

# Studies in Hebrews

## Lesson VI

### Text: Hebrews 4:1-16 (NIV)

**4:1** 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. **2** For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.<sup>[a]</sup> **3** 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.' "<sup>[b]</sup> And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world. **4** For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: "And on the seventh day God rested from all his work."<sup>[c]</sup> **5** And again in the passage above he says, "They shall never enter my rest."

**6** It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. **7** Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it *Today*, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts."<sup>[d]</sup> **8** For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. **9** There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; **10** for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. **11** Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

**12** For the word of God is living 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. **13** 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.

**14** Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens,<sup>[e]</sup> Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. **15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. **16** Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

**Footnotes:** a. Many manuscripts say: *because they did not share in the faith of those who obeyed*  
b. Psalm 95:11; also in verse 5 c. Gen. 2:2 d. Psalm 95:7,8 e. or *gone into heaven*

# Review

1. According to verse 1, Christians can hold to the promise of entering into what?
2. The writer warns his readers not to f\_\_\_\_\_ s\_\_\_\_\_ of it (vs. 1)
3. The ancient Israelites missed out on the Promised Land because they failed to respond to the G\_\_\_\_\_ with f\_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 2, cf. vv 3-6)
4. What prevents people from enjoying God's rest? (vv. 6-7)
5. How is God's promised rest different from the rest promised to Israel? (vv. 8-11)

# Questions for Thought & Discussion

6. Verse 12 shares some of the more dynamic characteristics of "the word of God." In the immediate context of the chapter, what specifically is the writer referring to?
7. In a larger context of faith and life, what do we know to be true about God's word? (vs. 12)
8. What does verse 13 tell us about the nature of God?
9. Having previously established Jesus as the Christ, greater than the angels, more esteemed than the prophets, and superior to Moses, the writer of Hebrews now presents Christ as our "high priest." (vs. 14) What is the significance of this designation? Practically speaking, what does it mean to you and me today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
10. Have you ever been afraid to approach God? What assurance do verses 15-16 give us about being transparent before a holy God?

