

Studies in Hebrews

Lesson IV

Text: Hebrews 3:1-19 (NIV)

1 Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. **2** He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. **3** Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. **4** For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.

5 Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. **6** But 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.

7 So, as the 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.'"^[a]

12 See 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, if you hear his voice, do not harden your heart as you did in the rebellion."^[b]

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

Footnotes:

a. Psalm 95:7-11

b. Psalm 95:7,8

c. Or disbelieved

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. What do all Christians have in common, regardless of background, according to verse 1?
2. Why does the writer describe Jesus as “the Apostle and High Priest of our confession”? (vs. 1b, NKJV)
3. In previous chapters, Jesus has been compared and contrasted with the angels. In what way is Jesus like Moses? (vs. 2) How is Jesus greater? (vv. 3,)
4. Christians advance what particular argument for the existence of God, based on the principle of verse 4?
5. What is “God’s house” (vs. 5) made up of? (vs. 6b)
6. Moses was a _____ of God’s house, but Jesus is the _____ of God’s house. (vv. 5-6) What point is the writer trying to make to Christians of Hebrew descent?
7. A genuine Christian will hold on firmly to what? (vv. 6c, 14)
8. Verses 7-9 calls to mind what story from Israel history? (cf. 16-18)
9. Why was that generation not allowed to enter God’s “rest” (vv. 10-11)
10. What is one way of preventing a “sinful, unbelieving heart” (vs. 12) in the house of God? (vs. 13)
11. When is the best timing to do the will of God? (vv. 13, 15)
12. Why were some not able to enter the Promised Land? (vs. 19)