

וַאֲרָא

**Va'eira  
(and I appeared)**

**Shemot [Exodus] 6:2-9:35**

הברית החדשה

**HaB'rit HaChadashah**  
(the new covenant)

We have selected this portion from the Brit because of the parallel between Pharaoh hardening his heart and this passage admonishing us not to harden our hearts today.

### **How's Your Hearing Today?**

***Ivrim [Hebrews] 3:7-4:13***

***7 Therefore, even as the Set-apart Spirit says,***

***“Today if you hear His voice,***

***8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation,  
Like as in the day of the trial in the wilderness,***

***9 Where your fathers tried me by proving me,  
And saw my works forty years.***

***10 Wherefore I was displeased with this generation,  
And said, ‘They do always err in their heart:  
But they did not know My ways;’***

***11 As I swore in My wrath,  
They shall not enter into My rest.”***

The writer of this epistle now begins to draw a parallel between hearing and obeying the Voice of YHWH and entering into the rest of YHWH. Understanding what it means to enter into His rest will help to

unlock the rest of this epistle, for this is one of the foundation stones upon which He bases His argument.

One of the prerequisites of entering into His rest is the hearing of His Voice. And, once His Voice is heard, to not harden one's heart against it and refuse to obey His commandments. This is exactly what happened to that generation which YHWH delivered out of the bondage of Egypt. It is sad to note that the Hebrew people witnessed Pharaoh harden his heart against YHWH time after time, and witnessed firsthand the culmination of that hardening of the heart with the death of Pharaoh and the destruction of the entire Egyptian army. How could they miss this lesson?

But they did miss it. In fact, we are told something pretty astounding in the book of B'midbar.

***B'midbar [Numbers] 14:22-23***

***22 for all the men who have seen My honor, and My signs, which I have done in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tested Me these ten times, and have not hearkened to My voice,***

***23 they will not see the land which I have sworn to their fathers, yea, none of those despising Me will see it;***

YHWH gave Pharaoh ten opportunities to repent and obey His commandment to let His people go. Pharaoh refused and hardened his heart. In the above verse, we see that the generation of Israelites that YHWH delivered out of Egypt tested YHWH ten times as well. The result was that YHWH said, "Okay, this is enough. You don't want to enter My land. Fine, you will not enter My land." And as they found out the very tough lesson that Esau found out, there is a limit to YHWH's mercy and compassion. We are commanded to seek Him while He may be found. And when is that? Today! Today if we hear His Voice, we are not to harden our hearts like that nation that came out of Egypt and all fell in the wilderness, or like Pharaoh who also hardened his heart and was drowned in the sea along with his entire army.

**Take Heed**

***12 Take heed, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living Elohim;***

***13 but encourage one another day by day, so long as it is called "today"; lest anyone of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin;***

We are to make sure that our heart is not evil and full of unbelief. We are also to make sure that our brothers do not have an evil heart full of unbelief. We are to encourage one another to walk this walk of faith. While we cannot force one another to do what is right in His eyes, we can encourage one another. In fact, we are to be very careful to be encouraging and uplifting at all times. Even if YHWH sends us to speak to a brother about sin in his life, even then and perhaps especially then, we should be

encouraging to him so that we can guard our own lives and perhaps with the help of His Spirit turn one away from His sin.

Sin is very appealing to the flesh. The flesh likes to sin! Sin feels good! This is exactly what makes sin so very deceitful. It is because it feels so good to do what the flesh wants to do and likes to do, at least for a season. Sin not only is deceitful, but all the while it is left unhindered to do as it pleases, it is also in the process of hardening one's heart. This is a self-propagating cycle in which hardness begets sin and sin begets more hardness, until the cycle of hardness is complete and redemption is out of reach and the only thing left is destruction.

## **Partakers of Mashiach**

***14 for we have become partakers of Mashiach, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm to the end;***

***15 while it is said,***

***“Today if ye shall hear His Voice,  
Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.”***

Who is a partaker of Mashiach? Those who not only begin the race, but also those who finish the race. If a person begins the race but does not finish the race, he will not actually partake of Mashiach. Currently we are only partaking of Mashiach by faith. But a day is coming in which that partaking will become actual and face to face.

However, to hold steadfastly the beginning of our walk in Mashiach we have to accurately hear and then obey His Voice. Not just in some things; and, not just in those things that are pleasing to us and it is something that we want to do. Rather, we must hear and obey (shema) His Voice in all things. Then and only then can we be partakers in Mashiach. Otherwise, our hearts will be hardened and we will end up provoking YHWH.

## **Provoking YHWH – Not Smart!**

***16 For who provoked Him when they heard? Indeed, did not all those that came out of Egypt by Moses?***

***17 And with whom was he displeased forty years? Was it not with them that sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?***

***18 And to whom did He swear that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that were disobedient?***

Can you imagine provoking YHWH to wrath? Can you imagine intentionally provoking YHWH? There are many who have done this and each and every one of them paid a very dear price, usually with his life. I wonder if there is anyone who is reading this now who thinks that he can afford such a price?

We need to learn to hear His Voice and then obey His instructions to us personally. When we hear and obey His Voice then we will enter into His rest. This is where we need to learn to live, in His rest. When we learn to live in His rest, then we will be at peace with Him, with ourselves, with others, and with our world.

## **Banished**

***19 And we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief.***

In order to enter into His rest we are going to need faith. Without faith it is not possible to enter into His rest. The opposite of faith is unbelief. The generation of Hebrews which came out of Egypt under the leadership of Moshe was not able to enter into the promised land because they did not have the faith to enter in. They were walking in the flesh, and looking with their eyes of flesh, and feeling with their feelings of flesh, instead of seeing with their eyes of faith.

We are faced with these very same choices today. We can walk in the works of the flesh, which will not allow us to enter into His rest. Or, we can walk in the Spirit, which will lead us to enter into His rest.

If a person continues to walk in the works of the flesh rather than walking in the Spirit, then that person will be hindered from entering into His rest. If one fails to enter into His rest by faith (walking in the Spirit) then he will not have eternal life.

## **Hearing United with Faith**

***1 Let us fear therefore, while, a promise remains of entering into His rest, lest anyone of you should seem to have come short of it.***

***2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, even as they also did; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith with them that heard.***

Please notice verse two, as the writer makes a reference to those who received the good news of Mashiach during His day, with that generation that came forth from Egypt as also having heard that same good news. This then brings a question to our minds as to what is that good news that they also heard? Answer: that YHWH had heard their cry for help, and that He had come down to help them, and to deliver them out of their bondage, and to plant them in a good land in which He would bless them and their children forever. But, there was a problem.

While they heard this message, it did not do them any good because the message was not received by faith. Therefore, they were not able to enter into the land which is equivalent to entering into His rest. This is the point of the writer to us: to help us see the importance of having faith so that we will not also be hindered from entering His rest.

## **Entering His Rest**

***3 For we who have believed do enter into that rest; even as He has said,***

***“As I swore in My wrath,***

***They shall not enter into My rest;”***

***although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.***

***4 For He has said somewhere of the seventh day on this wise,***

***“And Elohim rested on the seventh day from all His works;”***

***5 and in this place again,***

***“They shall not enter into My rest.”***

Now, here is the question that YHWH is asking each one of us today, “Will you enter My rest today by faith?” Or, will He swear an oath concerning you as He did about that generation that He delivered out of Egypt as the writer testifies above that YHWH would not let them enter His rest because they were an unbelieving generation and had no faith.

Just exactly what does it mean to have faith?

## **Do Not Harden Your Heart!**

***6 Seeing therefore that it remains that some should enter into, and those to whom the good news was preached failed to enter in because of disobedience.***

***7 He again defines a certain day, “Today”, saying in David so long a time afterward (even as has been said before),***

***“Today if you hear His Voice,***

***Harden not your hearts.”***

Today is the only day that we have! Yesterday is gone! Tomorrow may never get here! Live today to its fullest. And to do that, we have to hear His Voice. Once we do hear His Voice, then we have some choices to make. The primary choice is whether we will obey His instructions to us, or will we harden our hearts towards His Voice and disregard His Voice, or perhaps just simply ignore it and do our own thing? That is the choice before us. Of course, we need to understand that choosing to do our own

thing means that there is a price to pay for that, which means that we will not be able to enter into His rest.

## **The Shabbat Rest**

***8 For if Yehoshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another day.***

***9 There remains therefore a Shabbat rest for the people of Elohim.***

***10 For he that is entered into His rest has himself also rested from his works, as Elohim did from His.***

***11 Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall through the same example of disobedience.***

***12 For the word of Elohim is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***

Make no mistake about it, the most important thing that you have to do in this life is to enter into His rest by faith. Are you willing to pay the price to enter into His rest? Are you willing to do whatever it takes to enter into His rest? What does it mean to enter His rest?

Please notice verse ten above, as it states that those who enter His rest have also rested from their works as He rested from His works. But what does this mean? Does this only mean that we are to keep and observe the seventh day as a Shabbat? It does mean that, but not only that. It also means that one who has entered His rest no longer is working to earn his salvation. Rather, he is at rest knowing that he already has it by faith in Yeshua our Mashiach. This in turn frees such a person to live freely in the Spirit, going and doing as the Spirit directs without any fear. Knowing that regardless of what happens, YHWH is watching and in control. This means that a person living and walking in the Spirit will be keeping the two greatest commandments of loving YHWH with his whole being and loving his neighbor as himself (which means that he is doing his best to be a neighbor!).

A person can fool other people, but he cannot fool YHWH. His word can and will determine why you and I are doing what we are doing. He knows our intentions. We might deceive others for a season, but we are never deceiving YHWH, only ourselves!

It is going to take some hardcore honesty with ourselves if we are going to enter into His rest. We are going to have to ask ourselves some difficult questions. We are going to have to ask YHWH some questions that may have some tough answers to hear. But we are going to have to ask them none-the-less. Here are a few examples of some questions for us to ask YHWH (and ourselves).

- Am I currently hearing and obeying Your Voice in a way that is pleasing to You?
- Is there any area of hearing and obeying Your Voice that I come up short in?
- Is there any area in my life that is currently keeping me from entering into Your rest?

- Are there any areas of hardness in my heart towards you?
- Are there any areas of hardness in my heart towards any of my brothers in the faith?

It may take some real heart searching to answer these questions honestly, but we truly need to know the answers to these questions so that we can enter into His rest.

## **YHWH Knows!**

***13 And there is no creature that is hidden from His sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.***

We can play hide and seek with YHWH if we choose to do this. However, we are only deceiving ourselves. As when Adam and Chavah hid themselves in the Garden from YHWH and He called to them seeking to know where they were at, He already knew; He just needed to confront them with the reality of what they had done to themselves and to their relationship with Him.

Likewise, YHWH needs to ask us some questions from time to time. The question is, are we willing to listen to His questions and respond in an open and honest way? Or, will we dodge the question and seek to point the finger at someone or something else as being culpable?

As the verse above points out to us, YHWH knows anyway, so why play the deadly game of hide and seek when our eternal wellbeing is at stake? Doesn't make much sense, does it?

ABBA YHWH, please reveal to us any area of hardness in our hearts towards You or our fellow man so that nothing will hinder us from entering into Your rest; in the Name of Yeshua our Mashiach, Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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