

The Book of Hebrews

3. Jesus greater than Moses



The writer of Hebrews continues to build on the foundation established in the first and second chapters. In Chapter 1, Jesus is God who came in flesh, to deliver a better covenant. In Chapter 2, we see the covenant establishes the believer as joint-heirs with Christ, brothers called to Glory.

In Chapter 3, the writer, expands on the nature of Messiah and his covenant. He writes to two audiences, first to believing Jews who are struggling, and then to the non-committed Jews who have heard the Gospel. The first group, is addressed in verses 1-6, and the second group, non-committed Jews, in verses 7-19.

The first group is encouraged to complete the turn to Christ, to abandon the works based Mosaic covenant, for the new covenant, to turn to Jesus, the Messiah totally, who is builder of all things. The second group is warned to learn from the mistakes of Israel. How the nation had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years, and not to make the same mistake. They failed to believe God who delivered them from Egypt, Israel was about to make the same mistake twice, by rejecting Messiah.

Jesus is Greater than Moses

HEB 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,
HEB 3:2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house.
HEB 3:3 For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.
HEB 3:4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.
HEB 3:5 And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward,
HEB 3:6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

Verse 1

Therefore: Building on the arguments put forth in the first and second chapters. Chapter one, describes the nature and person of Messiah, that He is God in flesh (Hebrews 1:1,3,6,8,10). Chapter two, built on the first chapter, establishes the glory of Messiah's covenant, the sanctified are brothers of Christ, who will be in "Glory".(Hebrews 2:10). Chapter three, makes the case of the of the need to turn completely to Christ and not struggle between the Old and New Covenants.

Holy brethren: The audience being addressed in these first six verses is referred to "*Hagios Adelfos*", in other words "Sanctified brothers". When we are "Born again" (John 3:3,6-7), the Holy Spirit is deposited in the believer as a down-payment, a guarantee of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:14, I Corinthians 3:17). We are separated, made "Holy", as the result of who is inside our earthly body, "God's Spirit".

Heavenly calling: The calling of the believer is from Heaven. God has called us to faith in Christ. (Romans 1:6-7, I Corinthians 1:2, Ephesians 4:1,14, Ephesians 2:4-10, John 6:45-45,65)

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He

might be the firstborn among many brethren.
30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified;
and whom He justified, these He also glorified.
Romans 8:28-30

Apostle and High Priest: The only place the word "Apostle" is applied to Jesus. Apostle means "Sent One" (**apostol** or **Ἀποστόλος** *Apostolos* (ap-os'-tol-os);), Jesus was sent from the Father. A comparison between Jesus and the Old Covenant is in view. Moses was "Sent" by God, to Israel, making him an "Apostle" to the nation, and the High Priest represented the people to God. Jesus, is the one "Sent" by God to the nation, and He is our High Priest. Moses and the High Priest of the Old Covenant were pictures, of the "Messiah" who would fulfill the office of Priest, King and Prophet when He came. (Deuteronomy 18:15-18, Psalm 110:4, Hebrews 5:1-10)

Verse 2

Him who appointed him: The Father appointed the Son, because there was no one else, who could be "Intercessor". (Isaiah 59:16, Revelation 5:4). Christ came to represent God to man, and man to God. He is our mediator and restorer. (John 6:38-40, John 15:10)

Moses: Jesus like Moses, introduced a covenant to Israel, Moses and Jesus are similar in that respect. (Numbers 12:7)

Verse 3

More glory than Moses: The similarity of introducing a "Covenant", is overshadowed by the difference in Moses and Jesus. Moses was considered the greatest person who ever lived. He was greater than all prophets after him. The Torah, the five books of Moses, is given preeminence in Jewish scripture, a higher standing than the other books.

He who built: Jesus unlike Moses, is God, He is the creator all things, "the builder". Through Christ the universe came into existence and with the "Word of his power" the universe is held together. (John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:15-18, Hebrews 1:1-3).

House: The house referred to here is Israel, Moses was a faithful servant to the house of Israel, but Jesus was the creator of Israel. The writer wants his audience of Jewish believers to grasp the meaning of the "New" covenant. How the Old is superseded by the New, how the builder is greater than the house.

Verse 4

He who built all things: Here Jesus, is clearly being called God. If God built all things and Jesus is the builder, then Jesus must be God.

Verse 5

Moses: God viewed Moses different in all Israel, in regards to faithfulness. When Aaron and Mariam, Moses' brother and sister rebelled against his leadership in the wilderness, God declared His unique relationship with Moses.

6 Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream.

7 Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house.

8 I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?"

Numbers 12:6-7

As a servant: However great Moses was in his service to God, he was still a servant, a servant in God's house.

Spoken afterward: The Mosaic Covenant was a foreshadowing of the coming Messianic Covenant, which would succeed it. The "Passover Lamb" was picture of God's Lamb, Christ (Isaiah 53, Daniel 9:26). Moses foretold of the coming of Messiah, and Israel's responsibility to listen to the words of Messiah. (Deuteronomy 18:15-19).

31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of

Israel and with the house of Judah

32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, F23 says the Lord.

33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Jeremiah 31:31-33

39 "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

45 "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you-Moses, in whom you trust.

46 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

John 5:39,45-47

Verse 6

Son over His own house, Moses was a servant over God's house, the house Christ built. Christ is over His own house, since the Messiah is God.

whose house we are: By our faith in Christ, we are partakers in his covenant. (Ephesians 2:21-22, Matthew 16:18)

you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:5

if we hold fast: Some interpret this to mean, if we don't fall from the faith we shall be saved.

This would mean that no one is saved until they die, (The end). What is meant, is that perseverance demonstrates true faith.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

1 John 3:19

People can be part of a church group, bible study and even clergy and not saved. They might think they are saved, as a result of works, membership or culture. However, their salvation is not based on a relationship with Christ, but works. Jesus warns about that day, where many who have done works in Christ name, will be rejected because their was never a relationship.

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

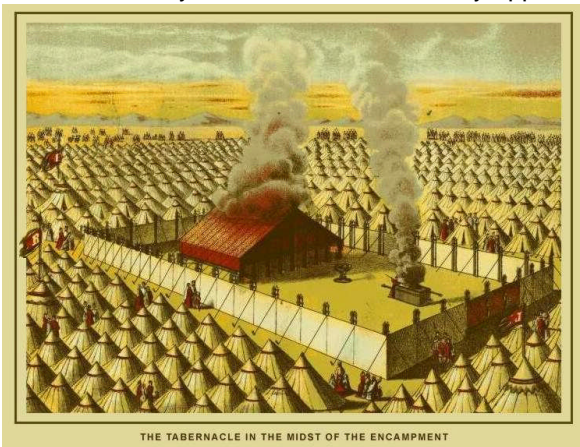
22 "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'

23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you: depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Matthew 7:21-23

This is not the case with the believer, sanctified with the Holy Spirit, deposited in the believer as God's guarantee of redemption. (Ephesians 1:14 2 Corinthians 1:21)

the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end: The end would demonstrate those truly saved, or those who only appeared so. Those who are truly saved will not be lost.



THE TABERNACLE IN THE MIDST OF THE ENCAMPMENT

"This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day
John 6:39

Do not harden your hearts

Using the example of the wilderness journey the writer to the Hebrews applies the example to Jews who have heard the Gospel, but refuse to commit to Christ.

Israel after being delivered from Egyptian slavery by the plagues on Egypt, was led through the Red Sea, by "the Cloud" (Exodus 14). The

"Cloud" contained the "Presence" of the Lord. The armies of Egypt pursued Israel, through the Red Sea and drowned as the Sea collapsed on them after the last Israelite crossed. Israel witnessed these events, and God's deliverance.

God also provided and spoke to Israel; the bitter waters of the wilderness were made sweet (Exodus 15), providing water to a thirsty nation, bread (Manna) came down from Heaven (Exodus 16), and water came from the Rock (Exodus 17). The Lord appeared in glory on Mt. Sinai, and spoke to the nation that they would fear Him (Exodus 19-20).

Moses at the request of the people, because of their fear of the Lord, went to meet with the Lord. While Moses was on Mt. Sinai, Israel rebelled and made a "Golden Calf" to lead them back to Egypt. Moses in a rage returns and smashes the 10 commandments, the Lord was about to destroy Israel, but Moses then intercedes and God spares the nation, and renews the covenant. (Exodus 34).

Finally, after the numerous miracles and deliverances, Israel refuses to enter the Promised Land. Ten of the twelve spies who entered gave negative report and the people refused to take the land promised by God, because they did not believe God could deliver the land to them. Only Joshua and Caleb urged Israel forward to take the land. God punished Israel for "Unbelief", those 20 years and older, except for Joshua and Caleb, would wander the wilderness of Sinai for 40 years until the generation died off. Their children would enter the land, along with Joshua and Caleb, Joshua would replace Moses as leader of Israel (Numbers 13-14).

*7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice,
8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,
:9 Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years.
10 Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.'
11 So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'"¹
12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;
13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.
14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,
15 while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."²
16 For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses?
17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness?
18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?
19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.
Hebrews 3:7-19*

Verse 7

Holy Spirit says: Quoting from the Psalm 95:7-11, the writer of Hebrews affirms the inspiration and authorship of the Holy Spirit, through the prophets. Scripture is God's inspired word, every word of the Autograph³ is inspired.

for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

² Peter 1:21

¹ Psalm 95:7-11,

² Psalm 95:7,8

³ Autograph is the original document where the prophet wrote the words, the autograph is transmitted through copies. This transmission process is known as "Manuscript Transmission". The English bible is a translation of the manuscripts, which are copies of the autographs.

Today: There is an urgency to receive the Gospel, There is no time for delay. Those who delay are in danger of drifting away (Hebrews 2;1). The Holy Spirit calls out to individuals, but everyone must choose. The second group heard the Gospel, but did not want to commit to Christ. The writer uses the Psalm 95:7-11, as an example of how not to respond, like the children of Israel in the wilderness. (Revelation 3:20, Isaiah 55:6)

Verse 8

Do not harden: Israel's lack of decision caused them to become hard, Israel continually tested God because they failed to believe. From one miracle deliverance to another, Israel failed to trust the Lord, until finally God rejected them, they would wonder in the desert for the 40 years, until the unbelieving generation died. Only those under the age of 20, were allowed to enter the land. From this we can see there is a limit to God's calling, those who refuse to make a decision are at risk of being hardened.

Verse 9

your fathers tested Me, tried Me: God proved Israel in the wilderness allowing their true nature to be demonstrated, not for God to know, but for them to know themselves.

21 "but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord
22 because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice,
23 "they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it.
Numbers 14:21-23

God allows trials in life, that He might receive the glory and that we might be tested, so we can know ourselves. Through our reaction to trials, God is glorified.

2 "And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.
3 "So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.
Deuteronomy 8:2-3

Israel failed the test, after witnessing God's deliverance, the "Unbelieving" generation refused to put their faith in the Lord. As a result, they were prevented from entering the land of promise.

Israel serves as an example, to the saved and unsaved. We can choose to live a victorious life of faith or life of doubt and testing. If we reject God's ability and provision in our life then we can expect a wilderness journey.

saw My works forty years: Israel saw the evidence of the God, but they refused to believe. This group of uncommitted Jews had all the evidence they needed to accept Jesus as Messiah foretold in the scriptures, much in the same way Israel saw their miracles in the wilderness, but refused to believe.

Today the evidence of Christ is available to all who are seeking. Through Prophecy, God has proved to the skeptic, atheist and seeker alike the truth of his word. The rejection of Christ (Messiah) was foretold (Isaiah 53, Daniel 9:26). The month and year of his death were revealed over 500 years before the event (Daniel's 70 weeks. Daniel 9; 24-27), including the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem following his death. The restoration of nation Israel foretold in Ezekiel 36-38, Isaiah 11, and Jeremiah 30, are modern day evidences "Works" of God, testifying to the truth of scripture. Miracles and healing in people's lives further demonstrate his faithfulness.

Verse 10-11

I was angry with that generation: The generation that wandered the wilderness brought the Lord to the point of judgment. They were judged to wander the hot deserts of Sinai because of disbelief. They along with their offspring, those who believed, suffered for parent's sin. Not everyone who

wandered died in unbelief. There were those who believed among them, but they suffered the fate of the corporate body, for the sins of the majority (Exodus 31:2).

Israel is a picture of God's grace and promise to the saved. God made a covenant promise to Abraham and his descendants. God would fulfill his promise in spite of the disobedience Abraham's descendants. The Christian life is similar; God will fulfill his promise to us despite our complete faithfulness. Our obedience will result in a victorious or defeated walk, but our salvation is based on our relationship and God's promise.

By resisting and testing the Lord, we risk being placed in the wilderness, rather than the place of rest. The difference between victorious Christian living and a defeated faithless life is a matter of trust. We can rest in the Lord's control, or grumble about our circumstances and tempt the Lord like Israel.

They shall not enter My rest: Israel was promised rest, the Land they were to enter was filled with plenty, but the 10 spies saw it as unattainable, and Israel believed the 10 rather than the 2. They did not trust God, who had delivered them repeatedly.

Verse 12

Beware, brethren: "Brethren" is in reference to the writer's relative, fellow Jews, to be distinguished from the earlier reference "Holy Brethren". This group is warned, by the example of Israel in the wilderness, to not make their same mistake.

evil heart of unbelief: Rejection of Christ was the ultimate sin.

in departing from the living God; Not accepting Christ was a departure from God. Moses himself warned Israel about the coming of Messiah, who would speak the very words of God to Israel. Those who rejected his words would be under condemnation.

18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

19 'And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.
Deuteronomy 18:18-19

Jesus warned Israel, that Moses himself would accuse those of Israel who rejected his message, because they did not believe Moses. Moses wrote about the coming of Messiah.

45 "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you-Moses, in whom you trust.

46 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"
John 5:45-47

Verse 13

Exhort: This word comes from the Greek **parakaleō** *Parakaleo* (par-ak-al-eh'-o); the root means to come alongside. The word "Comforter" in John 14:16 and "Advocate" in I John 2:1 come from the same root. Those who believe are to encourage those who have doubts, to "Come alongside" to help those who are struggling.

Today: Salvation is an urgent matter, tomorrow is no guarantee.

deceitfulness of sin: The ultimate sin is unbelief. Satan uses many strategies to pull people from the Gospel to get them to reject Christ. Satan uses procrastination and deceit to dissuade those who are interested. Rather than making the decision "Today", they wait. Thinking they have time, they become hardened to the Gospel, and are deceived.

Verse 14

become partakers of Christ: Partakers of Christ are those who choose Christ, not those who are thinking about making a decision. The proof of the choice is being steadfast until the end.

Verse 15-19

Today: Three times in chapter 3, the reader is urged to understand "Today" is the time to make the choice. There is an urgency, eternity stands at the door. (Hebrews 3:7,13,15)

Rebellion: Psalm 95:7-8 is quoted again this time the focus is on the word "Rebellion". Israel's disbelief led to outright rebellion against the Lord. Rebellion is equated with unbelief, disobedience and sin.

His rest: Those in the wilderness missed God's rest as a result of their rebellion, Israel is at risk of making the same mistake twice.

Did not obey: Those who did not obey, did not enter rest. To the Hebrew audience, on the verge of repeating the mistakes of their forefathers the warning is to not do what their forefathers did. By rejecting Christ, the Jews who had yet to choose Christ would fail to enter the rest God prepared. The “rest” here is synonymous with salvation rest, which is achieved by faith in Jesus the Messiah. Those who were obedient such as Joshua and Caleb, were able to enter the promised land, the picture of salvation, the land of rest. The children entered the land their fathers were prevented from entering.

Because of unbelief: In many ways this is a picture of Israel today, Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah and failed to enter the promised land and wandered the wilderness for the last nineteen hundred years. (Deuteronomy 28:64). However, the younger generation will be gathered back into the land in the days of King Messiah, when Christ returns at the 2nd coming. At this point Israel will accept what they rejected, like their forefathers, the younger generation will receive the land of promise and rest.

Joshua led the second generation into the promised land the first generation rejected. Jesus (Joshua) will lead the younger generation into the promised land of salvation, which the older generation rejected.

	Joshua	Jesus
Name	Joshua	Joshua
Leader of Israel	Rejected by the people	Rejected by the People
Led two generations (First Generation)	Joshua offered the first generation God's rest in the promise land	Jesus offered God's rest to the first generation
Second Generations	Joshua led the second generation into the promised land	Jesus will lead the second generation into the promised land (Zechariah 12:10)
Wondering the Wilderness	After rejecting the description of the promised land Israel wandered the wilderness 40 years	After rejecting the offer by Jesus Israel has wandered the wilderness for 2000 years.
Moses	Joshua followed and replaced Moses	Jesus followed and replaced Moses with a better Covenant