

### **Hebrews Chapter Three**

In the third chapter the writer tells us that Jesus is better than Moses. Moses was the leader (Apostle) that God sent to the children of Israel. God called Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-10) and sent him to deliver His people from bondage in Egypt. While Moses was the lawgiver, he was not the High Priest, his brother Aaron was. Jesus is both Apostle and High Priest (verse one). Moses is called faithful in his house (verse two) but only as a servant (verse five). Jesus is described as a son over His own house (verse six). We are His house.

#### **The Son was faithful (verses 1-6)**

The readers of this letter are called holy brethren. They are also described as “partakers of the heavenly calling”. The Apostle Peter wrote about our calling in 1 Peter 5:10 and 1 Peter 1:10.

We are commanded to consider Jesus. This command is repeated in Hebrews 12:3. What is it about Jesus that we are to consider? The writer begins in verse three to illustrate the fact that Jesus was faithful to God. Moses is also called faithful, but the writer takes great pains to show that Jesus is superior to Moses in this chapter.

Jesus is counted as worthy of more honor than Moses in verse three. The reason that Jesus is worthy of more honor than Moses is the fact that Jesus is preeminent. John the Baptist said he was not worthy to even carry the sandals of Jesus (Matthew 3:11). Paul said that Jesus is the Lord of both the dead and the living (Romans 14:9) and that in all things He might have the preeminence (Colossians 1:18). The writer of Hebrews has already called our attention to the preeminence of Jesus in Hebrews 1:4.

Jesus is preeminent because He built the spiritual house we reside in. We know from Hebrews 1:10 that Jesus laid the foundation of the Earth and in verse four we find that God built all things. The writer therefore identifies Jesus as God while Moses is described as a servant.

Because Jesus was faithful as a Son over His own house we are commanded to hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope until the end. This command is repeated in several other passages of the book (Hebrews 4:14 and 10:23). Christians must be confident because of our faith in Jesus and we should also be the happiest people on the face of the Earth. Our confidence and rejoicing is possible because Jesus was faithful.

#### **We must be faithful (verses 7-15)**

After using Jesus as the example of faithfulness, the writer then proceeds to direct us to be as well. The quotation in verses 7-11 comes from Psalm 95:7-11 and is introduced “Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says”. The writer of Hebrews understood and believed that the Old Testament was inspired by God. We today must also hold fast our understanding of the inspiration of scripture.

The Holy Spirit says “Today”, not tomorrow, but now, we must hear. It is not simply enough to hear; we must also beware of hardening our hearts so that we won’t really hear. We see the example of the children of Israel who had the opportunity to enter the promised land, but would not hear God. This is described as the day of rebellion (Numbers 14:26-38) but was really the culmination of a lot of rebellion and griping against God that began when they left Egypt and which never really ended.

Because the children of Israel decided to listen to the ten spies who said they would not be able to enter the promised land instead of the two faithful spies (Joshua and

Caleb) who said God would deliver the land into their possession, the people were doomed to wander in the wilderness of Sinai for forty years. This wandering was to continue until all those who rebelled against God were dead.

We are told to beware lest we would also have an evil heart of unbelief like the children of Israel. We are told to beware lest we depart from the living God. The writer makes very plain that disbelief and disobedience go hand in hand.

In order to protect Christians from the possibility that they would depart from God, the writer gives them the command to exhort each other. The immediacy of this command is shown in the use of the word, “today”. We are to exhort each other daily. If we will carry out this command we will be protected against the deceitfulness of sin.

This is one reason why it is so important for us to gather together as a congregation. When we have the opportunity to sing, pray, study, and partake of the Lord’s Supper it encourages and strengthens us. No one can remain a strong Christian who is not exhorted from time to time.

Christians are described as “partakers of Christ” if they hold fast. The use of the word, “if” indicates that we can cease to be partakers of Christ. We are commanded to hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end. This command and warning to be faithful is repeated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:58 and by Peter in 2 Peter 3:17. The warning that ends verse 15 is found in Psalm 95:7.

### **The children of Israel used as an example (verses 16-19)**

Only a handful entered the promised land out of the great multitude who left Egypt. In fact, of those who were over the age of twenty on the day of rebellion, only two (Joshua and Caleb) entered the promised land forty years later. All of the rest died in the

wilderness. The message is clear, God does not approve of disobedience. This disobedience was brought about because of unbelief. The real reason they could not enter into the promised land was that they refused to believe the word of God. This is a lesson for us today. Jesus is demonstrated to be superior to Moses.