

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 5 (January 29-February 4, 2017)

The writer of Hebrews had much to say about the subject of rest. We will examine this text in this week's devotions as we continue our study of God's rest and peace.

Sunday, January 29 (read Hebrews 3:7-11)

"So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.' "

The Jews looked to Moses as their hero and leader, because the exodus was a key part of their faith. Several million people started on the journey from slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land in Canaan. Only two (Joshua and Caleb) of 600,000 men (Exodus 12:37) who began the journey from Egypt actually made it into the land prepared for them (see Numbers 14:29-30). That is the reminder and the warning in today's text. Even today, God will not change His standards for entry into the Promised Land He has prepared for all believers. We will go to **Heaven** as a reward for receiving Jesus into our hearts, but only a small percentage of Christians will trust Him enough to live the kingdom life **on earth**. The balance of this week will be used to explore this true **rest** that God has made available to us all.

Monday, January 30 (read Hebrews 3:12-19)

*And to whom did God swear that they would never enter His rest if not to those who disobeyed?
(Hebrews 3:18)*

The writer of Hebrews goes into more details in today's reading. It is important that you realize that God is not threatening these disobedient believers with hell! If that were true, even Moses would not be in Heaven and the transfiguration in Matthew 17 would be a myth! No, He is saying that there is so much more to be learned and experienced as we obey His Word and walk with Him daily. I am trying to encourage you (v. 13) with these devotions as we seek His face in 2017. For Christians, today should be the best day of our lives and tomorrow should be even better. That type of growth has nothing to do with circumstances or feelings, but rather it depends fully on faith in the finished work of our Lord. Are you ready to forsake known disobedience in order to pursue His best?

Tuesday, January 31 (read Hebrews 4:1-5)

Therefore, since the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. (Hebrews 4:1)

In a similar text, Jesus said, "But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it" (Matthew 7:14). The good news is that He also said, "**I am the gate**; whoever enters through me will be saved" (John 10:9a, emphasis mine). Jesus and the writer of Hebrews are both saying that there is so much more to be experienced beyond basic salvation. The deeper life of **peace** and **rest** is available to all Christians, but only a small percentage of them are willing to **pray the price!** God's work is finished and His offer still stands (v. 1-3)! Do you have enough faith to reach out to Jesus and receive all that He has in store for you? **Faith** and **obedience** are required for that next step!

Wednesday, February 1 (read Hebrews 4:6-11)

Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience. (Hebrews 4:11)

Have you ever sat in a service where the Holy Spirit was obviously moving, people around you were getting blessed, but you felt nothing? It usually happens as a result of your willful disobedience to the known will of God (v. 6)! So “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (v. 7b). Leaving a life of sin and heading toward the Promised Land is no different today than it was in the days of the exodus. “There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from His” (v. 9-10). Someone has said, “Let go, let God!” In other words, we must cease from any personal effort to bring about this **rest**, and simply walk in obedience to His Word.

Thursday, February 2 (read Hebrews 4:12-13)

For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

Over the next three days, we will learn of three wonderful resources God has given to assist us in our journey toward **rest** and **peace**. The first one is in today’s text, the Word of God. How can we possibly know God’s will if we do not read and trust His Word? Just look at the penetrating power of His Word in today’s printed verse above. “The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7b). What does He see when He looks at your heart through His Word? Does He see rebellion or obedience? Does He see pure motives or does He see selfish ambitions? Is His Word living and active within you or is it only a history book? As a Christian, you will not be judged for your sins, but you will be judged by Christ for the quality of your works as it pertains to motives and attitude (see 1 Corinthians 3:10-15). Allow His Word to search you today during His Day of Grace.

Friday, February 3 (read Hebrews 4:14-15)

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

Not only do we have the Word of God to guide us toward **rest** and **peace**, but we also have Jesus, our High Priest, to intercede for us from heaven (v. 14; see Hebrews 7:25). Since Jesus is God and God cannot be tempted to sin (James 1:13), the Lord had to become flesh (John 1:14) from the womb of Mary so that He could be tempted and defeat Satan’s temptations. The devil offered pleasure, popularity and power (the three categories of temptation), but Jesus withstood them all by quoting the Word of God. Thus, He “has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin” (v. 15b). Since all that is true, what should we be doing? That will be our topic tomorrow.

Saturday, February 4 (read Hebrews 4:16)

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)

In the Name of Jesus, we can approach the Father in **prayer** anytime we desire to. That’s the third weapon available to us as we seek His **rest** and **peace**. On the last night of His earthly life, Jesus tells us seven times that the Father will give us anything we ask for in His Name. Shouldn’t we be asking to enter His Sabbath-rest while it is still available? Why do we need more material things (see Jeremiah 45:4-5)? Because of God’s **mercy**, we do not receive the hell that we deserve. Because of His **grace**, we receive Heaven that we do not deserve; therefore, come before His **throne of grace** early and often each day and you will experience His **rest** and **peace**!