

Hebrews 3.7 - 4.13

A Better Rest

Greetings from

Church Worshipped & Preached Last Sunday KUTA, Indonesia

Here TRUE Words Faithfully SPOKEN “Mark Blair is Greater than Superman!”

Before Going to INDO – Conf of Int’l Church leaders in Kuala Lumpur

1 thing We have in COMMON is DIASPORA - GLOBAL NOMADS

Phenomena of 21<sup>st</sup> C –

... Million Living in Nations OTHER than Passport Country

Some Travel FIRST CLASS > others FLOAT Across Seas Clinging to RAFTS

DIASPORA w/ Most PROMISE & POTENTIAL, Israel left Egypt 3500 yrs ago

Their 430 yrs SLAVERY to PHARAOH Ended One Dramatic Night

BLOOD of Lamb on Doorposts / MEAT of the Lamb in their BELLIES

More than 1 Million of Them headed Out at MIDNIGHT

Carried RICHES of Egyptians – who were Relieved to see their BACKSIDES

Chased by ENRAGED Pharaoh and Army – All had LOST their FIRSTBORN

God OPENED Red Sea: GATEWAY 4 Israelites / GRAVEYARD 4 Egyptians

God met them on Other Side > Pillar of Fire WARM > Cold Desert NIGHT

PILLAR became CLOUD as SUN Rose > COVER from Desert HEAT

God gave FREE Lunch 40 yrs > No HOLES in their SMOCKS or SANDALS

GOOD BEGINNING does Not Always Guarantee GOOD ENDING

## 1. Warning! Don't Miss your Rest!

WARNING Based on Very Familiar words to JEWISH Worshipper

Opening Lines Psalm 95 > Call to Worship in Synagogue every Sabbath

Shows WORSHIP is More than RITUAL it is RIGHT LIVING by Faith in God

Warns them as PASTOR "Take Care Brothers!...Be VERY Careful!!"

3.11 Let us therefore strive to enter that rest...

THEME: Fresh & Vital to Every Bel. Struggles to Follow Jesus in Hostile World

There was once in man a true happiness of which there now remains only an empty trace, which he in vain tries to fill from all his surroundings, seeking from things absent the help he does not obtain in things present? But these are all inadequate, because the infinite abyss can only be filled by an infinite and immutable object, that is to say, only by God Himself. Blaise Pascal

a. Relationship with God > God desires we KNOW, LOVE & ENJOY Him

WTSC 1<sup>st</sup> Question – What is Chief End / Life's Purpose / of Man?

Man's Chief End = GLORIFY God and ENJOY Him Forever

Man NEW BELIEVER at ICF KZ > Church-Goer from Youth in USA

Highlight of Sunday > Not Service > Seeing HOW QUICKLY RACE HOME

Clicked Stopwatch at Final AMEN > to SITTING before TV in Living Room!

'Been there, Done that!' > NOW Let's ENJOY the SPORTS on Sunday TV!

4.4 For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works."

Lit. Definition SABBATH = To Cease, To Rest, Peace

ACCOMPLISHMENT > God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.  
Genesis 1.31

PERFECTION > SHALOM > Complete Peace – God, Man, Nature

God Not REST because He was TIRED, Enthroned in GLORY of Finished Work

Sabbath is CELEBRATION of FINISHED CREATION

Helpful to UNDERSTAND this TEXT by doing some BIBLICAL Theology

BIBLICAL Theology >> Historical unfolding of Biblical Doctrines

See DEVELOPMENT of Biblical Truth from GENESIS to REVELATION

Key TOPIC of Text > REST, God's REST

<b>Era</b>	Creation	Exodus	Conquest	Kingship	Christ
<b>Rest</b>	Enthronement of God	Lost by the Elders	Promised to the Children	Faint Shadow in Feeble King	Secured and Enjoyed in Christ
<b>Source</b>	Genesis 2	Exodus 17	Joshua	David	Gospels
<b>Hebrews</b>	4.4 For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works."	4.5 And again in this passage he said, "They shall not enter my rest."	4.8 For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on.	4.7 again he appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward...	4.9 So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God

Promised REST is MORE than RELAXATION > RELATIONSHIP with God

NOT ONLY Did God MAKE WORLD > MADE US > FOR HIMSELF!

You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You.  
Augustine

HIS / MY /GOD'S Rest > Underserved Relationship based on Mercy, Grace

Entering REST > NOT a REWARD for MERIT or GOOD BEHAVIOR

4.9,10 So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

Unlike 1<sup>st</sup> 6 Days Creation, 7<sup>th</sup> Day NO MENTION of Morning and Evening Sabbath DAY in GENESIS God's TODAY > So it Still CONTINUES TODAY

We Now JOIN Him because we Trust in Finished Work of His Son for Us

3.14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

b. Rebellion against God – Tragically they MISSED God's REST

GOD'S PROMISE to TRAVELING ISRAELITES

The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and *I will give you rest.*"

Exodus 33.14

Hebrew Christians – like Israelites leaving Egypt – began with Great PROMISE

Have Jesus, BETTER than Anything, All God's Promises YES & AMEN in Him

Began POWER of Resurrection / PRESENCE of Spirit / PROMISES of Word

Be CAREFUL >> GREAT Start does NOT Guarantee a GOOD Ending

3.8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness

Exodus 17 – Not Long after Passing thru RED Sea > BIG PROBLEM, No Water

Will BELIEVE God who Opened Sea will Open SPRINGS in the Desert?

Or will they PANIC, GRUMBLE, COMPLAIN, in UNBELIEF > Yes, they Did!

And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the Lord saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

Exodus 17.7

Hebrew WORD for TESTING = Massah // REBELLION = Meribah

Ref. REBELLION, Exodus 17 AND Numbers 20 – Beginning & End of Journey

Whole Time of WILDERNESS Wanderings– 40 yrs of GRUMBLING

Psalm 95 ref. APEX of Unbelief > Numbers 13 & 14 @ KADESH BARNEA

Nation believed 10 Faithless SPIES instead of 2 FAITHFUL Spies

SIX Questions in THREE Pairs > 2<sup>nd</sup> Question of Pair ANSWERS Question...

3.16 For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses?

POINT > Everyone who DIED in the Wilderness  
began in Glorious Exodus w/ Great Expectations

3.17 And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

POINT > Those who ANGERED God failed to PERSEVERE in FAITH,  
HOPE at the START turned to HARDNESS of HEART

3.18,19 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

POINT > UNBELIEF leads to REBELLIOUS Actions

Christian pilgrims in the contemporary world must realize...it will not do to confess a merely nominal allegiance to Christian truth or pay occasional lip service in meetings and services to faith in Christ. Our commitment must be sincere and genuine...  
Raymond Brown

## 2. Way to Find our Rest

3.13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

SIN Deceives THEN & NOW > GRASSHOPPER Complex

FEARFULLY thought Canaanite GIANTS > they were Mere Grasshoppers

Day that Robert FULTON invented STEAM BOAT

Large Crowd gathered Shoreline Chanting: “It will NEVER START....!”

When it DID start they CHANGED Chant to: “It will Never STOP...!”

We MAY be GRASSHOPPERS! But GOD is OUR GIANT!!

a. We Need to Turn and Listen to Him

Israel LIVED 430 yrs TYRANNY of DESPOTIC PHAROAH’S

WORD of Pharaoh was LAW in EVERY CORNER of EGYPT

Pharaoh who KNEW Joseph simply ordered People of GOSHEN give LAND  
Some of FINEST LAND in KINGDOM > Subjects had NO CHOICE to OBEY

Israelites WITNESSED the INVIOLEABLE Word of Pharaoh > Lived in FEAR

Now the LORD, God of ISRAEL, THEIR LORD and GOD...

SMOTE EGYPT by Mighty Arm & Outstretched Hand

Gave them EVERY BLESSING for JOURNEY > MIGHTY and MERCIFUL

Word of their GOD & SAVIOR MEANT NOTHING – JUST IGNORED

3.7,8 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not  
harden your hearts as in the rebellion...

END 40 yrs ONLY 2 of Million+ in Cairo Departure Lounge landed in TelAviv

Began EXODUS with GOD > ENDED being EXTERMINATED by GOD

Sadly FAITHFULNESS of Moses Not Extend to Children of ISRAEL

3.11 As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’”

If TERRIBLE to Disobey Moses, how much More Terrible to DENY Christ

Moses SERVANT in God’s House, Jesus is GOD who BUILT the House

Rejecting Jesus more than missing Promised Land > ETERNAL DEATH

b. We Need to Trust God and Love Him

HEART of Problem > PROBLEM of the HEART

3.10 Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, ‘They always go  
astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’

ALWAYS Go ASTRAY > NOT KNOW Him > NO Trust & Love for GOD

Mt. SINAI = WEDDING Ceremony – Israel was God’s Beloved Bride

SOON ADULTERY – LOVED IDOLS Not IMMUTABLE, IMMORTAL GOD

HONEYMOON in WILDERNESS SPOILED > Irreconcilable DIFFERENCES

3.12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

HEART is CONTROL CENTER of our CONDUCT

4.12 piercing to the division of soul and of spirit

Not Intended to Prove whether Man is 2 or 3 Parts > Poetic Expression

Be careful about Studies > Great Teachings on 3 parts of Personality

Filled with LOTS of IMAGINATION and very Little Careful EXEGESIS

If Wondering, Bible consistently says Man is 2 Parts! – INSIDE & OUTSIDE

HEART is Seat of Human Personality – Synonyms SPIRIT and SOUL

“the radical center of human selfhood” Philip Hughes

Maturity is being big enough on inside to control yourself on the outside.

Can be YOUNG & SMALL still Mature / OLD & BIG and Very Immature

Not picture of CASUAL DRIFTERS but DELIBERATE DESERTERS

All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! ... The LORD said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? *How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them?*

Numbers 14.1-23

We are SAVED by FAITH not by FAMILY Connections

Like PERSON Raised in CHRISTIAN HOME / CHURCH / SCHOOL

But TURNS their BACK on GOD'S GRACE in JESUS

### 3. Word of Him who gives Rest

#### a. Word that Reads Us

VERY SAD Judgment Numbers 14 – Lost Rest, Will Die in Wilderness

Stubborn Israelites STILL Think they can Enter Promise Land by Own Strength

Do not go up, for the Lord is not among you...you shall fall by the sword.  
Because you have turned back from following the Lord, the Lord will not be with  
you... Numbers 14.42-44

Indeed those Foolish enough to TRY > SLAIN by Sword of Canaanites / LORD

4.12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword,  
piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and  
discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

God's WORD is that SWORD of Judgment > DESTROYS and DELIVERS  
SAVES & SLAYS – CONVICTS & COMFORTS – Pardons & PUNISHES

“my word that goes out of my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but shall  
accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent  
it” Isaiah 55.11

Living WORD of LIVING GOD > SWORD of the LORD is UNDEFEATABLE

4.13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to  
the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Word regards Neither AGE nor EDUCATION > No Respector of PERSONS

Word of God is 1) Living, 2) Penetrating, 3) Discerning, 4) Reckoning

Word of God is LIVING – God's Word, He is ALIVE and POWERFUL

Church History – 2000 years of Testimonies to POWER of GOD’S Word

500 yrs ago Martin Luther asked how he could Effect a REFORMATION...

I simply taught, preached, and translated God’s Word: otherwise I did nothing. And while I slept, or drank Wittenberg beer with my Philip and my Amsdorf, the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that never a Prince or Emperor inflicted such damage upon it, I did nothing. The Word did it all. Martin Luther

Evangelist George Whitefield was MOCKED by Group called Hell-Fire Club

One Day Mr. Thorpe was doing Mocking Immitation of Whitefield Sermon

His Friends Laughed at Thorpe’s exaggerated Expressions and Gestures

Thorpe sat down > He Believed > Converted by his Mocking Sermon!

Reason > Words – given w/ Bad Motive > God’s True and Living Words

Thorpe went on to become a PASTOR!

4.13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and **exposed** to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

EXPOSED = “twist the neck” or “take by the throat”

Like Bending Back Neck of Sacrificial Animal to Administer the Fatal Stroke

Word also Used > Wrestler’s Hold on Opponents Neck to make him Helpless

Same Word used for Way Knife put Under Neck of Man being led to Execution

So he could NOT BOW his Head in Shame AWAY From Gaze of the PEOPLE

Whatever is Meant by Metaphor > All Creatures are in God’s STRONG GRIP

THIS is the God who INVITES us to REST > Relax in His SALVATION

HIS WORD is a 2 Edged Sword > JUDGMENT and SANCTIFICATION

Judgment > See Ourselves as LOST, HOPELESS, NAKED before HOLY God

Sanctification > See JESUS who invites us to PUT ON His Righteousness

We are TOTALLY VULNERABLE and HELPLESS before Almighty GOD

Need to see Ourselves before Omniscient God as we REALLY ARE > NAKED

He sees the FEW Good Things we MAY Do – But ALSO All of the BAD Ones

At the end of the day, each of us will have to give an account of his or her life here on earth to God. None of us will be able to stand God's scrutiny, but if we truly walk with him, we will not try to cover up our sins and unbelief. Instead we will humbly acknowledge them and run to Christ to cover our nakedness.

Tesfaye Kassa Ethiopia

In JESUS we are Invited to ENTER the REST of God by FAITH

REST is RESULT of SALVATION > SALVATION is by FAITH...

My soul finds *rest* in God alone; my *salvation* comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation

Psalm 62.1-2

Real Believers will STRUGGLE, DOUBT, Sometimes FALL

At BEST we Christians are STILL Sinners in Process

We ALL think of Fellow Church Members, Friends, Family > FALLEN Away

1972 joined Youth Group over 100, Only God knows where we All are TODAY

I believe in PERSEVERANCE of the SAINTS / Not ETERNAL SECURITY

IF Endure to the END you will be SAVED / ABIDE in Jesus you WILL Endure

## b. Word that We Must Read

This is what the LORD says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and *you will find rest for your souls.*"

Jeremiah 6.16

ABIDING and ENDURING are ACTIVE VERBS...Stand, Look, Ask, Walk...

4.11 Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

STRIVE – Worthy of your WHOLE HEARTED ENERGY

SOME of you have Earned your Ph.D. > TIRELESS, Single-Minded FOCUS

SOLID BELIEF leads to ACTIVE TRUST

BELIEVE the Word – No Benefit if there is UNBELIEF

OBEY the Word – Disobedient Failed to Enter because of UNBELIEF

Obedience is the KEY to the Letter – Even Jesus LEARNED Obedience

4.1 Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.

PROMISED LAND Not ref to HEAVEN = Continuous Relationship with God

Live WITH and FOR God in Battleground of GOSPEL ADVERSITY

4.7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice

Each New Day demands a Fresh Appointment with God

Thru Systematic Bible Reading and Prayer

Some Christians think this is LEGALISM but only way to find LIBERTY

4.2 For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.

We are REQUIRED to HEAR, BELIEVE, OBEY, and SHARE Word of God

Must Read PRIVATELY & CORPORATELY > Grow in Life-Changing WORD

STUDY the WORD even as IT STUDIES YOU!

3.13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

We NEED DAILY Encouragement > Not just SUNDAY Christians

ONE KIND word WeChat might make Someone’s DAY! > Week > Eternity

Importance of STUDYING Word – Attend Small Groups, attend to SERMON

3.14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

ORIGINAL Confidence, Certainty of Conversion, Presence & Power of Jesus

Confidence of Caleb & Joshua – 2 SPIES who had FAITH to GO and FIGHT!

Do not rebel against the Lord. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us... Numbers 14.9

WE WILL EAT THOSE PEOPLE FOR A SNACK!! THEY’RE Piece of Cake!

Trust brings rest, because it sweeps away, as the north wind does the banded clouds on the horizon, all the deepest causes of unrest. Alexander MacLaren

MORE we TRUST in God our Father, More we REST in Him

Like CHILD Sleeps SOUNDLY in Parent’s Arms,

Israel SAW all that God did, but did NOT SUBMIT to Him in True Faith

This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: “In *repentance and rest is your salvation*” Isaiah 30.15

HUDSON TAYLOR carried Burdens of C.I.M. & burden for ALL of CHINA

He lived in PEACE and CONTENTMENT of His Heavenly Father

Day and night this was his secret, “just to roll the burden on the Lord.”  
 Frequently those who were wakeful in the little house in Chunkiang might hear,  
 at two or three in the morning, the soft refrain of Mr. Taylor’s favorite hymn,  
 “Jesus I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art.” He has learned that for  
 him only one life was possible – just that blessed life of resting and rejoicing in  
 the Lord under all circumstances, which he dealt with the difficulties, inward and  
 outward, great and small”  
 Hudson Taylor’s Spiritual Secret

God’s TODAY is Still OPEN – from GARDEN of GOD to Zhong Guan Cun

TIMELY Message to WHOLE Church thru ALL AGES in ALL PLACES

“In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped  
 you.” Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.  
 2 Corinthians 6.2

The Sabbath is not confined within a single day but extends through the whole  
 course of our life, until, completely dead to ourselves, we are filled with the life  
 of God.  
 John Calvin

JESUS MISSION was to COMPLETE Work of FATHER

SIN was the UNDOING of God’s Completed SABBATH

JESUS Sent to FINISH the NEW CREATION > REDO what Sin UNDOED

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and *I will give you rest.*"  
 Matthew 11.28

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Hebrews 3.<sup>7</sup>Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice,<sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness,<sup>9</sup> where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years.

<sup>10</sup>Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’<sup>11</sup>As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’”<sup>12</sup>Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.<sup>13</sup>But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.<sup>14</sup>For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.<sup>15</sup>As it is said, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

<sup>16</sup>For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses?<sup>17</sup>And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?<sup>18</sup>And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient?<sup>19</sup>So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. 4.<sup>1</sup>Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.<sup>2</sup>For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.<sup>3</sup>For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, “As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest,’” although his works were finished from the foundation of the world.<sup>4</sup>For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.”<sup>5</sup>And again in this passage he said, “They shall not enter my rest.”<sup>6</sup>Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience,<sup>7</sup> again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words 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 of another day later on.<sup>9</sup>So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God,<sup>10</sup> for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.<sup>11</sup>Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.<sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.<sup>13</sup>And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

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