

## Q1 L05 - Jesus, the Giver of Rest - 2022-01-29

Luccas Rodor: Hi, friends, welcome to our "Sabbath School Study Hour" here at the Granite Bay Seventh-day Hilltop Seventh Adventist Church. So good to be here with you and to have you spending this time with us. We're ready to dive deep into the study of this week's lesson, and we have a very good lesson prepared for you today. I hope that you've been studying this lesson. The title of this quarter's message is "The Message of Hebrews." And so, we're going to be looking at the book of Hebrews and diving deep into the beautiful messages that we find there.

This day, today, we have Pastor Shawn that's going to be leading out, and he'll be teaching lesson five, and the title is, "Jesus, the Giver of Rest." And so, I'm excited for that lesson. Jesus is our rest giver, and I hope that you enjoy and learn a lot. Before that, I'd like to ask you to take advantage of our free offer. Today's free offer is "Why God Said Remember," and so, if you'd like this free offer, you could call 866-788-3966. And you could ask for offer number 185. If you're in continental North America, you can ask for offer SH129, and you can text to the number 40544. If you're outside of North America, then you could go to [study.aftv.org/SH129](http://study.aftv.org/SH129). And you can also get a digital download of this beautiful study right here, "Why God Said Remember."

Please bow your heads and let us pray right now. Dear Lord, thank you so much for your blessings. Thank you so much for the Sabbath Day, and thank you so much for the Sabbath school lessons where we can dive deeper into your Word, Lord, and extract meaning and truth for our lives today. Right now, as Pastor Shawn leads out in this study, Father, I ask you to imbue his lips, imbue his mind and his heart with your Spirit, Lord, that he may speak from above. And may we learn what we need to learn and what you want us to learn today. I ask you these things in Jesus's name, amen.

God bless, Pastor Shawn.

Shawn Brummund: You know, it's interesting when you look at research in regards to mental health, that insomnia is apparently a challenge for about 35% of all adults in America. And so, with those kind of stats, I know that some of you that I'm speaking to here today, both in the Hilltop Church, as well as those who are watching online on various networks, that you're struggling and that you also have that challenge in your life, either long term or short term. And some of us have insomnia for short spurts. Even the Apostle Paul is on record twice in 2 Corinthians. He talks about how he struggled with sleeplessness.

And so, this is a challenge that goes back, and you're in good company. Even the Apostle Paul sometimes struggled with insomnia. One of the struggles with insomnia is that you deal with sleep deprivation. And when you deal with sleep deprivation, you increase your risk of being involved in an auto accident. You increase your risk of making a critical mistake on the job. If it's a long-term challenge that we have in an extensive way, we can find ourselves dealing with a lot of different health issues that can emerge from struggling with insomnia. Some of us have a hard time going to sleep. When we go to sleep, we toss and turn. We're counting sheep, we're reading a book, we're praying. We're doing all kinds of things to be able to find ourselves finally falling asleep.

Some of us will be able to get to sleep no problem, but then we find ourselves getting up and periodically waking up multiple times through the night and breaking that sleep cycle. Some of you are nodding your head, perhaps you've experienced that or are experiencing it. Some of us just find ourselves with our eyes kind of popping open at 4 or 5 in the morning, we just can't get back to sleep. And so, we don't sleep long enough even though we know that we need more than that five hours perhaps that we had before our eyes popped open. Whatever it is, we ended up not having a good night's sleep.

Now, another thing that the researchers also have discovered, and many of us know that by personal experience and when they look at the different list of the different researchers and experts in that particular field, they share with us that the number-one cause of insomnia is stress. And not only stress, but some of us that struggle with anxiety, depression. Some of these other different health, mental-

health challenges that are very real for some of us will contribute to that struggle of insomnia. Irregular sleep patterns is another cause of insomnia. Too much screen time, maybe too much stimulus just before you go to bed.

You know, there's a number of different reasons why we might struggle and what causes that insomnia. Why am I calling--talking about insomnia during our Sabbath School Hour? Well, because, you know, life tells us and experience tells us, research tells us that if we don't get a good night's rest, our quality of life is not as good as it could be. And as it turns out, the term "rest" appears 11 times in the two chapters that we're going to be looking at here today in Hebrews chapter 3 and in Hebrews chapter 4. Eleven times that word comes up, why? Because that's the main theme of this week's lesson study, "Jesus, the Giver of Rest."

And so, not only do we need a good night's sleep, a good night's rest to be able to have the best quality of life during our waking hours, but even more importantly that we need to be able to have spiritual rest, the rest that comes by having faith in Jesus, knowing that Jesus is with me and I am with Jesus. Knowing that there is a living God that is walking with me, that gives me mercy and grace as I sincerely give Him my faith that we might be able to walk together with Him. And so, that's the theme today. Hebrews chapter 3 and Hebrews chapter 4. And as we go to Monday's lesson on this particular chapter--actually, no, not Monday, Sunday's lesson, we find there that it points us to Genesis chapter 15, verses 13 to 21.

Now, this particular passage is one of several places in Genesis where God promises to bring Abraham's many descendants into the Promised Land of Canaan. It's one of the most powerful times that God reconfirms, in the deepest way that He can, this covenant that He cuts with Abraham, promising that one day when Abraham's descendants become as multiplied and as great as the sand of the sea, that indeed, God would reconfirm and cut that covenant again through what we now call the Old Testament, during the times of Moses.

And so, if you haven't read that passage, we won't take the time today because we can't look at everything. But in that passage, we find some of the most intriguing elements of that covenant with Abraham, as well as the prophecies that God had revealed there in concern to the several hundred years into Abraham's future. And sure enough, in that prophecy, we also find that God had prophesied and told Abraham that when His descendants do multiply, they won't actually multiply in the Promised Land, but they will multiply in a foreign land, that of Egypt.

And then he reveals that, indeed, after several hundred years of Israel's residence there and, sadly, their slavery that they experienced for many years before they were delivered, that indeed, they would serve that nation and that God would judge them, and God would bring them out, and God would bring them back to the Promised Land where Abraham himself lived and died.

Now, did God bring them out of Egypt to bring judgment on Egypt for Egypt's crimes? Well, yes. We find that answer in the passage of Genesis 15. In verse 14, it tells us that, quote, "Also the nation whom they serve," God says, "I will judge." And so, we find here clearly that God reveals that one of the reasons that God had delivered Israel out of slavery, out of bondage, out of a very difficult and very tragic situation that they found themselves under the leadership and slavery of a very evil king and Pharaoh, we find that God judges Egypt for its crimes against the people of Israel.

But is this the only reason? Well, no. This is not the only reason. There are many other reasons, but one of them was to allow them to freely worship God. God was revealing them so that they might be able to freely sacrifice at the temple, sacrifice at the sanctuary, on the altar, that God would be able to establish the Israelites a priesthood, that God would be able to reestablish what He had already established, many of those elements, already through the first family of Adam and Eve and the different families of the faithful, Noah's family and extended family through Salah, Abraham and the like. And so, God was delivering the Israelites that they might worship God.

Moses told Pharaoh, when he first went in to see him as well as some of the other visits that he had with the Pharaoh, and he said, "Let God's people go that they might worship Him, that they might sacrifice

before Him." God was inviting Israel into a land of freedom, a Promised Land that was flowing with milk and honey. There was prosperity on a physical level there, on a material level so that their quality of life would be far greater than that which was when they were being victimized by an evil Pharaoh and nation.

But again, God was delivering them and inviting them into a full, free religious experience with Him. And friends, that's what the Bible reveals to us as we look at the book of Exodus. Of course, that follows Genesis. We come to the time of Moses. I want to read a quote here from page 37 on Sunday because it's just worded so well. Page 37 in your quarterlies, if you have them with you. You can go along and find that with me. It's the last couple of three sentences there of the actual page. It says, "Creation and redemption are both enshrined in the Sabbath commandment."

What is the Sabbath commandment? "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall do no work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor the stranger who's within your gates: For in six days the Lord created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day. And therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and--" "And hallowed it."

Okay, so some of you are able to share that with me by memory. It's a great commandment to memorize. In fact, I would recommend that you have it memorized, all of the Ten Commandments, that you memorize it. You know, when you memorize the Ten Commandments, including the fourth commandment, God is much more able and capable of writing His law upon your hearts. Okay, because remember, the covenant that God cut through Jesus, the New Testament, He says, "I will write My laws upon your--upon your mind," okay. "And I will put My laws in your mind, and I will write them on your heart." And so, for God to be able to write it upon your heart, you have to make sure that it's firmly planted in your mind.

Now, friends, I have to say, and I just say this as a friendly challenge to you: go ahead and memorize those Ten Commandments. You know, there's too many of us as Christians, as Seventh-day Adventists, as champions as much as we are champions of the law of God, that God has called us to be able to help the world and to those who are believers and those who are coming-- becoming believers, to understand that the law of God is very relevant and is a very real element that God has always intended for a believer to follow. But there's too many of us that don't know those Ten Commandments off my heart.

Even if you don't know the full extensive commandment, like the fourth commandment, which is one of the wordiest ones, that one and the second one are really long. I'm not sure, I haven't counted the words, but they're a close first and second there. Some of them are very short. "Thou shall not kill. Thou shall not commit adultery. Thou shall not lie or bear false witness against your neighbor and--" There's too many of us that don't know those Ten Commandments by memory. But there's something about the exercise of memorizing. That's another thing we're going to run out of time if I continue to preach on that. All right, so that's Exodus chapter 20, verses 8 through 11.

What about the second time? There's two times that we find it. Let's go to Deuteronomy chapter 5. Let's open our Bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 5, and we find there, as we've studied our last quarter, we looked extensively at the book of Deuteronomy. And now we revisit it again in the light of Moses's last speeches. Moses knows that his life is quickly coming to an end. He knows that they're at the border of the Promised Land. He's giving his last words as God works through him to summarize the covenant and the laws and the principles and the plans that God has for Israel when they are entering into the Promised Land. And, of course, naturally, one of the things that Moses goes and reiterates verbally is that of the Ten commandments.

Now, Moses knew by memory, I am certain, I would bet my life on it, that he knew it just as well as you and I know it by memory, as we just recited it, from the wording that God actually wrote with His own finger on the tablet of stone. But when Moses recites the Ten Commandments before the Israelites, he

takes prophetic liberty as God is inspiring him to be able to alter a couple--three of those commandments, not to leave the principles and the ways and the truth that is at the bedrock of each of those commandments, but to be able to get further insight and further understanding.

And so, sometimes we get discouraged or sometimes we get confused when we read the fourth commandment in Jesus-- or in Moses's speech. And we say to ourselves, "Well, was Moses confused? In Exodus, he writes it one way, and in Deuteronomy, the same author writes it a different way." No, we have to remember this as a verbal recitation that Moses is sharing here, and he's taking prophetic liberty to further--give some insight. It says, "Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall do no work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle-- or nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who's within your gates; that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you."

So, there's some additional information that's not on the tablets of stone, but certainly is a commentary that God is inspiring Moses to give in further understanding, saying that's the reason why God tells you not only for you to rest, but for your manservant and maidservant to rest, so they can rest. That's a whole other lesson that I was so tempted to go off in a tangent and talk about going out to the restaurants on Sabbath, or, you know, going to a fair, some of these other things where we're soliciting the services of other manservants and maidservants. And this is, of course, contrary to the very principle and direction that God gives us in regards to the Sabbath commandment. He says, "That your male servant in your female servant may rest as well as you. "And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day."

And so, when we come to the last words of Moses's rendition of it here, we find here that God is inspiring him to also reveal, under inspiration, that God has now given the Sabbath to the believing, the believers that God is trying to establish as believers in Israel, that they were to keep the Sabbath both as a commemoration and a memorial of the fact that God had created this planet and all its beauty and amazing intricacies. All the species or life forms that we find upon the planet, all of it was done by God with power and with great intelligence and design within six powerful days. And then He capped off that seven--He capped off that six-day week into a seven-day week because then He looked at all that He had made, as Genesis chapter 2 says, or at the end of Genesis chapter 1, it says, "He saw the all that He had made indeed it was very-- it was very good."

Okay, and then He goes on, but then God blessed the Sabbath Day and rested on it. And not only that, but it also says that he's on record of making it holy. God rested from all His works and He made it holy. And so, that's why we--when we come to the bottom of page 37 here and it says, "Creation and redemption are both enshrined in the Sabbath commandment." Did God redeem the Israelites from in slavery and bondage in Egypt? Yes, He did. Okay, He rescued them. He bought them--he brought them as His son out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, into the Promised Land of freedom. And so, creation and redemption are both enshrined in the Sabbath commandment.

Now, of course, the rest of the Bible and the Bible writers use the Exodus, use this deliverance from slavery and bondage. Paul in particular really rode this theme and this truth in the fact that God was using Israel and its deliverance from literal slavery and bondage to represent God's deliverance from--for us from literal slavage and bondage to sin, to our selfishness, to our self-centeredness, and all these different struggles that we are born with that we come into this world with. And so, God delivers us when we come to Jesus by faith. He forgives us our sins, justification. He totally wipes our slate clean, but then also He delivers us from sin as well, doesn't He?

Okay, "Behold, I am or God who delivered you out of the slavery in bondage of Egypt," as God said in his--in the original record of the Ten Commandments and the time that God actually gave the Ten Commandments on the tablets of stone. And then it goes on in page 37, "Just as we did not create

ourselves, we cannot save ourselves," okay? It says, "We cannot redeem ourselves" in the quarterly. But redeem is something that we're not as familiar with. And so, I'd like to look at--you know, synonyms, that help us to be able to--that we're more familiar with. It might make it clear for us. He did not create ourselves--we did not create ourselves, and we cannot redeem or save ourselves. It's a work that only God can do, and by resting, we acknowledge our dependence upon Him, not only for existence, but also for salvation.

Sabbath keeping is a powerful expression of salvation by faith alone. And we're going to touch on more on that as we continue in our study here today. All right, so the Israelites are now free to observe the universal seventh-day Sabbath. God has delivered them out of Egypt. He's delivered to them out of bondage. And now they're free to worship Him in all ways, including that of observing the seventh-day Sabbath, the one that God had created for mankind in the very beginning of the first week of history here on this earth.

Now, the original one that was found on the tablets of stone points Israel to that time that God had delivered them. But the verbal reference to it by Moses includes something more that God wants the Israelites to know. And this ultimately points to the ultimate redemption that's found through Christ as the spiritual New Testament Israel. And so, I think that's another point that I just want to stop and clarify for us because I know that there's a lot of confusion in modern Christianity, in Protestant Christianity, evangelical Christianity, in concern to, what is Israel right now?

Where do we find God's Israel today? And many of us have been taught and many of us have believed, perhaps some of us even taught, that Israel today, God's Israel, is found in the Middle East. That's not true. That's not true at all. God reveals, both through Jesus's teachings, as well as later on through His apostles, that if you want to find Israel today, God's Israel, biblical Israel, it's right here. You're modern Israel. You're God's Israel. Israel today is Zion. Israel today is the church.

We have to remember that Christianity is not a religion that is separate from Judaism. Christianity is the ultimate fulfillment and extension of biblical Judaism. And so, true Judaism is found fully and most completely in the Christian church, in the New Testament.

Now, friends, I know that for some of us, that will be revolutionary, even as I'm saying it, especially if you've been taught that Israel is in the Middle East, that God isn't concerned, He has a plan, and that His main focus is on that little country in the Middle East. It used to be, but Jesus says, "I have removed the kingdom from you, and I have given to another nation bearing the fruits thereof." And then Peter later on in 1 Peter chapter 2, he says that you are a holy nation, a holy and royal priesthood. You are modern Israel. Paul comes along and says if you have faith in Jesus, you are of the seed of Abraham.

Now, friends, this is a truth that has been totally buried within Protestantism just over the last 50 years. If you back up 50 years in America to 19--well, 70 years now from--I can safely say for 1950 backwards, you can go to any Baptist Church, Methodist Church, Pentecostal church, almost any of those churches, and it was regular chorus for the pastors and the Sunday school teachers, the Sabbath school teachers, to be able to share with their members that indeed you are Zion, you are Israel. So, even though it's new coming from this pulpit and other Seventh-day Adventist pulpits, if you've never been exposed to it before, it wasn't if you go back 70 plus years in this country. Across the board, Protestants understood that New Testament Israel is the church.

And so, when we look at ancient Israel and how God had physically delivered them out of bondage and slavery, this is why Paul and the other apostles were able to very freely and confidently talk about how that symbolized the ultimate deliverance of all believers within modern Israel, within New Testament Israel, which is the church when you put your faith in Christ, experience His sanctification, as well as His justification that comes from Christ alone by faith in Christ alone. And so, the rest of the lesson study this week is in Hebrews chapter 3 and 4.

Because these two chapters lean so heavily upon Psalm 95, I want to invite you to come with me as we go to Psalm 95 today. We're going to the 95th Psalm. And as we go to the 95th Psalm, I want to read it in

its fullness. Now, Hebrews 3 and 4 doesn't quote the whole thing, but we're there and I'd like to see it in its full context and then be able to carry ourselves forward such, about a thousand years to Paul's day where he wrote Hebrews. So, we're back at Psalm 95 written by David. It doesn't say that in your Bible here because the ancient records in the Jewish Psalms doesn't say that. But when you come to Hebrews chapter 3, in particular, Hebrews chapter 4, it tells us that David is writing this psalm. So, we know it was written about 3,000 years back from our day. It says, "O come--" And, in fact, let's go ahead and read it together.

Okay, so let's go ahead and read together. Just read it softly, but let's read it out loud together. Let's see if we can capture the Spirit and do a little something different. You ready? It says, "O, come and let us sing to the Lord. Let us shout joyfully to the God of our salvation, let us come before His presence with thanksgiving. Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. For the Lord is the great God and the great King above all kings--above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth. The heights of the hills are His also. The sea is His, for He made it, and His hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, as in the day of trial in the wilderness when the fathers tested me. They tried me, though they saw my work. For 40 years, I was grieved with that generation and said, "It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they do not know my ways. For I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter my rest." And so, here we find a very powerful psalm.

Now, of course, this was a song. Psalm is an old English term that simply means song in our modern English. And so, the songs were all--had a tune. I have no idea how that tune goes, I don't think any scholar does. And it was all for the better anyway because God gave me the opposite of a gifted singing voice. And so, I wouldn't want to dare to try to sing it even if I knew the tune. But clearly, when we come to the Psalm, God invited the generation of Moses to enter His perfect spiritual, gospel rest. God was inviting Israel into a gospel experience. God was inviting Moses's generation into a true spiritual, perfect rest. In fact, in Exodus chapter 33 and verse 14, it tells us, "And He said, 'My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.'" Exodus 33, verse 14, He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest," Jesus says to Moses and to his generation.

All right, so Monday, it turns us--it starts to direct us to Hebrews chapter 3, and so that's where we're going to spend the rest of our time here today. Hebrews chapter 3, and we're going to pick it up with verse 12. Now, verses 7 through 11, we find that--here we find Paul quoting from Psalm 95 for the first time, and then he basically unpacks that through the rest of chapter 3 and through chapter 4. And so, that's what we're going to do over the next few minutes here today. So, we're just going to take it verse by verse again. Verses 7 through 10, verses 7 through 11, we've already read in its original context, in its original place in Psalm 95. Verse 7 does say, "Therefore as the Holy Spirit says today if you'll hear His voice."

Now, of course, the voice of God comes through the Holy Spirit, doesn't it? And so, there's a perfect tie-in there. Okay, but again in verse 11, sadly, Jesus, God the Father eventually had to say to that generation, "So I sworn in my wrath, they shall not enter My rest." "Beware, brethren," Paul goes on to his generation. You see, there's three generations that are being addressed here in these two chapters. One of them is Moses's generation, which again, we're finding as he quotes from David's generation, but also, as we'll later on look at, he's also quoting from--well, no, the psalm itself is reflecting on Moses's generation.

But then later on in Hebrews chapter 4, we find that God is also--Paul is--and in the Bible here is also addressing David's generation because David was the one that was prophetically inspired to give the psalm to his generation. "Today, if you hear His voice, harden not your heart." And then, of course, Paul ultimately is addressing his generation. And then God made sure--saw fit to be able to make sure that the writings of Paul in--to the Hebrew believers of his day was recorded and preserved in the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament, which means that it's also addressing our generation. It's addressing

you and I, and that's why we're looking at it here today as well.

By the way, when it says, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts," what's the opposite of hardening your hearts? It's softening your hearts, isn't it? All right, okay. So, when God says, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts," another way of saying that is today, if you hear His voice, soften your hearts, soften your hearts to the Lord God. You know, there's a sinful, independent part of us, you know, that wants to harden our hearts. And it's a temptation for all human beings. But God says don't fall for it, soften your hearts instead. Don't go that down that pathway. Don't choose that choice that you can make to be able to harden your heart and to be able to choose a way that is not with God and not of God. And so, Paul here is doing what he does throughout the whole book of Hebrews, as Pastor Doug and others that have been teaching this lesson study so far.

You know, the book of Hebrews was written predominantly to be able to encourage, as well as to warn Jewish believers in Paul's day not to go into apostasy. Apparently, there was a number of different Jewish believers that saw that Jesus was the ultimate Jewish Messiah, that He was the cap to Judaism, and that the New Testament was the ultimate fulfillment of Judaism, a transition and full completion of Judaism. And so, they embraced Christianity and they accepted Christ. But that came with a high, high price because there was great pushback by their families, by the Jewish community, by their synagogues, by their neighborhoods. And so, there was massive persecution.

Many of them were disowned by their family completely. And so, because of that, there was a great temptation to be able to go into apostasy, to abandon this great, powerful truth, and revert back to what was a semi-Judaism. The reason I say semi-Judaism, and this is not to offend any of my Jewish friends that might be watching considering the things of the New Testament Scriptures, but rather because of the fact that, just like Christianity became semi-Christianity, Judaism, also by Jesus's generation, Paul's generation, had become semi Judaism, biblical Judaism, why? Because, as we are so apt to be able to do so often, we want to start to create a lot of our own religion and add to the Scriptures, add to Judaism, add to Christianity.

And we just start to develop theologies and traditions and religions and ceremonies that aren't written in the Bible, and sadly, quite often are contrary to the original Judaism, original Christianity. And so, many Jewish believers in the Christian church were tempted to go back and apostatize from this truth and go back to their ways so that they can reassemble it and be accepted within their families and the neighborhoods. And so, when we come to verse 12, he says, "Beware, brethren, lest there be any of you that have an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily while it is still called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast in the end. While it is said, today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, soften your hearts instead."

And so, we find here a warning. And by the way, verse 14 and all through Hebrews, you know, sometimes I like to just know a book. You know, some--I know a number of different Scriptures that God gives to me to be able to help people see through different lies, religious lies, that have crept into Christianity. And one of those religious lies is that once you give your heart to Jesus, you come into a saving relationship with Him, you cannot be lost.

Okay, now if you stay in that relationship with Him, you cannot be lost, it's true. But you do have that ability and capability. And there were believers all through history that demonstrate that you can have a born-again, saved relationship with Jesus Christ and still find yourself dying a lost man or woman, why? Because you made choices later on that started to bring you away from Jesus and you began to apostatize, and you began to find yourself outside of that salvation.

Now, there's a number of different quotes, you know, 1 Corinthians chapter 9 and later in that chapter, you know, Paul says, "You know, I discipline my body that I might not lose that salvation which I've preached to others." You know, so very clearly, we find some proof text. But if you wanted to go to a whole book, the whole book of Hebrews is one of the greatest answers to the question, "If we're saved,

can we ever be lost?" And so, Hebrews is warning and encouraging the Hebrew believers that, indeed, you may have a saving relationship with him now, but if you begin to backslide and you begin to apostacize, you can lose that salvation.

Verse 14 says, "For if we have become partakers of Christ, if, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end." Just as "if" is reiterated dozens of times in the Old Testament, so is "if" also found, reiterated and repeated throughout the New Testament, why? Because salvation is conditional upon a sincere, consistent faith. And then we come to verse 16. It says, "For who having heard rebelled?" Well, of course, sadly, that was Moses's generation. "Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt led by Moses?"

Now, of course, many times when the Bible uses the term "all," he doesn't intend, and the Bible doesn't intend, for us to take it to its literal fullest end, meaning every single individual Israelite. And this is one of those cases because we have Joshua and Caleb for certain were faithful to God through that generation and actually entered the Promised Land. But all as a whole who came out of Egypt led by Moses, sadly, chose to harden our hearts rather than soften it, chose to not believe and obey, rather than to believe and obey. And verse 17, it says, "Now with whom was he angry 40 years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who did not obey."

And verse 19, now let's pick this up. Verse 19, it says, "So we that they could enter it--so we--so we see that they could not enter it because of unbelief," because of unbelief. Now, there's a parallelism here that we'd want to pick up that I don't want us to brush over because again here, it also reveals in these two chapters another kernel of truth that is very critical for us to understand, and that is true belief always comes with obedience.

Okay, so Paul here could very confidently and very freely go back and forth between obedience and unbelief, between disobedience and unbelief, between obedience and faith, why? Because one always comes with the other. You cannot have a sincere faith and not want to obey Jesus. If someone comes to you and says, "Listen, I'm a born-again Christian, I love Jesus with all my heart," but you start to talk about the law and obedience to them, and they start to turn off immediately and tell you how unimportant that is, that person does not have a sincere saving faith. And so, God has called us to be able to help our Christian friends if they're in that place to be able to understand that true love and faith in Jesus means a willing and surrendered obedience to Jesus.

Now, the book of James unpacks that. We find that reiterated here throughout these two chapters in a very powerful way because, again, Paul is going back and forth. The Bible goes back and forth between them being unbelievers and disobedient, why? Because when you believe, you obey. When you don't believe, you're disobey. Okay, and the more you believe, the more you will obey. And the more you obey, the more you believe. It's a great life-giving cycle that God gives to us that the Bible reveals for you and me. All right, so let's go to Hebrews chapter 4, and we're just going to commentate through Hebrews chapter 4 because we're going to run out of time very quickly here. Verse 4, chapter 4 it says, "Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of us seem to have come fall short of it."

Again, that conditionality of their salvation very clear. "For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them." Friends, the first time I saw that, I just about fell off my chair. And now I've got it highlighted in my most important color, green, in my Bible, why? Because it tells us very clearly that God was inviting and had revealed the gospel of Jesus Christ to the first generation of Israelites in which he cut a covenant with--through Moses and the leadership of Moses, just as much as he did with the first generation of Christian believers and you and me. It tells us that the gospel was crystal clear to them. God was inviting them to the same experience that he is inviting you and I as Christians today.

And that's another lie that God had--not that God, but the devil has sold to too many religious believers throughout Christianity's history, that somehow the Old Testament was not gospel-based. It was not based on what Ephesians tells us. Paul had been inspired to summarize in such a powerful way. For by



grace you have been saved through? Through faith. It's not of yourselves. It is a--it's a gift of God. "It's not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created for good works in Christ Jesus. "Ephesians chapter 2, verses 8 through 10, that same gospel was also preached to the Israelites in Moses's generation. The Holy Spirit was offering them the exact same experience, to be born again and saved by grace through faith.

Was the law important? Was obedience conditional to that faith? Well, yes, even as it is in the New Testament. And so, these two chapters are so powerful because it just blows away so many different lies that have crept into Christianity today. "For indeed, the gospel was preached to us as well as to them, but the word which they heard did not profit them." Why? Because it was not mixed with faith in those who heard it. You see, you can hear the Word and go away an unbeliever, why? Because we choose to either soften our hearts to the Word of God and the invitation he brings to us through the scriptures and his invitations, or we can, we can soften our hearts and we can open our hearts and say, "Lord Jesus, come in. I embrace this truth and this Word and the voice that is coming with it."

The Holy Spirit always comes and speaks to our hearts and our minds when we hear the Word of God, when we read the Word of God. What we do with it is what makes all the difference. And that's what God is telling us again here today in verse 2, sadly, that generation heard the word, they heard the voice, they experienced the convictions that came with it, but they did not profit because it was not mixed with faith. Verse 3, "For we who have believed do enter that rest," he says. But the good news is that that rest is still available, even as it said in verse 1 of the same chapter. And we have experienced it. We have entered into the rest. [sighing] You take a deep breath sometimes and just reflect on the rest that God has given to you and me.

Now, God uses the Sabbath to be able to represent that rest in the rest of this chapter in a very powerful way. We want to pick up because it's not just where he quotes the Sabbath commandment or actually reflects on the seventh day as first recorded in Genesis chapter 2 and verse 2. But he actually starts to introduce it in the verse or two before it, as well as the verse or two after it. And so, let's pick that up because the Sabbath is a beautiful representation of the, [sighing], the rest that we can find in Jesus. Because even though obedience is--willing obedience is conditional upon our salvation, it is not the way in which we earn our salvation.

You see the difference there, friends? God requires a willing obedience, but that obedience does not save us in of itself. So, we rest in what Jesus has done for us. Thank you, Jesus, that you died on the cross to be able to know that my sins have been wiped clean, that my sins have been made as white as snow. Thank you, Jesus, for the promise that when I confess my sins, you are just and faithful to forgive my sins and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness. Thank You, Jesus, that it's you that works in me, both to will and to do Your good pleasure, that it's not my righteousness that I must lean upon to find victory in this life, but I lean upon You and I rest in Your righteousness. I rest in Your holiness. And then He makes us holy with His power, and not with mine.

And so, in verse 3, it says, "For we who have believed, do enter that rest as He said. So I swear on My wrath, they shall not enter My rest." This is reverse deduction as he's using the fact that God said, "They shall not enter My rest" to reveal that, indeed, He offered it to them, but they would not accept it. And so He said, "You will not enter it." "Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world--" There's that first introduction to the seventh-day Sabbath. "Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."

When God came to the end of his creation activities at the end of day six and that he rested on the Sabbath, is there an eighth date on record which he says, "Oh, you know what, there's a couple of things I forgot. I need to go back and touch up a couple of things. There's a couple of species I forgot to put. And boy, did I ever really blew it with that elephant. That nose is way too long. I gotta be able to shorten that."

No, it doesn't say that, right? It says what He came to the end of His works, it was finished. And then He

rested. He paused as a symbol for you and me. And so, that's why we find in verse 4, "And he spoke in a certain place of the seventh day in this way, and God rested on the seventh day from all his works." Genesis chapter 2 and verse 2 he's quoting. "And again in this place, they shall not enter into My rest. Since therefore remains that some must enter it and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience." Again, he designates a certain day saying in David, "Today, after such a long time, as it has been said, today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."

And then as we're short for time, I'm going to skip down to verse 9 and 10 to close up. It says, "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God has from His." And again, verse 10 is reflecting the seventh-day Sabbath. And even as God finished and rested His works, God calls us to rest in His works as well so that we can know when we stand at the Judgment Day, when we stand at the border of the heavenly eternal kingdom and the Promised Land and he says, "Why should I let you in?" We can't say, "Well, because I was good enough, because I kept the Sabbath long enough, because I returned tithe faithfully enough." No, this was all part of your sincere faith experience and your salvation. But that's not the reason that you enter the Promised Land. It's because what Christ has done for you and what Christ is still doing for you, even right now as your high priest. Thank God for that.

Thank you so much for studying, folks. For those of you that are watching, it's nice to have you. We look forward to having you join us if you--in the future at Sabbath School Study Hours. Until then, God bless.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing, free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544 or visit the web address shown on your screen. And be sure to select the digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with Amazing Facts wherever and whenever you want, and most important, to share it with others.

Announcer: Amazing Facts Change Lives.

Male: My greatest wish is that my children will see me the way I see my own father. He's a very devoted man, and that kind of framed my childhood going forward from there, where I was always involved in church work. And I had a very rich experience with the Lord at a young age all the way up through college. Then after I got married, I got into a company called Comcast, and I spent the past, roughly, eight-and-a-half years, nine years at Comcast. And I was actually watching television with my son, and a Comcast commercial came on the air. And he said, "Oh, Daddy, that's Comcast. That's where you work, Daddy."

And most fathers would be proud of something like that, but it really struck me that, you know, my son's getting older and he does not see me as a servant of the Lord. He sees me as a servant of my company. And I knew that I would have to make some changes because I wanted him to know me as a man of God. I never thought I would be a preacher or anything like that, but I knew that there was room in the work for me and for my talents. And I wanted my son to see me operating in the work.

That's when I knew that my time there was coming to an end. I was sitting in my office one day, and I was kneeling in prayer. I said, "God, you know, show me what you want me to do because, you know, this seems like a big move here. And, you know, everyone's thinking I'm crazy. And I don't know exactly how, you know, things are going to go if they don't go well." That's a crazy thought when you're thinking about God. And I lifted my head up in prayer, and they were just like a flock of, I don't know, maybe 300 birds that were just flying, and they were swooping down over the water. And they would fly back up, and then they would chase each other around. And, you know, I was just look at the pattern of the giant flock. And the promise of the Lord came to me where he says that, you know, He takes care of the sparrows, and you don't see them worrying about how they are going to be taken care of from day to day. You know, they don't, you know, wring their hands, wondering, you know, "Will there be any worms to eat tomorrow?"

And that promise really stood out to me. And He said, "How much more do I love you? You know, I'm not going to send you on a mission to do My work and leave you high and dry because you claim to be My child, you claim to be My son, and everyone knows that." That assurance allows me to know that whatever happens here, whatever happens after here, we're sons of God. And there are certain things that we shouldn't worry about.

From the day we arrived at AFCOE, it's been obvious that God has blessed the Amazing Facts Ministry, the AFCOE program. And I will be using my AFCOE experience, no matter where I go, to reach people. Because the personal touch of face-to-face evangelism, speaking and sharing the Word of God out of your own mouth, there's no replacement for that. And Amazing Facts has been very instrumental in helping me find the area of the work of God and showing me how large and how broad it is. It's been a tremendous blessing to be in a place where we're around people seeking to do God's will and listening for His voice in their life. And that's very, very important today.

Announcer: Together, we have spread the gospel much farther than ever before. Thank you for your support.

Announcer: Amazing Facts Changed Lives.

Nita Littlefield: I'm Tlingit Indian from Sitka, Alaska. My Tlingit name is [speaking Tlingit] It was a very depressing time for the people of Alaska. A lot of alcohol abuse was taking place. And unfortunately, my mother got caught up in the alcohol. It made myself and my siblings grow up in a pretty horrible environment. It was really hard to understand God. It was really hard to understand what love was. I ended up having a child in my 12th grade and leaving home when I was 15 years old. But somehow, somehow, we made it.

And I became a loner, I became a hermit. So, I went up to the biggest marijuana county, to Humboldt County, and started my new career. Things weren't right though. No matter how nice I kept thinking life was living up on top of the mountain, not having to worry about wearing clothing, just waking up and watching the plants grow, searching still for more and more. I went to the post office, and I was standing there by myself. I looked down and here was this, what is called a handbill, a postcard. And the letters on it grabbed my attention and it said, "Revelations." I'd never heard Revelation taught before, and I thought, "Gosh, that would have been so good." I looked at the time and the day and I said, "Wow, that's today."

And for six weeks, I sat there in the front seat of that building and could not believe the things that I heard. And I found this hunger, that I had in my heart for decades being filled. I was actually like a starving child, you know, wanting to get into learn more about Revelations. And I chose to be baptized on April 3. Even though I chose to serve God, I kept falling. I was going to Bible studies all--four times a week and just so hungry to learn as much as possible.

God, just overnight, had me studying the Word of God through AFCOE, and the miracles that happened through AFCOE is so incredible. The only preacher I was listening to was Pastor Doug Batchelor, who I didn't even call by his name. I called him the caveman. And then here, all of a sudden, I'm sitting in front of him in his classroom, learning from him.

On October 11, I sat there, though, in my room saying, "Lord, here I am studying Your Word. But what, what am I doing here? What do I need to do? What is it you want me to do?" And that night about 1 in the morning, God spoke to me and He said, "I want you to write a note to Pastor Doug and tell him what you do." I sat there and I says, "No, I'm not going to write a note. I'm not going to write a note." And I said okay, so I ripped off a piece of paper, and I wrote on the note and I said, "I'm an experienced fashion designer. I can sew anything. I could make any patterns. If there's any way that I can be of any service to you, God told me to be bold and tell you." And I walked up and I handed him the note, and he didn't know what it was, but he said, "Thank you."

And four hours later, I got a phone call from Amazing Facts. Pastor Doug told me that I was an answer to

their prayers. They had been looking for a wardrobe stylist for their new film that they're producing.

Male: Action, two, three.

Nita: Amazing Facts has changed my life in the direction that God wants me to go. And now, out of all the knowledge that was taught to me, I'm able to go out into this world and share the gospel and finish the work for Jesus Christ.

Doug Batchelor: Friends, it's because of God's blessing and your support that thousands of others like Nita have found Jesus and everlasting life.