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HEBREWS CHAPTER 3

In Your Group Read Hebrews chapter three (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As A Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF HEBREWS CHAPTER 3 King James Version

HEB 3:1 ¶ Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; [2] Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. [3] For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. [4] For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. [5] And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; [6] But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. [7] ¶ Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye wil I hear his voice, (Psa. 95:7) [8] Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wil derness: (Psa. 95:8) [9] When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. (Psa. 95:9) [10] Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. (Psa. 95:10) [11] So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) (Psa. 95:11) [12] Take heed, 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 are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast

unto the end; [15] While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. (Psa. 95:7-8) [16] For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. [17] But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? [18] And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? [19] So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the "Additional Information" in each box provided.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 3 VERSES 1-6

Hebrews 3:1 ¶ Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; [2] Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. [3] For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. [4] For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. [5] And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; [6] But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. (King James Version)

[1] So then, holy brothers and sharers in the heavenly invitation, set your thoughts on Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. [2] He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, just as Moses was in the whole household of God. [3] For He is entitled to greater honor than Moses to the degree in which the builder of a house enjoys more honor than the house itself. [4] Of course every house is built by someone, but the Builder of all things is God. [5] And while Moses was faithful in His whole household as a servant, to bear witness to things that would be spoken of later, [6] Christ was faithful as a Son in charge of God's household. And we are that household, if we firmly maintain the confidence and pride in what we hope for. (The Berkeley Version).

1 And so, dear brothers and sisters who belong to God and are bound for heaven, think about this Jesus whom we declare to be God's Messenger and High Priest. 2 For he was faithful to God, who appointed him, just as Moses served faithfully and was entrusted with God's entire house. 3 But Jesus deserves far more glory than Moses, just as a person who builds a fine house deserves more praise than the house itself. 4 For every house has a builder, but God is the one who made everything. 5 Moses was certainly faithful in God's house, but only as a servant. His work was an illustration of the truths God would reveal later. 6 But Christ, the faithful Son, was in charge of the entire household. And we are God's household, if we keep up our courage and remain confident in our hope in Christ. (New Living Translation).

[1] So then, dear friends who are set apart for God and share together the invitation to heaven, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our faith. [2] He was faithful to God who appointed Him, just as Moses was faithful among all the people of God. [3] However, Jesus is considered to be worthy of far more honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has more honor than the house! [4] (And every house is built by someone, but the one who built everything is God.) [5] Moses, then, was faithful as a servant among all the people of God, telling them about things that would be proclaimed in the future. [6] But Christ was faithful as a Son in charge of God's family. And we are members of His family if we firmly cling to our confidence and the hope we glory in. **(The New Translation).**

Additional Information: This chapter continues a contrast, but this time it is between Christ and Moses. In chapters 1-2 Jesus is shown to be greater than angels, in this chapter he is shown to be infinitely greater than Moses.

(Verse 1) The "holy brethren" in this chapter are "**partakers of the heavenly calling.**" "Calling" in the New Testament is particularly a summons to salvation (Rom. 8:30; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Th. 2:12; Heb. 9:15).

(Verse 1) What kind of calling does the believer's have? A "**heavenly calling,**" i.e., "**heavenly**" meaning "**in heaven itself,**" and "**calling**" meaning "**an invitation.**" This is similar to what was said in Hebrew 2:10 when it spoke of Jesus "bringing many sons unto glory." The word, "**consider**" means "to consider attentively, or to fix one's eyes or mind upon" the One we profess. "**Profess**" meaning "whom we profess to be ours or what one professes [confesses]," Christ Jesus.

(Verse 2) And what is it that we need to "consider" about Him? Verse 2 tells us, that he "was faithful to Him that appointed him." That is the whole point of Hebrews 3. These believers were tempted to become "unfaithful" (faithless, to renounce their faith) and depart from the Living God.

(Verses 3, 4) Jesus is considered to be worthy of far more honor than Moses, just as a builder of a house has more honor than the house!

(Verse 5) Moses was a faithful servant that acted as a witness to things which were to be divulged later, or we could say, his work was foreshadowing truth that would be later known (truths about Christ, redemption, etc., but it was all in shadow form).

(Verse 6) Christ is a Son of his own house (i.e., God's people). And we (used of a group that includes the speaker or writer) are his house (present tense – and continue to be his house or people) if, if what? If we "**hold fast**" (Gk. "to hold fast, keep secure, keep firm possession of") what? (1) The "**confidence**" meaning "**our trust, reliance, boldness**" (Dict.). (2) And "**the rejoicing of the hope**" meaning the "joyful and confident expectation of our eternal salvation" (Thayer's Lexicon), "**firm**" (KJV - steadfast 4, sure 2, firm 1) "**unto the end**" (Gk. the end to which all things relate, the aim, purpose" – which is salvation in this context, or you may think it is the deeper life, or something else, but I think the writer of Hebrews is saying that if you turn away from God's provision in Christ, God cannot save you.) (Thayer's Lexicon).

(Verse 6) How can we know that we are really God's house? By holding **fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.** Apparently there were some people who professed to be believers who had fallen away, and it is because of them that the writer of Hebrews gives these words, which both warn and encourage. Christians perseverance is evidence of salvation.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 3
VERSES 7-11

Hebrews 3:7 ¶ [7] Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will I hear his voice, (Psa. 95:7) [8] Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: (Psa. 95:8) [9] When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. (Psa. 95:9) [10] Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. (Psa. 95:10) [11] So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) (Psa. 95:11) (King James Version)

[7] So it is as the Holy Spirit says: “Today listen to what he says. [8] Do not be stubborn as in the past when you turned against God, when you tested God in the desert. [9] There your ancestors tried me and tested me and saw the things I did for forty years. [10] I was angry with them. I said, “They are not loyal to me and have not understood my ways.’ [11] I was angry and made a promise, ‘They will never enter my rest.’” **(New Century Version)**

Now, if we can only keep a firm grip on this bold confidence, we’re the house! That’s why the Holy Spirit says, “Today, please listen; don’t turn a deaf ear as in ‘the bitter uprising,’ that time of wilderness testing! Even though they watched me at work for forty years, your ancestors refused to let me do it my way; over and over they tried my patience. And I was provoked, oh, provoked! I said, ‘They’ll never keep their minds on God; they refuse to walk down my road.’ Exasperated, I vowed, ‘They’ll never get where they’re going, never be able to sit down and rest.’” **(vs. 7-11) (The Message)**

Additional Information: (Verses 7-11) is a quotation from Psalm 95. The writer of Hebrews starts off by saying, “7 ¶ Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith (**present tense** meaning, as the Holy Ghost says and is now continuing to say), To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 **Harden** (Gk. to make hard, to become obstinate or stubborn – **present tense**) not your hearts, as in the provocation (or rebellion), in the day of temptation (the time of testing) in the wilderness: 9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me (tried My patience), and saw my **works (miracles)** forty years. 10 Wherefore I was **grieved** (Gk. wroth, disgusted) with that generation, and said, They do always **err** (Gk. to go astray, wander, and roam from the truth – **present tense**) in their heart; and they have not known (Gk. know, perceive, understand) my ways. 11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter (come in) into my **rest** (Gk. **a resting place; metaph. the heavenly blessedness in which God dwells**). In this passage the physical resting place of the promised land.)

HEBREWS CHAPTER 3
VERSES 12-15

Hebrews 3:12 [12] Take heed, 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 are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; [15] While it is said, Today if ye will I hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. (Psa. 95:7-8) (King James Version)

[12] Brothers, take care lest there be a wicked, unbelieving heart in any of you, moving you to be apostates from the living God. **[13]** Rather admonish one another daily, so long as this word *Today* is uttered, that none of you may be deceived by sin and *hardened*. **[14]** For we only participate in Christ provided that we hold firm to the very end the confidence with which we **[15]** started, this word ever sounding in our ears, *Today, when you hear his voice, harden not your hearts as at the Provocation.* **(Moffat Translation)**

[12] Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. **[13]** But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. **[14]** For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end; **[15]** while it is said, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME." **(New American Standard)**

[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 hearts as you did in the rebellion." **(New International Version)**

[12] So brothers, be careful that none of you has an evil, unbelieving heart. This will stop you from following the living God. **[13]** But encourage each other every day. Do this while it is "today." Help each other so that none of you will become hardened because of sin and its tricks. **[14]** We all share in Christ. This is true if we keep till the end the sure faith we had in the beginning. **[15]** As it has just been said: "If you hear God's voice today, do not be stubborn as in the past when you were against God." **(New Century Version)**

[12] So brothers and sisters, be careful that none of you is sinful, and refuses to believe, and stops following the living God. **[13]** But comfort each other every day. Do this while it is "today." Help each other so that none of you will become hardened because of sin and the way sin fools people. **[14]** We all share together with Christ. This is true if we continue until the end to have the sure faith we had in the beginning. **[15]** This is what that Scripture said: "If you hear God's voice today, don't be stubborn like in the past when you were against God." **(The Easy-to-Read Version)**

Additional Information: (Verse 12) Take heed (beware – **present tense**, take heed and continue to take heed), brethren, lest there be (**future tense** – an event or occurrence which has not yet

occurred) in any of you an evil (wicked) heart of unbelief (Gk. unfaithfulness, faithless), in departing (Gk. withdraw, remove, desert, or depart) from the living God.

(Verse 13) But exhort (to urge, advise, or warn earnestly – **present tense**: continuously, habitually, over and over) one another **daily**, lest any of you be hardened (Gk. become hard, obstinate, stubborn) through the deceitfulness (deception, trickery, lure or glamour) of sin.

(Verse 14) For **we** (used of a group that includes the speaker or writer) are made partakers (to have a share or part) of Christ, **if** (in the event) we hold (keep, retain) the beginning of our confidence (a state of trust, reliance, or intimacy) steadfast (stable or firm) unto the end (Gk. the end to which all things relate, the aim, purpose, which is eternal life or being a partaker of Christ). The New Living Translation states it like this, “For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ.” Staying with the Lord marks the difference between possession and profession.

(Verse 15) Now here is the warning in Scripture (Ps. 95:7-8), Today, don't be obstinate and stubborn as the Israelites were when they provoked God. Listen to the voice and message of the Son of God!

HEBREWS CHAPTER 3 VERSES 16-19

Hebrews 3: [16] For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. [17] But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? [18] And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? [19] So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. [Numbers 14:1-35] (King James Version).

¹⁶And who were those people I speak of, who heard God's voice speaking to them but then rebelled against him? They were the ones who came out of Egypt with Moses their leader. ¹⁷And who was it who made God angry for all those forty years? These same people who sinned and as a result died in the wilderness. ¹⁸And to whom was God speaking when he swore with an oath that they could never go into the land he had promised his people? He was speaking to all those who disobeyed him. ¹⁹And why couldn't they go in? Because they didn't trust him. **(The Living Bible)**

[16] those who rebelled after they had listened were all the people who were brought out of Egypt by Moses. **[17]** And those who made God angry for forty years were the ones who sinned and whose dead bodies were left lying in the wilderness. **[18]** Those that he swore would never reach the place of rest he had for them were those who had been disobedient. **[19]** We see, then, that it was because they were unfaithful that they were not able to reach it. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

[16] For who were those who rebelled, even though they heard the voice of God? Was it not all those who were led out of Egypt by Moses? **[17]** And with whom was God angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies lay where they fell in the wilderness? **[18]** And who were those to whom God vowed that they would never enter His rest? Was it not those who refused to obey Him? **[19]** So we see that they were unable to enter God's place of rest because they did not believe in Him. **(The New Translation)**

[16] For who heard and yet were rebellious? Was it not all who went out of Egypt under Moses? **[17]** And with whom was He provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the desert? **[18]** And to whom but the

disobedient did He swear, "They shall not enter into My rest? [19] So we see that on account of unbelief they were not able to enter. **(The Berkeley Version)**

Additional Information: (Verse 16) Did "provoke" is from the Greek word *parapikraino*, meaning "to be rebellious, to provoke, exasperate, to rouse to indignation" (Thayer's Lexicon).

(Verse 16) "For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses." The writer of Hebrews is aware of the notable exceptions of Joshua and Caleb. They did not take part in the general rebellion and unbelief.

(Verses 17-19) With whom was God displeased or grieved with for forty years? (1) With those who had sinned. (2) With those who believed not, were faithless, or unfaithful. So God swore that they would never enter His rest (or resting place).

(Verse 18) The Greek word for "believed not" is *apeitheo* and means "not to allow one's self to be persuaded; not to comply with; to refuse or withhold belief; to be disobedient; to refuse belief and obedience. (Thayer's Lexicon).

(Verse 19) "So we see (present tense: and continue to see) that they could not enter in because of unbelief, faithlessness, or unfaithfulness.

(Verses 16-19) The Israelites were victims of their own unbelief. They rebelled (v. 16), sinned (v. 17) and did not obey (v. 18).

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Hebrews Chapter 3)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Hebrews Chapter 3.**

1. **Read Hebrews 3:1.** The believers “heavenly calling” means: a. a call from God. b. a call to heaven. c. both a. & b.
2. **Read Hebrews 3:2.** Jesus: a. was faithful to God. b. did his own thing. c. said it didn’t really matter.
3. **Read Hebrews 3:3.** God spoke face to face with Moses, as a man speaks to his friend (Ex. 33:11). The commands of God were known to be the law of Moses (1 Kings 2:3). As great and glorious as Moses was, Jesus was: a. worthy of more glory. b. equal to Moses. c. none of the above.
4. **Read Hebrews 3:5-6.** Moses was a servant in God’s family, Jesus is the Son in charge of God’s family. True or False.
5. **Read Hebrews 3:6.** The writer of Hebrews is telling us to take our salvation: a. lightly. b. seriously. c. it doesn’t really matter.
6. **Read Hebrews 3:7-11.** Hebrews 3:7-11 is a quotation from Psalm 95, yet the writer of Hebrews tells us: a. that it is the Holy Spirit speaking to us. b. that it is great Christian literature. c. none of the above.
7. **Read Hebrews 3:12.** The writer of Hebrews shows us that this passage is serious and important by using the phrase: a. brethren. b. take heed. c. none of the above.
8. **Read Hebrews 3:12-13.** The writer of Hebrews shows us that this passage is serious and important by speaking of: a. an evil heart of unbelief. b. departing from the Living God. c. being hardened by sin’s deceit. d. all of the above.
9. **Read Hebrews 3:14.** We partake of Christ, if: a. we said the sinners prayer. b. joined the local church. c. hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.
10. **Read Hebrews 3:15.** Today if you will hear God’s voice: a. you must give to the poor. b. you must do good works. c. you must not harden your heart against Him.

11. **Read Hebrews 3:16.** Some people after hearing God: a. were glad to obey. b. provoked and rebelled against Him. c. listened but did not do.
12. **Read Hebrews 3:17.** Who was God grieved with for forty years? a. the women in the group. b. them that had sinned. c. those who obeyed.
13. **Read Hebrews 3:18.** Who did God swear would never enter His resting place? a. those older than 21. b. those people over 50. c. them that believed not.
14. **Read Hebrews 3:19.** How would you describe unbelief? disobedience, sin, rebellion, etc.
15. **Read Hebrews 3:16-19; and Numbers 14:1-35.** Read and discuss among your group Numbers 14:1-35.

Instructions for Group Leader: You may want to summarize the chapter (for the group) by reading aloud the following.

Putting the Chapter in Context: Hebrews Chapter 3.

(Verse 1) The writer of Hebrews is telling them that they have the hope of a heavenly calling (v.1), or we could say, of Christ bringing them unto glory (Heb. 2:10).

(Verse 2) The writer of Hebrews admonishes them to consider the example of Christ Jesus. "He was faithful to God" (v. 2), in contrast to the children of Israel who were unfaithful and because of their unbelief could not enter God's promise land.

(Verse 6) We are Christ's and shall enter his rest (eternal bliss), if "we" (used of a group that includes the speaker or writer) hold fast our confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end (v. 6).

(Verse 12) We are warned to "take heed...lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (v. 12).

(Verses 13-14) We are to exhort (to urge or warn earnestly) one another daily to not be hardened through the deceitfulness (glamour or lure) of sin (vs. 13-14).

(Verse 14) Here is the progression, if continued in: Sin, hardened heart, unbelief, and departing from the living God (v.12). We are made partaker of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end (v.14).