

ENTERING INTO HIS REST

“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”

Text: Heb. 4:1-11.

Introduction:

The REST of God is an experience every believer must desire to enter into. Indeed, not too many of us understand this provision God has made for us. It is a realm where all our labour, struggle, perplexity, calamity, confusion and works cease. God used several ordinances in the Old Testament (in his dealings with the Israelites – the people who served him after the flesh) to provide us a foretaste / prototype of his real intentions which is meant for us who are the seed of promise, the joint heirs with the Lord Jesus according to the election of grace – to whom really belong the blessings of Abraham.

As we take this study on entering into his rest, we shall trust the Lord to grant us a proper understanding of the ordinance of the holy Sabbath. He has worked and he deserves his rest. He has however out of love invited us into his vacation so as to put an end to our labours, works, struggles and efforts.

The ordinance of Sabbath and God’s Provision

Gen. 1:31-2:3, Ex. 20:8-11, Lev. 23:1-3; Lev. 25:1-7.

The Lord worked for six days and took a rest on the seventh day. He allowed the seventh day and made it a day of rest. Gen. 2:2. After;

1. He had worked for six days. Gen.1:31
2. He had finished the work. Gen.2:1
3. He was satisfied with the quality of the work which was very good. Gen.1:31
4. **Could any addition have been made to the work? Job 38:1-7.**

Interestingly, the Lord extended an invitation to his people to partake in this his vacation/rest. Gen. 2:3, Ex. 20:8-11. This raises a fundamental question – who did the work? It was God who did the work and thus deserved the rest but he invited his people to partake of it.

The provision of manna in the wilderness can help us understand further the issue of God’s rest. This great miracle was prepared by God. The manna he prepared while they slept contained all the nutrients, medicines, vitamins their body required and it was sweet.

Manna in the wilderness Ex.16:13-17; 19-20; 23-24; 29.

God used the gathering of manna in the wilderness to further illustrate entry into his rest. In gathering the manna, he gave them an ordinance.

- They were to gather daily only what they could eat. Ex. 16:16.
- They were not to keep it overnight, if they did, it bred worms. Ex. 16:20
- However on the sixth day, the Lord provided a double ration. They were able to keep it overnight and it did not breed worms. Ex. 16:23-24, 29.

Why did the Lord provide them a double ration on the sixth day? What does this imply to us?

God premised his rest in the Old Testament on a day (the same principle governed the sabbatical year). The people need not worry about what they or their dependants will eat on the seventh day,

it was already catered for. In reality before God invited us, there was already a provision to help us enter his rest.

Implications of the day in our day Heb. 4:3a; 7; 10

The rest of God as seen in Heb.4:8. God's is ultimately not a 'day of the week' neither is it the possession of Canaan. These are just figures or prototypes of the original in those who serve God after the flesh. For us, it is the rest prepared by God for us. It is a provision of God to end all our struggle, works, trying to keep the law, trying to survive.

God already completed the work, it was he who sent his son Jesus and he did all the work on the cross and in the grave – he already completed the job. It is a rest made ready that we are invited to enter into. God desires to catapult us into this realm of his rest.

Requirements to enter

The major requirement to enter is Faith. It takes faith to enter into his rest. It was the requirement to enter the prototype and it is the requirement to enter the reality. We find the people needed to exercise faith to enter then. They needed it in;

- a. The gathering of manna on a daily basis?
- b. The gathering of double ration on the sixth day?

What are the elements of faith in these? How does these practically relate to us today?

The danger of UNBELIEF

Unfortunately, there was a malady in the Old Testament which remains the most daunting challenge we face today as well – UNBELIEF. Heb.4:1-2.

- It looks too good to be true. Is. 53:1
- Men always believe they must do something, he must pay. Is. Matt. 19:16.

Unfortunately, UNBELIEF will deter us from entering, it is very contagious and men find it easier to believe UNBELIEF. Num. 13:28-14:4.

Conclusion

God's REST guarantees us a liberty from all our works, labours and struggles. Is it not however Ironical that in verse 11 of our text, we are admonished again to labour? We must understand that this is a different type of labour. Whereas men generally prefer to be victorious and overcome in their own labour, works and struggles, God's call is to a labour of faith, labour in the Word of God, a waiting on him, feeding ourselves with the Spirit of God to take us to a plain where we are able to believe him and thus enter into his rest. We are not trying to be accepted, we are already accepted!