

1. Various gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 2. The falseness of the devil.
 3. Coming of Christ.
20. Jesus did not take upon Himself the nature of an angel:
1. But the nature of the seed of Abraham.
 2. But great glory on earth.
 3. But the nature of men to come.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWO

This chapter is the logical conclusion of the thought of God's final message which is presented in Chapter One. Since God has spoken in His Son, we ought to heed the message. Two reasons are given to show why we should pay attention to it.

First, disobedience to the Word spoken through angels was punished. That being so, how could one who disregarded the Word spoken through the Lord hope to escape punishment? Second, the Christian age is under the dominion of the Son, not angels. A quotation from the eighth Psalm, which tells of the dominion over creation which God gave to Adam, is applied to Jesus in support of this claim.

Jesus became identified with man through His suffering, that He might "taste death for all" and be able to call them brethren whom He saved. In His death, He destroyed the power of the devil and brought freedom to those in bondage to sin. He was made like His brethren and became for them a faithful High Priest, providing a covering for the sins of the people.

III. *He is superior to Moses.* 3:1-4:13

A. *The comparison of Jesus and Moses with respect to greatness and glory.* 3:1-6

Text

3:1-6

1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus; 2 who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also was Moses in all his house. 3 For He hath been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by so much as he that built the house hath more honor than the house.

4 For every house is builded by some one; but He that 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 were afterward to be spoken; 6 but Christ as a Son, over His house; Whose house are we, if we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end.

Paraphrase

1 Since the author of the gospel is the Son of God, I exhort you, holy brethren, who by the preaching of the gospel (Chap. 2:3) are partakers of the calling to enter into the heavenly country, (Eph. 1:18) to consider attentively the dignity and authority of the Lawgiver and High-priest of our religion, Christ Jesus;

2 Who, in forming the gospel church, was faithful to God Who appointed Him His Apostle or Lawgiver, even as Moses also was faithful in forming all the parts of the Jewish church, God's house at that time.

3 But although the faithfulness of Jesus was not greater than that of Moses, He was counted by God worthy of more power than Moses, in as much as he who hath formed the services of the church, not for his own benefit, but for the benefit of others, is a more honourable person than any member of the church; such as Moses was, who needed the services of the Jewish church equally with the people.

4 Besides, every religious society is formed by some one: But He who hath formed all righteous communities and religious societies, is God; Who having delegated His authority to His Son, hath made Him Lord of all.

5 Now Moses indeed was faithful in forming all the parts of the Jewish church, as a servant who acted according to the directions which he received from God, without deviating from them in the least; because the Jewish church was designed for a testimony of the things which were afterwards to be spoken by Christ and His apostles.

6 But Christ, in erecting the gospel church, was faithful as a Son set over His Father's house as its Lawgiver: of Whose house we who believe, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, are members, if indeed we hold fast the bold glorying in the hope of resurrection to eternal life through Christ firm to the end, which we professed at our baptism.

*Comment**Wherefore holy brethren*

They are brethren, not by race or nationality, but by belief.

- a. It is impossible to have brotherhood when the fundamentals of faith are denied.
- b. International brotherhood will not be attained until men are brothers in Christ.

The verse speaks of "holy" brethren.

- a. In what way are we holy?
 1. We are made holy by sanctification at our baptism when we bury the old man of sin and rise to walk in newness of life.
 2. We are holy if we walk in holiness.
- b. None will see God unless holiness is present. cf. Eph. 5:5; Heb. 12:14.
- c. Church people need to live up to the name, "holy brethren".

partakers of a heavenly calling

God's heavenly, or holy, calling comes through the Word:

- a. Heavenly agencies sometimes are used to bring preacher and convert together, but the call comes through preaching.
 1. Peter and the household of Cornelius were brought together, but the Word called Cornelius and his household to salvation.
 2. Paul was brought to the preacher by a heavenly instrumentality, but he was *told* what to do to be saved. Acts 9:6.
- b. This call is to a unique life:
 1. I Cor. 1:2: " — called to be saints."
 2. II Thess. 2:14: " — called . . . to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 3. Gal. 5:13: " — called for freedom."
 4. Rom. 1:6: " — called to be Jesus Christ's."

consider the Apostle

Singular attention is now to be given to Jesus Christ for several reasons:

- a. He was faithful. 3:2.
- b. He was appointed. 3:2.
- c. He was counted of more glory than Moses. 3:3.
- d. He was a Son over His house. 3:6.

Consider the apostleship of Jesus:

- a. The word, "apostle" means, "one sent". Jesus claimed to have been sent:
 1. Luke 4:43: "I must preach . . . for therefore was I sent."
 2. Luke 20:9-16: He was the Son in the parable of the husbandman.
- b. To whom was He sent?
 1. Strictly speaking, to the Jews:
 - a) Matt. 15:24: " — unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
 - b) John 1:11: "He came unto His own."
 2. Purposefully speaking, to all men:
 - a) I John 4:14: " — to be the Saviour of the world."
 - b) John 3:16: " — the world."

and High Priest

The priestly system is more easily understood by some than by others:

- a. The Jews had a priestly system. See Lev. 16.
- b. Most heathen groups have a priestly system, although it is a very corrupt one.
The Christian's High Priest is Christ, Who is perfect, without sin and at the right hand of God.

of our confession

The word "confession" is translated "profession" in the King James version:

- a. It is the Greek word, *homologia*, used in several other places:
 1. I Tim. 6:12: "Profession" in K.J.; "confession" in A.S.
 2. II Cor. 9:13: "Profession" in K.J.; "confession" in A.S.
 3. Heb. 4:14: "Profession" in K.J.; "confession" in A.S.
 4. Heb. 10:23: "Profession" in K.J.; "confession" in A.S.
- b. We do confess our faith in a person:
 1. Matt. 10:32.
 2. Rom. 10:9-10.
- c. The confession of our faith is a profession; we confess faith, which obligates us to a way of life:
The idea of profession is challenged by Newell. (p. 80)
 - a. He seeks to emphasize that it is a confession in a person, and not a way of life.
 - b. In reality, he is correct. We do confess faith, but the idea of profession is too often left out, so people are baptized and come out "wet sinners."

even Jesus

What are we to confess about Jesus?

- a. Matt. 16:13-18: "The Christ, the Son of the Living God."
- b. I John 4:15: "Jesus is the Son of God."

Some confess Him to be only a good, moral martyr.

What about those who will not confess the truth?

- a. II John 7: They are deceivers, and the anti-Christ.
- b. I John 2:22: They are liars.

who was faithful

The faithfulness of Jesus stands out:

- a. He was faithful to God in temptation.
- b. He was faithful to God in the miracles, giving God the glory.
- c. He was faithful in God's work, His Father's business.
Luke 2:49; Heb. 3:2.
- d. He was faithful even in death. Matt. 26:42; John 17:4; 19:30. We may believe that He is now faithful in being our High Priest.

to Him that appointed Him

This word, "appointed", is also translated "advanced" or "made":

- a. Milligan suggests that the word refers not to origin, nor to begetting, but to task.
1. His example is I Samuel 12:6: "The Lord advanced Moses and Aaron."
2. Christ was appointed to a task. John 9:4; Heb. 12:2; 3:2.
3. It was a timely appointment.
4. Jesus came willingly to His appointment.

There are some appointments that should concern men:

- a. A day to repent, Acts 17:30-31.
- b. A day to die, Heb. 9:27.

as also was Moses in his house

Moses was a faithful person:

- a. Heb. 11:25: He chose ill treatment with the people of God.
- b. Exodus is a picture of wayward, whimpering Israel and faithful Moses:
 1. They murmured, but Moses prayed.
 2. They worshipped the golden calf, but Moses worshipped God.

- c. Numbers 12:7 is a commendation of the faithful one.
 Israel was the house of God, not the house of Moses:
- Exodus 25:8: "Let them make me a sanctuary."
 - Exodus 29:45: "I will dwell among the children of Israel."

more glory than Moses in all his house

Moses was a glorious person:

- He represents one division of the Old Testament. Luke 24:44.
- He was selected to be transfigured with Jesus. Matt. 17.
- Moses' glory vanished. Matt. 17:5-6.
 What is meant by "glory"?

 - It means fame, honor, brightness, splendor, praise.
 - Jesus is the most famous person in the world. Washington and Lincoln, are national heroes, but Jesus is international.
 What can be said about Jesus' glory, pertaining to time?

 - He had some glory on earth:
 - John 17:4: "I have glorified Thee."
 - John 7:37-39: "Jesus was not yet glorified."
 - He received glory after His earthly mission:
 - Acts 2:36: "God hath made Him both Lord and Christ."
 - I Peter 1:21: "God raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory."
 - The church is now glorifying Him: Eph. 3:21.
 - His glory is yet to come:
 - Matt. 16:27: He came in the glory of His Father.
 - I Thess. 4:13-18.

more honor than the house:

Does this imply that Jesus built the house of Israel?

- "Yes," says Milligan. (p. 115)
- Christ may be regarded as the Builder and Furnisher of the whole house of Israel, of which Moses himself was a member. Christ is eternal; He was the rock from which Israel drank, so this figure is reasonable.

He that buildeth all things is God

The purpose of this verse is to establish the deity of Jesus. Everything that is done should be ascribed to God.

I Cor. 3:6: "Apollos watered, but God giveth the increase."

Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant

Several verses establish Moses' faithfulness:

- a. It is established in Heb. 11:24-30.
- b. He was faithful in building the Tabernacle according to the pattern. Ex. 25:40.
- c. Numbers 12:7: "— faithful in all my house."
God's house is referred to: cf. Numbers 12:7. "He is faithful in all my house."
Moses was a servant: Numbers 12:8.

afterward to be spoken

In this sense, Moses was speaking as a prophet and giving an example of faithfulness:

- a. He was a herald of a doctrine to be published later.
- b. He was a forerunner of a coming prophet. Deut. 18:15.
- c. His example is for all: I Cor. 10:11: "These things happened . . . by way of example."

but Christ as a Son over his house

Moses was a servant, but Christ was a Son in God's house:

- a. This is only one of the many figures applied to Jesus:
 1. Matt. 16:13-18: He is the Builder.
 2. I Pet. 2:4-6: He is Cornerstone.
 3. Heb. 3:6: Son in the house.
 4. Heb. 10:21: High priest over the house of God.
- b. The word "own" appears in the King James version: ". . . over His own house."
1. Milligan challenges this translation. "In this figure it is not His own house, but the house of God."

The expression "house of Christ" never appears, but always the "house of God."

- a. Eph. 2:19: "Household of God."
- b. I Tim. 3:15: "— in the house of God."
- c. Heb. 10:21: "— over the house of God."
- d. I Pet. 4:17: "— judgment begins at the house of God."
- e. Eph. 2:22: "— in whom ye are builders together."
- f. I Pet. 2:7: "— head of the corner."

Whose house are we

The former house was presided over by the High Priest and by Moses:

- a. It was transitory and typical, a shadow of something better to come.
- b. Now we are the glorious eternal house of God.
It is a joy to be a part of a house that cannot be destroyed:
- a. Matt. 16:13-18: The gates of Hades cannot prevail against it.
- b. Matt. 7:24-27: Storms of life will not destroy it.

if we hold fast our boldness

Faithfulness is an absolute essential to salvation, for the book of Hebrews eliminates the doctrine of "once in grace, always in grace."

- a. We are of the household *if* we "hold fast".
- b. The implication is that when we turn loose, we are no longer in the house of God.
- c. Many scriptures speak similiarly:
 - 1. Matt. 10:22: " — endureth."
 - 2. Luke 9:62: " — putteth his hand to the plow."
 - 3. Rev. 2:10: " — faithful unto death."
 - 4. Heb. 3:14: " — if we hold fast."
 - 5. Heb. 6:5-6: " — fall away."

The word "boldness" is also translated "confidence":

- a. It has the idea of freeness and boldness of speech.
- b. "It means an inward state of full and undisturbed confidence."
(Milligan.)

and the glorying of our hope

It is also translated, "the rejoicing of hope":

- a. This is a contrast to crying, complaining Israel.
- b. Hope refers to the object of our faith.
 - 1. It is in the realm of the unseen.
Rom. 8:24: "Hope that is seen is not hope."
 - 2. We hope for the glorious body, the new heaven and the new earth.

firm unto the end

Our task is to complete a course that we have started:

- a. God will save us because of our effort, not in spite of it.
- b. A person cannot become a willful weakling and expect God to save him.

Study Questions

327. What is the great theme of Chapter Three?
328. What is it that makes men brethren?
329. Can we be called brothers to those who deny the fundamentals of brotherhood?
330. In what way are we made holy?
331. What is the descriptive word used concerning brethren? Is it important? cf. Eph. 5:5; Heb. 12:14.
332. Do we live up to the term?
333. Of what are we partakers?
334. How is it a "heavenly" calling?
335. What heavenly agencies are used?
336. What agencies were used in the life of Peter? Paul?
337. Name some things related to our call concerning our character, relationship, etc.
338. Who is the apostle to be considered?
339. How can He be called an apostle? cf. Luke 4:43.
340. Name the various things said about Jesus in this verse.
341. To whom was Jesus sent primarily?
342. Did He claim to be sent to all men? cf. I John 4:14.
343. Does the Christian have a priest?
344. Is the idea developed in this verse? In the book of Hebrews?
345. How is Jesus our High Priest?
346. How often does He sacrifice?
347. What can be said about His sympathy?
348. What can be said about His character?
349. What is meant by the expression, "of our confession"?
350. What is the alternate word used for "confession" in the King James version?
351. Is our confession of faith in Christ also a pledge of profession?
352. What do we confess?
353. What do we confess about Him?
354. What does the scripture declare concerning those who will not confess that He is the Christ? cf. II John 7; I John 2:22.
355. Discuss the faithfulness of Christ throughout His life on earth. cf. Luke 2:49; Heb. 12:2.
356. If Christ was faithful on earth, what may we suppose about Him now?

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

357. To whom was He faithful?
358. What does the word "appointed" mean?
359. Is the word "advanced" a good translation?
360. Does the word "made" carry the idea?
361. What appointment is referred to in verse 2?
362. Who appointed who? To what was He appointed?
363. Did Jesus approach the appointment gladly?
364. What appointments has God made for the sinner?
365. Does the Christian have any appointments?
366. Discuss Jesus' faithfulness on the cross. Matt. 26:42.
367. Discuss Moses' faithfulness in the building of the Tabernacle.
368. Compare the waywardness of Israel with the faithfulness of Moses.
369. Discuss the house referred to here.
370. Is it God's house or Moses' house?
371. Was the Tabernacle, or sanctuary, ever spoken of as belonging to Moses?
372. Does the name of God appear in the original manuscript, as the new version would lead you to believe?
373. Tell of the glory of Moses in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.
374. What does "glory" mean?
375. What glory had Jesus on earth?
376. What glory is ascribed to Christ in Acts; in the Epistles; in Revelation?
377. Should the church glorify Christ? cf. Eph. 3:21.
378. Does verse 5 infer that Moses did not build the house?
379. Does verse 6 infer that Jesus built the house of Israel?
380. What scriptures teach Christ's presence during the wilderness journey?
381. Should everything be ascribed to God?
382. Does everything that is made necessitate a builder?
383. Is there room for evolution in this verse?
384. Check different versions. Do they translate it (v.6) "His house", or "God's house"?
385. Consult verses that speak of Moses' faithfulness. cf. Ex. 25:40; Numbers 12:7, 8.
386. Whose house is spoken of in Numbers 12:8?
387. What relationship did Moses have to the house?
388. What is meant by "afterward to be spoken"?

389. Was Moses speaking a prophecy through his life or by an oral message?
390. Were these Old Testament experiences an example to us? cf. I Cor. 10:11.
391. If Moses was a servant, what was Christ in God's house?
392. Was Christ *in* the house or *over* it?
393. Is the idea of the faithfulness of Christ inferred here?
394. Is the word "own" that appears in the King James version a problem of exegesis? Whose house would it be if the word "own" is allowed?
395. Do we have the expression, "house of Christ", in the New Testament?
396. Compare the verses that speak of the house of God. Eph. 2:19; I Tim. 3:15; Heb. 10:21; I Peter 4:17.
397. Who is in the house of God? Do Christians comprise it?
398. What qualification is made in this verse?
399. If we turn loose of our boldness, can we be of the house of God?
400. Is this true, "once in grace, always in grace"?
401. What are we to hold to?
402. What will keep us in God's house?
403. Name some other scriptures which speak of man's need for faithfulness.
404. What is "boldness"? What other word could be used.
405. How do we hold fast to our boldness?
406. What does the word "glorying" mean?
407. How do we glory in hope?
408. Is there room for complaint when our hope is alive?
409. What is a firm hope? How does hope differ from faith?
410. How long is our hope to be firm?
411. What "end" is meant?
- B. *Warnings and exhortations with respect to pilgrimage.* 3:7-19
1. *Israel's pilgrimage:* 3:7-11

Text

3:7-11

7 Wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith,
 Today if ye shall hear His voice,
 8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation,
 Like as in the day of the trial in the wilderness,

9 Where your fathers tried Me by proving Me,
 And saw My works forty years.
 10 Wherefore I was displeased with this generation,
 And said, They do always err in their heart:
 But they did not know My ways;
 11 As I sware in My wrath,
 They shall not enter into My rest.

Paraphrase

7 Since the Son is the Father's faithful Apostle or Lawgiver in His church, I, by commission from Him, say to you, as said the Holy Ghost to the Jews by David, To-day when ye shall hear God's voice by His Son, commanding you to enter into the rest of heaven,

8 Be not faithless and obstinate as your fathers were in the bitter provocation at Kadesh, where they refused to go into Canaan, in the day of temptation in the wilderness.

9 Where your fathers, from the time of their departure out of Egypt until they arrived at Canaan, tempted Me by their disobedience, and proved Me by insolently demanding proofs of My faithfulness and power, notwithstanding they saw my miracles forty years. See Deut. 9:7.

10 Wherefore I was exceedingly displeased with that generation which I had brought out of Egypt, and said, They always err, not from ignorance, but from perverseness of disposition; and they have utterly disliked My method of dealing with them.

11 So, to punish them for their unbelief, I sware in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest in Canaan.

Comment

Wherefore even as the Holy Spirit saith

This is a quotation from Psalm 95:7.

- a. He attributes these words to the Holy Spirit, thus establishing the inspiration of the scriptures.
- b. Men who question the inspiration of the Bible have hundreds of such verses of which to dispose.

Harden not your hearts

This suggests immediate action in favor of God, not against Him.

- a. This subject is emphasized all through the New Testament:

1. John 9:4: " — while it it day."
2. Acts 22:16: "Now why tarriest thou?"
3. Rom. 13:11: " — awake out of sleep."
4. Acts 16:33: " — same hour."

Man is able to receive the word, but has the choice of hardening his heart.

as in the day of provocation

There were two reasons why the Jews needed to be reminded:

- a. They were foolishly inflated on account of the glory of their race:
 1. They needed to be reminded of their own sinfulness.
 2. Their feeling of superiority blinded them to the reality of their condition.
- b. They needed to know that falling away was dangerous. To what does the provocation refer?
 - a. Two possibilities:
 1. Numbers, chapters thirteen and fourteen: Spies bring back a report: "We are as grasshoppers." (13:33)
"And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron and the whole congregation said unto them, Would that we had died in the land of Egypt or would that we had died in the wilderness." (14:2)
 2. Exodus 17 may be referred to:
 - a) Here the Israelites cried against Moses and complained. (See 17:1-7)
 - b) Moses gave the places names. (17:7)
 1. *Massah* — proving — tempting.
 2. *Meribah* — chiding — strife.
 - b. We do not know to which of the two places David referred.

Like as in the day of the trial in the wilderness

The term "wilderness" refers to any waste land, and this was the type of country in which the Jews traveled. They were led through the wilderness because:

- a. It was less likely to lead to war.
- b. It gave God a chance to prove His power and love.

where your fathers tried Me by proving Me

God brought them gifts — water, manna and quails for food, the cloud and the pillar of fire for guidance and pro-

tection — yet they asked, "Where is His power?"

It increased their guilt, when in spite of so many evidences of His power they made so little progress.

Trying by proving illustrated:

- a. Newell — A boy says, "Father has forbidden me to do this and says I will be punished. I do not believe it. I will do what he said not to do and see if he will."
- b. The action of Israel was a trying thing upon the patience of God; yet it also proved that He meant every word spoken.

and saw My works forty years

Not once or for a short time — but for forty years.

History of their waywardness:

- a. First, in the wilderness of sin — when they murmured for bread and God gave them manna. Exodus 16:4.
- b. Second — they murmured because of lack of water. Ex. 17:2-9. This place is called Massah and Meribah.
- c. Third — During the third year after their departure from Egypt, they provoked God at Sinai by making the golden calf. Ex. 32:10.
- d. Fourth — At Taberah (Numbers 11:3) they murmured for want of flesh, and were smitten with a plague, v. 33. Many were buried here. v. 34.
- e. Kadesh — Caleb and Joshua as spies are rejected.
 1. Num. 14:30: God says all shall die but Caleb and Joshua.
 2. Deut. 1:34-35: God ordered them to turn into the wilderness, where they wandered 38 years. Deut. 2:14.
 - f. Wilderness near Mt. Hor. Num. 21:4-5. No bread or water. God sent serpents, and finally a brazen serpent was erected to save them.
 3. Newell says it refers to the eleven-day journey from Horeb by way of Mt. Sinai unto Kadesh Barnea that because of unfaithfulness took forty years.

Wherefore I was displeased with this generation

"Generation" means race, or men of one age.

Here was God, their Father, grieved at their refusal to follow His leading.

and said, They do always err in their heart

"Err" means to wander, go astray.

Their consistent errors must have brought the longsuffering Father to the breaking point.

but they did know My ways

They were as ignorant of God as they were of the paths of the desert.

They seemed senseless, unable to understand the ways of God.

- a. This was not an excuse, but an accusation.
- b. This condition did not save them, but destroyed them.

as I swear in my wrath

“Swear” refers to what God spoke.

Numbers 14:30-35: God here stated they shall not enter, because they listened to the report of the ten spies.

“Wrath” refers to His condemnation;

- a. God has a right to be wrathful.
 1. A lack of anger is a weakness.
 2. Tolerance is to be desired above intolerance, but it can also become a vice rather than a virtue.
- b. God has wrath when His longsuffering comes to an end.
- c. It is not good for man to reap and not sow.
 1. It is not good for man to sow wickedness, and not reap the same.
 2. God has made a consistent world for us.
- d. God used them as an example unto us.
 1. I Cor. 10:11-12: “— happened by way of example.”

They shall not enter into My rest

Num. 14:20 is the place where God reached this decision.

The generation that showed a lack of faith was not given the privilege to enter Canaan.

Study Questions

412. Where is the quotation from the Holy Spirit found?
413. Does this establish the inspiration of the scriptures?
414. Who can harden or soften hearts in this verse?
415. Can you name other scriptures that place the responsibility upon man? cf. Rom. 13:11.
416. What day of provocation is referred to, Pharaoh's or Israel's?
417. Is it a certain time, or the whole exodus?

418. Name some instances of provocation. cf. Numbers 13:32; Exodus 17:1-7.
419. Could it be at Massah and Meribah alone?
420. What is meant by "trial in the wilderness"?
421. What is a "wilderness" in the scriptures?
422. Why did the Israelites go into the wilderness?
423. Who are the "fathers" referred to here?
424. How did they try God?
425. What is meant by "try"?
426. What did the trial prove concerning God?
427. How long did they try God?
428. What is meant by "works"?
429. Tell of the Israelites' provocation of God that brought about works of God.
430. What is meant by "generation"?
431. What did God declare concerning that generation?
432. What is meant by "err"?
433. Where was the seat of their trouble?
434. Why didn't they know God's ways?
435. Is ignorance a sufficient excuse for disobedience?
436. What is meant by "swear"?
437. What is the wrath of God — anger, or condemnation?
438. Is wrath a good quality or a bad one?
439. Would it be good for man if God were a weakling?
440. Would it be good for man not to reap what he sows?
441. Where and when did this swearing take place? cf. Numbers 14:23.
2. *Our pilgrimage* — 3:12-19.

Text

3:12-19

12 Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God: 13 but exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called To-day; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin: 14 for we are become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end: 15 while it is said,

To-day if ye shall hear His voice,
Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

16 For who, when they heard, did provoke? nay, did not all they that came out of Egypt by Moses?

17 And with whom was He displeased forty years? was it not with them that sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that were disobedient?

19 And we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief.

Paraphrase

12 Brethren, this example of sin and punishment should make you take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, by departing from the living God; which ye will do, if ye reject the gospel, or renounce it after having embraced it.

13 Instead of exhorting one another, after the example of your fathers, to depart from the living God, exhort one another every day to obey Christ, while He calls you today to enter into the rest of heaven, lest any of you should be hardened against his call, through the deceitful suggestions of an unbelieving, timorous, sinful disposition, which magnifies the hardship of suffering for the gospel.

14 For we are partakers of the blessings of Christ's house, the gospel church, only if we hold fast the faith we have begun to exercise on Him as our Saviour (Chap. 5:9) firm unto the end of our lives.

15 Perseverance in faith and obedience is requisite to your enjoying the privileges of Christ's house; as ye may know by the saying of the Holy Ghost to the Israelites in David's days, Today, when ye shall hear His voice commanding you to enter into His rest, harden not your hearts as your fathers did in the bitter provocation.

16 For many, when they heard the command to enter into Canaan, bitterly provoked God by their disobedience, and were excluded from His rest in Canaan. However, not all who went out of Egypt with Moses provoked God by their rebellion, and were so punished.

17 But, to show you the infectious nature of disobedience, I ask you with whom was God displeased forty years? was it not with them who rebelled, (Josh. 5:6), even all the men of war who were numbered, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

18 Farther, to make you sensible of the evil of disobedience,

to whom did God swear that they should not enter into His rest, but to them who, notwithstanding they had seen God's miracles, did not believe He was able to bring them into Canaan, and absolutely refused to enter?

19 Thus we see that the Israelites could not fight their way into Canaan, because they did not believe the promises of God.

Comment

Take heed, brethren

"Profit by their mistake," the author is saying.

Society makes a fool of itself every generation:

- a. One generation seemingly has to try everything for itself rather than to be warned.
- b. Foolish is the man who will not learn from others.

lest haply

"Perhaps", or "lest there be", is the meaning of this expression.

There is a likelihood of falling away unless a person is careful.

there shall be in any one of you

This is personal — "any one of you".

We need warning, and we have it.

- a. I Cor. 10:12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
- b. I Cor. 9:27: "— I buffet my body."
- c. I Cor. 10:5, 10.
- d. II Peter 2:4.
- e. II Peter 2:7.
- f. Jude 5: "Now I desire to put you in remembrance, though ye know all things once for all, that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not."

an evil heart of unbelief

Sin will cause people to disbelieve.

The so-called "good moral man" does not exist:

- a. Unbelief is evil — sufficient to keep one out of God's rest.
- b. Mark 16:16: "He that disbelieveth shall be condemned."
The devil seems to sow doubt.

- a. To Eve, Gen. 3:4-5: "Ye shall not surely die — ye shall be as God."
- b. To Jesus. "If," Matt. 4.
 - 1. Matt. 4:3: "If thou art the Son of God command that these stones become bread."
 - 2. 4:5, 6; On pinnacle of temple: "If thou are the Son of God, cast Thyself down."

in falling away from the Living God

You can not fall away unless you were there.

Some say: "You never had it if you lost it."

The Jews fell away after believing and being saved.

This falling away is falling from fellowship, and results in falling into the hands of God.

Heb. 10:31: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

but exhort

To "exhort" is to give a pep talk:

- a. We should not let another's spiritual enthusiasm freeze up.
- b. This young Timothy was told to do.
I Tim. 6:2: "These things teach and *exhort*."
- c. Be careful lest you get into a rut of browbeating. People need feeding as well as rebuking. "Exhort" means to encourage.

one another day by day

We have a responsibility to one another daily:

- a. We should have a constant interest in our brethren.
- b. A day missed in encouragement may result in an eternity lost.

so long as it is called To-day

It includes every time that God addresses us.

Every time that God's sacred mouth speaks, remember, "To-day if ye shall hear His voice."

Jesus warned about the passing of the day:

- a. John 12:35: "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you."
- b. John 9:4: "The night cometh when no man can work."
A seasonable time will not always last.

lest any one of you

This makes it broad enough to include all:

- a. I Cor. 10:12: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
- b. Overconfidence in any endeavor is dangerous.

be hardened

He is talking to Christian people, yet some say, "once saved, always saved."

Sin makes one tough, calloused:

- a. Saul, a wonderful specimen of mankind, became hardened against David.
- b. Judas was trained among the other disciples, yet his heart was hardened against Jesus.

by the deceitfulness of sin

Sin is seductive:

- a. Col. 2:8: "—maketh spoil of you through . . . vain deceit."
- b. Matt. 13:22: "—deceitfulness of riches."

The sin here of primary concern, is apostasy.

Ways to be deceived:

- a. Deceive self. I Cor. 3:18; Gal. 6:3; I John 1:8; James 1:22.
- b. Fair speeches deceive the simple. Rom. 16:18.
- c. Deceitfulness of riches. Matt. 13:22.
- d. False teachers. Matt. 24:24: "—lead astray . . . the elect."
- e. Deceived by the devil. Rev. 12:9: "Satan, the deceiver of the whole world."

for we are become partakers

It is also translated, "made partakers".

- a. We become partakers in faithfulness to our call.
- b. We cannot expect a faithful Christ to save an unfaithful person.

partakers of Christ

Christ partook of man's flesh that man might partake of Him.

Being a partaker entitles one to the benefits:

- a. It has the idea of sharing in, participating with.
- b. The true calling of all true believers is meant here.

firm unto the end

"As long as life shall last" must be the determination of the child of God:

- a. There is no time for relaxation, compromise, or half-heartedness.
- b. "Hold fast" is the exhortation in Rev. 3:11.
We do not know when the "end" will be, so we must be firm always.

Today if ye shall hear His voice

The warning from Psalm 95:7 is quoted:

- a. It suggests the urgency of action, the very day one hears.
- b. We have only one chance. Heb, 9:27.
No purgatory, or second chance, is taught in this book.

For who when they heard did provoke?

This passage is translated differently:

- a. The King James version says: "For some, when they had heard . . ."
- b. It also is translated: "Who were those hearers who did bitterly provoke."
How does the difference arise?
 - a. The early manuscripts did not have punctuation or accent marks.
 - b. In 240 B.C., Aristophanes introduced an imperfect system for the benefit of scholars and teachers.
 - c. In the fifth century, Christian writers began to use accents.
 - d. Not until the tenth century did accents have a universal usage.
 - e. The problem arises in the word "who". Either:
 - 1. "Who" is an interrogative and requires a question mark at the end of the sentence. Or,
 - 2. "Who" is an inadequate pronoun equivalent to "some" and requires a period at the end of the sentence.
The word "some" suggests that some did not provoke, but this group was very small:
 - a. Joshua and Caleb were two of the hundreds of thousands, so even the word "all" in this verse is justified.
 - b. The lesson to be gained is to avoid being like the Israelites.

may did not all they that came out of Egypt by Moses

The King James version translation may give room for some exceptions:

"Howbeit not all that came out . . .":

- a. Joshua and Caleb are exceptions.
- b. Clarke suggests: “. . . all the priests and whole tribe of Levi, for they were not of the ones to fight.”
 - 1. Num. 26:63-65 seems to eliminate this.
 - 2. Some may have lived, however, for Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was one who did take possession:
 - a) See Num. 26:60: “—Eleazar son of Aaron.”
 - b) See Num. 34:17 and Joshua 24:33.

And with whom was He displeased forty years

The King James version states, “But with many of them God was not well pleased.”

Disbelief or doubt displeases God, as it breaks fellowship, or is a barrier to fellowship:

- a. Disbelief drove Adam and Eve out of the garden.
 - b. Disbelief drove Israel into the wilderness.
 - c. Disbelief keeps men away from God. Heb. 11:6.
- was it not with them that sinned whose bodies fell in the wilderness?*

Individuals are not discussed, but a disbelieving nation is.

- a. Joshua and Caleb were the exceptions.
- b. Moses and Aaron did not enter Canaan.
- c. I Cor. 10:5-13 suggests that not all perished, so we must conclude that those innocent ones who were too young to disbelieve did not perish.
- d. Numbers 14:29 says that all who were twenty years old or under should enter.

Funerals must have been often and sad, as a generation perished in the wilderness because of unbelief.

and to whom swear He that they should not

This refers to God’s condemnation and punishment. This is pronounced in Num. 14:20-38. Num. 14:22 says that they tempted God ten times.

not enter into His rest

It was a land of rest as God planned it:

- a. No more bondage and oppression.
- b. Cisterns, cities, farms, etc., were to be taken over. Deut. 6:10-11.

Those who did enter were disobedient like their parents, hence Canaan really never did become a place of rest.

but to them that were disobedient?

King James version: "But to them that believed not."

- a. Mark 16:16 expresses the awfulness of disbelief:
 1. You do not have to be a great worker of evil, only a disbeliever.
 2. Disbelief in the love, providence and gift of Jesus Christ is sufficient to condemn a man.
- Disbelief is equivalent to disobedience.

And we see

God's word is for us to study so as to find out how God deals with man:

- a. I Cor. 10:11: "Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come."
- b. Wise men profit by others' mistakes; fools never learn.

they were not able to enter in

This then is a warning to all Christians.

If every word spoken by angels was steadfast, Heb. 2:2, then this word must be heeded.

Reward goes only to the faithful:

- a. Rev. 2:10.
- b. I Cor. 9:24-27.
- c. Matt. 10:22.

because of unbelief

They were believers who became unbelievers:

- a. This is a lesson against backsliding, trifling.
- b. Is this unbelief the same as infidelity?
 1. No — it is not believing God.
 2. There is a difference in believing God and believing *in* God.
 3. Paul believed God. Acts 27:25: "For I believe God, that it shall be even so as it hath been spoken unto me."

This was backsliding for Israel:

- a. Hosea describes Israel as a "backsliding heifer". See Hosea 4:16.
- b. Revised Version: "Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer. Israel hath behaved himself stubbornly like a stubborn heifer."

If you have worked on a farm you can understand this. Some say it is impossible for men to fall away and be lost. If you point out a backslider, they say he was not saved in the first place. It amounts to, "If you get it, you can't lose it; if you lose it, you never had it." It is a dangerous doctrine, "If you can't be lost —." People can take all kinds of advantages of God, yet be saved.

c. Let us study the Scriptures on the subject:

1. Notice the many names given to backsliders.

a) Prov. 14:14: "— shall be filled with his own ways —"

Hosea 11:7: "People who are bent to backsliding —"

b) "Shrinking back": Heb. 10:38: "— righteous shall live by faith."

Some people shrink back. They lack courage. Some are like a horse with a collar sore; they never get in and pull.

c) Falling away: Heb. 3:12: "— evil heart of unbelief in falling —"

Luke 8:13: "— and in time of temptation fall away."

Heb. 10:26-31: "— sin wilfully."

Heb. 6:4-6: "For as touching those who — fell away."

d) Falling from grace: Gal. 5:4: "— ye are fallen away from grace."

How can man promote the doctrine that man can't fall away from grace?

e) Being hindered: Gal. 5:7: "Ye were running well, Who hindered you . . . " ?

f) Removed from the faith: Gal. 1:6: "— ye are quickly removing from him that —"

g) Again entangled therein: II Pet. 2:20: "— they are again entangled . . . the last state is become worse with them than the first." cf. v. 21, 22.

2. Some examples of backsliding:

a) Israel: Hosea 4:16: "Israel slideth back." Exodus 32 records Moses on the Mount and Israel making a golden calf.

b) Solomon: I Kings 11:4: "When Solomon when he was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods." cf. v. 9.

c) Simon Peter: Matt. 26:69-75: cursing, "I know not the man."

d) The Galatians: Gal. 1:6: "I marvel that ye are so quickly removed."

e) Simon the Sorcerer: Acts 8:13: "He believed and was baptized."

Acts 8:23: "Thou art in the gall of bitterness —"

- f) Judas : Matt. 26:48.
- g) Ananias and Sapphira : Acts 5:1-11.
- 3. Some practical thoughts in relationship to backsliding :
 - a) Our duty to one who errs.
Matt. 18:15-17: "If thy brother sin against thee, go to him."
I Cor. 5:1-5: "Deliver such a one to Satan."
Gal. 6:1: "Restore such a one."
 - b) Some things that will keep one from backsliding :
 - 1) Lord's Supper rightly observed :
I Cor. 11:30: " — for this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep."
 - 2) Christian fellowship that exhorts :
Heb. 10:25: "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together —"
 - 3) Guarding one's life with doctrine :
I Tim. 6:20: "Guard that which was committed unto thee."
I Cor. 11:2: "Hold fast the traditions even as I delivered them unto you."
 - 4) Prayer and meditation : Matt. 26:41.
 - c) A realization that we need not fail, but that we can escape backsliding : I Cor. 10:13.
 - d) The backslider is not fit for the kingdom ; Luke 9:62.
 - e) The way back to God for the backslider : Acts 8:22: "Repent and pray."
- 4. A warning on backsliding. For the willful sinner there is no way back. Heb. 4-6:
 - a. Simon Peter's fall was a spur-of-the-moment sin not planned at all ; he was sorry, and so he repented.
 - b. Ananias and Sapphira, and Judas each planned their sin ; it was willful, and there was no repentance.

Study Questions

- 442. Does God feel that one generation should learn from another?
- 443. Define "lest haply".
- 444. Does He make the application personal?
- 445. Give some warnings to man in the New Testament. cf. I Cor. 10:12; I Cor. 9:26; I Cor. 10:5, 10; Jude 5, 7.
- 446. What is the significance of "take heed"?
- 447. Is unbelief a serious matter according to verse 12?

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

448. Can a moral man who is an unbeliever be rightly spoken of as a good moral man?
449. How serious is unbelief in the category mentioned in Revelation?
450. What did unbelief do to Adam and Eve?
451. What did it do to Israel after the Egyptian bondage?
452. Did the devil try to work on Christ in this realm?
453. What is implied in the expression, "falling away from God"?
454. Were they once with God?
455. Can you fall from a building without first being in it or on it?
456. Does this verse give encouragement to the doctrine of man that "if you had it, you can't lose it; if you lose it, you never had it"?
457. What is our estate if we fall? cf. Heb. 10:31.
458. Define the word "exhort".
459. How are we to exhort? cf. I Tim. 6:2.
460. How frequently should we exhort?
461. What is meant by, "so long as it is called today"? cf. John 9:4.
462. Does "any one of you" include you?
463. Is v. 12 a warning against overconfidence? cf. I Cor. 10:12.
464. What will harden man?
465. How does sin harden?
466. Give example of hardened hearts in the word of God.
467. What does sin do to people, according to v. 13? Discuss deceit.
468. What is the kind of sin that is involved here?
469. Can you name some verses that speak of various kinds of deceit?
470. Who is deceived in I Cor. 3:18; Gal. 6:9; I John 1:8?
471. What method is used in Rom. 16:18; II Peter 2:18?
472. What deceives, according to Matt. 13:22?
473. Who deceives in Matt. 25:24?
474. Who deceives in Rev. 12:9?
475. Define "partakers".
476. Why should we be partakers of Christ? Does it entitle us to anything?
477. What qualifies us to be a partaker of Christ?
478. How many evil situations could be avoided "if"? v. 14.

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

479. Explain "hold fast".
480. What is meant by, "beginning of our confidence"?
481. "Firm unto the end" — end of what?
482. What is the value of the uncertainty of the time of the end?
483. What is the significance of "today if ye shall hear His voice"?
484. Whose voice is referred to ?
485. What Psalm is quoted?
486. If God has spoken, has man a right to expect more?
487. What did the Jews want from Jesus?
488. What was a "sign"? What did Jesus answer?
489. "Harden not your hearts" puts the responsibility upon whom?
490. How did God harden Pharaoh's heart? Was God to blame?
491. "As in the provocation": would this refer to the day when the Jews provoked Jesus?
492. What "day" is referred to?
493. Does "day" always mean 24 hours?
494. "For who, when they heard" refers to whom?
495. Is the word "who" always translated "who"?
496. What is implied by the word "provoke"?
497. Is it an accurate literal translation to say that all who came out of Egypt did provoke God?
498. Who were some exceptions?
499. Who does Clarke think may have been exceptions?
500. Cf. Numbers 26:63-65 to see if Clarke's view can be substantiated.
501. Did any live besides Joshua and Caleb? Cf. Numbers 26:65.
502. How long was God displeased?
503. Show other instances in the life of people when God was displeased.
504. What happened to those with whom God was displeased?
505. If their bodies did not fall, was it an inference that God was not displeased with them?
506. What was the age of those who did get to enter? Cf. Numbers 14:29.
507. How many funerals a day did it require?
508. To whom did God swear?
509. What did He pronounce at this time? Cf. Numbers 14:20-28.

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

510. What number of times did they provoke God? See Numbers 14:22.
511. In what way was Canaan to be a place of rest? Cf. Deut. 6:10-11.
512. The author has talked about disbelief all the way through, but now he uses the word "disobedient". Why?
513. Are "disbelief" and "disobedience" the same?
514. "And we see" has what significance?
515. "They were not able" carries what warning to us?
516. "Because of unbelief"—were they ever believers?
517. If so, what warning do we have?
518. Were they rank infidels?
519. Is there a difference in believing God and believing *in* God? Cf. Acts 27:25.
520. Was disbelief equivalent to backsliding?
521. What terms or synonyms are used for this condition of disbelief?
522. What are some examples of backsliding?
523. What should we do to the backslider?
524. What would you suggest doing to keep people from backsliding?
525. What is the way back to God for the backslider?
526. Is there a way for all backsliders to repent?
527. Why could Simon repent, but Ananias and Sapphira couldn't?

Chapter Three — Multiple Choice

1. Jesus Christ may be considered:
 1. An apostle.
 2. A martyr since he was crucified.
 3. A man of high estate.
2. Jesus is compared with:
 1. Isaiah.
 2. Enoch.
 3. Noah.
 4. Moses.
3. The third chapter of Hebrews mentions the children of Israel:
 1. Tempting God.
 2. Loving the Lord with all their heart, mind and soul.

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

3. Wandering forty-five years in the wilderness.
4. The person spoken of as being faithful in all his house was :
 1. Elijah.
 2. Jeremiah.
 3. Moses.
5. The frequency of exhortations on our part is to be :
 1. Semi-annually.
 2. Month by month.
 3. Week by week.
 4. Day by day.
6. The certainty of our being made partakers with Christ is based upon :
 1. Our holding fast the beginning of our confidence firm to the end.
 2. Our knowledge of the will of God.
 3. The ability to give a testimony of our salvation by faith only.
7. What expression summarizes the reason why the Jews could not enter into God's reward for them :
 1. Self-consciousness.
 2. Hatred.
 3. Unbelief.
 4. Poor leadership.
8. The Christ in relationship to our confession is :
 1. Pope.
 2. High Priest.
 3. Rabbi.
 4. Author.
9. Every house is built by some man, but He that built all things, according to this chapter, is :
 1. Paul, who built the Gentile house being sent to them.
 2. Christ, who said He would build His church.
 3. God, Who is the builder of the household.
10. Our hearts are hardened by sin by :
 1. The pleasure of it.
 2. The deceitfulness of it.
 3. The beauty of it.
11. This chapter is addressed to :
 1. Holy brethren.
 2. Backsliders.
 3. Gentiles.

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

12. Christ is counted worthy of more glory than:
 1. God.
 2. Adam.
 3. Moses.
13. God was displeased with the Israelites for:
 1. Ten days.
 2. Six months.
 3. Forty years.
14. Chapter three warns about:
 1. Evil heart of unbelief.
 2. False teachers.
 3. Following Moses.
15. Moses was a servant in God's house, but Christ:
 1. Was a builder.
 2. Was a Son.
 3. Had no part in a house.
16. We are exhorted to hold fast the beginning of our confidence:
 1. Firm unto the end.
 2. Because God will not let us go.
 3. Because we are weak.
17. The group that provoked God was:
 1. The males of Israel.
 2. They that came out of Egypt.
 3. Few.
18. The words of David in the ninety-fifth Psalm are attributed:
 1. To false teachers.
 2. To a lack of evidence.
 3. To the Holy Spirit.
19. The bodies of them that sinned in the wilderness:
 1. Fell in the wilderness.
 2. Were buried in one grave.
 3. Were over thirty years of age.
20. The disbelief in this chapter is called:
 1. The day of provocation.
 2. A minor offense to God.
 3. A rebellion against Moses.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THREE

Chapter three begins the development of the principal theme of Hebrews by calling attention to the faithfulness of Jesus,

the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. In the first two chapters, He is contrasted with angels, for it is His message that is superior to that spoken through angels. In this chapter, He is contrasted with Moses for, although Moses was faithful, the quality of Jesus' faithfulness is superior.

This superior faithfulness is the basis of the appeal for Christians to be true to Christ instead of failing as the Israelites did in the wilderness journey because of their unbelief. Those who accept Christ as Leader are urged to hold steadfastly to their convictions to the end of the journey of life, remembering the fate of those who came out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses. They were refused entrance into the promised rest because of disobedience and unbelief.

C. *Warning and exhortation in respect to rest: promises under Moses and Christ.* 4:1-13.

1. *Danger of losing the heavenly rest through unbelief and rebellion.* 4:1-3.

Text

4:1-3

1 Let us fear therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed we have had good tidings preached unto us, even as also they: but the word of hearing did not profit them, because it was not united by faith with them that heard. 3 For we who have believed do enter into that rest; even as he hath said,

As I swear in My wrath,

They shall not enter into My rest:

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

Paraphrase

1 Wherefore, since the Israelites were excluded from Canaan for their unbelief and disobedience, let us be afraid, lest a promise of entrance into God's rest being left to all Abraham's seed in the covenant, any of you should actually fall short of obtaining it.

2 For we also who believe, being Abraham's seed, have in that promise received the good tidings of a rest in the heavenly