

Wednesday, April 22, 2020
Hebrews Bible study
Hebrews 3:1-13

Prayer:

John Piper shares:

The people who boast and hope in Jesus Christ are the house of God. Which means that Jesus this very day — not just back in Moses’s day or in his own days on earth — but this very day is our Maker, our Owner, our Ruler, and our Provider.

Jesus is called the “builder” of this house. Moses was not the builder. He was part of the house. So it says, “Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses — as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself.” So Moses, as great as he was in leading the house, and giving God’s word to the house, was still just a part of the house. But Jesus built the house.

So if we boast in Jesus and hope in Jesus, we are the house, and Jesus is our Builder, and Owner and Ruler and Provider. He does not let his house be destroyed or fall into ruin.

Then the writer changes the imagery — from builder and house, to son and servant. “Moses was faithful in all God’s house as a servant . . . but Christ is faithful over God’s house as a son.” So Christ did become part of the house — part of the household — he built. But even so, his honor is far above Moses. Moses was a servant. Christ is the Son. The heir.

And we are part of this household. Hebrews 3:6: “And we are his house, if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.” By all means, let us respect and give Moses his due. But the point of the whole book of Hebrews is: Christ is greater. Greater in every way. He is the builder of the house of God’s people. And he is the Son in the house of God’s people. Let us respect Moses. But let us worship Jesus — our Maker, our brother.

Devotional excerpted from “Jesus: Worthy of More Glory than Moses”¹

2 Sections

3:1-6: Jesus Greater than Moses

3:7-13: Warnings against unbelief

Observations, notes, inferences and applications (inferences and applications are marked by →)

3:1-6: Jesus Greater than Moses

¹ https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/we-are-his-house?utm_campaign=Daily%20Email&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=78844508&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--bX44m92Z9gqJagzaZpbmn-YIcPk5vC_x7OKDtFILEsfnLHKb3-tHjaBLZgImkiVahTo3CcV-z7KS7fQCntIDW7Z9hg&_hsmi=78844508

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Hebrews Bible study

Hebrews 3:1-13

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; ² He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. ³ For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. ⁴ For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. ⁵ Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; ⁶ but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

ESV Study Note:

Heb. 3:1–10:18 *Jesus Is Superior to the Mosaic Law. Having concluded that Jesus is superior to the mediators of the Mosaic law (i.e., angels, [2:2](#)), the author now establishes the superiority of Jesus to Moses himself ([3:1–6](#)), of Jesus to the Aaronic high priesthood ([4:14–7:28](#)), of the new covenant in Jesus' blood to the former covenant ([8:1–13](#)), and of Jesus' death to the Mosaic sacrifices ([9:1–10:18](#)). This exposition also leads to three prolonged exhortations to Christian perseverance ([3:7–4:13](#); [5:11–6:12](#); [10:19–39](#)).*

- the passage is about to make a deduction or conclusion from the previous material.
- The previous section was written about Jesus being our great High Priest. Jesus suffered when tempted and He is able to help us when tempted.
- Recall that the previous two chapters have talked about Jesus being greater than angels.
- The inference in verse 1 is to “consider Jesus.” Or, “fix your eyes on Jesus.” This is because Jesus is greater than angels and also suffered as we suffer.
- “Brothers” is modified by “holy.” The writer calls his audience “holy.”
- →We don’t use the word “holy” much anymore. We don’t preach on holiness. We don’t talk about holiness. Holy means to be set apart for a purpose; so, as Christians Jesus has set us apart for a purpose, for His purpose.
- One of our purposes is mentioned in verse 1: those who share in a Heavenly calling. Christians share in God’s calling.
- Jesus is modified as well. The writer tells us that Jesus is the Apostle and the High Priest. In the previous chapter the writer started to talk about Jesus as the High Priest. Apostle means “one who is sent on a mission with full authority.” Jesus’ mission was completed and He had/has full authority.
- Verse 1 also says “whom we confess.” We confess Christ. This carries the idea of professing allegiance.
- →Our allegiance must be to Christ.
- Verse 2 states that Jesus was faithful to the one who appointed Him. That would mean: God, the Father.
- Verse 2 also starts to get into the Moses idea. Moses was faithful in all “God’s House.”
- →I am thinking “house” is beginning a metaphor. This carries the patriarchal idea of a family with God, the Father as the head.
- Verse 3: Jesus has greater honor than Moses. The verse doesn’t say it that simply. Jesus was “found worthy” of this honor. This means that through His struggles, life and accomplishments He has greater honor.
- →I fear this could be misunderstood as Jesus was God prior to His life. Jesus would have had greater honor regardless of His life on earth; however, I think the writer’s point is that through life He has even greater honor; although, the author doesn’t even mention Jesus’ life on earth. Jesus simply has been found worthy...

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Hebrews Bible study

Hebrews 3:1-13

- The rest of verse 3 is about the builder. Jesus built the house. Jesus built the house of—everything (Col 1:15-20), the church, people, the world. Everything exists by Jesus. Verse 5 specifies this.
 - →I wonder what this meant to the first readers. This is a statement of Deity on Christ. Comparing verse 3 and verse 4 gives Jesus Deity. Verse 3 is that Jesus is the builder and verse 4 is that God is the builder of everything. Powerful Scripture.
 - Verse 5 gives Moses credit. He was faithful as a servant in the house. His writings/life were testimony of the future.
 - →this could have to do with the prophecies about Jesus. Moses' farewell address was also very prophetic about the future of Israel (Deut 32-33).
 - **Moses = a servant in the house**
 - **Jesus= the master of the house**
 - Verse 6 shows the contrast. Jesus was faithful, both verse 5 and verse 6 start out calling someone faithful. Moses=faithful. Jesus=faithful.
 - **But Jesus was a Son "over" God's house. Moses was a servant.**
 - The author tells us that we are His house.
 - →I believe this is a metaphor of the church. The church is Jesus' house.
 - We are only His house if we hold on to the faith. If we hold on to the hope---this hope is Jesus.
 - →This carries on the idea of perseverance (1 Cor 9:24-27; Phil 2:12: work out your salvation...) we must persevere in the faith. Christianity is not just fire insurance. We are to live as Christians in life. There is no "part-time" Christianity.
 - This idea of "hold on" or "hold fast":
κατέχω impf. κατεῖχον; 2aor. κατέσχον; (1) transitively, active; (a) *hold fast, keep in possession, possess* (2C 6.10); figuratively *hold in memory, keep in mind, continue believing* (1C 15.2); (b) *hold back, detain, prevent* (LU 4.42); figuratively *restrain, check* (2TH 2.6); (c) *hold down, suppress*; figuratively *suppress* (RO 1.18); (d) *take (over), occupy* (LU 14.9); (2) transitively, passive; (a) of law *be bound by* (RO 7.6); (b) of disease *be afflicted with* (JN 5.4); (3) intransitively, as a nautical technical term *hold one's course toward, head for, steer for* (AC 27.40)²
- I like the picture of keeping this in memory. We are keeping in memory of our faith in Christ.
- John MacArthur points out that this also has to do with returning to old systems of salvation. For them this means they must beware not to return to the Levitical system.
 - Num 12:7; Heb 3:5: both Scriptures about Moses being faithful in "all His house."
 - 1 Tim 3:15 calls the church the household of God.

The IVP Bible Backgrounds Commentary:

impf. imperfect

2aor. second aorist

²Friberg, T., Friberg, B., & Miller, N. F. (2000). *Vol. 4: Analytical lexicon of the Greek New Testament*. Baker's Greek New Testament library (225). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books.

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Hebrews Bible study

Hebrews 3:1-13

3:1. *The mention of a “heavenly” calling would have appealed to philosophically minded Jewish thinkers like Philo, who regarded earthly reality as only a shadow of heavenly reality. The writer of Hebrews probably presents Jesus as superior to Moses, who was not a high priest. (Samaritan writers saw Moses as an “apostle,” and some Jewish writers saw the high priest as such, although rarely. The author of Hebrews sees Jesus as an “apostle,” a commissioned messenger of the Father, in a way greater than Moses or an earthly high priest. Philo regarded Moses as a high priest of sorts, but the Old Testament and most of Judaism recognized that Aaron filled that role, and the writer of Hebrews probably assumes only the Old Testament perspective on the part of his readers.)³*

3:2. *In verses 2–6 the writer constructs an implicit midrash on Numbers 12:7–8, expounding the familiar text without citing it (cf. also 1 Chron 17:14 LXX). In this passage, God honors Moses above Aaron and Miriam, claiming him to be greater than a normal prophet and noting that “he*

Philo ***Philo.** A first-century Jewish philosopher committed to both Judaism and Greek thought; he lived in Alexandria, Egypt, and held a position of great influence and prestige in the Jewish community there.

Samaritan **Samaritans.** A people of mixed Jewish and Gentile ancestry who claimed descent from Jacob and worshiped the God of Israel, but felt that Mount Gerizim rather than Jerusalem was the holy site for worship. They engaged the Jews in bitter rivalry, often leading to political hostilities in Jesus’ day, sometimes requiring Roman intervention.

apostle ***Apostle.** The term applies literally to a sent or commissioned messenger; in Judaism such messengers acted on the full authority of their sender, to the extent that they accurately represented the sender’s message. The closest Old Testament equivalent to God’s “apostles” in this sense was the prophets, although the apostles seem to have added an overseeing and evangelistic function that prophets (both Old Testament and New Testament) did not always incorporate. Those prophets commissioned with special authority to oversee prophetic awakening (e.g., perhaps Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah) or to judge Israel (e.g., Deborah, Samuel) may provide the best Old Testament models.

Old Testament ***Old Testament.** The common modern term for the Hebrew Bible (including Aramaic portions) as defined by the Jewish and Protestant Christian canons; Jewish readers generally call this the Tenach.

³Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (Heb 3:1). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

midrash **Midrash.** *Jewish commentary or exposition on Scripture.* The forms varied considerably but often included reading a text in the light of other texts, with careful attention to all nuances of details supposedly filled with divine significance. Because such methods of reading Scripture were common, early Christians could employ them in relating their message to other ancient Jewish Bible readers.

LXX **LXX.** The common abbreviation for the Septuagint.

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Hebrews Bible study

Hebrews 3:1-13

is faithful in all my household.” Jesus is thus this special kind of prophet “like Moses,” of whom there were no others (Deut 18:15–18).

3:3–4. In many Jewish traditions Moses was the greatest person in history, and in others he was certainly one of the greatest (i.e., next to Abraham). Jewish and Christian writers used the argument that the builder was greater than what was made (v. 3) to note that the Creator was greater than his creation (as in v. 4). This writer identifies Jesus as the Creator. Ancient writers often developed arguments based on wordplays; this writer plays on two senses of “house”: God’s “household” (3:2) and a building (3:3–4).

3:5. Past symbols could testify to future realities in Jewish apocalyptic literature, the way that earthly “shadows” testified to heavenly realities in writings by Philo and Jews influenced by Platonism. Jewish readers may have recalled the tradition that Moses foresaw and testified of the messianic era (on his special visionary abilities see Num 12:8). A first-century reader could understand Numbers 12:7 the way later rabbis also did: God was owner of the house, but Moses was the manager of the estate, and like many managers, was a servant.

apocalyptic ***Apocalypses, apocalyptic literature.** The broadest use of the term today (usually followed in this commentary) refers to the thought world of literature dealing with the end time, often replete with symbols. The most precise sense of the term refers to a category of ancient Jewish literature growing out of Old Testament prophecy (especially Daniel and parts of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, etc.) in which visions or travels through the heavens reveal divine secrets, usually including many about the future. Nonfuturistic Jewish mysticism was probably a truncated apocalyptic with future expectations played down.

Philo ***Philo.** A first-century Jewish philosopher committed to both Judaism and Greek thought; he lived in Alexandria, Egypt, and held a position of great influence and prestige in the Jewish community there.

messianic ***Messiah.** The rendering of a Hebrew term meaning “anointed one,” equivalent to the original sense of the Greek term translated “Christ.” In the Old Testament, different kinds of people were anointed, and some of the Dead Sea Scrolls mention two main anointed ones in the end time, a king and a priest. But the common expectation reflected in the biblical Psalms and Prophets was that one of David’s royal descendants would take the throne again when God reestablished his kingdom for Israel. Most people believed that God would somehow have to intervene to put down Roman rule so the Messiah’s kingdom could be secure; many seem to have thought this intervention would be accomplished through force of arms. Various messianic figures arose in first-century Palestine, expecting a miraculous intervention from God; all were crushed by the Romans. (Jesus was the only one claimed to have been resurrected; he was also one of the only messiahs claiming Davidic descent, proof of which became difficult for any claimants arising after A.D. 70.)

rabbis ***Rabbi.** Jewish teacher. Sometime after A.D. 70 the term became a technical one for those ordained in the rabbinic movement, which probably consisted primarily of Pharisaic scribes. (To accommodate customary usage this commentary sometimes applies the term to Jewish teachers of the law in general, although such common usage may have technically been later; it also applies the term to the teachings of Jewish legal experts collected in rabbinic literature.)

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Hebrews Bible study

Hebrews 3:1-13

3:6. A firstborn son was naturally heir and lord over the house, acting on his father's authority while the father lived and becoming master when his father died. In the Old Testament, God's household was Israel; here it is the faithful remnant, those who have submitted to God's truth in Christ.⁴

3:7-13: Warnings against unbelief

⁷ Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says,

"Today if you hear His voice,

⁸ *Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me,*

As in the day of trial in the wilderness,

⁹ *Where your fathers tried Me by testing Me,*

And saw My works for forty years.

¹⁰ *"Therefore I was angry with this generation,*

And said, 'They always go astray in their heart,

And they did not know My ways';

¹¹ *As I swore in My wrath,*

'They shall not enter My rest.'"

The Peril of Unbelief

¹² Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

- Now, the writer quotes a few Old Testament passages and gives credit to the Holy Spirit for these.
- Common in the N.T. to say that the Holy Spirit spoke and give an O.T. passage
- Mainly Ps 95:7 (continuing through Psalm 95:11; quoted again in Heb 3:15; 4:7
- Verse 8 continues the quote which is from Psalm 95:8
- This passage is about the unbelief that happened in the Old Testament. Moses sent the spies out and they were scared. They didn't trust in the Lord. Because of that they had to wander in the wilderness for forty years.

Old Testament ***Old Testament.** The common modern term for the Hebrew Bible (including Aramaic portions) as defined by the Jewish and Protestant Christian canons; Jewish readers generally call this the Tenach.

Christ ***Christ.** The Greek equivalent of the Hebrew term for "Messiah." Some Gentile readers, unfamiliar with the Jewish sense of the term, may have taken it merely as Jesus' surname, a usage that became more common over time.

⁴Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (Heb 3:2-6). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Hebrews Bible study

Hebrews 3:1-13

- They didn't enter God's rest because they didn't trust in God.
- Rest in the Old Testament carries the idea of having peace and safety.
- →The author of Hebrews uses this example to motivate them to believe.
- Verse 12: our hearts are called "sinful" and "unbelieving" if we don't "hold fast" or "hold on" to our faith in God (verse 6).
- *The solution to verse 12 is in verse 13. We must encourage one another. We must encourage one another daily, every day. "so that" implies purpose. We encourage one another so that we don't fall into sin. We are not "hardened" by sin. Sin is called deceitfulness.*
- →the devil is deceitful. He will try to trick us. Matthew 4: 1-11 the temptation of Jesus. The devil used Scripture but used it out of context. Gen 4:7 Cain is about to kill Abel and the Lord tells him that sin is crouching at his door and desires to take him over. Strong image!
- In this verse "Today" is capitalized. I think the emphasis is the idea of "this age" until Christ comes again. Definition 5 below.

IVP Bible Backgrounds Commentary:

3:7–19

Rejecting Christ like Rejecting Moses

Here begins an explicit midrash (commentary) on Psalm 95:7–11, which continues until 4:14, where the midrash on Psalm 110:4 begins. Like other Jewish writers, this author gives attention to the details of the text. Israel was to have "rest" in the Promised Land, but the writer points out that this means not only in this age—when the promise was never completely fulfilled (4:8)—but in its completion in the age to come.

midrash **Midrash**. Jewish commentary or exposition on Scripture. The forms varied considerably but often included reading a text in the light of other texts, with careful attention to all nuances of details supposedly filled with divine significance. Because such methods of reading Scripture were common, early Christians could employ them in relating their message to other ancient Jewish Bible readers.

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Hebrews Bible study

Hebrews 3:1-13

3:7. Ancient Judaism most often associated the “Holy Spirit” with prophecy, and the rabbis and some others particularly associated this prophetic Spirit with the inspiration of Scripture.

3:8–11. The author cites Psalm 95:7–11, a text that later became familiar through its regular use in the synagogue liturgy, but that would have been already known to most first-century Jews who recited the Psalms. This psalm refers to Israel’s rebellion in the wilderness and calls on its hearers not to be like their ancestors. Jewish teachers debated whether the wilderness generation might have inherited the life of the world to come, even though they did not enter the Promised Land; the rabbis believed that God’s people could atone for their sins in this age by suffering. But the psalmist and the writer of Hebrews seem to have agreed that they also did not enter the world to come.⁵

ESV Study Note:

Heb. 3:12–13 Drawing on several key words in [Psalm 95](#), Hebrews warns against allowing the unbelief of a **hardened**, sinful **heart** to cause one to **fall away** (Gk. *apostēnai*, “turn away from, forsake, apostatize from”; cf. [Luke 8:13](#); [1 Tim. 4:1](#)). His counter to this danger is both to encourage personal commitment (**take care**) and to call on the church to walk together in mutual encouragement (**exhort one another**). **as long as it is called “today.”** From the perspective of God's saving plans for world history, the church

Holy ***Holy Spirit**. Although used only twice in the Old Testament (Ps 51, Is 63), this term became a standard title for the Spirit of God in New Testament times. Many people believed that the Spirit had been quenched since the completion of the Old Testament and that prophecy continued only in muted form; but the Old Testament had promised an outpouring of the Spirit in the end, when the Messiah would come. Jewish people especially associated the Spirit with prophecy and divine illumination or insight, and many also (especially the Essenes) associated it with God purifying his people in the end time. The New Testament includes both uses, although it also speaks of the Spirit as a person like the Father and Son (especially in John), which Judaism did not do.

prophecy **Prophecy**. Speaking forth God’s message by his inspiration. It can, but need not, involve prediction. Although “prophet” technically refers to anyone who prophesies, Judaism generally reserved this title for God’s spokespeople of the distant past.

rabbis ***Rabbi**. Jewish teacher. Sometime after A.D. 70 the term became a technical one for those ordained in the rabbinic movement, which probably consisted primarily of Pharisaic scribes. (To accommodate customary usage this commentary sometimes applies the term to Jewish teachers of the law in general, although such common usage may have technically been later; it also applies the term to the teachings of Jewish legal experts collected in rabbinic literature.)

atone **Atone, atonement**. The satisfaction of God’s anger by venting it on a substitute instead of on the guilty person. Laying down one’s life for another was highly regarded in Greek culture; some elements in Judaism came to emphasize that martyrs paid the price for others. But the concept especially derives from one kind of Old Testament sacrifice, in which the death of a sacrifice appeases God’s anger so the sinner can be forgiven.

⁵Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (Heb 3:6-8). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Hebrews Bible study

Hebrews 3:1-13

lives in a special moment in which the Lord has come, spoken, and gone, and believers await his return—faith is called for in this hour, and mutual exhortation sustains and strengthens faith.