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FACING UP TO PAST FAILURES

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 23
HEBREWS 4:8-9

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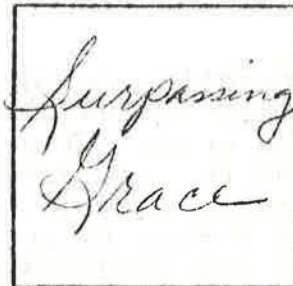
HEBREWS 4:8-9 "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."



This refers to salvation grace. It is a free gift from God. Your decision didn't have anything to do with God providing it for you. Volition is involved in your being saved, but not in the provision for your salvation which is all from God.



This is blessings of grace that come after salvation. Your volition does have something to do with this kind of grace, which we call super grace. If you have a cup, then God will pour. You, with David, can say, "My cup runneth over."



This is what we call surpassing grace and we find it referred to in Ephesians 2:7. Surpassing grace is the grace that will provide eternal blessings. Such things as a resurrection body, a perfect home forever. This surpassing grace is not related to your volition. God gives you these things because he is God. Revelation 21:4

Back up in Hebrews 4:3 we had the phrase "We which have believed" and the believers are those to whom grace opens all the doors. Remember that God's rest in Genesis 2:2 was the rest of total provision. He had provided everything that was necessary.

HEBREWS 4:8 "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day." This should read "For if Joshua" and the word is not "Jesus." The objective of this study is to show that super grace is available to every generation. And this is true regardless of the failure of past generations.

The word "For" is a particle "gar" and it is used here to explain something. It is to explain the fact that though the past generation failed to latch onto super grace, that super grace blessings are still available. The "if" here is a second class condition and it means the statement is not true. In other words, "If Joshua had given them rest and he didn't." The greek word here is "iesous" and it is referring to Joshua. (You will find this same kind of thing in Acts 7:45.) This is speaking of the generation which followed the Exodus generation. The Exodus generation is often spoken of as the generation of Moses. This next generation is spoken of as the generation of Joshua. This Joshua generation entered Canaan but very few of them had the capacity of soul which was required for their task. God commanded them to completely conquer the land and to drive out the enemy and not to inter-marry with any of them. This they failed to do. They should have been completely obedient but they were not.

Complete Military Conquest

God knew what he was doing where he told them to conquer the land and destroy the enemies in the land. God has never ordered the slaughter of men unless it was for the preservation of the human race. But God protects the race and were it not for this the race would have destroyed itself long ago. This conquest should have been done in 1,400 B.C. but it wasn't done until David's time in 1,000 B.C. and even then it wasn't done conclusively.

A Soul Failure

The failure of the Joshua generation was not the failure to cross the Jordan and enter the land. They failed to carry out God's specific demands and didn't destroy the enemy. They even began to inter-marry with them. God never intended to just hand the land over to them. He meant for them to fight for every foot of land they got. But they failed, and their failure was a soul failure. They couldn't conquer the land for their soul power was inadequate. They didn't have super grace capacity, therefore, no super grace blessings.

God Pours If You Have A Cup

God promised them the land. Caleb was on the spy team that saw the giants and he wanted to get at those giants. Because of his faith, God allowed Caleb to enter the land and he got to conquer the giants that many of them had feared. Caleb, as a very old man, was a man of super grace. God always pours if you have a cup.

Next we have the words "Had given them rest" and this is an aorist, active, indicative of "katapauo" and it means "to cause them to rest." So this phrase says, "If Joshua had caused them to rest" but of course he didn't. This is a constantive aorist and it gathers into one act all the acts of conquest from the time they entered the land until Joshua died. He did many glorious and courageous things but he didn't carry out the complete commands of the Lord. Their parents died the sin unto death outside the land, and now many of them will do the same inside the land. They didn't have the soul capacity of complete obedience. So look at this conclusion--Prosperous environment minus super

grace capacity is not better than adversity minus super grace capacity. It is capacity of soul that counts. They were a generation of believers minus Bible Doctrine. So we have the statement, "If Joshua had caused them to rest, but he didn't."

The Holy Spirit

The word "He" in this next phrase refers to The Holy Spirit as he spoke to David and David wrote this down in Psalm 95. The correct translation of this last part of this verse is this--"Then concerning another day he would not be speaking after these things." Let us see what this means. "He would not be speaking" is an imperfect, active, indicative of "laleo." Remember this--From the time of Adam's fall in the garden to the generation of Joshua, there had never been a moment when super grace blessings were not available. And this is a universal truth for all time. There is never a day or a generation when God's storehouse of blessings are closed to super grace believers. In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says to every believer if you will open the door I will enter.

The word for "another day" refers to another day of the same kind. There we have "meta tauta" and it means "after these things." So look at what we have in this verse--"For if Joshua had caused them to rest, but he didn't, then concerning another day (of super grace opportunities and super grace blessings) he (The Holy Spirit) would not be speaking after these things.

How To Treat Past Failures

Remember this, failures in the past do not hinder future blessings from God. In other words, just because they failed in the past, it doesn't mean we can't pull out of it and move on toward super grace. PAST FAILURES DON'T PRECLUDE PRESENT AND FUTURE VICTORIES. So the Holy Spirit spoke to David of another day, and it was a day of potential victories.

Summary

1. The Exodus generation, often called the generation of Moses, failed to enter occupation with Christ and therefore failed to get super grace blessings. Because of no capacity, God kept this generation out of the land. They didn't have conquest in their souls.
2. The failure of this Exodus generation didn't slam the door on God's blessings for those coming after them. Just because they failed, it didn't mean that their children and children's children had to fail. But the Joshua generation did not occupy the land because they did not appropriate the super grace blessings that God had stored up for them. They were often enslaved because of their poor conquest. This is the whole emphasis of the Book of Judges. The people they didn't slaughter turned around and enslaved them. The people of God were enslaved at least seven times during this period.
3. The failure of this Exodus generation, the failure of the Joshua generation, or the failure of any succeeding generation doesn't imply that God has withdrawn his super grace blessings from any one. God always has a grace foundation ready to flow for any individual or any nation.

4. In David's generation super grace blessings were still available. Psalm 95:7-11
5. For this reason the writer of Hebrews (Who was unknown) reminds the Apostolic generation in 67 A.D. that super grace blessings are still available to them. Even though it was just before the most terrible disaster that ever befell any nation in the history of the world.
6. No matter how great the failure in any generation of the past, it does not mean that God does not stand ready in 1977 to pour out his super grace blessings. He is ready when you are ready. He pours when you are ready to receive it.
7. Super grace blessings are open to every generation. This requires entering into the celebrity-ship of Jesus Christ. God wants to take the mind of Christ and write it in your mind.

HEBREWS 4:9 "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Here we have a conclusion to all we have been studying for many weeks. "There remaineth" is a present, passive, indicative of "apoleipo" and it means to have something left over. This is a customary present, and it means this habitually occurs. The door for super grace blessings is always an open door. God is never caught with a short stick. His storehouse of blessings have never been and will never be exhausted. Look at what is available to you--

- a. Bible doctrine in permanent form--The Canon of Scripture
- b. A continuing flow of pastor-teachers.
- c. A classroom, the church, where doctrine can be studied and known.
- d. The ministry of the Holy Spirit within to guide and prompt and protect you.

The passive voice of this verb means "to be left over" for you. You receive this as a free gift from God. The indicative mood means God is waiting to pour if you will just let him. Next we have the word "Therefore" from "ara" and it sets up a conclusion.

Next we have "A rest" and up until now the word used for rest has been the word "katapausis." This is the word used for the super grace life which God accomplishes in the life of the willing believer. But now we have another word and the word is "sabbatismos." This takes us right back to that first "sabbath" when God rested from all his work. The word "katapausis" speaks of receiving all the things and enjoying them. But this word "sabbatismos" talks about these blessings from the standpoint of the one who provides them. He provided them from before the foundation of the world. He knew you were coming along. He knew all about you and he went into action and provided everything for you.

- a. This is his way to give you perfect happiness.
- b. This is his way to give you victory in the Angelic Conflict
- c. This is his way of causing Satan to be defeated in your life.

By pouring for you God gives the great tactical defeat to Satan and this is God's way to reward you. And he wants to reward you with this victory right now. When God pours in an apostate generation like the one in which we are living the blessings are amazing. Super grace is the road where all divine blessings meet.

Next in this verse we have the phrase "to the people" and this is a dative singular of "laos" and it refers to those who are qualified for super grace. Only these people reap what God shows. These are the only people to whom Romans 8:28 applies. "All things blend together for good." IT IS DOCTRINE IN THE SOUL THAT PRODUCES SUPER GRACE CAPACITY. Then we have the words "To the God."

So in this verse we have this--

"Therefore there is left over a sabbatical rest (super grace blessings with reference to the people of the God.)"

Summary

1. Super grace blessings are not held back from one generation because the previous generation failed.
2. The failure of one individual person to appropriate super grace blessings does not hinder some other person from receiving all that God can give.
3. Super grace blessings are open to you in spite of all former failures either by an individual or a nation.
4. You can't commit a sin so great that you can tie the hands of God to give you future blessings, provided you follow his instructions in rebound.
5. God has set up a marker to remind us of his provision in super grace and that marker is the Canon of Scripture. (This will be brought out in verse 12.)