

Hebrews 4:1-2

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/heb/heb-4/hebrews-41-2/>

We can miss out on entering God's rest (receiving our inheritance); hearing God's word must be united with faith.

It is made clear in these verses that Paul's audience of believers has not yet entered God's rest, but they still have the opportunity to enter. When the previously enslaved Israelites were delivered from Egypt and traveled across the desert, they heard the *good news* that God would give them the Promised Land as their inheritance, but they did not have faith that these promises were true ([Numbers 14:7-9](#)). Similarly, Paul's audience has been told *good news*, that they have the opportunity to share in Christ's inheritance if they hold fast. Paul tells his audiences that they should *fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it*. The Israelites in the Old Testament did not prove themselves faithful to God, so they did not inherit the land and if we do not prove ourselves faithful, we will *come short* of receiving our inheritance (3:6).

Rest is not referring to going to heaven and spending eternity with God, the Israelites in the Old Testament and Paul's audience had already placed their faith in God and that is all that is required to spend eternity with Him. Rest is referring to the opportunity to receive an inheritance as a reward for completing the work God gives us to do. In order to receive the inheritance that is available to us, we must have faith, be obedient to God, and finish the job; God rested when He finished what He set out to do. Paul is not saying that his audience could miss out on spending eternity with God, he is saying that they could miss out on the reward that is available to them. In order to inherit our reward, we must continue to exercise a daily, abiding faith in God and be obedient to Him. The Israelites were told the promise God made – that he would give them the Promised Land – but *the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard*. In other words, they did not act upon it and failed to receive their inheritance.

Paul is warning his readers to hear the *good news* of our opportunity to receive the reward of being named as a "son" in the same manner Jesus received that reward for faithfulness, and to have faith in the promises of God. In chapter 3, Paul explained that the promise of the inheritance given to the

Israelites did not benefit them since they did not walk in faith (3:18-19). Similarly, the promises of God also have no benefit to us without faith. Without faith in God, we cannot be obedient to Him; faith is required to gain our inheritance (3:18-19).

Biblical Text:

¹ Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. ² 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.