

## ENTERING GOD'S REST: A Study from Heb.3:12-6:1

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### I. Introductory Scripture and Comments: Heb.3:12-19

- A. The writer compares the Jews who professed faith in Christ in his day with their ancestors in the time of Moses, who could not enter God's rest because of their rebellious unbelief.

**Note:** It should be apparent that the writer of Hebrews is using the term '*God's rest*' as a synonym for salvation, not merely a reference to entering the promised land of Canaan (See 4:3.).

- B. In Heb.3:14 we see the necessity for a steadfast, enduring faith. Throughout this short study, we will see strong exhortation for a faith that not only believes but also obeys and moves continually and actively toward a mature faith that endures to the end. We will pursue this theme of a persevering faith, hoping to avoid most of the secondary issues that arise from this portion of Scripture, with one exception which I will briefly cover first.

### II. Heb.4:2-3: The 'Gospel', Not Confined to N.T. Times

- A. The good news of God's saving grace, expressed as His mercy to any repentant person who turns from his sin to God is, in reality, the gospel. Thus, Noah, Abraham, and others in the O.T. found grace or salvation. The tendency of present day Christians is to limit God's gospel of Christ to N.T. times and afterward simply because the cross of Jesus is the pivotal point in history where the O.T. promise was fulfilled, but God's saving

grace was determined from the foundation of the world.

- B.** Heb.4:2: This verse summarizes the above point. Note the order that the Scripture mentions N.T. and O.T. persons who had the gospel preached to them—“...to us as well as to them...”. Here, the O.T. persons are to be seen as primary, or the first to hear the gospel. But it did not profit them due to their lack of faith.

### **III.** The ‘*Let us*’ Exhortations of Hebrews 4:1-6:1

**A.** Heb.4:1 “...let us fear...”

1. “...lest any of you *seem to have come short of it* (God’s rest)...”
2. Every race has a start and a finish. Those who do not finish are disqualified. Only those who finish can be qualified for the prize.
3. The life of faith is that way. The race must be finished.
4. The Israelites whom God brought out of Egypt made a promise to be God’s people (Deut.5:27—“tell us all that the Lord our God says to you (Moses), and we will hear and do it.”). They did not keep their word because they had no faith (did not believe and obey God).

**B.** Heb.4:11 “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest.”

1. Part of this diligence is attention to God’s word (v.12).
2. The word judges our belief and obedience (v.13).

**C.** Heb.4:14 “Let us hold fast our confession”

1. We have Jesus, the Son of God, as our High Priest.
2. Jesus was tempted as we are, yet without sin. He

understands us with compassion (v.15).

3. Jesus can save to the uttermost (totally, absolutely) those who come to God through Him (7:24-25).

**D. Heb.4:16** “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace...”

1. “...that we may obtain mercy” (Salvation/forgiveness)
2. “..and grace to help in time of need.”(comfort, etc.)

**E. Heb.5:9** “...to those who obey Him, He became the Author of eternal salvation.”

**F. Heb.6:1** “...Let us go on to perfection (maturity in Christ)”

1. Progressing from the foundational doctrines to build upon that solid Foundation, who is Christ.
2. When a builder establishes a totally acceptable foundation, he does not do it over and over, but he proceeds to build a strong building upon that trusted foundation.
3. Likewise, a Christian must not have to learn the basic Christian doctrines of repentance from dead works and faith toward God over and over, but must grow into a mature, ministering servant for Christ.
4. Belief that obeys is true faith that honors Christ and glorifies the Father. A living, active faith is a healthy faith and it will endure to the end, being kept intact by the power of God’s Holy Spirit.

*For further reference see I Pet.1:3-5 and II Pet.1:2-11.*