

Hebrews 3-4

Last time we finished Hebrews chapter 2, and today we're going to be going through chapter 3, and into chapter 4.

And you'll notice that each chapter here builds on the last one. Chapter 2 started out with "therefore", Paul referencing back to what he had said in chapter one, and stating his conclusion based on that, and building on that conclusion in the rest of this chapter. And so in chapter 3 he's going to do a similar thing, he starts out with "wherefore", and he's going to build on what he said in chapter 2.

And so what he said in chapter 2 is that they ought to give the more earnest heed to the word of the Son, because even the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and transgressors were punished. But the angels don't control the world to come, the inheritance, it is the Son, and he's now spoken, and the Hebrews have heard him, and had that word abundantly confirmed to them.

And so they need to heed the word, because they, with Christ, are heirs of salvation. The world to come has been put in subjection under man. And so though we don't see man having all things put under his feet yet, that is his calling. And we can see the potential for it being fulfilled, in Christ, who has been crowned with glory and honor. Christ, who in becoming the captain of our salvation, became one with those whom he would sanctify. And one in every way, even in suffering and death, that he might taste death for every man. That he might take the power of death from the devil, and might deliver them in bondage under the word spoken by the angels. And so he took on him the seed of Abraham, and was made like unto his brethren, that he might be their merciful and faithful high priest, able to succor them that are tempted. That through him, having made reconciliation for the sins of the people, all things might indeed be put under our feet.

Chapter 3 Verse 1

Hebrews 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

So as we said, Paul once again starts off this chapter with a call to action based on what he said in the last chapter. Last time he called them to give the more earnest heed to the word spoken by the Son, and now he again calls them to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

And in doing so he calls them "holy brethren", and "partakers of the heavenly calling." So he reminds them of who they are.

They are holy, they are those that are sanctified in Christ.

They are brethren, the brethren of Christ Jesus the man.

They are partakers of the heavenly calling, the calling to be heirs of the world to come.

Because they have made profession, a profession of faith in Christ.

And so seeing that this is where they stand, as heirs of so great salvation, he calls upon them to consider the Apostle and High Priest of their profession, Christ Jesus. To consider the one that they have professed faith in.

Verse 2

Hebrews 3:2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

So he directs them particularly to consider the *faithfulness* of Christ. And in doing so he introduces the next comparison between the Son and some element from the OT. He's compared the Son to the OT prophets, the OT priests, to the angels, and now, he's going to compare Christ to Moses. The man through whom the OT, the old covenant, was given.

So Paul has finished dealing with the angels, and he's turning to the next most respected, highest figure in the OT, Moses. Moses was the most revered prophet and man of God in the OT. And rightly so. God spoke to Moses as it were face to face, even apparently, unlike he ever spoke to any other prophet. It was through Moses that the law was given. He was the savior that God sent to deliver the Hebrews from Egypt and bring them into the inheritance. And so he was arguably the greatest, the most important, the most influential man in the OT, he was closer to God than anybody else. Without him there would have been no nation of Israel, and no OT. And Paul commends Moses here, as being faithful in all God's house. So Moses was a faithful man of God.

But Paul asks them to consider that Jesus was also faithful to him that appointed him. Just like Moses was.

So if Moses, in the OT, was a powerful man— If it was through him that the law was given, if it was him that God appointed to be their savior, if it was him that dispensed the promised land to them by lot, that gave them the inheritance— If he was faithful— Then if for all of those reasons he was worthy of respect, how much more the Son? How much more Christ, the captain of *their* salvation? The one who will dispense *their* inheritance? The one who has now proclaimed the word of God to *them*, that Paul's just admonished them to heed, and not neglect and transgress. For he also was faithful. He "was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house."

Verse 3

Hebrews 3:3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

And so God appointed Christ, and appointed Moses. He appointed to each of them glory. And he gave Christ more glory, he counted Christ to be worthy of more glory than Moses.

Now, Paul has been talking about glory from the start of Hebrews. In chapter 1 verse 3 he said of Christ, "Who being the brightness of his **glory**." And so he began the book by pointing out that the Son was the very glory of God.

But in the last chapter he began talking about the glory that God had promised to man, when he said of man, "thou crownedst him with **glory** and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands." And he went on to point out how we now already do indeed see Jesus crowned with glory and honor, that he might bring "many sons unto **glory**."

And so God has promised glory to man, and he has now bestowed that glory on Christ. So that he is now seated at the right hand of God, being made heir of all things.

And that's more glory than Moses was given by God. Moses was never made heir of all things. In fact, he never even got to enter into the promised land and receive the inheritance. God did appoint Moses to be a deliverer for Israel, and a great prophet, but as Paul said in chapter one, he appointed the Son to be heir of all things.

And so just as the Son has obtained a more excellent name than the angels, it is clear that "this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house."

Verse 4

Hebrews 3:4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

Now, this talk about the house of God, of Moses being faithful in all God's house, that comes from the OT. Paul is referencing Numbers 12:7.

Numbers 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.

3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

4 And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

5 And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

7 *My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.*

8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

9 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.

So God commended Moses as being a special prophet, who was faithful in all his house.

So that is where Paul gets this phrase. And to really understand what Paul is saying about that, we need to take the first six verses of this chapter together.

Hebrews 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

So the people of God is who it is referring to as the house of God. When God said that Moses was faithful in all his house in the OT, he was speaking of the nation of Israel. And now Paul is again using the same term to speak of the Hebrews who have come to faith in Christ. We know that in different NT passages it speaks of the church, of the congregation of saints, as the temple of the Lord. And that is the same kind of thing he is saying here.

And so he's said that Moses was faithful in all God's house, God gave him that commendation in the OT.

But the Son has been counted worthy of even more glory than Moses, because the one that built the house has more honor than the house.

And he makes it very clear who built the house, by saying that he that built all things is God. Every house is built by somebody, and it is God that built this one. Moses didn't build the house. It was God's house, and God is the one who built it.

And since it was through the Son that all things were made, the house of God was built by him as well. And he who hath builded the house has more honor than a man who is simply a member of the house.

Verse 5

Hebrews 3:5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

So Moses didn't build God's house, but he was faithful serving in God's house, as a servant. It was God's house, and he was a servant, a butler, or overseer, serving God in his house.

And he did that, it says, "for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." So Moses's ministry, his service in the house of God, was designed to point to things to come. He was faithful for a testimony of things that were to be spoken after.

And the Hebrews understood this. Moses had told this to Israel:

Deuteronomy 18:15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, *like unto me*; unto him ye shall hearken;
16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *like unto thee*, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

So Moses declared that God had said he would raise up another Prophet of Israel, like unto him. That his ministry, his faithfulness within the house of God, was a pattern that a later Prophet would follow. A Prophet who would speak a new word unto them. And who if anyone transgressed that word, he'd receive a just recompense of reward, God would require it of them.

And so the Hebrews understood this, and they were still looking, still waiting, for that other prophet like Moses to come. They asked John the Baptist if he was that prophet. And he told

them no. And then when they found Christ they said, surely this is that prophet that was to come into the world.

So Paul reminds them, that Christ is indeed that Prophet. That he, like Moses, is faithful in all God's house.

Verse 6

Hebrews 3:6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

But, Christ is not just a servant in the house of God, as Moses was. He is the Son. He is the heir. The heir of all things. He will inherit the house one day. He is as a son over his own house. For he is the God that built all things.

And so Paul shows that Christ fulfills that ministry that is greater, that supersedes the ministry of Moses. *He* is now the deliverer of the Hebrews, *he* is now the one whose word they need to not transgress.

Their fathers were the house in which Moses was a servant. But they are now the house of Christ.

"Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

So once again he says, don't let these things slip. Don't neglect so great salvation. Don't transgress, don't disobey the voice of the Son. Hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Now, it sounds like what he's saying, from all these admonitions that he's giving them, that if they don't hold fast, they aren't the house of God. I mean, by saying "if", that's what he implies. That it's conditioned on that. And that is in fact exactly what he is saying. He's going to expound that in the next chapters. He's going to make it very clear that their salvation is predicated on them holding fast unto the end.

Now, I know that makes some people uncomfortable. That makes it sound like they don't have assurance as a believer that they'll be saved. It sounds like that contradicts the doctrine of "once saved, always saved."

And it is true that if we look in Paul's other epistles, and elsewhere, we find this same kind of admonition throughout the NT. So if it wasn't possible, if there wasn't some danger of some of the people who they were writing to ultimately falling away, God was just wasting his breath. But what Paul is saying here, is actually a little different. You'll note that each time Paul has said something like this in Hebrews he's spoken to them collectively.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

"Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope unto the end."

So he's not speaking to them individually, he's speaking to them collectively. He's speaking to the Hebrews, to the redeemed of Israel, collectively, as a nation, as a people.

He's saying that the Hebrews as a whole need to hold fast, if they, as a nation, want to be the house of God.

You see, what he's about to do here is carry out this comparison between Christ and Moses to its logical conclusions. He's shown that Christ is like Moses, and was counted worthy of more

glory than Moses, as a Son over his own house. And he's finished with that comparison as it relates to the Son, he doesn't have a reason to belabor the point further that Christ has superseded Moses.

But what he's done here is flip that comparison around, to compare the house of God in which Moses served to the house of God over which Christ is a Son. He's going to compare the people of Israel, the Hebrews, among which Moses served, with the Hebrews to whom Christ spoke. He's going to compare that generation, the generation of their fathers, with this generation, unto whom Christ has spoken.

And he's going to derive from that comparison some principles that they should live by, as members of the house of God. A house that is now not just under the hand of a faithful servant, but of the Son, the heir himself.

And so he's going to look at the history of Israel, as Moses brought them out of Egypt. And he's going to compare that to them now.

And that's going to be a collective comparison, as a nation, as a people.

Verses 7-11

He's going to quote from *Psalms 95:7-11*:

Hebrews 3:7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,
8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:
9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.
10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.
11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

Now, Paul is going to expound this here, and in chapter 4. This is the base text that he's now going to be working from for the next little while. And the essence of what he's doing here is providing some more OT background for the assertion that they are the house of God, as those brought out by Moses, and need to hold fast. That if they want to indeed be the house of God, they need to consider what Israel did under Moses and receive instruction from it. Because there is indeed an OT basis for what Paul is saying, from there in Psalm 95. And to get the full brunt of it, we need to go back to Psalm 95 and take a look at the whole thing:

Psalms 95:1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.
3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.
4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.
5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.
6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.
7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice,
8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:
9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.
10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

That's it. That's the whole of Psalm 95. It starts off joyful and triumphant, praising God. Kind of like Paul has done here in Hebrews by extolling the glories of the Son. But then right in the middle it suddenly changes tone, and gives a grave admonition.

Paul says, "the Holy Ghost saith," and then quotes just that part. It's as if the psalmist was going along writing this wonderful psalm of praise, and suddenly the Spirit begins speaking expressly and saying, wait a minute, we need a warning here.

And so the Psalm reminds them of how their fathers didn't listen to God's voice, but transgressed his word. And how because of that they weren't able to enter into his rest.

And then it stops. Boom. That's it. End of story.

But what happens? Do they heed God's word this time around? Tune in next time, to learn the answers to these questions.

It doesn't say. It leaves it as an open question. They are just given clear exhortation, and it is up to them to follow through.

So here Paul is going to remind them of that. He's pointing back to this admonition in this Psalm, and he's going to take the more earnest heed. Because there it does indeed compare them with their fathers that wandered in the wilderness. And so if the Son is the Prophet like unto Moses, then they need to beware lest they be the generation like unto their fathers.

"Wherefore", based that:

Verse 12

Hebrews 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

And note again how he is speaking collectively. He says, "in any of you." "Lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief."

So he warns them against an evil heart, because Psalm 95 admonished saying, "Harden not your hearts." And of that generation, God said, "They do always err in their heart." So the warning was in regard to their hearts. So Paul tells them to take heed, lest there be in any of them an evil heart.

And he defines what an evil heart would be. He calls it "an evil heart of unbelief." So what he's going to be talking about here is belief vs unbelief. That's what he's going to be talking about in the next chapter or so.

And when he said, "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end," he was talking about belief vs unbelief. Confidence, and rejoicing of the hope, those are ways of describing belief, fruits of belief. Being confident in something, rejoicing in that hope. So what he's going to be talking about here, there are parts that you could take out of context, and think that he was talking about a works salvation. He's not. He's going to make it clear that whether they will be saved or not, whether they are the house of God or not, is predicated on belief. Whether or not they believe the word of the Son. He's still talking about the word, and their need to heed it, and believe it.

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

So he warns them against departing from the living God. Against departing from the faith. They need to hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope unto the end. Not departing. So he is writing to people, that could be the house of God, if they hold fast. That are in the faith, but need to take heed not to stop believing and depart from the living God.

Verse 13

Hebrews 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

So again, he's speaking of them collectively, "any of you," "exhort one another." And he tells them to exhort one another daily.

Now, if there's not a danger of some of them leaving the rejoicing of the hope, and departing from the living God, then Paul just wasted a lot of good paper, and the psalmist wasted a lot of good paper, to warn people who are rejoicing in the hope that they need to stand fast.

Paul's premise here, and the psalmist's premise is, that the Hebrews need to stand fast in the rejoicing. Because just because they are rejoicing now, doesn't mean that they will receive the inheritance. They need to hold fast the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

And so to ensure that they do indeed hold fast the hope, that the Hebrews do rejoice unto the end, they need to be exhorting one another daily. Lest any of them be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Remember, in Psalm 95 God told them "*harden not your hearts*, as in the provocation." And so he tells them to avoid that, to avoid their hearts being hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. And to avoid that they need to exhort one another daily.

Daily, while it is called "to day", just as it said in the Psalm, "to day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." If you are going to hear what he said today, then don't harden your hearts tomorrow. Because if you do harden your hearts tomorrow, there will be a recompense.

Verse 14

Hebrews 3:14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

Paul is making this very clear here. He's making it very clear that this is conditional. Yes, they are made partakers of Christ, they are made heirs of the inheritance, *if* they hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end.

They have to complete what they started. They have to continue believing, to continue being confident, to continue rejoicing in the hope. If they only rejoice in the beginning, only today and not tomorrow, then they won't be made partakers of Christ, they won't receive the inheritance.

Verse 15

Hebrews 3:15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

So they are made partakers of Christ, and they rejoice in that. But they need to take earnest heed, they need to remember this admonition that God gave them in the Psalms. They need to

consider how Israel, how the house of God, responded to Moses. They need to consider that they are now the house of God, and they are in the same situation.

In Psalms they are told to harden not their hearts, as in the provocation. The implication being, that if they do, the same thing will happen to them that happened to their fathers. That happened to those that did harden their hearts during the provocation. That rejoiced as they came up out of Egypt, and sang by the Red sea, but complained in the wilderness. Who rejoiced today, but refused to hear God's word tomorrow.

Verse 16

Hebrews 3:16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

And so he reminds them how some of the Israelites that Moses brought out of Egypt did indeed provoke God in the wilderness. After they had heard his word, at first they rejoiced in their deliverance, but soon after they began to transgress it.

So God delivered them, he wrought for them so great salvation, and they rejoiced in it and praised the LORD. And yet they still in the end rejected the word of the LORD, and refused to hear, and provoked him.

And so the Hebrews need to stand fast. They need to continue rejoicing in the hope unto the end. They need to take earnest heed, and not neglect their so great salvation, not let it slip. For every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward.

Verse 17

Hebrews 3:17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

And so although they rejoiced, although they were delivered, yet because they didn't remain steadfast, because they provoked God after they had heard his voice, he slew them. Their carcasses fell in the wilderness. They wandered for forty years until all of them died. They didn't get to enter into the inheritance.

They were delivered, they rejoiced, they weren't steadfast, and they didn't receive the inheritance.

Because they had sinned.

And when he says sin here, remember what he's talking about here. I said that he's talking about belief vs unbelief. And so when he's talking about sin, that's what he's talking about. He's not just talking about general wickedness, he's talking about their failure to believe God, how they stopped believing his word. For a while they believed, and then they stopped. They'd believe him, and then they wouldn't believe him. They sinned. They transgressed his word. They didn't believe it.

And so they didn't receive the inheritance.

And the message for the Hebrews, is that if they believe now, that's great. But they need to remain steadfast. They've been given this admonition in the OT, that they are just like the generation at the time of Moses. They are rejoicing in so great a salvation and inheritance that God has wrought for them, but if they don't remain steadfast, just like those they died in the wilderness, they won't receive it.

Verse 18

Hebrews 3:18 And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

So you see, he's talking about belief. What was their sin? They believed not. Those that didn't believe didn't get to enter into God's rest, into the promised land, into the inheritance. But they believed God when he brought them out of Egypt, when they rejoiced by the Red sea. He delivered them, and they rejoiced. Once saved, always saved, right? No, Hebrews. No. If you want to enter into your inheritance, you can't neglect so great salvation. You can't let these things slip. You can't transgress the word. You can't stop rejoicing in the hope. You can't lose your confidence. You can't fall from your steadfastness. You can't stop believing. If you do, you won't receive the inheritance. And as he said in chapter 2, that means that you'll be punished, if you transgress the word, you'll be damned.

Verse 19

Hebrews 3:19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

The Hebrews have to continue believing, or they won't be able to enter in. Just as it was with their fathers.

And I want to point out again that he isn't speaking to them as individuals here. The salvation of Israel was always a national salvation. They were all, as a nation, delivered from Egypt. And so what Paul is talking about here is still a national, a collective salvation, for the Hebrews as a whole.

And so when he says that they couldn't enter in because of unbelief, who is it that couldn't enter in? The sinners? the people that didn't believe? Did God bring them to the border of the promised land and say, "OK, this one believed, he gets to go in, that one didn't, he has to wander 40 more years, this one did, that one didn't... ?" No. That's not what happened. *Some* when they had heard did provoke, *howbeit not all* that came out of Egypt by Moses. Yet *none of them* could enter in, because of that unbelief. Not just the unbelievers didn't get to enter in, *none of them* got to enter in. And so Paul admonishes, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be *in any of you* an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest *any of you* be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

It was a national salvation, Israel was saved as a people. And that is still the way it is. Israel will be saved as a people. The Hebrews will be saved as a people. And so they need to exhort one another, lest there be *any* that don't believe. Because as long as there are any with unbelief, they won't be able to receive their inheritance. They'll have to continue to wait, to wander in the wilderness, until all of the complainers are destroyed.

You see, those that did believe did eventually receive the inheritance. But they had to wander for 40 years first.

And the Hebrews that have believed in Christ throughout history will receive their inheritance one day, even though their brethren haven't. But they haven't received it yet. They won't receive it until all Israel will rejoice, until all Israel will be saved. They won't receive it until as a people they together believe in God. Until has a people when God has brought them to the border of the promised land, they will believe him and enter in.

And so that brings us to the tribulation Hebrews. Do you see how this will be so important for them then? They'll need to exhort one another daily, because on the day that their salvation comes, they have to all, as a nation, be ready to receive it. They have to all, as a people, be believing. If they're not, they can't receive the inheritance.

It's very difficult to be an amillennialist, it is very difficult to believe in replacement theology, and believe the Bible at the same time. You basically have to choose between one or the other. Because the Bible is very clear that all Israel will be saved, and that that cannot happen, until all of them are believing, only then will they be able to receive the inheritance. If that's not true, if there is not a time of tribulation, of temptation, that the Hebrews have to go through, before the inheritance comes, then everything that Paul has been saying, everything that he's going to say in chapters 3 and 4, it would all just be wasted breath. It would be meaningless exhortation with no profit, with no purpose.

But one day 144,000 Hebrews from all of the tribes are going to be sealed, and they are going to exhort their brethren, they are going to exhort one another daily, until that great day of the LORD comes, when all Israel will rejoice, because all Israel will believe, and all Israel will be saved.

If that's not true, and that's not going to happen, then the Bible is just a book of fairytales, written by people like the apostle Paul who were fairytale-believing fools. Who actually believed what God said, and gave the Hebrews admonition based on it. If it's not true, Paul was a fool, and his entire premise for writing the book of Hebrews, that Israel needs to take earnest heed, and prepare itself to receive the inheritance, was totally false.

But the Bible makes it abundantly clear that the apostle Paul is dead right here. He's not making this up here, he's drawing on OT passages that say this very thing. It is God's promise to Israel, and his gifts and callings are without repentance. They are made partakers of Christ, if they hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end. He will call, and they will answer him. They will be his people, and he will be their God.

The Bible is absolutely crystal-clear about these things. The only way to get it wrong is to throw the Bible out the window. And that is what some people do. They teach doctrines of men instead of studying the word of God. But the word of God minces no words over this. There's question about it. All Israel will be saved.

Chapter 4 verse 1

Hebrews 4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

So again he says "therefore," "let us therefore fear." So he's building on what he said before. He's presented them with this comparison based on that OT passage from Psalm 95. And in the latter part of chapter 3 he explained why that comparison was valid. And now that he's made that argument, now that he's made that comparison clear, he's going to begin drawing some conclusions from it. And we hinted at some of these conclusions already, but Paul is going to expound on them some more here.

And as he does that, he once again uses that phrase, “any of you.” “Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.” So he calls on the Hebrews to fear, lest any of them come short of the promise. Lest any of them neglect the word.

Just as he’s told them before to take earnest heed, now he uses even stronger language, telling them to fear. And we understand why there is reason to fear. He brought it up in chapter 2 and talked about it again at the end of chapter 3: if they don’t receive the word, but transgress, they will be punished. Those that don’t enter into the inheritance receive damnation instead. And if they aren’t all prepared, none will be able to enter in.

So they have reason to fear. They have reason to fear that some of them will come short of it, because if any of them do come short of it, none of them will get the inheritance yet. Not until only those that will obey the word are left.

So, if the time is coming that the Son is going to get his inheritance, and when he’s parting it out to those who will partake of it with him, they want to get their share, they are going to get their share as the Hebrews, as Israel, as a people, as a nation. And if the whole people isn’t ready, then they’ll end up getting nothing. The time of inheritance is coming, and if they aren’t all ready, the Son will just get the inheritance without them, and Israel won’t get anything. So they need to be ready.

Because there is a promise left them of entering into his rest. It is a promise that is *left to them*, not one that was first given to them. It is a promise that has stood from the foundation of the world, Paul is going to show in the next verses, but yet the Hebrews haven’t gotten it yet. And so each generation has passed without getting the inheritance, coming short of it, and leaving the promise to the next generation.

So it’s been left, it’s been left, it’s been left. So they do indeed have reason to fear, lest they also should come short of it.

Verse 2

Hebrews 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

So they have had the same gospel preached to them as was preached to their fathers in the wilderness. The gospel of the kingdom, the gospel of the inheritance.

But just because their fathers had that gospel preached to them, didn’t mean that they received the inheritance. They didn’t. They wandered for 40 years in a land of wilderness until they had all died.

And the reason that that happened, as he explained at the end of chapter 3, was because of unbelief. The reason that the word preached did not profit their fathers, was that it wasn’t mixed with faith in them that heard it.

And so as we said at the end of chapter 3, just because they’ve had this gospel preached to them, and rejoiced in this hope, it doesn’t mean that they’ll receive the promise. That word that is preached to them has to be mixed with faith in them that heard it.

So remember what I said, that he’s going to be talking about belief vs unbelief here.

And their fathers didn’t believe, and so they didn’t get to receive the inheritance. They didn’t get to receive the promise. They left it to their children.

But that didn’t guarantee that the children would get it either.

Hear the words of Moses in Numbers chapter 32:

Numbers 32:8 Thus did your fathers, when I sent them from Kadeshbarnea to see the land.

9 For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them.

10 And the LORD'S anger was kindled the same time, and he sware, saying,

11 Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me:

12 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD.

13 And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consumed.

14 And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel.

15 For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people.

So when they came again to the border of the promised land, Moses told them, that if they refused to heed God's word, but turned away from it, they wouldn't get to enter in either. They wouldn't receive the promise either. He'd send them back out into the wilderness until all of that generation was consumed as well.

And so God didn't just reject one generation and choose the next one. When the children had the promise left to them, it was still predicated on their faith.

And so the fact that this promise is still left to them, means that the Hebrews need to give the more earnest heed.

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them."

GOSPEL

Now, I think we need to stop here for a moment, and take a closer look at this word "gospel." Because this is another one of those words that we've kind of gotten mixed up on the definition over time. We've gotten to the point where we use the term gospel to refer almost exclusively to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. And certainly that does work into it. But that's not always specifically what's being referred to when the term gospel is used in the NT.

Because the term gospel, although the word "gospel" is derived from the Greek, and so you only find it in the NT, it is actually a concept that goes back to the OT. The word gospel simply means "good news," and in the OT the good news is not that somebody is going to die. The good news isn't the death and resurrection of Christ. That's a NT addendum to the gospel. The good news is actually in relation to the kingdom.

If you really want to understand the term gospel, you need to go back to the gospels. Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Because we find Jesus beginning to preach the gospel during his earthly ministry. And his message wasn't, "hey, I'm about to die, and be resurrected." He didn't tell anybody that. It was a secret between him and his disciples, and he told them not to tell anyone. But it says that he was going around preaching the gospel.

So what was the gospel that he was preaching? Well, in Matthew it says three times, "the gospel of the kingdom." It says the same thing in Mark. The gospel is the gospel of the kingdom. And so Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all of which relate to the kingdom, talk about the gospel, they

all use that term. But in John, you won't find it. It is the one that is most focused on Christ's death and resurrection, and the message of that, but it never once uses the term gospel to refer to that message. Because that wasn't what the term gospel meant. That's not the way that it was used.

The concept of the gospel comes primarily from OT prophecies from the book of Isaiah. Prophecies about the kingdom. About the inheritance.

Luke 4:17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,
18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the **gospel** to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

And he's quoting from Isaiah 61:1-2.

And by the way, his quote matches the Masoretic text and not the Septuagint. Go figure. Some people try to claim otherwise, but anybody who can read can see that they are just imagining things.

OK, so here is what it says in Isaiah 61, to get some context for that quote:

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach **good tidings** unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;
3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.
4 And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.
5 And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.
6 But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

Now, do you see how this is talking about a physical kingdom? It isn't speaking figuratively here either. And that's obvious, because what Jesus said he was doing, about preaching this good news to the meek, and healing the brokenhearted, all of that is literal. He was literally going around preaching and healing people and comforting them.

And we can get the context from the previous chapter, leading up to those verses, as well:

Isaiah 60:15 Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.
16 Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.
17 For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.

18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

20 Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

21 Thy people also shall be all righteous: *they shall inherit the land for ever*, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

22 A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time.

And so again, it is talking about the kingdom, it is talking about the inheritance.

And so that is the passage that Jesus quoted from, to declare what gospel he had been called to preach. A gospel of the kingdom. A gospel of the inheritance.

You see, Paul has been pointing out here in the first couple chapters how they've heard this word from the Son himself. That this is the word that he was given from the Father, that this is what he preached to them. A word of the kingdom. A gospel of the kingdom. A physical kingdom. The kingdom of God being manifested in the kingdom of men. The kingdom of heaven.

That's the message that Jesus came to bring to the Hebrews. And it is that message, that gospel, that Paul is now calling them to take heed to. Because that message is still being preached to them, after so long a time. A message that was preached to their forefathers, and yet has still been left to them, it is a promise that hasn't yet been received. Because the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Verse 3

Hebrews 4:3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

So again, he's talking about belief. Those that have believed do enter into rest.

And he's taking that word rest from Psalm 95. He quotes the portion that he gets it from here, "As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest."

So those that have believed are still having this gospel preached to them, they are still left this promise of entering into God's rest. What God called, "my rest."

He says, "although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." So he's still focused on the fact that they've been left this, that those that went before were never all worthy to enter in, that Israel has still been wandering in the wilderness waiting to receive that promise. And the next time is coming up when they're Savior is going to bring them to the border of the promised land, and if they want to enter in, they need to not be like their fathers, they need to really, really, take very earnest heed to the word that they have heard, because so many before have failed, and if they miss this one, it's the last chance, they've got to be prepared this time, they've got to be believing this time.

Because God has been waiting for man to enter into this rest from the foundation of the world. Now, how is that? Well, Paul's going to explain:

Verses 4-5

Hebrews 4:4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

So the seventh day, after God had created the world, after he'd given man the dominion, he rested. He rested the seventh day from all his works. And his goal was that man would enter into rest with him. But man ended up rebelling against him. And so we don't have rest right now. God later promised that rest to Israel, when he was going to bring them into the promised land, into the inheritance. But because of their unbelief, he swore that they wouldn't enter into his rest.

Verse 6

Hebrews 4:6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

So God rested the seventh day, but it still remained for some to enter into rest with him. After all that time. And the people that were supposed to have entered into rest with him weren't able to because of unbelief. They had that gospel first preached to them, but the word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Verse 7

Hebrews 4:7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

So God has set a particular time, a particular day, when they have to be ready to enter into his rest. Because he said there, David said there in Psalms, "*To day* if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

So God was still waiting for some to enter into rest with him, and he had set a particular day when they needed to not harden their hearts, but believe the word, so that they could enter in.

So that after all this time that he's been offering it, they could receive it. Just like after 40 years wandering in the wilderness, the children of their fathers had to be ready to enter in.

He's limited a certain day, and he's not going to keep playing this game, he's not going to keep sending them back to wander, this is the day, if they're not ready then, they'll never get it. There will not be another.

Verse 8

Hebrews 4:8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

Now when he says "Jesus" there, Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua. So he's referring to how those children, after their fathers had died, after wandering in the wilderness 40 years, were indeed brought into the promised land by Joshua. God did raise them up a new savior, that's what Joshua means, savior, and bring them in.

But they still didn't get to enter into God's rest. And that is manifest by the fact that David, afterward, after so long a time, was still inspired to write of a future day when they would be able to enter into that rest. He was still speaking of another day that was coming. So they've never fully received it yet.

Verse 9

Hebrews 4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

So there is still a rest that remains to the Hebrews, that is left to them, that they need to enter into.

And God has raised them up a new Joshua, a new Jesus, a new Savior, that they might hear his word, and believe it, and enter into that rest. Truly, fully, enter into that rest.

Verse 10

Hebrews 4:10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

So Paul has stated his conclusion very plainly, and he's used scripture and sound logic to prove that conclusion. But he's not done. He has another proof here.

And the proof is, that when you enter into rest, you cease from working. You can't be working and resting at the same time, that's a contradiction in terms. And so when God rested the seventh day, he rested from *all* his works. It says so explicitly, so that there's no confusion about the nature of his rest. It was absolute. He rested from *all* his works.

And so, if they have already entered into God's rest, then they should have ceased from all of their works too, right? But they haven't. God has given them a work to do. In Psalm 95, they are told to "harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." They are told to do something. They need to do something now, so that they can enter into rest, as God did.

And what they need to do, the "work" that they need to do, is very simple. Paul's already been talking about it all through here. This isn't works salvation. It is faith salvation. The work that they need to do is to not harden their hearts against the word of God, but receive the word into their heart, and believe it. The "work" that they need to do, is to believe.

Verse 11

Hebrews 4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

So they're not in the rest yet. They can't just kick back and let these things slip. They can't just kick back and neglect this salvation. They need to labour to do the thing that he's told them again and again to do here: to take earnest heed, and believe the word spoken by the Son. They need to labour, to keep believing and heeding the word, until they enter into that rest. Because if they don't, if they are complacent, they may fall after the same example of unbelief. They'll be unable to enter in, just as their fathers were. On the day when they were to enter the inheritance, they rebelled against the word of the LORD. And it is imperative for the Hebrews

that they don't end up doing the same thing again. So today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Verse 12

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

So God has sent his word to them by his Son. And it is a quick and lively word, it is a powerful and mighty word, it is a sharp word, that pierces into the depths of our very nature, and discerns the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

And so that word itself will know, it will discern, whether or not they believe. Whether our not their heart is hard, or whether its thought and intent is hope and rejoicing unto the end.

They have to heed it and believe it. There is no getting around that. There's no fooling the word. There's no escaping it.

Verse 13

Hebrews 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

And so God can see into the heart of man, and his word can discern it. You must believe, because if you harden your hearts, he will know, and he will reject you from the inheritance, just as you have rejected his word.

Verse 14

Hebrews 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

So Paul is not calling on them to believe something new here. He isn't calling on them to make a new profession. These Hebrews have already made a profession. But he's calling on them to keep believing, and hold fast their profession. Because only those that believe will enter into rest. God has limited a certain day. A certain day when the inheritance is open. And you have to believe on that day. The Hebrews have to believe on that day. They can believe on every other day, that doesn't count. *Today* if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

And on bright side, conversely, that means that the Hebrews can be in unbelief on any other day, and that doesn't count. Only that day counts.

If they disbelieve God for 2000 years, but on that day, they believe him, guess what? He's limited a certain day. If their hearts aren't hard on that day, they get to enter into the inheritance.

So those that are believing now, better hold fast their profession. They better keep believing. Because if they want a part of the inheritance, on that day, they need to be believing.

Now, again, I know that there is the inevitable question, "Doesn't that mean that you can lose your salvation?" And that's a kind of touchy topic.

But the Bible is pretty clear. It is clear that if you leave the faith, if you stop believing, you will not be saved. That's why there are so many admonitions throughout the NT to stay in the faith, to remain steadfast. It isn't just something that God says to the Hebrews.

And some will say, "What about the assurance of the believer? Doesn't that contradict that?" Absolutely not. The believer has absolute assurance. It is only those that stop believing, that leave the faith, and deny Christ, that will be denied by him. But the believers have assurance.

There's not some sin that you commit that you lose your salvation. The believer has assurance. But he has to believe, if he stops he won't be saved. That is what Paul tells the Hebrews here, but he also tells the Gentile churches the same things in his other epistles.

Now, you can say, "Well, if somebody would actually deny Christ and leave the faith, I don't think that they were actually born-again to start with." And there's likely a lot of truth in that. All I can tell you is what Paul is saying here. He's admonishing people, that have made a profession, that he has said *are* partakers of the heavenly calling, that he is saying *are* indeed believing. And he's exhorting them to keep believing, if they want to receive the inheritance.

And so can they lose it? Paul's not going to answer that right here. He is going to address this more later, but right now he's just going to leave it hanging like this.

And we'll do the same. We'll wait to see what more Paul has to say about this.

But it is important to keep in mind, in this particular case, here in Hebrews, that he's talking about Israel as a people. As we said before, he's not just talking about them as individuals. And so part of the danger is not just that particular people will lose their part in the inheritance, but that if all Israel isn't believing, none of them will receive their part in the inheritance.

And so really, their receiving of the inheritance isn't just predicated on their own belief. It is also predicated on the belief of those around them. And so they need to exhort one another.

And so it will only be when all Israel is believing that they'll be able to receive their inheritance.

And the Bible tells us that there is indeed a time when that will happen. There is a day coming, when all Israel will believe and all Israel will be saved, and enter into their inheritance.

At the end of the tribulation the Jews have to be ready, because if they're not they won't be able to enter in.

And again, the Son told them this.

Matthew 24:45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

So he's talking about the household of God. Which is what Paul calls the Hebrews. The house of God, over which is now the Son.

And when the Lord cometh, who is that going to be? That's going to be Israel. The church will no longer be on this earth, Israel will be the earthly household of God at that point. So Christ is speaking here of the Hebrews.

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

So if he's doing the right thing at the end, he'll receive the inheritance. He'll partake in the Son's inheritance, ruling over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

But if he stops doing the right thing, and begins to do evil, if he doesn't remain steadfast:

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

He won't receive the inheritance. His portion will be with the hypocrites.

And that isn't just true of those that God has given a charge over his people. Every one of them needs to beware, lest there be in any of them an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

And Jesus's next parable makes that clear:

Matthew 25:1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

And these 10 virgins represent Israel. Just as in Revelation there are 144,000 virgin males that are sealed from the 10 tribes of Israel. Only 10 tribes, because Ephraim is not saved by name, and Dan will not be saved. So only the 10 remaining tribes are found listed there, that make up the 144,000.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

And some of the people of Israel will be wise, and some of them will be foolish.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

And so some were foolish, and weren't prepared for the long haul. They weren't prepared to continue waiting and watching for a long time, until the day that the bridegroom came, until the day of Christ's return. Some of them brought extra oil, so that they'd be sure to be ready, and some of them were foolish, and didn't.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

So it is night, they are sleeping, they aren't aware of everything that is going on around them, they don't know when he is going to show up. It isn't until he's seen coming on his way, in the clouds of heaven, that they are awakened and made aware that he's coming and now is the time that they need to go out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

So everyone gets ready to go and meet him.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

But the foolish weren't ready.

9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

So they weren't ready, they weren't prepared for the long haul, and when the bridegroom is coming, they're running around trying to get ready. And while they're doing that, the bridegroom comes and the people that were ready go to the marriage. To be guests at the marriage supper of the lamb when he marries his bride, the church. And the door is shut, because Israel that was ready is there, everybody is there.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

But the others that weren't prepared finally show up, and they want to enter into the marriage supper, they want to enter into the kingdom and inheritance also.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

But Christ doesn't let them.

13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

And so the Hebrews are admonished to watch. To be ready, and to keep being ready, because if they stop being ready, they won't be able to enter in. If they aren't ready on that day, and they don't know when it is, but if they aren't ready on that day, that is the day that counts. They might have been ready before, but that day is what counts, and they have to be ready if they want to enter in.

So we are seeing how the book of Hebrews does indeed relate to the tribulation and the end times. And we'll continue to see that later on as well.