

The Epistle to the Hebrews

Hebrews 4:1-13

- Questions

1. What conclusion (“therefore”) does the author draw from his previous argument concerning Israel’s disobedient unbelief (4:1)? Why should the reader fear (4:1)?
2. Why did the “word of hearing” not profit the unbelieving Israelites and what does the author want his readers to learn from this (4:2; see also 4:11)?
3. Who is permitted to enter into the rest that the unbelieving Israelites did not enter (4:3)?
4. What did God do and when did he do it (4:4)?
5. Why did the unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness fail to enter into God’s rest (4:6; see also 3:16-19)?
6. What warning did David give Israel “so long a time” after the wilderness wandering (4:7)?
7. What “day” did David speak of long after the time of Joshua (4:8)?
8. What remains for the faithful people of God and what must they do to receive it (4:9-11)?
9. How does the author describe God’s word and what is God’s word able to do (4:12)?
10. What attribute of God and what role of God is described in 4:13?

- Digging Deeper

1. What “promise” is left (it remains) for God’s people and how does the author go about demonstrating his point in 4:1-11?
2. What “good tidings” (gospel) were preached to Israel (4:2)?
3. What OT scriptures are quoted in 4:3,4,5,7?

4. How long after the wilderness wandering did David (in Psalms) say “Today” (4:7)?
5. What point regarding “rest” is the author trying to make with the word “Today” (4:7; see also 3:7,13,15)
6. Why does the KJV have “Jesus” in 4:8? Is the author referring to Jesus or Joshua in this verse (see also Acts 7:45 in the KJV)?
7. What *kind* of “rest” did the Israelites experience in Canaan land (Deut. 3:20; 12:10; Josh. 21:43-45; 22:4; 23:1)? Is this the *kind* of “rest” that God intended for his people from the beginning? What *kind* of “rest” does God want for his people “Today” (Heb. 4:1,4,5,8-11)?
8. What does “quick” (KJV) mean in 4:12?
9. What point has the author made with reference to God’s word from the beginning of the book up to Hebrews 4 (see Heb. 1:1-2; 2:2-3; 4:2,12-13)?

- Applications for Today

1. If “once saved always saved” is true, then there is no need for a Christian to “fear” that he will “come short of” heaven (Heb. 4:2; 10:31; 12:15).
2. Hearing God’s word will profit us only when we unite that hearing with an active faith (4:2; Rom. 1:5; 16:26; 1 Thess. 2:13; Jas. 1:22-25; 2:24-26).
3. God’s rest from his work of creation (4:4,10; Gen. 2:2-3) was meant to typify all the faithful who will rest in heaven from their Christian work of service (4:9-11; Rev. 14:13).
4. Sunday is not the “Christian Sabbath,” but heaven is a “sabbath rest” for God’s people (4:9-10; Rev. 14:13; 22:1-5)
5. We must put forth a diligent effort to obey God in order to receive the promise of a heavenly rest (4:11; Rom. 12:11; Heb. 6:11; 2 Pet. 1:10; 3:14).
6. God’s word is not dead and it is not dull. God’s word can examine and judge all that is in the heart of mankind. Therefore, we should always maintain a very serious attitude toward God’s word and a desire to obey it completely (Heb. 1:1-2; 2:2-3; 4:2,12-13; 12:28-29; Psalm 19:7-14; Psalm 119).
7. God is omnipresent (all places) and omniscient (all knowing); we cannot hide from him (4:13; Psalm 139).