

“Our Promised Rest”
1 Kings 6
(Preached at Trinity, October 25, 2020)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. **Verse 1** opens with important chronology. The reference point in marking the beginning of the construction of Solomon's Temple is the Exodus of Israel from Egypt. It began 480 years after Israel was redeemed from Egypt.
Counting back 480 years from the fourth year of Solomon's reign puts the date of the Exodus at 1446 BC. Scholars debate whether these dates should be taken literally, but the precise recording of specific months suggests to us it should be taken literally.
2. Israel's history was and is important. Dates were carefully recorded. There is another date to consider here, although not mentioned specifically.
Exodus. 12:40-41 NAU - "Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. ⁴¹ And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."
3. These specific dates are significant. They are meant to be viewed with significance. This takes place in the fourth year of Solomon's reign which tells us it was significant for him. So why is it important? Because it marks the beginning of a new era.
 - A. **Exodus 12** declares the end of bondage—God's gift of redemption from Egypt.
 - B. **Verse 1** tells us it had been 480 years since that event, but it had been a tumultuous 480 years. It was marked by years of wandering in the wilderness followed by years of war. In fact, it was because of war that David was not permitted to build the Temple.
1 Kings 5:3 NAU - "You know that David my father was unable to build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the wars which surrounded him, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet."
C. But now a new day of rest had dawned.
 - (1) God promised David:
2 Samuel 7:10-11 NAS - "I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, ¹¹ even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you."
 - (2) Solomon is announcing God's fulfillment of His promise:
1 Kings 5:4 NAU - "But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor misfortune."
4. God is working out redemptive history. He chose His elect people in eternity and determined to send forth Christ as Redeemer. All of history is the stage upon which this drama is unfolding. In the end God will have gathered all of His lost sheep together and we will enter into our eternal rest.

5. For many, this history is too long; the days are advancing too slowly. They presume there is no rhyme or reason to history.
2 Peter 3:3-8 NAU - "Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." ⁵ For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God *the* heavens existed long ago and *the* earth was formed out of water and by water, ⁶ through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. ⁷ But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. ⁸ But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day."
6. God's promises are sure. God promised David that He would bring rest. But we will see in the forthcoming chapters that the rest enjoyed by Solomon would be fleeting. **Verses 11-13** provide a brief description of the problem.
1 Kings 6:11-13 NAU - "Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon saying, ¹² "Concerning this house which you are building, if you will walk in My statutes and execute My ordinances and keep all My commandments by walking in them, then I will carry out My word with you which I spoke to David your father. ¹³ "I will dwell among the sons of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel."
7. Dale Ralph Davis describes the meaning of these verses well:
 "The message of this literary intrusion is clear: you must live faithfully under the covenant of God if you are to enjoy the promise of God and the presence of God."¹
8. As long as sin endures upon the earth true rest will not be possible. Israel did not maintain covenant faithfulness—they did not and they could not. But God provided lasting rest in the Gospel of Christ.
9. As we've seen, Solomon is a type of Christ. He was the earthly testimony to God's promise to David of an enduring kingdom. The Temple was testimony to God's abiding presence in Israel. It was testimony to God's people worshiping Him in holiness. It was testimony of their need to approach God by the blood of atonement. And it was a constant reminder: God is holy, holy, holy. This is why the greatest details of the description of the Temple were directed to the interior—**Verses 15-36**. The average Israelite would never see the interior of the Temple.
10. The Temple was also a type of Christ. He is God's everlasting presence with His people. He is God's ultimate sacrifice for the sins that kept them from His rest. In Christ we now enjoy rest. What are the elements of this rest?

¹ Dale Ralph Davis, *1 Kings: The Wisdom and the Folly*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 66.

I. Rest from our bondage to the Law

- A. The Law demands perfect obedience
1. The Law makes demands but provides no means of meeting the demands and provides no solution for violations.
 2. It is a taskmaster that is merciless.
 3. A single transgression renders a person guilty and subject to infinite retribution.
 4. This is a terrible yoke to bear, an impossible burden
- B. The Gospel provides the solution – it provides for us rest from our bondage to the Law.
1. Jesus Christ has fulfilled the Law. He did so by meeting all of the demands of the Law. He kept the Law perfectly.
Galatians 4:4-5 NAU - "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵ so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."
 2. The demands of the Law have not changed, but our relationship to the Law has changed. Since Jesus has fulfilled the Law it can no longer condemn us for transgressions.
Romans 8:1-3 NAU - "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as *an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,"
 3. God now takes pity upon our weakness.
 4. Jesus says, "The Law is no longer an impossible taskmaster." He offers to us rest from our labor to keep the Law that could never be satisfied.
Matthew 11:28-29 NAU - "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls."
 5. This rest is made possible by faith.
Galatians 3:23-24 NAU - "But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith."

II. Rest from our bondage to sin

- A. In our fallen condition sin held us captive
1. We served the lusts of our flesh
Ephesians 2:1-3 NAU - "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³ Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

2. Paul described our condition as being servants to sin
Romans 6:16 NAU - "Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?"
- B. Jesus Christ has delivered us from our bondage to sin
Romans 6:17-18 NAU - "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."
1. Jesus has provided rest from our spiritual bondage
Ephesians 2:4-6 NAU - "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,"
 2. We now have the power to overcome sin
Romans 6:11-12 NAU - "Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,"
- III. The promise of our eternal rest
- A. In the Old Covenant Israel was delivered from Egypt and promised a land and a period of rest.
1. There is a sharp contrast between the aimless wandering of the wilderness and the promise of rest in Canaan. One was characterized by grumbling and unbelief while the other of faith and promise.
 2. The wilderness was a testimony to God's condemnation upon a generation of unbelief.
Hebrews 3:9-11 NAU - "Where your fathers tried *Me* by testing *Me*, And saw My works for forty years. ¹⁰ "Therefore I was angry with this generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart; And they did not know My ways'; ¹¹ As I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest."
 3. Canaan is described as God's rest for His people.
- B. Although we have been redeemed from our bondage to sin we are still living in the wilderness of this world.
1. The writer of Hebrews sees the relationship between the exodus and our present life of faith. We too are enduring a time of testing.
 2. We are surrounded by sin. The world is full of corruption
 We still struggle with fleshly desires. We are anxiously awaiting our deliverance from our mortal flesh.

3. Richard Phillips writes: "This is the time in the wilderness, the time of difficulty and often of sorrow and pain. We are not now living in the Promised Land but in the wilderness, and the sooner we realize this, the better."²
 4. Paul says all of creation is groaning under the weight of corruption
Romans 8:19-23 NAU - "For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. ²³ And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body."
 5. We are still warned not to follow the path of those in the exodus wilderness.
Hebrews 4:1-2 NAU - "Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should 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."
 6. We are also commanded to watch over one another, especially those who are on the brink of turning away.
Hebrews 3:13-14 NAU - "But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end;"
- C. We are promised our final rest. Eternity is referred to as our ultimate rest, our ultimate Sabbath
Hebrews 4:9-11 NAU - "So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. ¹⁰ For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. ¹¹ Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through *following* the same example of disobedience."
1. It describes a rest that is future and yet realized as a certain hope.
 2. It is resting in His presence and enjoying the fullness of His love - now
 3. It is resting from all of the toils of life in the wilderness.
 4. Our present Sabbath Day is a foreshadowed of that which is promised.

Conclusion:

1. How does one enter into this rest? By simply trusting in the work of Christ as our Redeemer and resting in Him, trusting His rich provision as we press towards our eternal rest.
2. We enter into this rest by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation.
Hebrews 4:3 NAU - "For we who have believed enter that rest"

² Richard D. Phillips, *Hebrews*, eds. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, Reformed Expository Commentary, (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2015), 99.