

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: 1/2-3/2023 Hebrews 3

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!

**MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)
THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS
WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!**

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763?pwd=b25tUzhkaTE0UzIrSnpkVmZEWGJVQT09>

Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763 - Passcode: 087484

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,87858644763# US (San Jose) +13462487799,,87858644763# US (Houston)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose); +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston); +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma); +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C); +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago); +1 929 436 2866 US (New York);

Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763?pwd=b25tUzhkaTE0UzIrSnpkVmZEWGJVQT09>

TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).

**THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, CCCM, AS
WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!**

MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85309150746?pwd=TK5oVjN0TzdpWjE3UC9Oam05a21uQT09>

Meeting ID: 853 0915 0746 - Passcode: 715340

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,85309150746# US (San Jose) +12532158782,,85309150746# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose); +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma); +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston); +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C); +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago); +1 929 436 2866 US (New York);

Meeting ID: 853 0915 0746

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85309150746?pwd=TK5oVjN0TzdpWjE3UC9Oam05a21uQT09>

Phil Twente ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221 www.ptwente.com - For Audio & notes from previous studies -

OPENING PRAYER

In Chapter 1, we were given God's Supreme Revelation concerning Jesus Christ, including His being exalted above Angels. Chapter 2 - Warning Against Neglecting Salvation

CHAPTER 3 – THE SON WAS FAITHFUL –

JESUS GREATER THAN MOSES - (Heb 3:1-6) Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, [2] who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. [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. [4] For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. [5] And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, [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.

Heb 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers* (companions) *of the heavenly calling (in which consider* (observe fully, persevering) *the Apostle* (one who is sent) *and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.

- This section presents the superiority of Jesus over the highly revered Moses. *Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling*, in which the power of the heavenly life works to make our life heavenly. Writing to the Hebrews, to the Jews who had received Jesus Christ as their Lord and their Messiah, those who had come recognize Jesus as Messiah.
- ***Consider Jesus! which is the central thought*** of the verse, and of the passage of which it is a part, as it is indeed of the whole Epistle! May we let the study of this great Book and possession of the Son of God awaken our devotion and our enthusiasm that we may be able to tell men what beauty and what glory there is in Jesus!
- ***Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;*** Calling their careful attention, to Christ Jesus, Who was, first of all *the Apostle*. The word *Apostle*, literally means, one who is sent. Jesus was sent by God to this world. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. God, Jesus said, did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. Throughout the Book of John, over and over again, Jesus asserts that He was sent by God. In the High Priestly prayer, (*John 17:3,8,18,21,23,25.*) Thus, an apostle, the Apostle sent by God to the earth.
- ***Jesus is also the High Priest of our profession.*** In chapter 2, he began to introduce the subject of the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ for the believers. (*Heb 2:17*) *Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*
- ***There is going to be that pointing to Jesus Christ as the High Priest,*** throughout the Book of Hebrews. The high priest was appointed by God to represent God to the people. He was God's representative. He was to speak to the people the Word of God. On the other hand, he also was to represent the people before God. Only the High Priest was allowed to go into the Holy of Holies. And only one day in the year, Yom Kippur, to represent the people before God and to offer to God, the offerings for the sins of the people.
- ***The High Priest, under the Levitical Order had to be a descendent of Aaron.*** But now Jesus is our High Priest, not of the Levitical order, but of a higher order of priesthood than that of Levi. For we know that Jesus was from the tribe of Judah. There is nothing of the Scriptures that speak of the tribe of Judah, being a priestly tribe. But He is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Heb 3:2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house.

- ***Jesus, who was faithful to Him that appointed Him! He was appointed by God.*** The declaration by God was, I have sworn that You are a Priest forever, after the Order of Melchizedek.
- ***Who was faithful to Him that appointed Him as Moses also was faithful in all his house.*** In chapter one, we were shown the superiority of Jesus Christ, over the angels. He is superior to the angels.
- ***Now he is going to show us that Jesus is superior to Moses!*** The Jews held Moses in high esteem because he was the one to whom God gave the Law. He was the representative of God to the people, in bringing them the law of God, the Word of God. To the present day there are many Jews that will only accept the Books of Moses, the first five books, as truly inspired.
- ***Moses is good! Jesus Christ is better!***

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.

- **Moses was faithful in the house, the house of Israel.** But the One who built the house, has more honor than the house itself! Thus, He has more honor than even Moses, because it was Jesus who built the house.

Heb 3:4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.

- **He who built all things is God.** Moses was only a part of God's household of faith, whereas Jesus was the Creator of that household. Therefore, He is greater than Moses and equal to God. Here is another declaration in the New Testament, of the deity of Jesus Christ. He is the One who built the house and the One who built all things, is God. So, the declaration again, Jesus 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,

- **For a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward.** Moses was faithful primarily as a testimony to that which was to come in Christ. (*Joh 5:46*) *For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.*
- **Moses was a servant in the house. Jesus was the Master over the house,** which is the church. Jesus said, (*Mat 16:18b*) *On this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.* In the New Testament, we are likened unto a house. Living stones, fitly joined together, finding that oneness, that is ours in Christ Jesus.

Heb 3:6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if (probable future condition, if we persevere) we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

- **But Christ as a Son over His own house.** Not only is Christ superior to Moses in that He is the Creator and Moses is a creature, but also the best thing that could be said of Moses is that he was a servant of God—never was he called the Son of God. Christ is the Son of God, which is quite a difference between the son in the house and a servant in a house! Christ is superior to Moses on two counts: Christ is the Creator and He is the Son!
- **Whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.** You are the house, the church, if you hold fast. Notice the necessity to persevere! This is not speaking of how to be saved or remain saved. It means rather that steadfastness, perseverance in faithfulness is proof of real faith. The person who returns to the rituals of the Levitical system to contribute to his own salvation proves he was never truly part of God's household, whereas the one who abides in Christ gives evidence of his genuine membership in that household. The promise of God will fulfill this holding fast. (*1Th 5:24*) *He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it. We need to be firm to the end!*
- **Rejoicing of the hope** – It is when faith becomes a joy, and hope is a glorying in the God, that we can be more than conquerors!
- **One of things that apparently prompted the writing of this Book to the Hebrews,** was that many of the Jews, who had come to embrace Jesus Christ as the Messiah, had to suffer and die. Because tradition is such a strong and powerful thing, some of them were being drawn back into legalism, back under the Law, even to the extent of going with sacrifices for sin offerings to the temple. So, emphasis on holding fast to the truth of Jesus Christ, persevering to the end, not turning back to the Law, for a relationship with God, not looking again to the Old Covenant, but continuing to relate to God through the New Covenant.
- **In the Book of Acts, that there was a problem in the early church, stemming** from the church in Jerusalem, that sought to co-exist with Judaism. The disciples, were still going into the temple to worship.

- **You remember in (Act 3:1) Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour,** when they encountered the lame man, who was subsequently healed. Paul the apostle, when he came back to Jerusalem, was wanting to celebrate the feast. So he went through the purification rites in the temple so that he would participate in the coming feast there in Jerusalem.
- **Many of the priests, it says, came to the faith. Many Jews believed** that Jesus was the Messiah. Those in Jerusalem, were still somewhat bound with the traditions of Judaism and with the Law. They came to the Gentile church in Antioch, and they said, you cannot be Christians unless you keep the Law of Moses and are circumcised.
- **This is true of many people today, in that tradition has such a strong hold** on us. That many times, we are guilty of holding tradition even above the Word of God! That one of the problems in the early church, especially in the church in Jerusalem with the Jewish believers.
- **God doesn't want a legal relationship with you.** That's far too formal! God wants a loving relationship with you! He doesn't want you to feel bound to Him by a law. He wants you to feel bound to Him by love! He wants a loving relationship with you, which is much better! There is something about a legal relationship. There is that tendency to just see how far you can go without breaking that bond.
- **But with a loving relationship, the thought is, just how close can I stay to Christ?** Bound by love, I'm bound by much stronger chords, than I would be if I were bound by rules and regulations and by the law. I thank God for this loving relationship that He has called us to, the relationship that we have with Christ Jesus.

BE FAITHFUL – Harden not your hearts! - (Heb 3:7-15) 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.' [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."

Heb 3:7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE,

- **Hebrews 3:7-11, the writer cites (Psa 95:7-11) as the words of its ultimate author,** the Holy Spirit. This passage describes the Israelites' wilderness wanderings after their delivery from Egypt. Despite God's miraculous works and His gracious, providential faithfulness to them, the people still failed to commit themselves to Him in faith.
- **Today. The reference is to the present moment while the words of God are fresh** in the mind. There is a sense of urgency to immediately give heed to the voice of God. This urgency is emphasized by repeating the reference to "today" from (Psa 95:7); three more times (**Heb 3:13,15; 4:7**) and is the theme of the writer's exposition (**2Co:6:2**) *For He says: "IN AN ACCEPTABLE TIME I HAVE HEARD YOU, AND IN THE DAY OF SALVATION I HAVE HELPED YOU."* Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation..
- **As the Holy Spirit says: TODAY!** What does this mean? God is the eternal One. With Him there is no yesterday or tomorrow. What we call past and future are with Him an ever present **now!** His life is an ever blessed, never ending **TODAY!** One of the great words of this epistle in regard to Christ and His salvation is the word eternal, forever. He has become the author of eternal salvation. That is a salvation which bears the character of eternity. Its chief mark is that it is an ever present **NOW!** There is not a moment in which Christ, whoever lives to pray for us, is not able to maintain us in the power of an endless life!
- **TODAY is also a word of earnest warning.** The believer who answers the TODAY of the Holy Spirit

with the “tomorrow” of some more convenient season, does not know how he is hardening his heart. The delay, instead of making the surrender and obedience and faith easier, makes it more difficult. It closes the heart for TODAY against the Comforter, cutting off all hope and power of growth. Oh believer, even as the Holy Spirit says TODAY, so when you hear His voice, open your heart in great tenderness to listen and obey! It means that for each time you hear His voice, immediate, wholehearted submission to all God says, immediate trustful acceptance of all He gives! Obedience to the Spirit’s TODAY is your only certainty of power and blessing! With timely urgency, *(Rev 2:11a) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

Heb 3:8 DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE REBELLION, IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS,

- ***DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS!*** Here is the first lesson the Holy Spirit teaches. He calls us *not to harden* or close the heart, but to heed the voice of God! The condition of all further teaching is always, *If you hear His voice, harden not your heart!*
- ***AS IN THE REBELLION!*** There are a couple of instances of rebellion (*provocations* in the KJV), where the people provoked God by their unbelief and then where Moses provoked God by His rash actions. The first rebellion came when they had come to the border of the Promised Land. They had come to Kadesh Barnea, ready to enter in and to take the land that God had promised to give to them. God promised to go before them, and to drive out the enemies before them, giving them this land as an inheritance.
- ***Spies sent into the land! We read in Deuteronomy that some of the elders of the people came to Moses. (Deu 1:22-23) "And every one of you came near to me and said, 'Let us send men before us, and let them search out the land for us, and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we shall come.' [23] "The plan pleased me well; so I took twelve of your men, one man from each tribe, to spy it out, in order that we might establish a strategy, a war strategy, to take the land. So one man was appointed from each tribe, who went into the land to sort of spy it out.***
- ***When these men returned, ten of them brought an evil report.*** They said it isn’t a very good land. It’s a land that eats up the inhabitants. In other words, it can’t support the people that are there. Besides that, the cities have walls that are so high, they go up into heaven! Also, we saw giants there! We were like grasshoppers in their eyes. The evil report inspired fear in the hearts of the people.
- ***Joshua and Caleb brought back an entirely different report!*** In the valley of Eshcol they picked a cluster of grapes, so large, that they carried it on a staff between two men, proving, it’s a great land! Here’s the fruit of the land! This proves that the land is just rich in agricultural possibilities. The people said, yes, but we hear the walls are high. They said, no, not really that high.
- ***But we heard that there are giants there! They said, they’re bread for us!*** We’ll eat them up, you know. But yet the people listened to the ten and the evil message of the ten. So they said, our children will be wiped out. We will be destroyed. You know, we can’t do it! It was unbelief that God would not keep His promise to drive out the enemies before them and to give them the land. Thus, they had provoked God by their unbelief, not believing that God would keep His promise in giving to them, this land.
- ***So God said, because you did not believe Me, you will wander or roam in the wilderness*** until this whole generation dies off. Your children, which you said would die, they will enter into the land. But none of you shall enter in, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, because of your unbelief. So God was provoked because of their unbelief there at Kadesh Barnea.
- ***Then again as they were approaching the land, some forty years later.*** For the most part the people had died off, that generation. As they were approaching the land again, they came to a place where there was no water. They again ***came to Moses, making accusations.*** You brought us out here to kill us with thirst. It’s better off that we had stayed in Egypt. You haven’t brought us into the land! They were making all of these accusations, that really upset Moses! He went before God. He said, what am I going to do with these people? Here they are, again complaining and griping and all. God said, Moses, speak to the rock and it will bring forth water!

- **But Moses was angry! He was angry with the people!** He went out to them. He took his rod. And he said, you rebels, how long do I have to put up with you? Must I smite this rock again to give you water? He took the rod and he smote the rock twice. The water came forth.
- **But God said to Moses, Moses, you didn't represent Me** before the people. For that reason, you cannot go into the land. You will not be able to lead them into the land! Moses was God's representative to the people. He had misrepresented God! God saw their thirst. God was pitiful toward them. He was understanding. He wanted to supply for them. So He said to Moses, just speak to the rock. But Moses was angry, saying, must I smite this rock, you rebels? He misrepresented God, making the people think that God was angry with them, when He wasn't!
- **Being a representative of God is a very serious business! Here is Moses now. He did well!** But now, towards the end of his career, he gets upset. He loses his temper! He yells at the people! He calls them a bunch of rebels, making them feel that God is really upset with them! Thus God was provoked with Moses. He was not able to enter into the land, because he did not properly represent God, there at the waters of strife. He called it Meribah, the waters of strife.
- **Later on, Moses said, oh Lord, please, let me go in!** I want to see the beautiful mountains of Israel! I want to see the mountains of Lebanon and all. I've heard about them. Oh, I would love to see them! God said, don't speak to Me of this matter again! You can't do it because you failed to represent Me there at the waters of Meribah. That was a tremendous price that Moses had to pay! He could not enter into the Promised Land.
- **Now, these experiences are all real! But they are also allegorical.** The experiences in Egypt, the bondage under the Egyptians, that horrible misery of being enslaved to the Egyptians, is a type of the believer's bondage, when in sin! The power that sin has over a person and the bondage that it brings them under. They are bound and in bondage to sin. That's the land and life in Egypt. And Pharaoh represents Satan, who makes the task harder and even more difficult. He is unwilling to let them go.
- **Their passing through the Red Sea is a symbol of water baptism,** whereby they leave the old life and enter into a new relationship with God. Out of the life of bondage, into a new relationship with God.
- **The wilderness is representative of that new life that we have,** but yet trying to live a life now that is pleasing to God in the energy and the ability of our flesh. Where we are, sort of just passing through this realization, that though I want to do good, evil is still present with me. The good things that I would do, I'm not doing. But some of the evil things that I really don't want to do, I find myself doing.
- **Paul aptly describes it in Romans, chapter seven,** as he talks about his struggle with an awakened consciousness, a new relationship with God in Christ. But yet not having entered into the place of victory through power of the Holy Spirit.
- **The river Jordan represents the coming to the realization** that I have been crucified with Christ. Now there are those who say, well Jordan represents our death and our entering into heaven. But not so! It actually represents the death to self, the reckoning of the old man to be dead, crucified with Christ, that I might live in the newness of life in the power of the Spirit!
- **The promised land is that land that God has promised to us, a victory.** A victory through the power of the Holy Spirit. An overcoming life, a victorious life, the land of promise. It comes after the death to self to my own ambitions, to my own desires.
- **Moses in representing the law, could not bring them in to the promised land!** The law cannot bring you into this relationship of victory in Christ Jesus. It can only lead you up to it. That is why it took Joshua, whose name in Greek is Jesus. It took Joshua to lead them into the land. Moses could not lead them in, because of the provocation at the water of Meribah, when he didn't properly represent God.
- **The reason why the promised land is not heaven is that they still had to fight the enemy** when they came into the land. They still experienced these battles. It's interesting they also had battles in the wilderness, but they didn't gain anything by them. It was not until they entered into the promised land that through the battles they really began to gain real territory.

- **The Lord said, everyplace you put your foot, I have given it to you as an inheritance.** But that is something you have to go in and claim it! So, in our walk in the Spirit, we must step in and claim the blessings of God! We have to claim the territory over the flesh, over the life of the flesh, the things of the flesh. We have to move in and by faith, claim the victory of Jesus Christ! Every place we put our foot down, God has given that to us as a possession. So, the whole experience is an allegory, as Paul teaches in 2 Corinthians.

Heb 3:9 WHERE YOUR FATHERS TESTED ME, TRIED ME, AND SAW MY WORKS FORTY YEARS.

- **They tested, tempted God, saying God wasn't able** to do what He promised to do. They provoked God by their unbelief. And their unbelief kept them from the rich, full, blessings, God wanted to give to them! How about you? Is there any unbelief that is keeping His blessings from you?
- **FORTY YEARS.** (*Num 14:34*) *According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection.*

Heb 3:10 THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THAT GENERATION (those who, at the Exodus, were over twenty years old), ***AND SAID, 'THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART, AND THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN MY WAYS.'***

- **What an accusation! THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN MY WAYS, the ways of God!** Their error is in their hearts. It is a heart of unbelief. They really don't know God. The sin here is singular. It is not fornication, as destructive as that sin may be. It is not idolatry, as sad as that sin is. It is just not believing how good God is!
- **Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.** The more and the better you know God, the greater your faith! That is why we are encouraged to study the Scriptures, because the Scriptures reveal to us the person, the character, and the nature of God. The more you know God, the easier it will be for you to trust Him!
- **How do you know Him? By reading about God, the things that God has done!** The things that God wants to do for those who will put their trust completely in Him! Oh, how glorious it is to be able to put our trust in God and see His marvelous works, that He will do for us and through us! So *God was angry with that generation, saying they always go astray in their hart, and they have not known My ways.*

Heb 3:11 SO I SWORE IN MY WRATH, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.' "

- **Now, the promised land was a place of God's rest for them.** The life in the Spirit where they are resting now in the work of God, not in their own efforts anymore. The wilderness represented their efforts, their struggles. But now entering into the finished work, the rest that God has for His people.
- **MY REST.** The earthly rest which God promised to give was life in the land of Canaan which Israel would receive as their inheritance, (*Deu 12:9*) *for as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance which the LORD your God is giving you.*
- **Because of rebellion against God, an entire generation of the children of Israel was prohibited** from entering into that rest in the Promised Land (*Deu 28:65*) *And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul.*
- **The application of this picture is to an individual's spiritual rest in the Lord, which was foretold** in the OT; (*Psa 116:7*) *Return to your rest, O my soul, For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.* (*Isa 28:12*) *To whom He said, "This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest," And, "This is the refreshing"; Yet they would not hear.* At salvation, every believer enters the true rest, the realm of spiritual promise, never again laboring to achieve through personal effort, a righteousness that pleases God. God wanted both kinds of rest for that generation which was delivered from Egypt.

Heb 3:12 Beware, brethren (second warning in Hebrews), **lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;**

- **So the second warning in Hebrews - Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you**, and for us, *an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God!* David said, search me, oh God and know my heart. Try me. Know my thoughts! See if there be some way of wickedness in me. So, we are here warned to take heed, lest there be in us an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.
- **Beware brethren.** This admonition is addressed to those having the same or potential characteristics as the generation which perished in the wilderness without ever seeing the land of promise. They were unbelieving Jewish brethren who were in the company of the "holy brethren" (*Heb 3:1*). They were admonished to believe and be saved before it was too late.
- **Lest there be in any of you an evil heart.** All people are born with such a heart (*Jer 17:9*). In the case of these Hebrews, that evil manifested itself in disbelief of the gospel which moved them in the opposite way from God.
- **Much greater consequences!** Here he is showing that the consequences are much greater than that shown in the Old Testament! There it was just **physical death**, just temporal, because of their unbelief. Here it is **spiritual death**, eternally, for unbelief. Unbelief results in *departing from the living God*, which is the one sin that cannot be forgiven!!

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

- **So, be careful that you don't depart from the living God.** How deceitful sin is! It gives a promise of excitement, a promise of joy, a promise of anything your flesh might long for! It's deceitful because it makes promises of these things, but it doesn't produce! It is deceitful because it hardens our hearts! The end result is that it produces misery and pain and suffering. There may be the moments of excitement, the moments of thrill, but ultimately they will end in abject misery and woe!
- **It's sort of like riding a raft in white water above Niagara Falls.** It's an extremely thrilling experience—white-water rafting. There are few things that excel the excitement, but what serious potential consequences! So, with sin. The only thing is, that sin hides the consequences. It doesn't show you what it will lead to. (*Pro 14:12*) *There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.* Jesus said, (*Mat 7:13*) *"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.*
- **Sin's gate, the Devil's gate, doesn't say, "Path to Destruction"! It says, "Path to Happiness"!** This is living! This is life! And there are bright lights to attract and to draw people to it! But in reality, once you enter into that broad way, you are on the path to destruction because sin has as its very character and nature, that destructive element. Sin destroys!
- **God has not forbidden you, one decent thing!** The only things that God has forbidden you to do, are things that in the end result, have a destructive characteristic to them, things that in the end will destroy you! Sin is destructive. God is constructive! God wants to build you up and make you a better person! Sin will tear you down and destroy you! So God has laid for us the things that are destructive and has told us, don't do that!
- **As through the prophet, (Eze 33:11)** *Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel? That has been the call of God from the ages to the sinner. Turn from your sin and live! I don't have any pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that they will turn and that they will live! And so, the deceitfulness of sin!*
- **Exhort one another daily and that importance of having good, Godly, friends,** that will exhort you when they see you on dangerous turf, when they see you drifting away, that they will come and they will exhort you to Godly living. They will exhort you to a renewed commitment of your life in serving Jesus Christ. Not only do we need to watch out for the hardening of our own hearts but also for believers around us! Note that it is on a *daily* basis!
- **There is a verse of Scripture in the Old Testament relating to King Saul,** when he was first called to be king. (*ISa 10:26*) *And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and valiant men went with him, whose*

hearts God had touched. What great potential is in that verse! When you are surrounded by a company of people whose hearts God had touched. What an encouragement it is, what a strength it is, that we are encouraging one another and exhorting one another in the things of the Lord! So we are told to exhort each other daily, while it is called, today!

Heb 3:14 For we have become partakers of Christ if (maintaining that position) ***we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,***

- **Oh, what a verse of Scripture! We have become partakers of Jesus Christ!** Of course every time we take communion, Jesus said, this cup is New Covenant in My blood, shed for the remission for sins. Every time we eat the bread, He said, this bread is My body, broken for you! *We are partakers of Jesus Christ!* Partakers of His divine nature. To think that Jesus would dwell in me and would dwell in you! That is a thought that we cannot really comprehend or grasp! That the Lord, the Creator of the universe, would dwell within my heart, that I could be a partaker of that divine nature of Jesus Christ, but yet that is exactly what the Scripture teaches. That we have been made partakers of Christ.
- **But again, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.** The importance of maintaining that position, not turning back, not turning away from it. We are partakers, *if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end!* When you first came to trust in Jesus Christ—you held onto that and you didn't turn away from it. Hold it steadfast to the end! The exhortation is similar to that in *Heb 3:6*, repeating the theme of perseverance. We need to exhort one another, daily in these things, to remain faithful to God in difficult times!

Heb 3:15 while it is said: "TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE REBELLION."

FAILURE THROUGH UNBELIEF OF THE WILDERNESS WANDERERS - (Heb 3:16-19)

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.

Heb 3:16 For who having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses?

- **That is, the people, for the most part were not pagan,** but were those who had a history with God, nevertheless most of them provoked God. Joshua and Caleb had honored God with their faith! So God said, because they trusted in Me and believed in Me, they will enter into the land of promise. The people provoked God, but not all. 600,000 men were wrong! Only two. Joshua and Caleb were right! The writer is encouraging them, even though they had a history of unbelief!

Heb 3:17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness?

- **When they had come to Kadesh Barnea, because of their lack of faith, they did not enter in.** They began one of the longest death marches in history. For forty years, it was a death march, averaging about forty deaths per day, until their corpses, carcasses, all fell in the wilderness.

Heb 3:18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?

- **So it was their unbelief, even as it is your unbelief, that keeps you** from entering into the rest that God has for His people today. My belief that somehow, someday, I can please God by my works, rather than resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

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

- That kept them back from the promised land. This is the point of this whole section! An *unbelief* will rob you of the better things in life! *Unbelief* basically leads to spiritual suicide! How is your tendency toward *unbelief*?

SUMMARY:

- **JESUS GREATER THAN MOSES** - (Heb 3:1-6)
- **BE FAITHFUL – Harden not your hearts!** - (Heb 3:7-15)
- **FAILURE THROUGH HARDENING OF HEART AND UNBELIEF OF THE WILDERNESS WANDERERS** - (Heb 3:16-19)
- **Unbelief robs us of the better things in life, leading to spiritual suicide! How is your tendency toward unbelief?**
- **How strong is your belief? What do you strongly believe in?**
- **Let us close with the song, “This I Believe.”**

CLOSING SONG: -

THIS I BELIEVE - (The Creed) (3:43/3:46) Hillsong

*Our Father everlasting The all-creating One God Almighty
Through your Holy Spirit Conceiving Christ the Son Jesus our Saviour
(Refrain) I believe in God our Father I believe in Christ the Son I believe in the Holy Spirit
Our God is three in One I believe in the resurrection That we will rise again
For I believe in the Name of Jesus*

*Our Judge and our Defender Suffered and crucified Forgiveness is in You
Descended into darkness You rose in glorious light Forever seated high (Refrain)*

*I believe in You I believe You rose again I believe that Jesus Christ is Lord
I believe in life eternal I believe in the virgin birth I believe in the saints' communion
And in Your Holy Church I believe in the resurrection When Jesus comes again
For I believe in the Name of Jesus (Refrain)
For I believe in the Name of Jesus.*

CLOSING PRAYER:

Read and meditate over Hebrews Chapter 4!