



The Pre-eminence of Jesus Christ over Moses Hebrews 3

Introduction

Thus far we have seen Jesus' sevenfold excellence and we have examined His superiority by comparing Him to the Old Testament prophets, God's human, earthly servants, and to angels, God's supernatural, heavenly servants.

We will continue to examine His excellence and superiority, for as we look to Jesus as He is, we gain strength and purpose to endure whatever trials and temptations may come our way.

His superiority does not minimize the roles or deeds of prophets or angels, or anyone to whom He is compared as we proceed through the book. Indeed, it is an honor to be one to whom He is compared, for both people and things are enhanced by their association with Jesus.

In this lesson Jesus is compared to Moses in the matter of faithfulness. He is, again, superior; however Moses is not diminished thereby, for he is the example of faithfulness used to illustrate the perfection of Jesus' faithfulness. Although imperfect, Moses illustrates the highest degree of human faithfulness. Does the quality of your life glorify God, particularly in the matter of faithfulness, even though it is not perfect? Let us be thankful that we can do well even though we cannot do perfectly. To imperfect people such as we are, Jesus will one day say, *Well done, good and faithful servant; You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord* (Matthew 25:21). Are you looking forward to that day? Are you living in the reality of that day?

Outline of Hebrews Chapter 3

- I. Comparison of Christ's Faithfulness to Moses' Faithfulness - Hebrews 3:1-6
- II. Failure of Moses' Followers to Persevere - Hebrews 3:7-19

I. Comparison of Christ's Faithfulness to Moses' Faithfulness – Hebrews 3:1-6

A. Worthy of Consideration - 3:1

It is always good to consider the Lord Jesus Christ. We can neither consider Him too much nor too frequently. We are always blessed by considering Him. How are we to consider Him in this context? In His faithfulness He is our example. Prior to Jesus' earthly life Moses was the example. He was evidently the most faithful person

who ever lived. More space is given to Moses in the Bible than to any other person besides the Lord.

There are several comparisons of Moses to Christ. Both were unusually preserved in childhood, contended with masters of evil, fasted forty days, controlled the sea, fed a multitude, had radiant faces, endured murmurings, were discredited in the home, made intercessory prayers, spoke as oracles, had seventy helpers, established memorials, and reappeared after death. The highest goal for humans is to be Christ-like (Romans 8:29). Moses was Christ-like, especially in being faithful.

B. Comparison of Son to Servant - Hebrews 3:2-6

1. Both were appointed by God - 3:2

Moses was preserved and prepared by God even before God called him in the burning bush (Exodus 1-3). God appointed him to deliver His people, the Hebrew slaves, to become the free nation of Israel.

Jesus the Son was appointed by God the Father in the councils of eternity to deliver slaves of sin to be saints of God, *a holy nation* (1 Peter 2:9).

2. Both were part of God's *house* - 3:3

The *house* could refer to the tabernacle, the people or both. God's people are frequently called God's house, as *house of David* (1 Chronicles 17:24, 1 Peter 2:6). Moses was in God's house as a faithful servant. Christ, however, was the builder of the house and thus *counted worthy of more glory, and more honor*. Without the builder there would be no house.

3. Christ's greater honor as builder - 3:4

There is a great statement of Christ's deity here. In verse 3, Christ is called the builder. In verse four, God is referred to as *He who built all things*. The builder of all things is also the builder of the house.

4. Faithful as a Son over faithful as a servant - 3:5-6

The most faithful servant in a house cannot equal the faithfulness of a son over his own house. Jesus' house is made up of those who believe in Him and confidently hold fast to our hope with joy.

Will you be a follower of Jesus who delivers lost people from slavery to sin and leads safely through

the wilderness of this life? If so, you are part of His household.

II. Failure of Moses' Followers to Persevere - Hebrews 3:7-19

A. Warning Repeated Three Times by Holy Spirit - 3:7-11

1. Holy Spirit's authorship - 3:7

The Holy Spirit is named the author of Scripture in Acts 1:16, 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21, and elsewhere. This is why it is called Holy Scripture and the Holy Bible.

2. Quotation from Psalm 95:7-11

It is an interesting "coincidence", of which Scripture is full, that Hebrews 3:7-11 is from Psalm 95:7-11. David recounts the wilderness wanderings and correctly concludes that the people hardened their hearts to God's voice and commandments. Then, like Pharaoh, from whom they should have learned, they made a habit, or pattern, of hardening their hearts to His voice. So David, by the Holy Spirit, says, TODAY, don't do that. Never mind about yesterday, it cannot be reclaimed, but it can instruct us. Do not repeat yesterday's mistake.

3. Repetition of Psalm 95:7-11

This is so important a lesson that the Holy Spirit repeats it three times; first in Psalm 95, then twice in Hebrews 3, verse 7 and verse 15, with an echo in verse 13. Anything God takes the care to repeat three times should be noted. We are creatures of habit who become reflex-oriented. Once we have done something it is easier to repeat and harder to change. Once we resist God and harden our hearts, it is easier the next time and more difficult to obey, or be soft-hearted toward God. Therefore, the admonition comes concerning TODAY. Today is a new opportunity. We do not have to react as we did yesterday, but we probably will unless we determinedly choose to change and to react differently.

Today, will you choose to respond to God, His commandments and wooing with a tender heart? Perhaps that will seem difficult. However if you desire to overcome whatever resistance you feel, God will help you. As the Father did for the prodigal son in Luke 11, your Heavenly Father will run to meet you.

B. Writer's Exhortation to Avoid Repetition - 3:12-14

We, too, are warned to beware, or be aware, of a heart of unbelief, called an *evil heart*, which takes us away from God. We may feel justified in departing from God, the *Living God*, when we feel mistreated, deprived, and rebellious, but the result will be further hardening of the heart, estrangement from God, and a failure to find rest.

Therefore, we all need encouragement (3:13). None of us knows how close to the brink another person may be. Pressures of circumstances, family stress, and physical disability combine to drag us down and away from God, to disbelieve His promise, and to entertain doubt of His goodness.

This is the deceitfulness of sin. Doubt and disbelief are sin and become progressive. A smile, a kind word, a thoughtful act can encourage another to keep going in faith.

Perseverance in the circumstances makes us Christ's partners, sharers, or partakers (3:14). When we take His yoke He bears the heavier side and we find that His burden is easy and His yoke is light (Matthew 11:28-29).

C. Failure caused by followers' faithlessness (*unbelief*) - Hebrews 3:15-19

The writer concludes that Moses' followers failed to enter the promised land, and find rest, due to their *unbelief*. Even though that unbelief was their own responsibility and in no way Moses' fault, he had no power to change it. The result was that the people he led failed in spite of his great faithfulness. He was able to lead them out of Egypt and slavery but he could not lead them into Canaan.

Therefore, Christ is greater than Moses because He not only delivers His followers from slavery but leads them safely through the wilderness and into the victorious life of Canaan.

Application

1. Who or what are you following other than Christ? Will you give the Lord Jesus Christ your wholehearted attention today? Will you begin to practice believing everything God says in His Word?
2. Whom can you encourage to persevere in trusting and believing God?