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HEBREWS 4:3

THE SCRIPTURE CONCERNED

> For we which have believed do enter into REST, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my REST: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise, And God DID REST the seventh day from all his works. And in this *place* again, If they shall enter into my REST. (Hebrews 4:3-5 AV)

THE MEANING PEOPLE DRAW FROM THIS TRANSLATION

Since this is clearly speaking about the original Sabbath in Genesis 2:2-3, people conclude that the word "Sabbath" means "rest" or "rest day".

But that is not correct!

THE MISTRANSLATION

The Greek verb "pauo" means: to cease, to leave off, to stop, etc.. It is the root from which our English verb "to pause" has been formed. The Greek prepositions "ana" and "kata" are OPPOSITES, with "ana" meaning "UP" and "kata" meaning "DOWN". It follows that when these prepositions are used to form nouns, the noun with the prefix "ana" must have a different meaning from the noun with the prefix "kata".

Thus the Greek nouns "anapausis" and "katapausis" are NOT synonyms, even though dictionaries of biblical Greek tend to assign the same meanings to these two words. The noun "anapausis" means rest, repose, comfort; and the noun "katapausis" means cessation, ending. It is doctrinal prejudice towards established and cherished ideas which claims the same meanings for these two nouns.

In the English language KJV the word "rest" appears 9 times in Hebrews chapter 4. In six instances it is the Greek noun "KATAPAUSIS", in two instances it is the Greek verb "KATAPAUO" and in one case it is the Greek noun "sabbatismos", the Greek word for "Sabbath". Those 9 places are: verses 1, 3, 5, 10 and 11 (katapausis), verses 4 and 8 (katapauo) and verse 9 (sabbatismos).

By contrast, the Greek word "anapausis", which really does mean "rest", is never used in Hebrews chapter 4.

The six instances of "katapausis" should have been translated as "cessation", and the two instances of "katapauo" should have been translated as "to cease", and the one instance of "sabbatismos" should have been translated as "the keeping of a Sabbath", with the understanding that this really means "the keeping of a period of cessation".

THE SOURCE OF THIS WRONG TRANSLATION

The English translators copied the idea of "rest" from the Latin Vulgate version. This in turn forced them to assign the meaning of "anapausis" (i.e. rest) to the word "katapausis".

THE CORRECT TRANSLATION

Here are the corrected translations for all the verses in Hebrews 4 which contain the word "rest" in the KJV. The corrections have been rendered in capital letters for easier recognition.

> Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his END (or PERIOD OF CESSATION), any of you should seem to come short of it. (Hebrews 4:1)
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> For we which have believed do enter into A CESSATION, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my PERIOD OF CESSATION: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise, And God CEASED the seventh day from all his works. And in this *place* again, If they shall enter into my CESSATION. (Hebrews 4:3-5)
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> For if Jesus had given them CESSATION, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore A PERIOD OF CESSATION to the people of God. For he that is entered into his PERIOD OF CESSATION, he also HATH CEASED (correct in the KJV!!) from his own works, as God *did* from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that PERIOD OF CESSATION, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. (Hebrews 4:8-11)

By "cessation" is understood "ceasing from doing our own works, in order to do the works of God". While the above rendering obviously does not flow as smoothly as the traditional translation, it does more accurately reflect the real meaning of these verses. Notice also that in verse 10 even the KJV has CORRECTLY rendered the Greek verb "katapauo" as "has ceased". If it means "has ceased" in verse 10, then it also means "ceased" and "cessation" in all the other places where this verb and the noun formed from it are used.

THE MEANING OF THIS CORRECT TRANSLATION

In this chapter Paul is referring back to the account in Genesis. And Paul did not use either a verb or a noun that means "rest". Paul correctly rendered these references into Greek by using a verb and a noun that refer to something coming to an end, a cessation. And that is precisely the theme Paul is explaining, that man's rule on this planet will come to an end, and it will be replaced by a period when man will TOTALLY CEASE from all his works. The millennium will most assuredly not be a time "of rest", but it will be a time of "cessation of man's works".

IN SUMMARY

This subject is explained in greater detail in my article "FURTHER UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE SABBATH COMMANDMENT", which is available in the main article directory.

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