Hebrews 4:11-13

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

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***Hebrews 4:11–13*** (ESV)  
**11** Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. **12** For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. **13** And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

1. Briefly summarize Hebrews 4:1-10.
2. Look at Heb 4:11. Consider the parallel between the situation in Moses’ day with the situation of the Hebrews at the time of the writing of this letter. In Moses’ day, when the people were commanded to enter the promise land (and enter His rest), who wanted to obey and who didn’t? **Who** is author of Hebrews encouraging the people to be like, and **why**?
3. Recall that prior to the time of the writing of Hebrews, Jacob, the brother of Yeshua, who was the leader of the Way, had just been murdered by the traditional Jewish leadership. What socio-religious pressures would the believers in Messiah have felt during this time? How was their situation similar to that of Joshua and Caleb in Moses’s day?
4. Verses12 and 13 present a different thought. What is the main point of these two verses?
5. How does Heb 4:12-13 connect with the prior passage? Why is the author writing these things here?
6. In Heb 4:12, what is “the word of God” the author is referring to? “Word” is translated from the Greek **logos**. Where else has **logos** been used in Hebrews so far? Also refer back to the very beginning of Hebrews.
7. Looking at Heb 4:12, in what way is the Word “living”? The same term is used in 1 Pet 1:23. Consider also 1 Cor 2:7-13.
8. In Heb 4:12, what is the Greek word translated as “active”? How is God’s Word “active”? Consider Isaiah 55:10-11.
9. In Heb 4:12 states the word of God is “sharper than a two edged sword”. What is the purpose or advantage of a two edged sword over a regular single edged word? What does this imply about the Word? Consider 2 Cor 2:14-16.
10. Look at various uses of soul (HB nefesh, GR psuxe) and spirit (HB ruach GR pneuma) in the Scriptures. Minimally consider Mat 16:26, Eph 6:6, Phil 1:27, Ex 25:21, Matt 26:41. How would you distinguish between the “spirit” vs “soul” of a person? How are they both the same?
11. Heb 4:12 speaks of the Word like the sword, in some way “distinguishing” (dividing, distributing, discerning) between three pairs of terms:  
     a) soul and spirit b) joints and marrow c) thoughts and intentions  
    How are the two terms in each pairs the same or different? What is the connection between them all? Recall again the main point of this verse.
12. Some argue that man is composed of three distinct parts -- body, soul, and spirit -- based on Heb 4:12 and 1 Thes 5:23. What do you think of this, in light of the above discussion?
13. Heb 4:13 brings an end to this argument. What is his final point?
14. In Heb 4:13, the last phrase is usually translated “to whom we must give account”. This is actually an interesting “word-play” with one of the key words in our passage. What is the actual Greek word for “account” here? What is the literal translation of this phrase? Compare to similar usage in Matt 12:36. What is the word play being used?