

Hebrews: Chapter 3

Heb 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

- The writer here addresses his audience as being holy- Gk.40- *sacred* (physically *pure*, morally *blameless* or *religious*, ceremonially *consecrated*. As *consecrated* these brethren understood their purpose as being “set apart as holy, useful to the Master of the house, ready for every good work” (2 Tim 2:21; see also 13:21).

- To be partakers of the heavenly calling (*the Great Commission*) they were *participants* of the Gospel invitation (2 Thes 2:13-14). They obeyed the Gospel and continued their *acknowledgment* of that calling under “the New Covenant in [Christ’s] blood” (Lk 22:20).

- Apostle- Gk.652- a *delegate*; specifically, an *ambassador* of the Gospel; officially a *commissioner* of Christ: - he that is sent. Jesus was an *ambassador* of the Gospel, commissioned by God to save “the world” (Jn 3:16).

- High Priest- (*See notes on 2:11.*) Only a high priest was permitted to enter the Most Holy Place within the tabernacle, once each year on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16). Jesus, as the N.T. High Priest, “entered once for all into the [holiest of all], not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption” (9:12).

- profession- Gk.3671- from 3670 to *covenant*. Thayer: “*whom we profess (to be ours)*”. This implies a publicly acknowledged relationship exists through a mutual agreement with Jesus as “the Mediator of a New Covenant” (12:24). (Mat 10:32-33; Rom 10:9-10)

“So Jesus is the object of our confession because He was the one sent and the one who offered, and indeed was, the reconciliation for our sins.” Hampton

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Heb 3:2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses *was faithful* in all his house.

- Here, Christ is compared with Moses in that He was *trustworthy* in fulfilling His mission to lead the remnant (*spiritual Israel*- Rom 11:5) into the promised land (*Moses into Palestine, Christ into Heaven*).

Act 7:37 This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brothers.' 38 This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us.

Deu 18:15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among you, from your brothers--it is to Him you shall listen-- 16 just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' 17 And the LORD said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken. 18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall

speak to them all that I command Him. 19 And whoever will not listen to My words that He shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.

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Heb 3:3 For this *Man* was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He Who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

Heb 3:4 For every house is builded by some *man*; but He that built all things *is* God.

- In the O.T., Moses was part of “the congregation in the wilderness” so he was just to be considered a building block that the builder used in completing the construction of the house. The comparison between Moses and Jesus not only shows Christ’s preeminence (*as part of Deity Who created all things*) but makes clear the fact that the Gospel age that brings salvation far exceeds the Mosaic which brought condemnation (*Rom 5:20-21*). The house being built here is obviously referring to the church (*remnant of spiritual Israel from both Testaments*) which is comprised of the faithful “like living stones” (*1 Pet 2:5*) “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in Whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord” (*Eph 2:20-21*). Using the creation and the relationship between it and its Maker (*God*), the writer here is showing the comparison between Christ and His church as the builder’s (*creator*) relationship to the house (*church*) he builds. It’s the “every design has a designer” conclusion. Thus, the church being in existence dictates that it must have had a Designer.

Col 1:18 And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent (*Gk.4409- to be first [in rank or influence]*).

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Heb 3:5 And Moses verily *was* faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

- As “the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth” (*Num 12:3*), his *trustworthy* nature qualified him to be the *attendant* within God’s chosen *family* Israel. Such faithfulness “testifies to the accuracy of the message he brought.” (*Hampton*)

“The word after here is not necessary in order to a just translation of this passage, and obscures the sense. It does not mean that he was a witness of those truths which were to be spoken “subsequently” to his time under another dispensation ...but it means merely that Moses stood forth as a public witness of the truths which God designed to reveal, or which were to be spoken.”

Albert Barnes

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Heb 3:6 But Christ as a Son over His own house; Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

- With regards to Moses’ relationship as only being “a servant” **under** the Heir in God’s *family*, Christ is over (*Gk.1909- superimposition/Thayer- “of care, power, control over anything”*) His own house **as** Heir (*Mat 28:18; see also notes in Gal 4*).
- His own house- *Gk.3624- a dwelling*; by implication a *family*. Thayer, “*the family of God, of the Christian church*”. The writer here again uses the pronoun we as being in fellowship with them.

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- if- Once again here is a theme of the letter. In 2:1 he states, “lest we drift away from it” (*concerning the warning*) whereas here it has to do with remembering their *assurance* and *rejoicing* over what they were *anticipating*; without which they would lose their identity as being part of the N.T. church.

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Heb 3:7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear His voice,

Heb 3:8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

Heb 3:9 When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years.

Heb 3:10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart; and they have not known My ways.

Heb 3:11 So I swear in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest.)

- This is a direct quote from Psa 95:7-11. Hardness (*Gk.4645- render stubborn*) of heart (*Gk.2588- the thoughts or feelings [mind]*) can be applied to both Mosaic and Christian dispensations. Neglecting to hear the warning in this context would carry a similar outcome of punishment that the Israelites suffered in the wilderness; death. Holy Spirit is the author of scripture (*2 Pet 1:20*) and as such those addressed in this context were to heed the appeal to keep them from slipping into apostasy. These Hebrew saints were to “hold fast to the word—unless [they] believed in vain” (*as Paul warned the Corinthians- 1 Cor 15:2*) but in this case as it pertained to the prophetic words of Christ (*2:3*).

- if ye will hear- There was a willingness that the author was trying to provoke from his readers. It seemed that they didn’t quite understand the dire nature that was being reported (*2:3*) to them concerning the future of Jerusalem, which is why the importance of the word “Today”, as it related to the gravity of the message/warning itself. The signs of the times were obvious concerning “the Day [that was] drawing near” (*10:26-27*). Even Jesus, remarking to the crowds, stated “You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?” (*Lk 12:56*).

- grieved- *Gk.4360- to feel indignant at*. In likening the Hebrews to their O.T. counterparts in case they too were insubordinate, they also would not be able to enter [God’s] rest. To them of the O.T. it was the land of Canaan, to these of the New it would be Heaven. Provoking God’s indignation in either Testament would be to lose spending an eternity with Him.

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Heb 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

- in any of you- In the end it will be the faithful Christians who will make up the bride of Christ that He will return for. The church as a whole (*including Jew and Gentile alike*) will not fall away (*Rom 11:26*) as much as it is the individual Christians that will. But, as “a little leaven leavens the whole lump” (*1 Cor 5:6*) the author here zeros in on the individual that may cause some of the rest to stumble into apathy.

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Heb 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

- exhort- Gk.3870- to *call near*, that is, *invite, invoke* (by *imploration*). The message was of such importance that the writer didn't tell them to wait until the sermon on the first day of the week when they gathered together to break bread (*Act 20:7*). It was to be a daily exhortation because of its dire nature.
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- today- Gk.4594- at *present*. In other words, don't wait until tomorrow or this evening or anytime later. The *delusion* of sin tended to take their attention off things that were important and continuing in it would cause rebellion against the truth that would ultimately save them. Would there have been anything more important than being ready to escape for their lives?

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Heb 3:14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

- partakers- Gk.3353- *participant*; by implication an *associate*. *We* is again here speaking to Jews who became Christians. If they didn't succumb to being persecuted by their Jewish neighbors who were still following the Mosaic Law (*that had already been nailed to the cross of Christ- Col 2:14*), the *assurance* they held since the *commencement* of their conversion would keep them *stable unto the end* (*Gk.5056/Thayer- "of the present order of things"*), i.e., they wouldn't provoke God into not allowing them to enter into His rest (*v. 11*).

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Heb 3:15 While it is said, Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

“He entreats them, therefore, as long as it could be said ‘today,’ or as long as life lasted, to take care lest they should harden their hearts as had been done in the temptation in the wilderness.”

Albert Barnes

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Heb 3:16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

Heb 3:17 But with whom was He grieved forty years? *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

Heb 3:18 And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not?

- All speaking of the Israelites who witnessed the miracle of crossing the Red Sea on dry land and who provoked God time and again throughout the wilderness wanderings as they (*those 20 years old and above other than Caleb and Joshua- Num 14:29-30*) died before they could return to enter the rest God had prepared for them in the land of promise.

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Heb 3:19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

- Through all they understood that happened to their Israelite brethren because of unbelief, the writer gives the conclusion (*so we see*).

Worksheet
Hebrews: Chapter 3

1. What is the “heavenly calling”?
2. Explain how Jesus is the “apostle and High Priest”.
3. Define what “confession” means according to the koine Greek.
4. How does Jesus compare to Moses?
5. But how is Jesus’ position “worthy of more glory than Moses”?
6. How does using the word “today” (*v. 7*) emphasize the nature of the message here?
7. Explain the difference between the “rest” of O.T. vs. N.T. in the context of verse 11.
8. What did the “evil, unbelieving heart” refer to in verse 12?
9. Explain what it means to “be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin”.
10. What does the writer mean “to share in Christ”?
11. What kept the O.T. Israelites from entering Canaan, even while “led by Moses”?

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