

TRUST IN REST

(Hebrews 3:1-4:13)

DAY ONE READING AND QUESTIONS

¹Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. ²He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. ³Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. ⁴For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. ⁵Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. ⁶But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

1. *What does it mean to fix our thoughts on Jesus? Is this more than thinking about him? What specifically should we "fix" on concerning Jesus?*
2. *How is Jesus like Moses? How is he different?*
3. *How are we God's house?*

DAY TWO READING AND QUESTIONS:

⁷So, as the Holy Spirit says:

"Today, if you hear his voice,

⁸do not harden your hearts

as you did in the rebellion,

during the time of testing in the desert,

⁹where your fathers tested and tried me

and for forty years saw what I did.

¹⁰That is why I was angry with that generation,

and I said, "Their hearts are always going astray,

and they have not known my ways.'

¹¹So I declared on oath in my anger,

"They shall never enter my rest.' "

¹²See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. ¹⁴We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. ¹⁵As has just been said:

"Today, if you hear his voice,

do not harden your hearts

as you did in the rebellion."

1. *Why did God not allow the generation in the wilderness to enter his rest? What Bible story does this refer to?*
2. *What will keep us from having sinful, unbelieving hearts?*
3. *List some ways we can encourage one another daily toward trusting God.*

DAY THREE READING AND QUESTIONS:

¹⁶Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? ¹⁷And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? ¹⁸And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? ¹⁹So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

¹Therefore, 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. ²For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. ³Now 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 work has been finished since the creation of the world. ⁴For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: “And on the seventh day God rested from all his work.” ⁵And again in the passage above he says, “They shall never enter my rest.”

1. *In what sense does the promise of rest remain? What is the rest we are promised by God?*
2. *How could we fall short of that rest? Why does this warning occur in a book meant to encourage us? Can warnings help us?*
3. *Describe the anger of God. How is it different from human anger?*

DAY FOUR READING AND QUESTIONS:

⁶It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. ⁷Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before:

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.”

⁸For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. ⁹There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. ¹¹Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

¹²For 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. ¹³Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

1. *What is the relationship between unbelief and disobedience? How did Israel’s unbelief lead to disobedience?*
2. *We are told to make every effort to enter God’s rest. Is this works righteousness and earning salvation? How does our effort relate to God’s grace?*
3. *What is the point of the sword illustration? Whose sword is it? What does it do? How does this sword illustration relate to the rest God promised?*

DAY FIVE READING AND QUESTIONS:

Go back and read the entire passage.

1. *Do you need more rest? What kind of rest does Jesus promise us in this passage?*
2. *Why do we fail to receive the gift of rest Jesus promised?*
3. *Is it urgent to enter God's rest? When should we listen to God's voice?*

MEDITATION ON HEBREWS 3:1-4:13

I wake up in the morning thinking, "I can't wait to get some rest. Wonder if I can work in a nap today."

Perhaps it's my age creeping up on me, but I don't think I'm alone. The college students I teach drag themselves to class, needing sleep. Overworked mothers get no rest. No matter what business they are in, my friends all long for the day off, the weekend, and the vacation.

We live in an age that needs some rest.

God promises rest. Not simply a day off or an extended vacation, but a deep, daily, satisfying rest. God invites us into his very life, the rest he has enjoyed since creation. That invitation is urgent ("Today") and personal.

But for most of us, serving God doesn't look like rest, it looks like more work! Church meetings, small groups, and committee work all pile up as more things to do on an already too busy schedule.

So what is this rest God promises? How do we enter it? The same way Jesus did. The same way Moses did. By being faithful. Trusting.

Listening. With soft, not hard hearts. We enter that rest by trusting the promises of God today.

That rest is not something way out there in our future—when we die by and by—it is a reality every moment of each day. By allowing God's word to cut deeply into our hearts, we open ourselves to that daily work that is rest. As Jesus himself said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

The secret of the easy yoke is trust. If, like Jesus, we are faithful in God's house, then each moment spent with God is a place of deep, satisfying rest.

"Father, we are so tired because we run our own lives. May we trust our little lives with you, knowing that you alone bring rest."