

THE CURRENT PROBLEM OF UNBELIEF | 4:1-3A

- Unbelief and its resulting disobedience ended in some not entering the Promised Land. Therefore, the writer gives a ‘therefore’
- The national need: *fear*
 - Why? *Lest any come short of entering the promised rest*
 - The rest cannot be equated with Salvation or Heaven, which is fully accomplished in the work of Christ. While we “fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), we are “justified as a gift by His grace” (Romans 3:24).
 - If this is equated with Christian salvation, then It contradicts other passages of Scripture, like 2 Timothy 1:7 and Romans 8:15
- The national reason: *a promise remains...but not for long*
 - This is a message to Israel in the last days of her nationhood. It does not carry over to the church.
 - The Christian's promise is not "entering His rest" (which has the Promised Land and Kingdom in view), our "blessed hope" is the rapture.
 - Israel was at its final days of opportunity

OBJECTIONS TO MY VIEW

This is for the Christian	The Kingdom was withdrawn with Paul
There is a problem with works based salvation	Paul redefines the Kingdom or misuses its promises (1 Cor 6:9-10)
The writer is “fear-mongering”	Paul’s work doesn’t align with such thinking: Acts 19:3, 20:25, 28:23, 28:31

- National Israel in Apostolic days had the “good news” preached to them, just as national Israel had the good news preached to the generation that died in the wilderness.
 - Be careful with the word, “gospel” (KJV). Those in the wilderness did not have the Gospel preached to them, since you cannot preach that which has not yet occurred.
 - There is more than one piece of “good news.” The context of this “gospel” is the *promised rest*, that is, the Kingdom established on the land of Israel.
- Verse 3a is a promise to believing Israel compared to a warning to unbelieving Israel.
 - Entrance to the Kingdom was never on works alone. It always had a matter of faith (v. 2) that resulted in obedience.

THE SABBATH EXAMPLE | 4:3B-5

- There should likely be a new sentence with, “Although the works were finished...”
 - “Although” is elsewhere translated, “and yet.”
 - The Sabbath is here presented as an illustration of the completion of God’s work, thus the readiness to fulfill His promises.

- The word *rest*: **κατάπαυσις** *katapausis*
 - Literally, "completely stopped."
 - This word testifies against Theistic Evolution as well as Inaugurated Eschatology ("already/not yet"). The rest in all these verses is "completely stopped." His rest will come quickly, suddenly, and completely, not slowly and bit-by-bit.
- The "complete stop" of the work of God displays the nature of the coming Kingdom of God. Nothing will be the same when it begins!

THE REMAINING HOPE | 4:6-10

- Verse 6: An opportunity remains to enter **therein**.
 - **Therein** is the "complete stop" (rest) of the Kingdom.
 - It clearly remains for some to enter it. The writer is arguing that God, once again, has given another day for them to "not harden your hearts." (vv. 6-7)
 - In the wilderness, those who did not enter the Promised Land failed to do so because of unbelief (KJV) / disobedience (NASB).
- Note on v. 8: *Jesus or Joshua?*
 - KJV uses the Greek, "Jesus" as a transliteration (also in Luke 3:29 and Acts 7:45)
 - NASB uses the Hebrew "Joshua" as a translation.
 - Joshua (Yeshua) and Jesus are the same name.
 - Context determines who is being spoken of here, and the subject is clearly Joshua
- There remains a *sabbatismos* for the people of God
 - KJV translates "rest," not giving a distinction between this word and the previous "rest" (*katapausis*).
 - NASB translates "Sabbath rest," giving a closer translation of the Greek word.
 - The verse goes back to the Sabbath example of vv. 3-5. Just as God completely and forever "completely stopped" on the seventh day, so the *Sabbath observance* (*sabbatismos*) for the people of God remains as a future reality.
 - The *people of God* is defined in 11:25 as the nation of Israel.
- A reference to Christ's completed work and the nation's only hope: v. 10
 - Christ is the One who "has entered His rest" and has now "rested from his works" as God did.
 - While this is not definitively Christ, the larger context of Hebrews displays the completed work of Christ, in which the nation should trust.