

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: 1/9-10/2023 Hebrews 4

MONDAY NIGHT STUDY THIS WEEK IS ZOOM ONLY!

TUESDAY MORNING STUDY WILL BE BOTH IN CLASSROOM AND ZOOM!

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!

MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY IN ZOOM ONLY, AS CCCM CAMPUS IS CLOSED ON MONDAY, 1/9, WILL BE RESUMED NEXT WEEK MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763?pwd=b25tUzhkaTE0UzIrSnpkVmZEWGJVQT09>

Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763 - Passcode: 087484

One tap mobile

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Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763?pwd=b25tUzhkaTE0UzIrSnpkVmZEWGJVQT09>

TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).

THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340

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<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85309150746?pwd=Tk5oVjN0TzdpWjE3UC9Oam05a21uQT09>

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Phil Twente ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221 www.ptwente.com - For Audio & notes from previous studies -

OPENING PRAYER

In Chapter 1, we were given God's Supreme Revelation concerning Jesus Christ, including His being exalted above Angels. Chapter 2 - Warning Against neglecting salvation. Chapter 3 – Jesus greater than Moses; warning against hardening our hearts and unbelief, failing to enter into His rest.

Review: *(Heb 3:12-19) Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; [13] but exhort one another daily, while it is called "TODAY," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. [14] For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, while it is said: "TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE REBELLION." [16] For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? [17] Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? [18] And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? [19] So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

CHAPTER 4 – THE PROMISE OF REST – vs. 1-10; THE WORD DISCOVERS OUR CONDITION – vs. 11-13; JESUS THE GREAT COMPASSIONATE HIGH PRIEST! - vs.14-16.

THE PROMISE OF REST – (Heb 4:1-10) Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. [2] For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. [3] For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "SO I SWORE IN MY WRATH, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,' " although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. [4] For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS"; [5] and again in this place: "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST." [6] Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, [7] again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "TODAY," after such a long time, as it has been said: "TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS." [8] For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. [9] There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. [10] For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

Heb 4:1 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

- **There are certain things that we should fear.** God has given us exceedingly rich and precious promises. He has covered all of the bases. There is not a need, that you have, but what God has not made provision for it, and has given you promises to take care of it. Or, putting it positively, "For every need that you have, God has made provision for it and promises to take care of it!" But let us *fear lest* God has given to us a *promise*, that we should *come short of* receiving it. That we do not obtain that promise because of *unbelief* in our hearts.
- **His rest. This is the rest which God gives;** therefore, it is called "My rest" (*Psa 95:11*) and "His rest." For believers, God's *rest* includes His peace, confidence of salvation, reliance on His strength, and assurance of a future heavenly home. This "rest" is used in Old Testament in (*Psa : 95:11*). It is also used in the New Testament (*katápausis – abode, place of rest*), in (*Acts 7:49; Hebrews 3:11; 3:18; 4:1; 4:3; 4:5; 4:11*). His rest is entering into that *abode*, place of *rest*, that we receive when we believe that God would do the things that He promised to do. This is primarily the *rest* in Canaan and then the heavenly *rest* in which God dwells.

“Let us” - We have come to the first “Let us” in this Epistle to the Hebrews. Constantly Paul urges the Hebrew believers to go on with the Lord. He is constantly challenging them. This is the first “Let us,” which is used thirteen times in this epistle, more than in any other New Testament book.

- **Let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.** The entire phrase could be translated "lest you think you have come too late to *enter* into the *rest* (abode) of God. (**Heb 12:15**) *looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled.*
- **With reverential fear, all of us are to examine their own spiritual condition.** (**1Co 10:1-6, 12**) *Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, [2] all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, [3] all ate the same spiritual food, [4] and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. [5] But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. [6] Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. [12] Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. (2Co 13:5) Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.*
- **Additionally, we are to actively press for commitment on the part of others.** (**Jud 1:22-23**) *And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.*

Heb 4:2 For indeed the gospel (the everlasting gospel) **was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.**

- **The gospel was preached across the board.** The “gospel” is not just a New Testament revelation, for it was preached to the children of Israel in the wilderness, in types and prophecies at least. In fact, it is “the everlasting gospel!” *But the word which they heard did not profit them. The gospel was preached to all. To those who believed, it was profitable. To those who do not believe, it was not profitable, because it was not mixed with faith! It was not received by faith!*
- **All of the blessings of God that are bestowed on me, are bestowed by the grace of God.** My part is simply believing and trusting God to do it! Though, I am painfully conscious of my failures, my weaknesses, I am trusting God to do what He said He would do, not as a reward, but just as a token of His love and His grace for me!
- **At times we may think we should be seeking to be blessed of God,** predicated upon our good works. Fasting, expecting God to bless me because I have spent time in the word, fasting and prayer, going away and getting alone with God. Doing it with the anticipation and the thought, surely God will bless me because, look, what I am doing! I am much in the word, fasting and praying.
- **But, I need to learn and understand the grace of God and the blessings of God,** bestowed upon me because of His grace! Not because of my works, not because of my goodness, but because of His love and His grace. Once, having discovered that, I have never been short of blessings. Because I just believed God to bless me, even though I know I do not deserve it. But it is not a reward for my good efforts or my works. It is just something that He does because He loves you so very, very much! Thus, to accept grace, gracefully, is a great lesson that I had to learn and am still learning! A good lesson for us all.
- **Not mixed with faith. Mere knowledge of God's message is not sufficient.** It must be appropriated by saving faith. Later in the epistle, a much longer exposition will take up this topic of faith (**Heb. 10:19-12:29**). The writer's point of comparison is that, like the Jews who left Egypt, his generation had also received God's message through the preaching of the gospel. They had been evangelized.

Heb 4:3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "SO I SWORE IN MY WRATH, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,' " although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

- **The writer has used the children of Israel and their failure** to enter into the Promised Land as an example, their *unbelief* that kept them from the promises of God. (*1 Cor 10:1-13*)
- **We who have believed do enter that rest.** Those who exercise faith in the message of God will enter into their spiritual *rest*. This is the corollary of *Psa 95:11*, stating the opposite side, that the unbeliever will not enter into the *rest* which God provides.
- **Finished from the foundation of the world.** The spiritual *rest*, which God gives, is not something incomplete or unfinished. It is a *rest*, which is based on a finished work, which God purposed in eternity past, just like the *rest* which God took after He finished creation.

Heb 4:4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS";

- **It was the rest of completion!** *Katapauo* – make quiet,, to lead to a quiet abode, to rest. (*Heb 4:4,8,10*) There was nothing left to do! The whole universe was created. All of the life forms, there was nothing more to create! So God rested from His creative acts, not that He was worn out and tired, having expended so much energy in creating the whole universe, that He just had to sit down and recover. It was the rest of completion! It is completed! It is a finished work. It is a rest!
- **We read that it was evening and it was morning, day one.** It was evening and it was morning, day two, and on through the six days of creation, but when you get to the seventh day, it does not say anything about it ending! Just like our eternal rest – there is no ending! It does not say it was evening and it was morning, day seven! It does not say any of that, thus the rabbis say it is because God is still resting. The work of creation is finished. So, He rested in the finished work of creation.
- **When Jesus came, He said He did not come to do His own will but the will of the Father** and to finish His work. There was, God had finished the work of creation. But when man sinned, then it was necessary that God do a work of redemption for lost man. Jesus came to finish the work of redemption, which is by offering Himself as a sacrifice for our sin, taking upon Himself our guilt and our sins, and offering Himself as a sacrifice. On the cross, Jesus cried, *"It is finished!"* He is talking now about the work of redemption, God's work of redemption. It was finished on the cross! There is nothing that we can do to save ourselves! There is no work that I can do, by which to save myself from sin. The work of redemption is a finished work! Jesus finished it on the cross!

Heb 4:5 and again in this place: "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST."

Heb 4:6 Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience,

- **Paul speaks about this in (Romans 9:30-31)** *What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; [31] but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.* How that the Jews never attained to the righteousness of the law because they sought by their works to attain that righteousness, but the Gentiles have attained unto the righteousness of the law, because they believed in God. Thus, the person who is trying to work and by good works, to please God or to appease God, never makes it!
- **Jesus said to His disciples, unless your righteousness exceeds** that of the Scribes and the Pharisees, you will in no way enter the Kingdom of Heaven. That should close the door once and for all of our efforts by our works to hope to please God and appease God for our sins. If the Scribes and the Pharisees could not make it by works, there is no way you will ever make it by your good works. They were filled with good works. Yet they failed. Why? Because of *unbelief*. The message of grace was preached to them. But they were bound up in their works. So, it remains that some did enter into the *rest*, the ones to whom it was first preached, they did not enter in because of *unbelief*.

Heb 4:7 again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "TODAY," after such a long time, as it has been said: "TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS."

- *Again, He designates a certain day, saying in David, "TODAY, after such a long time.* That is after so long a time! I mean it was in the wilderness that God said, *Today, if you harden not your hearts,* but they provoked God. Now several hundred years later, when David comes upon the scene, there still is a failure to enter into that *rest*.
- **TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.** Here is the promises of God, still not fulfilled. They have not yet obtained all that God would have for them. There is so much more for each of us that God desires to do, that God desires to give and we fall short because of our failure in faith!
- **The opportunity to enter God's rest remains open (Heb 4:1)** *Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.* It is not yet too late. God had offered the *rest* to His people in Moses' time and continued to offer it in David's time. He is still patiently inviting His people to enter His *rest*. Quoting *Psa 95:7-8* once again, the author urges an immediate, positive response. The themes of urgency and obedience are thus combined in a clear invitation to the readers.

Heb 4:8 For if Joshua (Greek name is Jesus) *had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day.*

- **For if Joshua, which is the Joshua of the Old Testament.** The writer is still talking about the children of Israel. He is talking about their coming into the land. If Joshua *had given them rest*, in bringing them into that place, *then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.* It is interesting, Moses could not bring them into the Promised Land. The law cannot bring you in to the promised walk in the Spirit. Moses could not bring them in.
- **Joshua led them in, but even with Joshua, it was not a complete subduing** of the land. It was not a complete possessing of all that God had promised. There was much of the territory still in the hands of the enemy when Joshua died. It was not a complete victory. They did not take all that God had promised to them, all that was available, all that God would have done.
- **Often, we also fall short. We may enter in and begin to experience the life of the Spirit** and the victory of God's Spirit working in us. But there is so much more that we could enjoy and have, if we would only press on, by faith, and take that which God has and desires for us.
- **If God had just one man, fully dedicated to Him, what would He do through that man?** Dwight Moody was challenged by the statement, the world has yet to see what God could do, if He had just one man who was fully dedicated to Him. There is so much more for each of you. There are so many promises that we have not claimed.

Heb 4:9 There remains therefore a rest (*sabbatismos* – keeping sabbath; blessed rest) *for the people of God.*

- **Now in this verse, he is going to talk about a different type of rest.** **The rest of the Sabbath,** the Sabbath Day rest, using the illustration of God having created the earth in the six days and resting on the Sabbath or on the seventh day, having completed it! Completion of creation!
- **There remains therefore a rest.** The blessed rest from toils and troubles looked for in the age to come by the true worshippers of God and true Christians. It's still there! It's still possible to enter into it.
- **A rest.** The "*rest*" in this verse is not the rest mentioned so frequently in this section. Rather it is *sabbath rest*, from the Greek *sabbatismos*, occurring only this once in the New Testament. Thus the people of God not only may enjoy the spiritual rest promised by Christ in this life (*Mat 11:28*) *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* **But also may look forward to the eternal rest in the new earth** which was typified by a weekly Sabbath rest in Israel. The latter not only commemorated the completed work of creation but also anticipated the completed work of redemption and reconciliation. That coming *rest* will not be one of inaction, of course, for "His servants shall serve Him" there (*Rev 22:3, 5b*) *And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. [5b] And they shall reign forever and ever.* But rather one of perfect fellowship with God and freedom from the presence of sin.

Our present weekly “rest” on the Lord’s Day continues this observance even more effectively than the *sabbatismos* of Israel, for it commemorates both His creation and His resurrection, the two finished works of Christ, until He comes again.

Heb 4:10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

- **God rested, and we enter into His rest.** How does one rest and cease from his works? It is by ceasing from self. It is only in death that we rest from our works.
- **On the Sabbath Day, God had finished His work and He rested.** It is over! It was done! Now, we also can enter into that **rest of the finished work of Jesus Christ!** (*Rom 6:11*) *Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* It is a done deal! **I cease from my works and I rest in the finished work of Jesus!** Now, the glorious thing is that is where God is resting. He is resting in the finished work of the cross! We need to rest in the finished work of the cross and to realize that God has accounted righteousness unto me by my simple faith and trust in Jesus! There is no other peace! There is no other rest! It is not by my good works, not by works of my righteousness, for by grace you are saved through faith, that not of yourself, it is a gift from God! He wants us to rest in our relationship with Him, that one place in all my life, is that the relationship with Him!
- **God's true rest did not come through Joshua or Moses, but through Jesus Christ,** who is greater than either one of them. Joshua led the nation of Israel into the land of their promised rest. However, that was merely the earthly rest which was only the shadow of what was involved in the heavenly rest. The very fact that God was still offering His rest in the time of David, more than four hundred years after Israel had been in the land, meant that the rest being offered was spiritual, which was superior to that which Joshua obtained. Israel's earthly rest was filled with the attacks of enemies and the daily cycle of work. The heavenly rest is characterized by the fullness of heavenly promise. (*Eph 1:3*) *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,* and the absence of any labor to obtain it.
- **The end of the first section – the promise of rest!**

THE WORD DISCOVERS OUR CONDITION! - (*Heb 4:11-13*) Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. [12] For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. [13] And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Heb 4:11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

- **The concluding third part of the exposition of *Psa 95:7-11*** emphasizes the accountability which comes to those who have heard the Word of God. Scripture records the examples of those in the wilderness with Moses, those who entered Canaan with Joshua, and those who received the same opportunity in David's day. It is the Word which must be believed and obeyed. It is the Word which will judge the disobedient.
- **“Let us” - We have come to the second “Let us” in this Epistle** to the Hebrews. Constantly Paul urges the Hebrew believers to go on with the Lord; he is constantly challenging them. This is the second “Let us,” which is used thirteen times in this epistle, more than any other New Testament book.
- ***Be diligent to enter that rest:*** The word, diligence, means to make haste; to be in earnest; to put your whole heart into it; to see that you do it, that is to enter that rest. That sounds a little funny, doesn't it? Let us labor to enter into the rest. The rest is there for us, but it is not forced on us by God. We must enter that rest by being diligent to rely, to trust in, clinging to Jesus and His work done

for us. Yield to Him! Be willing that all self-working should come to an end. Next, we must trust, setting our heart on Him who has entered the heavens to appear for us. Look to Jesus, your Joshua, and leave all in His hands. Come away out of yourself and live in Jesus, resting in Him! Fear not! Today, if you hear His voice, enter in!

- **Lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.** As the children of Israel fell in the wilderness, let us be careful. Let us seek to *enter in* and to experience that beautiful *rest* in the finished work of Jesus! He is our rest! If we are not diligent to *enter that rest*, the same disastrous results can occur to us even as was the case of the children of Israel in the wilderness march.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is *living and powerful*, and sharper than any *two-edged sword*, *piercing even to the division of soul* (flesh) *and spirit*, and of joints and marrow, and is a *discerner* (to determine, the critic) of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- **For the word of God is living and powerful.** Now the writer switches gears. God knows what He is talking about and do not bet against it! The word is living and powerful. God's promises in His word bring life! They are powerful! The power of the Scriptures! The power to transform our lives! The power of the Scriptures to conform us into the image of Jesus Christ. The life-giving power of the Scriptures!
- **I always thought the Word was quick and powerful and sharper** than any two-edged sword because it would bring to light and deal with my failures, which is true. But additionally look at the context of the verse. The Word pierces the heart as it recounts stories of people who were robbed because they just didn't believe how good God is. It is also all about Him.
- **And sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul (flesh) and spirit, and of joints and marrow.** The soul and the spirit are so integrated, that it is almost impossible for us to recognize whether or not it is a soulish experience or a spiritual experience. Many people who are having soulish, emotional experiences, interpret them as spiritual experiences. Experiences that they believe are experiencing the power and the dynamics of the Holy Spirit, which only has touched their emotions or their soul, their psyche, and have never penetrated into the Spirit realm.
- **Many people today that are going around looking for emotional experiences.** They come away from these emotional experiences, deceived, because they think they have had a genuine Spiritual experience, saying, oh, it was such a glorious service. The power of the Holy Spirit came down. People were just so moved by the Holy Spirit. Just waves of the Spirit moving over the people's lives. In fact they did not even get a chance to preach. But what does that tell you? It was all in the realm of the emotion. It is the Word of God that feeds the Spirit. You see you cannot grow Spiritually on emotional experiences. As great as the emotional experience might be, you do not grow Spiritually on emotional experiences. You can only grow Spiritually on the Word of God! It is the Word of God that feeds the Spirit of man. Your Spiritual growth comes through the Word, not through experiences!
- **The Word of God is able to pierce, even to the division** of the soul and the spirit and of the joints and marrow. It is *a discerner (the critic) of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* God's Word, discerning the thoughts and the intents of the heart, the motives behind the action. One day when we stand before the Lord to be judged as the believers, coming to the Bema seat of Christ, to receive the rewards, our works will be judged by fire. Many of the works that a person has done will be as wood, hay and stubble and will be consumed by the fiery judgment. Those that survive, will be rewarded. The works will be judged of what sort they are. Not so much what I did, but why I did it.
- **The Word of God, it can discern the thoughts and the intents of our hearts.** That is why David said, (Psa 139:23-24) *Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; [24] And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.* David knew that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Who can know it? But God said, I search the heart. I test the mind.

Heb 4:13 *And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*

- ***There is no creature hidden from His sight.*** God knows all about you. He is all-knowing and all-penetrating. You do not hide anything at all from God.
- ***But all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*** There are no secret things. There are no secret motives. Nothing that God does not see. There is nothing that God does not know. You are an open book. You do not hide anything! I think that sometimes because we are clever and we can hide our true motives from men, somehow, we get deceived and think that we are hiding them from God. How ridiculous! When God's word comes in, so does light; it makes the simple wise and understanding. It is the light of the word that shows you, your sin and will surely and certainly lead you out. The word is living and will give life!

JESUS THE GREAT COMPASSIONATE HIGH PRIEST! - (Heb 4:14-16) *Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. [15] For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but as we are, yet without sin. [16] Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Heb 4:14 *Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.*

- ***Seeing then that we have a great High Priest.*** Now he jumps again in thoughts. He goes now to the thought of Jesus as our great High Priest. Surely at this point, we need one! You see, we are standing before a God that knows everything. He knows the thoughts and the intents of our heart. Everything is naked and open before Him with whom we have to do. Recognizing that, I need someone to stand for me before God! I need an intercessor!
- ***Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.*** Just as the high priest under the old covenant passed through three areas (the outer court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies) to make the atoning sacrifice, Jesus passed through three heavens (the atmospheric heaven, the stellar heaven, and God's abode, after making the perfect, final sacrifice. **(2Co 12:2-4)** *I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. [3] And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— [4]how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.* Once a year on the Day of Atonement the high priest of Israel would enter the Holy of Holies to make atonement for the sins of the people. That tabernacle was only a limited copy of the heavenly reality.
- ***When Jesus entered into the heavenly Holy of Holies,*** having accomplished redemption, the earthly facsimile was replaced by the reality of heaven itself. Freed from that which is earthly, the Christian faith is characterized by the heavenly. Jesus the Son of God. The use of both the title of humanity (*Jesus*) and of deity (*Son of God*) is significant, although it is far beyond our complete understanding. He is the *Just* and the *Justifier*!

Heb 4:15 *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

- ***Jesus went through greater temptations than you or I have ever experienced.*** None of you have come close to facing the same intensity of temptation that Jesus faced. All of us fell, faltered, long before we came to that intensity of temptation that He had. Satan tempts us. When you resist, he continues, looking harder and harder for the breaking point. With Jesus, there was no breaking point! Thus He was tempted even in a greater way, such as we would know temptation. But in being tempted, He came to an understanding of what it is, so that He could have mercy in understanding you, in what you are going through! **(Heb 2:18)** *For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted. (1Co 10:13)* *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

- **Our great High Priest, He knows what it is, to be under the pressure of temptation.** In all points He was tempted as we are, yet without sin, that is apart from sin. So He can *sympathize with our weaknesses!* He can be touched by us! Oh, I thank God for this! He is touched by my weakness! He said to Peter, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. He can *sympathize with our weaknesses!* He understands!
- **(Psalm 103:14) For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.** Sometimes we think we are super-saints or something. God says, no, you are dust! He knows your frame. You are made up of dust. Knowing our frame, there is that compassion. There is that mercy. There is that grace that is available for us!
- **Because we have this great High Priest, again the contrast.** In the next chapter, it is going to continue in the idea of Jesus, our great High Priest. That is introduced here in chapter four. It is going to be carried, in fact, not only in chapter five, but really throughout most of the rest of the Book of Hebrews. He is going to be coming back to Jesus as our great High Priest.
- **Again, the whole background to the Book.** There were Jews, who had received Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sin through His death on the cross, His sacrifice. They had come to accept Jesus as their Savior and accepted His sacrifice for their sins. But as they were bound up in the traditions of Judaism, the holidays, the feast days, the taking of the sacrifices to the temple. There were some of them that were drifting sort of back into Judaism.
- **That is why, in chapter two, you read, therefore, let us take the more earnest heed to the things that we have heard, lest we should drift away from them.** For if the word spoken by the angels was steadfast and every transgression received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect this great salvation?
- **There was that danger of drifting back into Judaism.** Because there was a certain security, realizing that on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest going into the holy of holies, there before God to offer the sacrifice for the sins of the nation. There was that very moving ceremony as the goat was led out to the wilderness and departed and went out into the wilderness. The idea of our sins now being washed, being separated, gone. That great Day of Atonement, where the one goat, offered as a sin offering and the other fleeing out into the wilderness. And the idea, my sins have been forgiven, but they have also been lost! They have been separated from me. This was moving. It was a touching thing.
- **Tradition, it is like Christmas. It is like Easter.** It is hard to give up because it is so engrained in us traditionally. There are the aspects of the family and the various aspects that just seem to hold us to the tradition.
- **Coming to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.** There was a feeling that we do not have a High Priest anymore. He would go into the holy of holies. I knew that I would not dare to go into the holy of holies. I would not enter into the presence of God! I knew that if a person would try to enter into the holy of holies, they would be struck dead! To dare to presume to come into the presence of God, would be instant death! Sinful man standing before a holy God! So the priest, after many sacrifices for himself and all, on this one day, would go in before the people. But even then he would go in with bells on the hem of his garment, in case there was something wrong with the sacrifice, he would be dead! If the bells stopped ringing they had a rope around his leg and they would pull him out!
- **But there is a certain amount of insecurity now for the Jew. It seems that I don't have a high priest anymore.** Paul is saying, look, we do have a great High Priest! A perfect, compassionate, understanding, much greater High Priest! He understands you. He understands your weaknesses. He understands your temptations.
- **But was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.** The writer here adds to **(Heb 2:18) For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted,** that Jesus was sinless. He was able to be tempted **(Mat 4:1-2) Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. [2] And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry,** but not able to sin. **(Heb 7:26). For such an high priest became us who is holy,** in relationship to God! *Harmless*, free from any malice, craftiness, cleverness! *Undefiled*, free from any moral impurity! *Separate from sinners*, He is like us, yet unlike us. He could mix and

mingle with sinners, and they didn't feel uncomfortable in His presence, but He was not one of them! *and made higher than the heavens.* He is also “*separate from sinners.*”

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- **Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace!** We, ourselves, can now come boldly to the throne of grace! We can enter into God's presence, through our Great High Priest, through Jesus Christ! He has made access unto the Father for each of us, to the throne of grace. Most ancient rulers were unapproachable by anyone but their highest advisers. In contrast, the Holy Spirit calls **for all** to come confidently before God's throne to receive mercy and grace through Jesus Christ.
- **That we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.** In the words of hymn writer Eugene Bartlett, *Jesus Opened Up the Way*;
“*Jesus Christ the Lord opened up the way to glory When He died to save us from our ruined state, And He asks that we shall go tell the world the story, How His blood will save them from their awful fate.*
Jesus opened up the way to heaven's gate When He died on the cross, To redeem all the lost; He prepared the road That leads to His abode, 'Tis a road marked by blood But it leads us home to God.”
- **What glorious access we have! (Rom 5:1-2)** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, [2] through whom also **we have access by faith** into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. **(Eph 1:7)** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. Access to the throne of grace, where we can come boldly because of the finished work of Jesus!

SUMMARY:

- **The promise of rest – vs. 1-10;**
- **The word discovers our condition – vs. 11-13**
- **Jesus is our great compassionate High Priest! - vs.14-16.**
- **Like a river glorious is God's perfect peace.**

CLOSING SONG:

LIKE A RIVER GLORIOUS! Frances Havergal – London Festival Orchestra – (2:05)

*Like a river glorious is God's perfect peace. Over all victorious in its bright increase
Perfect, yet it floweth fuller every day. Perfect, yet it groweth deeper all the way.*

Refrain: Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest. Finding as He promised, Perfect peace and rest (2x)

CLOSING PRAYER:

Read and meditate over Hebrews Chapter 5!