

Hebrews, Part 3

Key words: better (13x), perfect (14x in Greek), eternal

What Jesus gives us is **better** because it gives us **perfect** standing before Him, and because it is **eternal!**

Thousands of angels assisted in the giving of the Law, so the Jews considered them extremely important and superior.

In chapter one, Paul gives us several quotations back-to-back from the Old Testament, in order to prove that Jesus is BETTER than angels.

In chapter two, Paul shows us that Jesus was made “a little LOWER than the angels” – God took on a human nature that He had never possessed so we could take on a divine nature that we had never possessed!

Next to Abraham, Moses was the man most greatly revered by the Jews. The entire system of Jewish Law came through Moses, and so it is a temptation for these Jewish Christians to go back to the “safety” of living under the Law (no persecution). There is a similar temptation today, because no one minds a brand of Christianity that just lets you “blend in” or that doesn’t demand any change in your life!

So, in chapter three, in order to show them that going back to the Law would be futile, the author proves that **Jesus is BETTER than Moses!**

Hebrews 3:1-2 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

“PARTAKERS” = “partners” (same word as in Luke 5:7)
“APOSTLE” = “one sent with a commission”

An APOSTLE represents GOD TO MAN
A HIGH PRIEST represents MAN TO GOD
Moses was only an Apostle (not a high priest), but Jesus was BOTH

Hebrews 3:3-6 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. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 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.

“HOUSE” – used 6X in these verses, refers to PEOPLE, not buildings

Moses was a SERVANT in the house (v. 5)
Jesus was a SON over the house (v. 6)
But Jesus was also the BUILDER of the house (v. 3-4) – HE IS GOD!

Moses spoke about things to come (“which were to be spoken after”), but Jesus brought the fulfillment of those things! Moses spoke in the shadows of the OT, but Jesus brought the light of the NT.

“HOPE FIRM UNTO THE END” – we live in the “future tense”!
(i.e. Joshua and Caleb lived in the “future tense” for forty years, even when the majority of the Israelites did not)

Hebrews 3:7-11 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

Canaan represents our SPIRITUAL INHERITANCE (not Heaven!)
The wilderness represents a LACK OF FAITH or REBELLION (we don’t believe we can possess it, or we don’t want to possess it – both wrong!)

It is possible to be “out of Egypt” but not “in Canaan” – and that is really the problem of these Hebrew believers – they are “LOOKING BACK”

This section quotes Psalm 95:7-11 almost verbatim, which is God’s reaction to Israel’s rebellion – “they shall not enter into my rest!” And all of that faithless, rebellious generation died in the wilderness!

There are three RESTS referred to in this section ...

- 1. God rested on the Sabbath Day (4:4)**
This parallels our rest in salvation (Christ’s completed work – 4:3)
- 2. Israel had “rest” when they inherited Canaan (3:11)**
This parallels our “rest” as we claim our inheritance in Christ (4:11)
We have to “LABOUR” to enter into this rest!
- 3. There is a final FUTURE rest in Heaven for God’s people! (4:9)**
When we enter into this rest, there is no more “work” to be done!

Hebrews 3:12-13 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

“DEPARTING FROM THE LIVING GOD” = “APOSTASY”

Hebrews 3:14-15 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

IF we hold steadfast, we get to enter into God’s rest – if not, we don’t!

Hebrews 3:16-19 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

It was not EVERYONE who couldn’t enter in, just those who didn’t have faith and rebelled in their hearts – and they died in the wilderness because of that UNBELIEF. However, Joshua and Caleb believed ... and God let them lead the next generation into the Promised Land!

2 Kings 7:1-3 Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord, To morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?

2 Kings 7:17-20 And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him. And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

Hebrews 4:1-2 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Israel refused to mix God’s Word with faith, and so they lost the inheritance that God had provided for them. **FAITH IS THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE WORD OF GOD OPERATES!**

Hebrews 4:3-5 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

This passage speaks of Creation Rest, which parallels Salvation Rest (i.e. God did the work, and we just enter into it). Israel refused to enter into the rest God offered, and so do some people today.

John 1:11-12 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Hebrews 4:6-11 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

“LIMITETH” = “marks out, appoints” (the promise is still open TODAY!)
“JESUS” = Greek form of “Joshua” (v. 8)

Israel’s rest in Canaan was not the ultimate rest God promised to His people – and neither is the “rest” we are trying to achieve now! THERE REMAINETH THEREFORE A REST TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD! However, the only way we get to our “eternal” rest (v. 10) is to constantly strive (“labour”) to enter into our inheritance in Christ (v. 11)

Hebrews 4:12-13 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

GOD KNOWS WHETHER YOU HAVE A HEART OF FAITH OR NOT!