

Our study this week concerns the Hebrews writer reminding believers about a most alarming fact—especially for his readers of the time: Jesus the Christ is even superior to the highly esteemed Moses. To a group of believers who adored Moses and even used his name as a synonym for the Scriptures (cf.,

A QUESTION TO GET YOU THINKING:

WHY DOES THE LORD GOD GET SO ANGRY WITH OUR REBELLION? IT'S NOT AS IF HE HAS NOT SEEN IT ALL BEFORE. . .

Mark 10:3; Matthew 22:24), declaring the Christ's superiority was world-shattering. And bewildering. All of their lives had been spent in learning "what Moses said" and "what does Moses say about ..."
Now the epistle of Hebrews tells us not to hold onto Moses, but to Jesus.

Chapters 1 and 2 laid the ground work. The writer claims Jesus the Christ, as the Son of God, is *the* definitive revelation of the Lord God Jehovah. Furthermore, contrary to popular thought at the time, the Christ is superior to angels—no angel was ever given the universe to rule nor the privilege to sit beside Father God's majesty. Additionally, the Christ became human, just like us, so He could learn (understand experientially) what we feel as "flesh and blood." His humanity made Him a faithful priest, a merciful priest, and the One who could atone (propitiate) our sin. It was through His suffering and temptations that He was, is, and shall be able always to help us through our suffering and temptations.

This is the exclusively exceptional fundamental of the faith—God Himself condescended to earth (Genesis 3:15, Matthew 28:6, and Hebrews 2:14-15), taking on human form so He could learn about us, and we about Him. Without His deity, we could not be saved from our weaknesses and sins. Without His humanity, we could not learn just how righteous, how just, and how loving the Lord God is. Contrary to popular preaching then and now, it was for this reason that He came to earth—to demonstrate publicly the righteousness of Father God.⁹

⁹“[Father] God presented him [the Christ] as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate His justice, because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—He did it to demonstrate His justice at the present time, so as to be just and the One who justifies those who have faith □□ Jesus.”—Romans 3:25-26

Hebrews 3:1-6. *We are God's house, if we stay courageous.* Since the Christ's suffering during His temptations help us through our temptations, we who share in His divine mission must drink, eat, and live¹⁰

Jesus the Christ, the chief ambassador of Father God and the High Priest to whom we give our total fealty.



Christ Jesus was faithful to Father God who appointed Him to the tasks of creation, atonement, and redemption. As such, Jesus

was shown to be superior to Moses; after all, the architect has more nobility than the building he/she creates. Every building is designed by someone, yet the Lord God Jesus is the architect of everything. Yes, Moses was a faithful servant in the Lord God's plans—yet, he proclaimed what would be said and done in the future:

Yahweh your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to Him [in contrast to the shamans, sorcerers, and occultists you will encounter, verse 14].¹¹

But the Christ? He is a faithful *owner* of Father God's building. He is the Son, we are the house, BUT only if we hold on to our courage and the hope about which we have delight.

- Q What is this "heavenly calling" which we share as God's house? Does this calling command¹² or invite¹³ our fealty? How is this fealty manifested to meet the satisfaction of the Sovereign?¹⁴
- Q In what ways was Christ Jesus faithful the One who sent Him, as ambassador and/or as high priest?
- Q Why is Jesus the Christ superior to Moses [either as Moses the person or Moses as a synonym for the Scriptures]? So?
- Q What keeps us from being part of God's house? To what hope and with what courage are we to hold onto? What happens to those outside of God's house? Are there other houses besides God's house? [Hint: check out Matthew 7:24-27.]

HEBREWS 3:1-6

Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. ²He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. ³Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. ⁴For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. ⁵Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. ⁶But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

¹⁰See John 6:53.

¹¹From Deuteronomy 18:15, Moses is speaking.

¹²"You are either for Me, or against Me..." –Matthew 12:30.

¹³"Come you who are weary and heavy laden..." –Matthew 11:28.

¹⁴Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!" –Matthew 7:21-23.

Hebrews 3:7-15. *Rebellion hardens our heart which in turn turns us away from the Lord God.* We've already learned from Holy Spirit's Scriptures that if we hear the Lord God's voice, we are not to freeze our *raison d'être*. Be not cold to the Lord God, especially when being tested in the deserts of life.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MPGyx7N1XI>

Our predecessors were tested, and failed—we thought we could challenge the Lord God Jehovah. Our rebellion caused His anger. He said our *raison d'être* is always getting polluted. Why? We have not known God's ways! Then, it happened. The Lord God declared—you shall never enter My dwelling place!

So, fellow believers, make sure none has a “me-heart,” devoid of God, a separated, and/or unbelieving *raison d'être*. If your purpose for life is rebellion, or is polluted by unbelief, seek out the encouragement of others.

And what about you whose *raison d'être* is closer to the Lord God's *raison d'être*? It is your responsibility to encourage those with frozen hearts, not just on Sunday, but daily. As long as we have “**today**,”¹⁵ we should encourage each other. Our cause: Ensuring no one's *raison d'être* is frozen by the seduction which occurs when being separated from God (i.e., sin). We are able to share *ev* the Christ IF we hold firmly until the end to the confidence we had at the beginning. Remember the Psalmist's advice:

If you hear God's calling, do not freeze your *raison d'être* as you did in the past when you were rebelling against God.

Q How does rebellion pollute our reason for being? How do we know when our *raison d'être* is being polluted?

¹⁵In the Scriptures here, the word for “today” is an **adverb**, not a noun (Σήμερον, *say-me-ron*, 4594). The writer is using today to modify “now.” In other words, as long as now exists, today; i.e., encourage each other now, not later.

HEBREWS 3:7-15

So, as Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you hear his voice,⁸ do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert,⁹ where your fathers tested and tried Me and for forty years saw what I did.¹⁰ That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, “Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.”¹¹ So I declared on oath in my anger, “They shall never enter my rest.” [Psalm 95:7-11]

¹²See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.¹⁴ We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.¹⁵ As has just been said:

“Today, when [if] you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.” [Psalm 95:7-8]

- Q What is at least one reason why our *raison detre* gets out of whack? [Hint: see verse 10]
- Q How does encouragement, daily encouragement, soften a frozen heart, the heart whose purpose is no longer consonant with the Lord God's *raison d'être*?
- Q What type or manner of encouragement do you find most edifying? Why?
- Q When should this encouragement happen within God's house?
- Q How does sin deceive us? Cause us to lose our grip on God completely to the end? Why do we lose the confidence we once had at the beginning of our faith journey?

SOME KEY ISSUES FOR HEBREWS 3:16-19

Hebrews 3:16-19. *We will not enter the dwelling place of the Lord God if we disobey and/or disbelieve*. It was we who heard the Lord God, yet were nonetheless rebellious. And, it was us with whom the Lord God was angry. We sinned and we were left in the desert, right where our bodies fell.

And who did the Lord God swear He would never let into the Promised Land? Us. Why? We disobeyed — we rejected His protection, we ignored His power, and we forgot we were the created. We were kept from the Promised Land because of our unbelief.

HEBREWS 3:16-19

¹⁶Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? ¹⁷And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? ¹⁸And to whom did God swear they would never enter His dwelling place [or *rest*] if not to those who disobeyed [or *disbelieved*]? ¹⁹So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

We have a WE problem.

- Q Why is the writer of Hebrews making such a close connection between the initial readers and subsequent readers of his letter and our rebellion in the desert?
- Q Why does the Lord God deny access into His dwelling place? Is that not mean, if not downright cruel? Why is obedient belief so important to the Lord God that He would swear unbelief and disobedience will prevent access to Him?