

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Vaught Sermon Notes: Hebrews

W.O. Vaught Archive

8-7-1977

When Christians Ought to be Afraid

W. O. Vaught

Ouachita Baptist University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_hebrews



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), and the [Liturgy and Worship Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Vaught, W. O., "When Christians Ought to be Afraid" (1977). *Vaught Sermon Notes: Hebrews*. 14.
https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_hebrews/14

This Sermon Notes is brought to you for free and open access by the W.O. Vaught Archive at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Vaught Sermon Notes: Hebrews by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact mortensona@obu.edu.

WHEN CHRISTIANS OUGHT TO BE AFRAID

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 18
HEBREWS 3:17-4:1

Dr. W. O. Vaught
Immanuel Baptist Church
Little Rock, Arkansas

In verse 16 we pointed out in our last study that verse 16 is mistranslated and it should be two questions---

"For, who having heard, revolted?"

(The answer is--the whole generation minus five.)

"But did not all, having come out from Egypt, through Moses?"

(Yes, all the reversionists did revolt--except five.)

HEBREWS 3:17 "But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?" "But" is used here as a transitional particle. So we have "But with whom?" Next we have an aorist, active, indicative of "prosochthizo" and it means to be disgusted. This is an anthropopathism to explain what is going on in the mind of God. This is a human term to explain God's attitude. This disgust lasted for the whole forty years of their wandering. "As it not" is a strong negative used as an interrogative word. The word is "ouchi." It always expects an affirmative answer. "With them that had sinned" comes from the aorist, active, participle of "hamartano" which means "missing the mark." The word "whose" is the genitive plural of "hos." Next we have the word carcasses and the word is "kolon." "Fell" is an aorist, active, indicative of "pipto" and should be translated "had fallen."

(You see we might suggest right here that you could have an appropriate funeral service for all of them and say exactly the same thing at the funeral of each one. It might go something like this--"Here lies Aaron Finkelstein. He died because he disobeyed God. Normally, he should have lived 25 or 30 more years but he is an illustration of the sin unto death. He went negative. Now he was warned again and again but he wouldn't listen. He actually died long before he should have died. Something like that would have been a very appropriate funeral sermon there in that desert for the whole forty years.

The question posed here expects a positive answer.

HEBREWS 3:18 "And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?" The words "to whom" is the genitive plural of the relative pronoun "tisin." "Sware he" is an aorist, active, indicative of "omnumi" and this means a solemn promise with an oath. "Eiserchomai" is the word for "enter into." The word for "rest" is "katapausis" and this is the rest that refers to the super grace life. "But" is from "ei me" and should be translated "except." "To them that believe not" is an aorist, active, participle of "opeitheo." It means no obedience, to be obstinant, to reject authority.

Look at these principles

1. Reversionism keeps the believer out of the super grace life.
2. Reversionism also means perpetual discipline all the way to the point of death and even the death is discipline (The sin unto death).
3. 1 Cor. 10:5 is a little commentary on the Exodus generation.

4. Moses was the exception. He died on the edge of the desert. He did not die the sin unto death. He died because his work was temporarily finished. I say temporarily, because Moses will have another job coming up in the Tribulation. Moses was kept out of the Promised Land because of a failure in his own leadership function.

HEBREWS 3:19 "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." The explanation of their breakdown was in the faith-rest technique. The sentence begins with the explanatory "kai" and this is to explain and answer those five questions. "So we see" is a present, active, indicative of "blepo." It means, we see, we conclude, we learn this from looking at all the facts.

The word "that" is from "hoti" and it refers to the content of their perception. "Could not" is an aorist, active, indicative of "dunamai" plus the negative and it really means "they were not able to enter in for forty years." At no point of time for the entire forty years were they able to enter in. The possibility was there, but they just couldn't make it. "Enter in" is the aorist, active, infinitive of "eiserchomai." They didn't recover at any point for forty years and though God looked for some moment when they might enter in, they were never able to make it. They were free and wealthy and had everything going for them. They had high I.Q. but they lacked doctrine, and therefore, they fell flat on their faces. You would have thought that they would have caught on, but they didn't.

Next we have "because of unbelief" and this is "dia" plus the accusative of "apistia" and it means lack of faith, really it means unfaithfulness. Salvation wasn't their problem. They were saved, but they rejected doctrine.

1. The Jews of this Exodus generation are here used by this unknown writer of Hebrews as an example to the Jews living in Jerusalem about 67 A.D. just prior to their fall and destruction.
2. Both of these generations of Jews were reversionists.
3. However, the Exodus generation was out of the land trying to get in, while the 67 A.D. generation were in the land trying to get out. But the condition of the soul was the same for both.
4. One generation was punished by the sin unto death in the desert. The other generation was punished by the fifth cycle of discipline and also the sin unto death in Jerusalem.
5. Both generations reached the point of the sin unto death in the same manner. They were indifferent to doctrine. They were apathetic and rejected doctrine totally.
6. They failed to feed on spiritual food and they failed to use the faith-rest technique.

Some Conclusions From This Chapter

1. Every generation of believers faces the same identical issue. Before salvation the issue is "What think ye of Christ?" After salvation the issue is "What think ye of doctrine?" After salvation the most important thing is that you have a positive attitude toward doctrine.

2. The principle in this chapter is this--God must vindicate his Word. The only place where he can vindicate his Word is in your soul. Every day since 96 A.D. when the Canon of Scripture was completed, God has vindicated his work by protecting it from all attacks. There are more Bibles today in more languages than ever before in history. God has preserved his Word. He has perpetuated his Word. He has disseminated his Word as never before in history. But having a Bible does you no good at all unless you get doctrine in your soul.
3. Therefore, blessing or cursing depends on your attitude toward Bible Doctrine during your stay on this earth.
4. Positive volition toward doctrine leads to super grace every time. This is the normal function of the priesthood of every believer.
5. Negative volition toward doctrine leads toward reversionism and the sin unto death.
6. Reversionism means cursing. Super grace means blessing.
7. The difference between reversionism and super grace is doctrine in the soul of the believer.
8. From doctrine in the soul comes this principle--under super grace the believer reaps what God sows and the reaping is the frosting on the cake. Super grace blessing is a direct result of doctrine in the soul. On the other hand, the cursing of reversionism means the believer reaps what he sows. So the super grace believer lives in Romans 8:28. The reversionist lives in Heb. 12:6.

Chapter 4

HEBREWS 4:1 "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Actually, chapters four and five go together and we will study them that way. Whoever made the chapter division made a bad division.

Verses 1-13 of chapter 4 presents a challenge to super grace. Then verses 14-16 of chapter 4 shows how super grace is related to the believer. Verses 1-10 of chapter 5 introduces the unique High Priest. Then in verses 11-14 the reversionism of the Jews interrupts the discourse.

Verse 1 begins with a particle "oun" used as an inferential conjunction and is designed to remind us this was not only the future of that generation but it will be our future also, provided we follow the same path they followed.

ISAIAH 41:10 "Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." In this verse we are told to "Fear not."

2 TIMOTHY 1:7 "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." This verse reminds us that we have not been given the spirit of fear. But there is an area which we may enter and we are told to then be afraid. There is no fear in dying, but if we die in the wrong way, then we can be afraid. They were going to die in that desert and they died for the wrong reason. Well might they be afraid!

"Let us fear" is an aorist, passive, subjunctive of "phobeo." This aorist tense in this sentence is an interesting idiom. It means this action is indefinite without regard to the duration. It is a dramatic aorist, a result which had been accomplished. Other people have failed and now you come along and do exactly the same thing so "Let us fear." God used the Exodus generation and says to the Jews in Jerusalem in 67 A.D., "Look, it is time for you to be afraid!" The subjunctive mood means that God is inviting them to a course of action which will lead them away from this fear. It takes into account the volition of the believer and says, "You don't have to go this way of fear." There are four of these subjunctives in this chapter--

Verse 1-----Let us fear
 Verse 11-----Let us labour
 Verse 14-----Let us hold fast
 Verse 16-----Let us come boldly

You can almost chart the course of this chapter by these four subjunctives. Somewhere, somehow you have to become frightened about something. Now we need not fear certain things. We need not fear every day events, circumstances, or even the trends in government or economic systems. But we do need to fear about missing the boat in learning Bible doctrine.

So the Lord is saying something like this--Look, you idiots, you are being frightened about the wrong things. You are being frightened by events, when you ought to be frightened by missing doctrine. Doctrine is more important to you than anything else in your life. He was reminding those Jews that they better get scared now and walk out of Jerusalem while there was yet time so they could miss the worst cataclysm in all of history.

In my preaching, my desire is never to frighten people. But I wish I could frighten you about missing doctrine. Some of you will go away from this class tonight and say that doctrine is not as important as that preacher tries to make it. (I hope when you go away the Devil will really get after you and miss you with his pitchfork not more than an inch and scare you so bad you will rush back to Bible study and Bible doctrine as fast as you can.)

That's about the best I can do with this expression "Let us fear." This fear is to start warning bells ringing in our souls. 2 Tim. 1:7 tells us not to fear anything in this life. So when some exception comes along like this, then it has added significance.

Now different things frighten different people. What you ought to really fear is not getting doctrine in your minds. But people become indifferent and they come to the place where they don't fear anything. He is trying to arouse them to a genuine fear, the fear of not getting doctrine, so they will return to Bible class and start learning again. In the first stage of this idea of fear, the Lord just knocks on your door and whatever it is that frightens you he just dumps on you so you will open the door, get back in fellowship and hurry back to Bible class. And the first thing you know, the Lord is having fellowship with you again.

REVELATION 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Why open the door? Because you are scared to death going it alone and walking on your own without doctrine.

That Exodus generation got the manna every day and ate it and then went out and ran Moses down and complained about everything. Just think of how many thousands of blessings God had planned for them but he had to plow them under because they were not ready to receive them. You have to have your cup ready before God can pour in the blessings. The cup is your willingness to take in doctrine. There are so many people who really think that God is trying to give them a real hard time now, in contrast with the great blessings he wants to give them in eternity. That is one of the lies the Devil uses the most to scare a lot of believers. Many people just lap up that untruth far more than you realize.

Next in this verse we have the word "epaggelia" and it means a promise of great blessing. "Being left" is a present, passive, participle of "kataleipo" and means to neglect, to be left behind, to leave unclaimed. This is a genitive absolute, not really a part of the sentence, but it is thrown in to add emphasis to this warning. The promise being unclaimed is of maximum importance. It is an interesting greek use of the tense. It is an event which has not yet occurred, a futuristic present, but it is regarded so certain that it is stated as though it had already occurred. It happened to them and it can happen to you. "Of entering in" is an aorist, active, infinitive of "eiserchomai." It is a constantive aorist and it takes in forty years of negative volition toward doctrine. It is forty years gathered into one event. The word "rest" is "eis" plus "katapausis."

Over in Matthew 11:28 he says, "I will give you rest" and that word is "anapausis" and this is the rest of salvation. But this word "katapausis" is the rest that comes from doctrine in the mind and comes after salvation. Then we have "tis ez humon" and it means any among you. Any can fail, but the door is still open to any of you to come out of failure into light. Next we have "should seem" and this is a present, active, subjunctive of "dokeo." It is really a bad translation. It means to have a subjective opinion. It is the thinking of a discouraged person. It is the thinking of reaction. It is the thinking of the emotional revolt of the soul. "To come short" is a perfect active, infinitive of "hustereo" and it means to fall short, to fail to reach the goal, to default.

Now a correct translation of this verse---"Therefore, let us fear, lest at any time, a promised blessing being unclaimed or entering into his rest (super grace blessings) any one from among you should think subjectively to the point of default."

Summary

1. Thinking subjectively to default means to come short of super grace blessing. This is the ultimate tragedy of the Christian life. God has designed super grace blessings for all believers. He has made the deposit in the bank. Are you going to check it out, or are you going to just leave it there unused?
2. God has a plan for your life. This plan has a goal. God wants to share his abundance with you as you move toward that goal. Now he warns us to be afraid of missing this. Be afraid of missing the provision he has made. What God provides is perfect, so don't miss it! "FEAR MISSING THE BOAT." The blessings are just too great to miss. You are on the winning side, so stay with it. Blessing is coming!