

Tisha B'Av and *The Rest of God*

Good morning.

ENTERING GOD'S REST

<SLIDE> Today, we'll continue in the Book of Numbers, and the main topic is **Entering God's Rest**. The best example in the Old Testament on how NOT to enter His rest is the famous incident called Tisha B'Av.

We're up to chapters 13 & 14, and it is that famous incident when the Israelites get just to the edge of the Promised Land and allow their fear of the people in the land to stop them from entering. Twelve Scouts are sent into Canaan, and all twelve come back with stories of how big and ferocious the inhabitants are. Of those twelve, only two say that God is greater than those people, the other ten say it's hopeless. The Israelites refused to trust God, and they are then forced to march around in the desert for the next 40 years until all those who were counted in the census (fighting men over 20 years of age) die off. This incident is called Tisha B'Av.

One of the greatest things that is offered to us today is a resting place. And it is a resting place that doesn't begin in the NT but goes all the way back to the OT:

- In Psalm 23, David talks about the Lord being his shepherd,
"I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures,
He leads me besides still waters, He restores my soul.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;

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For You *are* with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD
Forever."

What's the 'one thing' that is necessary? Psalm 27 says: "One thing I have desired of the Lord, That will I seek: That I may **dwelt in** the house of the Lord All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord, And to **inquire in** His temple."

David talks about a place of rest where I can drink from still waters. A place where I can find rest, **not because of my own resourcefulness but because of my relationship with the Shepherd Himself.**

- God describes us as sheep – dumb sheep – not completely as an insult; it describes the *reality* that we are engaged in a conflict so overwhelming that we of our own efforts cannot get out of. **I will never get out on my own. And no one other than Him can get you out.**
- It takes most of us a lifetime to realize that, and sometimes we forget it and try to go it alone. It doesn't work.

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<SLIDE>: In discussing the two topics of God's Rest and Tisha B'Av, I want to begin reading from the Book of Hebrews Chapter 4, in which the Holy Spirit comments on the latter event:

"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. ² For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they (Israelites) did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed. ³ Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said,

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

And yet his works **have been finished** since the creation of the world."

- God's REST – The Israelites in the wilderness did not enter into God's rest because of UNBELIEF. **Unbelief forfeits rest.**

Before discussing what God's Rest is, let's look at the background incident of Tisha B'Av in the OT.

<SLIDE> Tisha b'Av is the **9th day of the Hebrew month of Av**. Today, most Christians have never heard of Tisha B'Av, or that it is a special day on the Jewish calendar, particularly for the orthodox Jewish community. It is the saddest day of the year for Jews, and it remembers a series of events thru history that began with this incident in the Book of Numbers where the Israelites refused to enter the land of Canaan out of fear.

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Tisha B'Av is the last day of a *Three Week* period of mourning that began on June 7th this year, which is the 17th day of the Hebrew month of Tammuz. The 17th Day of Tammuz is the day when Moses broke the two tablets with the Ten Commandments because of the golden calf incident. The final Nine Days of the Three Weeks are a time of intensified mourning. Starting on the first of Av (nine days ago), orthodox Jews refrain from eating meat or drinking wine, and from wearing freshly laundered clothes.

There are only two twenty-four hour fasts in Judaism: Tisha B'Av is one of them, and Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) is the other. So, starting last night at 6:00 pm, observant Jews have fasted from sunset to sunset today. During this time, the synagogues are dimly lit and the Book of Lamentations is read during the evening service. Observant Jews follow mourning customs similar to the *shiva* (the period following the death of a family member or a loved one), which includes sitting on low stools, refraining from work, and not greeting others.

However, in addition to being the saddest day of the year, remarkably the 9th of Av also is considered the beginning of the renewed hope for the coming of the Messiah. Isn't that remarkable – how, over and over through much of Jewish history, tragedy leads to renewed hope in God's faithfulness to fulfill the covenant promises.

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THE INCIDENT AT KADESH-BARNEA

<SLIDE> Chapter 13 of the Book of Numbers opens with the Israelites camped at the southern border of Canaan. The place is called Kadesh..... also called Kadesh-Barnea. They left Mt. Sinai about three weeks earlier. They're ready to enter the land that God had promised them, and they're just waiting for the word to go.

Back at Mt Sinai, God and the Israelites made a covenant, an agreement – a contract. God agreed to be their God and dwell in their midst and bless the nation, and the people agreed to live up to the principles specified in the Torah. It's been approximately a year and a half period since they left Egypt, and the Israelites have already tested God's patience nine times. Kadesh-Barnea will be the 10th time, and God will finally say "Enough already."

Chapter 13 of the Book of Numbers.

The LORD said to Moses, ² "Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe, send one of its leaders." So at the LORD's command Moses sent them out from the Desert of Paran. All of them were leaders of the Israelites....

¹⁷ When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, "Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. ¹⁸ See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. ¹⁹ What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or fortified? ²⁰ How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees in it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land." (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.)

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...²³ When they reached the Valley of Eshkol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs.²⁴ That place was called the Valley of Eshkol because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there. ²⁵ At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land.

THE SCOUTS & THE REBELLION

It is difficult to understate the enormity of the rebellion against Yehovah at Kadesh and the catastrophe that is unfolding here. What should have been a wonderful story about triumph and prosperity – a tale of Israel inheriting the Land and all the goodness that the Lord had prepared for them – instead it turns into a tragic narrative about disbelief, failure, weakness, and a direct repudiation of God's grace.

Only weeks earlier, Israel had been consecrated by the Lord, given His Torah, and they were basking in the constant presence of Yehoveh – but now they will throw it all away to obey their own fears and desires.

- **So please grasp that we are reading one of those momentous history-changing moments in the story of mankind.**

Israel trekked right up to the edge of fulfilling centuries of promise, and then they quit. Just as victory was in their grasp, they drew back in fear. They turned back and refused to enter into that promise. As Paul would later say, look at the Israelites and press on toward the finish line, don't quit **just short of the goal** in Christ.

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THE SCOUTS

<SLIDE> Verse 1 sounds like it was *God's* idea to send the scouts ahead, but the Book of Deuteronomy makes it clear that the elders of the people asked Moses for permission to send scouts ahead to see what the lay of the land was. Moses was reluctant, but God says they could have their wish.

So, Moses sends 12 scouts, one from each of the 12 tribes (except from the tribe of Levi, who as you will recall is now considered separately, God's tribe, so to speak.). The scouts were leaders in their respective clans – not the heads of the clans, but well respected men.

Some bible versions say the 12 were scouting, others spying. Now, there's a difference between spying and scouting.

- It's a little like the difference between shoplifting and shopping.

They were instructed to go scout out and see the land in order to reassure the people. It was similar to checking out various communities when you're going to buy a house; this was not like the preliminary to a military operation. If it had been a military spying operation, most certainly the leaders of the tribes would not have gone, and they wouldn't have sent twelve; 2 or 3 would have been more appropriate because stealth would have been key; and later in the Bible when we see actual military "spying", it will indeed usually be 2 or 3 men at most.

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In verse 16 we get this interesting little aside – that one of the tribal leaders eventually had his name changed by Moses: ‘Hoshea’, son of Nun. Hoshea became known as Joshua...or, more accurately in the Hebrew, ‘Yehoshua’. So what's the difference between *Hoshea* and *Yehoshua*? Well in some ways it is quite amazing.

‘Hoshea’ means "God saves". Yehoshua means "Yehoveh will save". Hoshea is about 40 years old at this point in time. He was born in Egypt, obviously well before the Exodus. As you might remember, Moses had to ask God what His Personal Name was back at the burning bush. Up until then, all they had were God’s titles (like El Shaddai), not His Personal Name. God tells Moses that YHWH was His name – which we translate as Yahweh. This means that the name Joshua, ‘Yehoshua’, *could not* have existed when Joshua was born in Egypt... because God's personal name wasn't known back then! **This change in names, to me, is one of those little noticed verses that demonstrates the historicity of the Biblical narrative.**

The Evil Report

The scouts were in the land of Canaan for 40 days, and they came back with fairly accurate account of what they saw. Numbers Chapter 3, starting at verse 26:

Numbers 3: ²⁶ They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷ They gave Moses this account: "We went into the

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land to which you sent us, and it *does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit.* ²⁸ But the people who live there are powerful and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there."

So, the scouts return in about six weeks and go straight to Moses and Aaron and report what they encountered. They first tell Moses what they saw, and then tell "*the whole community*" of Israel. This does NOT mean all of the Israelites. It just means the elders and leaders of Israel.

We get a little hint of the attitude of these scouts when they say "*we went to the land to which YOU SENT US*". -- Not the land the Lord promised or the land that was sworn to Abraham. They evidently began to disassociate themselves from the Promise, from the covenant, and from God, and for them, this was more of a political/economic matter, not a religious one.

<SLIDE>: It's apparent that when the scouts mentioned the size of the people and the existence of fortified cities, it unsettled the elders, because in verse 30, it says...

Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."

Let's understand something: the scouts' assessment – so far – was actually well-balanced and not exaggerated. They were telling the truth – the people *were* big, and archeology confirms that the fortified cities had walls up to 30' high and 15' thick. This was scaring the daylights

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out of the leaders and elders of Israel who had gathered around them to hear the scouting report.

We can easily how the news spread thru the camp, with more and more people expressing anxiety and fear. Verse 30 says that "Caleb hushed the people....." Caleb had to tell them to settle down and take a deep breath. Then Caleb says, OK – enough reality – but remember that God's promise is a greater reality. We know what we're up against; now let's go and take the land because surely we'll overcome all of these obstacles. Joshua and Caleb agreed with the assessment of the land and the size of the people, but they said it didn't matter – God was bigger than any foe in the land.

Verse 31...

³¹ But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." ³² And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. ³³We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

The leaders argued back. **Who cares about grapes the size of oranges – we want peace, man!**

The people were scared about fighting a group of nations whose people were physically more powerful than them. Remember, Goliath was a descendent of one of these tribes. It's understandable to be apprehensive; it's human to be nervous in their situation. Here we have former slaves about to confront huge, battle-hardened people in fortified cities without any siege equipment.

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GOD'S HOLINESS

But, the reality of the situation was that God made definite promises, and He is **Holy**. – **He is different than us, and He does not lie nor change His mind about promises (Numbers 23). Because he is holy, He must be treated differently,**

- I can disregard a boss's instructions on occasion, an elder's instruction, even my wife's suggestions on *rare* occasions (but I never do – right honey?) – that's understandable because I'm dealing with other humans.
- But I can never disobey God's instructions. If I do, then **I'm treating God no differently than I may treat anyone else – that's an attack against His Holiness, and He doesn't allow that.**

And, this is the 10th time since they had left Egypt that they questioned God's willingness and even His ability to fulfill His promises. God's Holiness was being challenged for the 10th time. And, there would be grave repercussions.

As word of the scouts' report circulated around the camp, the people began to panic; **they wept all night**

THE REBELLION

<SLIDE> Chapter 14: That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. ² All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! ³ Why is the LORD bringing us to this land

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only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?"⁴ And they said to each other, "We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt."

- All Israel is united against Moses and Aaron... and God
- "Why GOD?" did you do this to us? Just to KILL us!

Verse 1 states that **the whole community broke into loud cries, and the people wept *that night***. That is, the elders and leaders started yelling and screaming and bickering, and the people seeing what was happening, broke down into one giant panic attack. The community was united against Moses and Aaron and therefore against God. Note to the wise: you can't be against God's mediator (Jesus) on the one hand and on the other say, you're for God.

"If ONLY we had stayed in Egypt". Translation: we prefer slavery to our former evil taskmasters than redemption from the Lord because the slavery was more comfortable and familiar and did seem to have its perks.

Why God, they ask, did you bring us here to be slaughtered by the Canaanites? They accuse **God** of not having their best interests at heart; rather this whole exodus thing is just some cruel hoax being played on us helpless folk. Why do you HATE us, God?

- Our wives and little ones will become plunder. If it only were just us men, we'd go in and fight (that's a crock, by the way).
- I won't take my kids in there and get them all killed off just because of some stupid word from God!

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This was a very definite choice – they CHOSE to believe the conclusions of the scouts rather than to believe God's promises.

The leaders' solution to the problem is what you might expect in any organization that wants pure democracy: "*let's elect a DIFFERENT leader and go back to Egypt*". Let's go back to slavery and captivity. At least we ate better. At least we had houses to live in and we weren't required to fight and put our lives at risk. At least we'd be alive.

- How quickly we forget the pain and anguish of our past lives, our lives before accepting Christ.

OK – that's what happened. In Jewish history, this event is solemnly remembered every year as *Tisha B'Av*.

<SLIDE> The name **Tisha B'Av** comes from verse one of Chapter 14: it says: "That night, all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, 'If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert!'"

- "that night" – that night was Tisha B'Av -> **9th of Month of Av**

It's like when we Americans might say '9-11' or 'December 7th' – it recalls a day when tragedy struck. *Tisha B'Av* has been called the "saddest day in Jewish history".

- God said to the Israelites: You cry because you lack the faith to go into battle WHEN THE OUTCOME IS GUARANTEED? **To cry over nothing? I'll give you something to cry about!**

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Chapter 14 goes on to describe how Moses' interceded with God not to wipe them out. God agrees, but there are consequences for the rebellion. Continuing in Numbers Chapter 14, verse 21, Yehovah says:

²¹ Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth, ²² not one of those who saw my glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times²³ - not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their ancestors. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it.

- The people were spared, but the consequence for the rebellion is that they won't enter the land - they will wander in the desert over the next 38 years until all men over age 20 die off.

Tisha B'Av - was a major event in world history. Even though their children eventually did get into the land, a pattern was set up:

- The pattern is this - destruction and death will always follow unfaithfulness to Him, because that's still a part of the covenant the Israelites made with Yehovah.

And this pattern is why the incident at Kadesh is actually known as the

1st Tisha B'Av.

<SLIDE>> - (series of 7 mouse <SLIDE>s)

Many major catastrophes that would fall upon the Jews throughout history due to unfaithfulness would also occur on **this SAME DAY - the 9th of Av!**

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The two most memorable are the destruction of the two Temples in Jerusalem:

- Destruction of 1st Temple by Babylonians – 586BC
- Destruction of 2nd Temple 655 years later in 70AD by the Romans – this had been prophesized by Jesus.

And there were other catastrophic events that happened to the Jews on this date:

- Sixty years later, the Jews rebelled again, following a man named Simon Bar Kokhba, who claimed to be the Messiah. He was given the surname Bar Kokhba (Son of a star) which referred to the prophesied star mentioned in Numbers 24 that pointed to the Messiah – we refer to that star as the Star of Bethlehem. The last stronghold of the rebellion was the fortress of Betar, and it fell to the Romans on the 9th of Av in 133 AD after three-year siege. 580,000 Jews died by either by starvation or the sword.
- July 31, 1492 – EXPULSION OF Jews from Spain – Columbus – in 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue. !!
- 1941 – Hermann Goring signs “final solution” document on the 9th of Av
- And, on *Tisha B'Av* in 1943, the first trainload of Jews arrived at their destination, Treblinka, and sent to the gas chambers.

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Tragic events in Jewish history, all which occurred on *Tisha B'Av*. Now, we can find a number of tragic events throughout history in *all* cultures. But this sure seems very unusual – such significant events – meaningful to one particular people (the Jews) – all occurring on the anniversary of the day that they first were punished for not believing in God's promises.

<SLIDE> Q: Was the failure of the Israelites on the first 9th Av the reason for these later events? **Not at all**. The reason for the tragic events is described in Deuteronomy 28:

<click>: ¹⁵ However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you: ... ⁴⁹ The Lord will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an **eagle** swooping down, a nation whose language you will not understand, ⁵⁰ a fierce-looking nation without respect for the old or pity for the young."

So, the reason for the destructions down thru history was the repeated and flagrant violations of the covenant between God and Israel. God just seemed to choose the 9th of Av as a reminder where the unfaithfulness all started.

By the way, please note that the passage mentions an **"eagle"** – on top of every Roman legion's standard carried into battle was an image of an Eagle, and the 2nd Temple was utterly destroyed by the "fierce-looking nation" (the Romans) carrying this symbol in 70 AD.

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GOD'S REST

<SLIDE> The reason those these Israelites never made it to Canaan because of unbelief. **Unbelief forfeits rest.** It's the rest of finally getting into your own land, not being persecuted, not being pressured, not being killed, not being made slaves; it is a rest from all of that. And they never entered into that promised rest because of unbelief.

- That's the basic principle of this whole passage in Hebrews.
Nobody experiences God's rest apart from faith – that's the key to entering into rest.
- God gave the land to them but they never possessed it. Enter into rest = entering into that for which they were delivered out of. God would give you something that you would never possess otherwise. *Rest is not particularly physical, it's spiritual.*

We also know that when the younger generation under Joshua went into the land, they too did not enjoy the full rest that God had planned for them.

- And the reason they didn't enjoy their full rest was simply because when they got into the land, instead of doing what God told them to do and believing God in obedient faith, they rejected God's instructions. So even though they went into the land, they never experienced full rest. It was a hassle all of the time, fighting against every imaginable group, and they were messed up from beginning to end of their time in the land.

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WHAT IS REST?

- **Rest = no activity?** Sitting in a lounge chair sipping piña coladas and watching reruns of Seinfeld?
- **Retired?**... is it like being retired but only without the wife's "to do" lists?

<SLIDE> NO. "Biblical Rest" is NOT *Inactivity per se* – it is not like people at a Nursing home sitting around doing nothing in particular, watching Price is Right on TV, miserable!

- Nothing is so unbearable to man or woman as being *fully* at rest, without a passion, without business, without entertainment, without care.

<SLIDE> No – Rest is resting from striving, and instead of striving, you **REST IN CHRIST. NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE – NURSING HOME OR WHITE HOUSE.**

- Gen.2:2,3 says that God rested on the 7th day after the creation — not because He was tired, but because **He was finished with His work.**

- And in Exodus 20, in one of the commandments, God said:

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

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The Israelites were invited to enter into God's creative rest by not working on Saturdays and trusting that God would *provide* for them. In a world of subsistence living where you couldn't depend upon a Price Chopper if you needed food – this was unheard of. Yet as the Israelites expressed faith in their God in this way, it was a testimony to the other nations that their God was real and powerful and faithful to his people.

- Instead of working, you were to worship God on the Sabbath – rest, don't take any work with you, don't take any burden from your house when you go to worship, just bring yourself.

The Seventh–Day Adventists today worship on Saturday. Argument regarding what is the Sabbath? – scripturally, it is Saturday.

- I remember how as a catholic I could go to 5:00pm on Saturday to fulfill obligation – and thus be free to go golfing with backslidden Protestants on Sunday.
- Today, we gather on Sundays, because it is a new day – the day of Resurrection.

But, I can be friends with Seventh–Day Adventists because I also worship on Saturday since I was born again.

- And I worship on Fridays, and often on Thursday, sometimes even on Mondays but it's more difficult because that's the day of the Deacon's meeting.
- I don't have to come to a building to be in worship.

God rested on 7th day. He said: Remember the Sabbath to keep it hold unto the Lord. Look backwards to the Sabbath and look forward to holding it unto the Lord

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The Sabbath was God's announcement that He was finished, that all things were complete and set in order. The creation was completed and He had set into motion a cycle that would continue. Sin broke that rest in the garden – we prefer the tree of knowledge to the tree of life. (note: I'm not against study...).

- Rest was taking time to seek and recognizing your total dependence on Him, which is something we tend to forget all during the week.

Israel never entered full rest because of their unbelief; *Moses couldn't make it happen* for them and *Joshua couldn't make it happen* for them. But great as the promised land was, God has a rest far greater; God has an ETERNAL rest that's available to you and me by faith in Jesus Christ, and because it is greater, it took Someone greater than Moses and greater than Joshua to make it a reality. And that “greater than both” is Jesus Himself.

Things and events in the OT are shadows of Christ. It is probably appropriate for the Jews to keep the Sabbath Day today because they're still waiting for the Messiah. They have the shadow. It is ridiculous for the Church to follow after the shadow when we have the bridegroom.

- After the bride walks down the aisle and is married, she doesn't cling to the groom's shadow – she grabs onto the real Bridegroom Himself!

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HOW DO WE ENTER GOD'S REST?

Hebrews 4:10-13 explains the essential nature of faith.

<SLIDE>: “ ... for anyone who enters God's rest also **rests** from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, **make every effort** to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.”

Faith involves both **ceasing from your works** while **making every effort to enter the rest**. This sounds like a nonsensical paradox (e.g., Buddhist saying: “*Think of the sound of one hand clapping*”). But this is not the case. There is a sense in which biblical faith involves both passivity and effort.

- It requires passivity in the sense that you stop depending on your own resources and depend instead on God's resources. Faith is saying: “*I cannot do this—only God can do this.*”
- Yet it also requires our **effort to then choose** to depend on God. We instinctively rely on our own efforts and resources instead of on God's – this is the heart of what it means to be fallen.

So faith is counter-intuitive, a deliberate choice that is usually against our feelings and “wisdom.” It was counter-intuitive for the Israelites to not work on Saturday when they didn't have excess food. It was counter-intuitive for the Israelites to go into a land full of strong enemies. All thru OT, God is instructing us to fight our way into that rest, to push thru into that rest, to do whatever you need to do to enter into that rest.

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But, God fights the battle – if we let Him – and we don't sweat.

- **Leviticus says that the High Priest – when he enters the Holy of Holies – shall not wear woolen garments like other priests were required to wear in normal Tabernacle duty. Wool can get very hot. There is to be no sweat in the Holy of Holies.**

And we must fight anyone or anything that would pull you out of that rest. Now that we've rested from trying to save ourselves, don't try to rob us of that with your doubt, your fear, your unbelief, your appeal to self-righteousness. It took me half of my life to enter into this rest and I'm not going to let anyone or any self-doubt to pull me back into that pit.

You know, there are several places in NT when Jesus shouted; one is in John chapter 7:37

On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him **come to Me** and **drink**."

Why are you thirsty when I have some drink for you? Why are you burdened by things I have already moved out of the way?

JESUS' REST

<SLIDE> Matthew 11:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

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In order to make this journey to Christ, we have to do it without baggage. You can't carry loads of weight. Jesus gives an invitation to come unto Him. You must come unto Him – you won't get rest from anyone else.

- If you go to anyone else, all you'll find is more work.
- **That's why so many marriages have problems after a while.** When you're not looking for a man, you're often looking for a messiah. Or men, you're usually not looking for a wife, you're really looking for a maid to clean up your mess and fix your life and make you feel better with yourself. The reality is, however, whoever you marry, you find that they're just as messed up as you are or worse!
 - **When you carry her over the threshold, it's not just her you're carrying, you're carrying her momma, her grandmamma, her past failed relationships, her childhood.**

Life brings baggage, the longer we live, the more we pick up. Unless we learn to cast it on Jesus, we get mood swings, stress, depression, etc.

“Take My yoke upon you and my burdens are light.”

- Jesus says that He is able to pull this load because He is strong, and He invites us to get into His yoke by coming to Him and learning from Him. This is the **ONLY** way for us to experience rest for our souls—the wonderful blessing of His presence and power enabling us to pull this load.
- **And the last place Jesus cried out while on earth is on the cross:**

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Jesus had **cried** out (IT IS FINISHED) in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

It is finished! **God rested from His work again.**

The next time we'll hear Jesus shout is at His 2nd Coming!

- *Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.*
- *My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

It is Well With My Soul