

A scenic landscape featuring a range of snow-capped mountains in the background, a dense forest of evergreen trees in the middle ground, and a calm lake in the foreground that perfectly reflects the mountains and trees. The sky is a clear, bright blue. Overlaid on the center of the image is the word "SERMON" in large, bold, yellow capital letters.

# SERMON

*The Letter to the*

# Hebrews



**Hebrews 4:1-13**  
**“Sabbath Rest”**

## Hebrews 4:1-13: “Sabbath Rest”

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. <sup>2</sup> For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.

<sup>3</sup> Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, ‘So I declared on oath in my anger,  
“They shall never enter my rest.”’

And yet his works have been finished since the creation of the world. <sup>4</sup> For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: ‘On the seventh day God rested from all his works.’

## Hebrews 4:1-13: “Sabbath Rest”

<sup>5</sup> And again in the passage above he says, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’

<sup>6</sup> Therefore since it still remains for some to enter that rest, and since those who formerly had the good news proclaimed to them did not go in because of their disobedience, <sup>7</sup> God again set a certain day, calling it ‘Today’. This he did when a long time later he spoke through David, as in the passage already quoted:

‘Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts.’

<sup>8</sup> For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day.

## Hebrews 4:1-13: “Sabbath Rest”

<sup>9</sup> There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;  
<sup>10</sup> for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his.

<sup>11</sup> Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

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

# Hebrews

- Written to people from Jewish background, have professed faith in Jesus as their Messiah, but in the face of persecution are tempted to return to Judaism.
- To encourage them to endure, the writer:
  - brings up different aspects of the old covenant;
  - he shows how those who disobeyed that covenant faced loss and judgment;
  - he shows how Jesus is better or greater;
  - therefore to abandon faith in Jesus means greater loss and greater judgment.

# Background: Hebrews 3

- Exodus 17:1-7 – the Hebrews, despite all they had heard and seen, questioned whether God was present.
- Numbers 14 – they turned away from the Lord in unbelief and did not enter the land but died in the wilderness.
- Psalm 95:7-11 – the same unbelieving heart is behind both.
- Hebrews 4 – they faced, and we face, a similar choice “today”.

When Israel turned away, it was not a huge step; it was just one more small step.



# What is rest?

- “They shall not enter my rest.” (Ps 95:11)
- “...<sup>22</sup> not one of those who saw my glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times— <sup>23</sup> not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their ancestors.” (Numbers 14:22-23)
- *But “rest” in Hebrews 4 is about more than real estate.*

# Rest is the end of works.

- By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. (Gen 2:2, Heb 4:4)
- Now he called his name Noah, saying, “This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands *arising* from the ground which the Lord has cursed.” (Gen 5:29 NASB)
- For six days work is to be done, but the seventh day is a day of sabbath rest, holy to the LORD. (Ex 31:15)

# Rest is the end of wandering.

- The Lord replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” Ex 33:14
- For you have not as yet come to the resting place and the inheritance which the Lord your God is giving you. Dt 12:9

# Rest is the end of warfare.

- <sup>10</sup> But you will cross the Jordan and settle in the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, and he will give you rest from all your enemies around you so that you will live in safety” (Deut 12:10)

“Rest” is a picture of salvation.

# Rest in the Past

- “The one who has entered his rest has himself also rested from his works” (4:10 NASB).

# Rest in the Present

- “Now we who have believed enter that rest” (4:3-4)

# Rest in the Future

- the promise of entering his rest still stands (4:1)
- There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God (4:9)
- Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest (4:11)



# Rest and Salvation

Which is it—past, present, or future?

# Rest and Salvation

- Like “rest”, salvation is past, present, and future.
  - I have been saved, I am being saved, and I will be saved.
  - Jesus saved us from the penalty of sin; He is saving us now from the power of sin. And one day he will save us from the presence of sin.

# Rest and Salvation

- The end of our works
- The end of our wandering
- The end of our warfare

We must help each other in the pursuit of God's rest (4:1).

- "...let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it." (4:1)
- "...encourage one another daily..." (3:13)

We must keep a “posture” of belief (4:2-3, 10).

- <sup>3</sup> Now we who have believed enter that rest...
- <sup>10</sup> for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works...

We must keep a “posture” of belief (4:2-3).

- *We cease our works to please God, our wandering away from him, our warfare against him, and rest in his righteousness, his grace, his reconciliation freely given to us in Jesus Christ.*

We must watch over our hearts  
carefully (4:11).

- <sup>11</sup> Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest

We must watch over our hearts  
carefully (4:11).

Above all else, guard your heart,  
for everything you do flows from it. (Prov 4:23)

<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of  
you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns  
away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But encourage one  
another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so  
that none of you may be hardened by sin’s  
deceitfulness. (Heb 3:12-13)



# We must humbly acknowledge God's Word (4:12-13).

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. <sup>13</sup> Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

# We must humbly acknowledge God's Word (4:12-13).

- The Word of God infallibly exposes and judges our unbelief and hypocrisy.
- To enter God's rest we must accept the testimony of God's word against our sin.

# We must humbly acknowledge God's Word(4:12-13).

<sup>8</sup> If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8-9)

CONCLUSION



To  
God  
be the Glory!