

# Hebrews: A Bridge from the Old to the New

## Hebrews – Chapter 3

### Jesus Christ: Superior to Moses

#### *The Ministry of Jesus is Better than the Ministry of Moses (Verses 1-6)*

- 1 The phrase “holy brothers” tells us the writer is addressing believers: “holy” (*hagios*) means set apart for God and “brothers” refers to their place in God’s family <sup>Hebrews 2:11</sup>, and the “heavenly calling” <sup>Philippians 3:12-14</sup> was their summons to salvation <sup>Romans 8:30</sup> they had received. The author was encouraging all true believers to keep Jesus at the front of their thought processes at all times <sup>2 Corinthians 4:18, Hebrews 12:2</sup>, because He was (and is) the ultimate “apostle” <sup>John 5:36-38</sup> (sent by the Father, with all of the knowledge of God) and “high priest” <sup>Hebrews 2:17, 5:5-6 (1-10)</sup> (perfect spiritual leader). All believers confess the name of Jesus <sup>1 Timothy 6:12</sup>.
- 2 In their earthly ministries, Jesus <sup>John 12:49-50, 14:31a</sup> and Moses <sup>Exodus 40:16, Numbers 12:7</sup> were both faithful to the work God entrusted to them <sup>1 Corinthians 4:2</sup> and faithful to His people (“God’s house”).
- 3-4 Jesus was/is the creator of all things <sup>John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:15-16</sup>, including God’s spiritual “house” consisting of all genuine believers <sup>1 Peter 2:4-5</sup>, and with Jesus as the “chief cornerstone” <sup>Isaiah 28:16, Ephesians 2:19-22</sup>. So, the reason the author stated Jesus is “worthy of greater honor” than Moses, despite his “deeds” having been “mighty” and “awesome” <sup>Deuteronomy 34:12</sup>, Moses was merely a human servant in the house of God.
- 5 The people of Israel trusted Moses, because he was a faithful servant <sup>Exodus 14:31</sup>. And through his writings, Moses testified about Jesus, the Savior to come <sup>Deuteronomy 18:18, John 5:46</sup>.
- 6 In contrast to Moses, Jesus was the one and only Son of the Father <sup>John 3:16, 1 John 4:9-10</sup>, with believers being His “house” <sup>1 Corinthians 3:16, 1 Timothy 3:14-15</sup>. The phrase “if we hold on” is not an indication of how to be or remain saved, but an indication that perseverance in faithfulness is a proof of genuine faith <sup>1 Corinthians 15:1-2</sup>. And perseverance is the product of God’s provision of “courage” <sup>Mark 6:50b, 1 Corinthians 16:13, Ephesians 6:10-13</sup> and “hope” <sup>Romans 5:1-5, 1 Peter 1:3-5</sup> for those that rest in Jesus Christ.

#### *Heed the Voice of God: A Warning against Disbelieving (Verses 7-14)*

- 7 In the next five verses <sup>v.7-11</sup>, the author cites an OT passage <sup>Psalms 95:7-11</sup>, and attributes it to the ultimate author of Scripture, the Holy Spirit <sup>Acts 28:25, 2 Timothy 3:16</sup>. The word “today” refers to the present moment, indicating a sense of urgency <sup>v.13, 2 Corinthians 6:1-2</sup> for listening intently to the voice of God (in the heart while in prayer or reading His Word, through other people or circumstances, etc). The “if” indicates the instructions that follow are for those who truly hear and understand <sup>Luke 8:8, Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6:13;22</sup>.

- 8-10** Hardened hearts are a sign of focusing on self and forgetting God's promises Mark 8:17-21, like the Israelites did when Moses led them in the desert Exodus 14:10-12 and what many Christians do today when Jesus leads them in a trial Ephesians 4:17-19. Israel experienced God's provision of a release from slavery Exodus 12:31-32, escape from the Egyptian soldiers Exodus 15:19 and the provision of food in the wilderness Exodus 16:11-13, 35. In spite of the presence of God, especially through Moses Acts 7:35-36, their faith wavered so easily, which angered God against a generation of Israel Numbers 14:11-12, who were left to die in the desert Numbers 14:29-33.
- 11** God fulfilled all His promises to the Israelites Joshua 21:44-45, 1 Kings 8:56, including offering them rest from their enemies in the Promised Land Deuteronomy 12:10. Entering the PL is a picture of the rest (freedom) found in salvation in the LORD Romans 8:1-2 and promised to every true believer Psalms 62:1-2, 116:7, Isaiah 30:15a.
- 12-13** In addressing "brothers" here, the author appears to have been writing to fellow Jews, in contrast to followers of Jesus (Son of the "living God" Matthew 16:16) who earlier were referred to as "holy brothers" <sup>v.1</sup>. The first century Jews were urged to not give in to their naturally "sinful, unbelieving heart" Jeremiah 17:9, because it will give way to temptation and lead to the deception of sin and unbelief James 1:13-15, resulting from a hardened heart Acts 19:8-9a.
- 14** Jewish believers who "hold firmly" to Jesus and His teachings John 8:31-32 will have confidence in approaching God 2 Corinthians 3:4-6, Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19-23, even on the "day of judgement" 1 John 4:16-18.

### *Heed the Voice of God: A Warning against Rebellion (Verses 15-19)*

- 15** The author repeated an earlier OT quote Psalms 95:7-8 to emphasize the importance of hearing God every day.
- 16-18** These verses are the author's restatement of the issues in an earlier quote <sup>v.7-11, Psalms 95:7-11</sup>. He reminded his Jewish readers that their ancestors "heard" God (saw His power) Exodus 14:31, but at each sign of trouble, they grumbled (rebelled) Exodus 15:22-24, Numbers 14:1-4 and lacked any trust in the LORD Deuteronomy 1:26-33. Their repeated complaining reflected a total lack of faith, and so God decided to hold them accountable by having a generation of Israelite adults die in the desert Deuteronomy 1:34-38, Numbers 14:22-23, instead of entering the PL. So, not only did the writer remind them of Israel's history of the sin of rebellion, but also of the resulting judgement sent by the LORD. He did this to warn the Jews of his day to not take the same path of disobedience, because, if they did, they would face the same type of judgement 1 Corinthians 10:1-13.
- 19** In short, the Israelites who died in the wilderness were victims of their own unbelief Psalms 78:21-22, John 3:18,36.

**Exodus 14:10-12** As Pharaoh approached ... They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"

**Exodus 14:31** And when the Israelites saw the great power the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.

**Exodus 15:23-24** When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"

**Exodus 40:16** Moses did everything just as the LORD commanded him.

**Numbers 14:22-23** ...not one of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times – not one of them will ever see the land I promised ... to their forefathers. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it.

**Numbers 14:29** In this desert your bodies will fall – every one of you twenty years old or more...

**Deuteronomy 12:10** But you will cross the Jordan and settle in the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance ... he will give you rest from all your enemies around you so that you will live in safety.

**Deuteronomy 34:12** For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

**1 Kings 8:56** Praise be to the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses.

**Psalms 62:1-2** My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

**Psalms 78:21-22** When the LORD heard them, he was very angry; his fire broke out against Jacob, and his wrath rose against Israel, for they did not believe in God or trust in his deliverance.

**Jeremiah 17:9** The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?.

**Mark 8:17-21** Jesus asked them: "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don't you remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" "Twelve." "And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" "Seven." He said to them, "Do you still not understand?"

**John 5:46** "If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me."

**John 8:31-32** To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

**John 14:31a** "...I love the Father and I do exactly what my Father has commanded me."

**Acts 7:35b-36** [Moses] was sent to be their ruler and deliverer by God himself, through the angel who appeared to him in the bush. He led them out of Egypt and did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for forty years in the desert.

**Romans 5:1-5** ...since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our LORD Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we

know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit...

**Romans 8:1-2** Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

**Romans 8:30** And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

**1 Corinthians 3:16** Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and God's Spirit lives in you?

**1 Corinthians 15:1-2** Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

**2 Corinthians 4:18** So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

**2 Corinthians 6:1-2** As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

**Ephesians 2:19-22** Consequently, you are ... fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the LORD. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

**Ephesians 4:17b-19** ...you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

**Ephesians 6:10-13** Finally, be strong in the LORD and his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

**Hebrews 4:16** Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

**Hebrews 5:5-6** So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

**James 1:13b-14** ...God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

**1 Peter 2:4-5** As you come to him, the living Stone – rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him – you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

**Revelation 2:7a** He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.