for most of us, Jesus was or would have been an uncomfortable person in many ways.

## The Flow of Power Is in Rest

When you reach that place of rest, you enter into a flow of God's miraculous power in all aspects of your life and that of others around you. There are many people in the body of Christ who somehow managed to function in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but they never entered God's rest and because of that they failed in the end because they were always under pressure to perform. This does not make them false prophets, but genuine prophets who have lost their rest. Do you know what was King Saul's problem in the Old Testament? He did not wait for Samuel, and yielded to the pressure of the people. And Samuel tells him: "The problem is not the act itself that you brought the sacrifice, but the fact that you, as king, as leader, left God's resting place. *As a leader, you cannot afford not to be in God's rest.*"

## Jesus' Ministry and Ours

Psalm 110:1 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

Here God the Father tells Jesus (David's Lord) to sit down, sit at His right hand until He, the

Father, puts Jesus' enemies under His feet. The description of Jesus' ministry is to rule the nations of the world, that is, to reign. But have you ever seen Jesus stressed or fearful?

In Ephesians, the Bible tells us that we too have been exalted and lifted up to be seated on the same throne with Jesus at the right hand of God. The Father says to you and to me, "Hey, sit down until I put all your enemies under your feet." And the last enemy is death. So, it is a work of God that brings enemies under your feet.

## Peace vs. Power

Romans 16:20 (NKJV)

<sup>20</sup>And *the God of peace will crush Satan* under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Not the God of power, but the God of peace will crush Satan. *We think that crushing Satan is a matter of power, but here he says it is a matter of peace.*

Peace is translated as *irene* in Greek and as *shalom* in Hebrew. Peace is that realm of finality (where everything is finished, finalized, complete), a realm where nothing is lacking. The God of that *shalom* will crush Satan.

## Rest Is a Person

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NKJV)

<sup>6</sup>For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, *Prince of Peace*.

<sup>7</sup>*Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

Matthew 11:28-30 (NKJV)

<sup>28</sup>*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

<sup>29</sup>*Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

<sup>30</sup>*For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

I don't know if you noticed that everywhere Jesus says: "Come after Me and follow Me." But here, in the passage above, for the weary, He says: "Come to Me, not after Me." *Peace and rest are not a formula, but a person: the Person of Christ.*

## Only One "Work" in the New Testament

Hebrews 4:9-11 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup>*There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.*

<sup>10</sup>*For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.*

<sup>11</sup>*Let us therefore be diligent (make every effort, strive) to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.*

There is only one thing in the New Testament for which we must "work" and "strive": to enter into rest. *Strive every day to enter in rest (oxymoron).* Why? Because it is not easy and it is

not the natural tendency of the Christian.

## How to Enter this Rest?

### By the Word of God

Hebrews 4:11-16 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup>Let us therefore *be diligent (make every effort, strive) to enter that rest*, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

<sup>12</sup>*For the word of God is living and powerful (active)*, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

<sup>13</sup>And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

<sup>14</sup>Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

<sup>15</sup>For *we do not have* a High Priest *who cannot* sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

<sup>16</sup>Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

God's word here is in the context of God's rest. If you allow the Word of God to enter deeply into your life, He will make a discernment or a filter in your thoughts and will tell you: *"This is from the soul, the other is from the spirit; this is pure information, the other is revelation."* And then you have to make a decision. And by doing this constantly, you enter into rest!

God knows all your thoughts and intentions (v.13) and this can create fear in you. We put on

all kinds of masks, we try to prove things, and because of that, we sit outside of rest.

And then what do we do? Verse 15 says that we do not have a High Priest Who cannot have mercy on our weaknesses. Verse 15 could very nicely say the same thing in the following way: "we have a High Priest who has mercy on our weaknesses." But by using a double negation, the author emphasized even more how true this is. We come into His presence to receive grace.

Romans 14:17 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup>for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and *peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*.

When you step out of God's peace, you are not operating in or out of the Kingdom, but you are placing yourself outside of the Kingdom. And I am not referring here to the loss of salvation, but to everyday life. *When we go out of peace and joy, we block the flow of power. And it is not God who blocks it, but us.*

Seeking God and doing things for Him is good. But between this and becoming tired, frustrated, and irritated is a very thin line that you almost don't even know when you've crossed it or how long you've been there. *And in frustration, pressure, and irritation there is no longer the flow and anointing of God!*

## By Speaking in Tongues

The more you discipline yourself and learn to be daily in an atmosphere of worship, praying in tongues, listening to sermons, the more the work of being at rest is less, and rest becomes a lifestyle.

Isaiah 28:11-12 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup>For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people,

<sup>12</sup>To whom He said, "*This is the rest* with which You may cause the weary to rest," And, "*This is the refreshing*"; Yet they would not hear.

Another way you can "strive" to enter rest is by speaking in tongues. When you speak in tongues, among many other things the Holy Spirit does, He preaches to your mind and emotions in an unknown language, and thus your soul enters into God's rest.