

**LORD!**  
**Please**  
**Give Us**  
**Soft and**  
**Believing**  
**Hearts!**

Text: Hebrews 4:1-13 NAS 1995

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Regular maintenance is important – like ✦oil changes, ✦physical examinations, and ✦spiritual examinations (see [2 Corinthians 13:5](#)).

Skipping regular maintenance can be a HUGE problem – like:

- Running our engine out of oil.
- Being diagnosed with stage 4 cancer.
- Dying with a *hard* and *unbelieving* heart.

Bethlehem Parma has 201 members. It's eternally important for *every one of us* to undergo *regular spiritual maintenance*.

How? Through ✦*contact with* and ✦*application of* God's word:

- Each day, *let us read and apply the Bible!*
- Each week, *let us hear and apply a sermon!*

As we move through [Hebrews 4:1-13](#), let us pray for:

**SOFT AND BELIEVING HEARTS**

1. **Warning:** <sup>1</sup> **Therefore** [because of the delivered-Israelites, who died in the wilderness because of unbelief], **let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.** <sup>2</sup> For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.
  - a. Israel at the Time of Moses: The LORD ✦ delivered them from Egypt with great signs and wonders and ✦ promised to give them a land flowing with milk and honey. However, *except for Joshua and Caleb*, all the men 20 years and older came short and did not enter because of their *hard and unbelieving hearts* (see [Numbers chapter 13-14](#)).
  - b. Us Today: The LORD has ✦ delivered us and all **through Jesus** from the ultimate slavery of sin and death and ✦ promised us the gift of heaven. It all sounds wonderful, *but it must be received with **soft and believing hearts!***
2. **God's Rest:** <sup>3</sup> For we who have believed enter that rest, just 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 said somewhere concerning the seventh *day*: "**AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS**"; <sup>5</sup> and again in this *passage*, "**THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.**" // What does that mean?
  - a. God's Rest through Jesus: **Now** – *forgiveness and peace!* **In the life to come** – *the fulness of eternal life!*

- b. Two Categories:
- i. Hard and Unbelieving Hearts: They hear but do not enter God's rest.
  - ii. Soft and Believing Hearts: They hear and – *by God's grace* – have believed and enter God's rest.
- c. His works were finished: A building must be finished and approved – *before it can be occupied*. Is that why many did not enter God's rest – because it was not ready? No! When God chose us in Christ before He created the world, His work in Christ was as good as done – *since God's promises cannot fail*.
- d. THEY SHALL NOT ENTER: God made the way for **all**, *but those with hard and unbelieving hearts shall not enter!*
3. **Today**:<sup>6</sup> **Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience,**<sup>7</sup> **He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS."**
- a. As Time Marches On for Each Person: *Their window of salvation is slowly closing*. Therefore, the emphasis here is on TODAY – because, *someday, tomorrow will be too late!*
  - b. God is calling all people with hard and unbelieving hearts to: ✦strong urgency and ✦sincere repentance (godly sorrow and trust alone in Jesus for heaven)!
4. **Rest**:<sup>8</sup> **For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that.**<sup>9</sup> **So there remains**

a Sabbath rest for the people of God. <sup>10</sup> For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. <sup>11</sup> Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through *following* the same example of disobedience.

- a. God's Rest: He created in six days, then He rested on the seventh (*the basis of our 7-day week*).
  - b. Jesus' Rest: He *lived sinlessly* and *died sacrificially*, then He rested on Holy Saturday.
  - c. Our Rest: With **soft and believing hearts**, we rest in Jesus' work, *confident that our sins are forgiven*.
  - d. Our Good Works: Our "Thank You" letter to God for gifting us with eternal life!
5. **All-Knowing**: <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. // The Holy Spirit works through God's word to expose *★EVERY THOUGHT* and *★EVERY INTENSION* of the heart. God knows if we are *▶hard and unbelieving* or *▶soft and believing*.

**Let Us Pray**: LORD, we know that **soft and believing** is critical now, today, to the end! For all who are – *keep them!* For all who are not – *touch them, save them, today and always!*

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