

20/11/2016

HEBREWS 3:16-19 = REST (The whole matter of "...entering into His rest")

#SCRIPTURE READING: Hebrews 3:4-19 (13-16), 1 Corinthians 10:1-13, 1 Peter 2:1-11

#SERMON=INTRODUCTION: **What is your understanding of/comes to mind when you hear the Biblical term "to enter into His rest"? *How do we indeed enter this rest? *What is our/your inheritance under the New Covenant = what are the practical implications of it for your/our every day lives? *Does this theme/topic bother/concern you at all?..*

+TRANSITION: *Why do I touch on this subject today? 2 reasons: (1) Peter shared on it two Sundays ago (Part 1) - and plans to continue/complete the topic next Sunday (Part 2); I thought it could be good to "refresh"/make sure we remember what was shared in preparation for Part 2. (2) Since my 50th birthday (few years ago) many brothers/sisters have spoken about the significance of the number/age of 50 and the promise that goes along with it for God's children re "...entering into His rest". So when I heard Peter shearing on this, I listened attentively...*

+EXEGESIS & APPLICATION: Peter's broader theme is "Pilgrims on a journey on the narrow road". Implication of this is *that all God's children* - his chosen/set apart holy nation/priests (1 PET 2:9) - *are on their way to the Eternal City. That we are indeed sojourners/pilgrims only passing through this world* (1 PET 2:11).

*We learned about our inheritance under the New Covenant. Peter quoted Derek Prince's words/way of putting it, to explain it clearly: Under the Old Covenant God led his people to inherit a physical Promised Land. Under the New Covenant, the inheritance that God leads his people (us) into, is a (Spiritual) Land of Promises. All the principles of obtaining the Promised Land under the Old Covenant, apply equally under the New Covenant.

In the Old Covenant, the leader who brought Israel/God's people into the Promised Land, was Joshua - HEB 4:8 = "For if Joshua had given them rest, then He [God] would not afterward have spoken about another day..." [Joshua = Yehoshua = Jesus] In the New Covenant, the leader who brought God's people into the Land of Promises, is named Jesus = Ye(ho)shua = Josua... *Take note of the warning in HEB 4:11 = "Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience..."*

*Our inheritance under the New Covenant are "the exceedingly great and precious promises" by which we become "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 PET 1:4) The promise of rest is a Spiritual rest that we enter into by faith, where the Holy Spirit (through his Life giving power) produces in me the Divine Nature of God. The promise of entering his rest, *is a Spiritual rest *from our own dead works*; *is a Spiritual rest *that we obtain by faith and obedience to/in the Gospel. We overcome our enemies by refusing to submit to them until the Holy Spirit transforms us by producing in us his Nature (fruit of the Spirit) - which "fills that void"*. Please allow me to repeat it: *Through his Life giving power, the Holy Spirit brings us into the rest of God - by forming in us the Divine Nature of God... Here we ain't only Spiritual survivors anymore* - being tossed to&fro by waves/winds of uncertainty (JAMES 1:6). No, because of what the Holy Spirit has done/is busy doing in us, we truly become more than conquerors - certain of our identity in Christ; i e *I am God's possession (EPH 1:11-14); *I have been chosen by God (EPH 1:4&11 / 1 PET 2:9) *I am his loved son/daughter (ROM 8:15-17 / 1 JOHN 3:1); *I am redeemed and forgiven - holy and blameless in his sight (ISAIAH 53:4-6 / 1 COR 15:1-11 & ROM 3:21-26, 8:33-34); *I am blessed and have all I need in JC (EPH 1:3 / COL 2:9); *I have the Holy Spirit in me (JOHN 14:15-21 & 26-27)...

*Dear B/S in CJ, testimony *re* my own journey since becoming aware of “...entering the rest of God”. What do we read in **HEB 3:19b** - what was *the main reason they didn't enter His rest/ the promised land?* Unbelief - no faith in God that He would keep his promises.

*What is your definition of faith - and what practical role does it play in enabling us to endure? **HEB 11:1:** “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The Greek word the Hebrew author uses here for substance is *hupostasis* - appearing only once in the Bible and meaning, *literally*, “*that which stands under and underpinning - a support*”. *Figuratively* (as it is used here) it means “*a guarantee or assurance*”. B/S, used in other contexts, the word *hupostasis* means “*title deed*” or *something very close to it..* May I re-define faith as the title deed of things hoped for. What does a title deed in your hand mean? *It means that that which is written on that piece of paper - belongs to you! It means that this piece of paper is the proof that that which is written on it is mine = I have a legal access to that which is written on it!...*

Why is it NB to understand faith as “the title deed” of things hoped for? B/S: *What do we have to prove* that the promised salvation, the resurrection from the dead and the glory in heaven are really ours - *apart from believing God's Word?* After all, *we can't see salvation; we can't prove by algebra that we will rise from the dead; we aren't yet treading the plains of heaven. So what do we have?* Faith - the title deed of our hope. And faith births hope!..

One/two last remarks *re* faith. *The beginning point of faith is believing in God's character - He IS Who He says He is. The end point of faith is believing in God's promises - He will DO what He says! And to me that constitutes hope.* My shortest *definition of hope:* The conviction that God will keep/fulfill his promises - concerning the present and the eternal!

*What is the one word that runs through all of the previous? Promise/-s. B/S, during the past few years, on my own faith-journey, I've come to realise the life-changing/purifying power of God's promises in preventing/fighting unbelief. I would like to apply this principle to the whole matter of being certain that I will enter/enabling me to enter his rest...

Let's apply the purifying power of God's promises concerning the area of lust. **2 PET 1:4** = [*“...as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness] by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”* B/S, lust (practising/giving in to it) is linked to the matter of our eternal security - *eventually it can rob me from entering his rest.* **GAL 5:19-21** = “... those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” **1 PET 2:11** = “Abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.” The battle for obedience is absolute necessary for our final salvation, because *the battle for obedience is the fight of faith. The battle against lust, is the battle against unbelief..* Why do I say that? Let's read **ROM 8:13** = “For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.” B/S, the victory over sin is not the ground of our eternal acceptance with God - Christ is; our sin was borne by Him. *But I “live”/practice the purifying power of God's promise in ROM 8:13, that if I overcome theses things, I will live!* Even stronger words in **ROM 6:14** which says “Sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under the law but under grace.” I believe it, I strengthen it through spending time in God's presence - *and then I go out and live a life of victory, halleluja!* Add **MATT 5:8** = “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” B/S, *the plague of guilt will not free you from the bondage of lust; it is only believing God's promises (re victory/life = entering his rest!) and then living them/putting them to practice, that will let me experiece the purifying power of his promises!*

+**CONCLUSION:** **1 COR 10:12.** No, *it's not about being uncertain about your ID in Christ. It's about a humble boldness/bold humility - believing in God's promises to me as his child; and then experiencing the purifying power of them; JC being the Yes/Amen to them (2 COR 1:20).*