

Yahweh is God and Yeshua is His Prophet

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, 2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also *was faithful* in all His house. 3 For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. 4 For every house is built by someone, but He who 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 would be spoken *afterward*, 6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end. (Heb. 3:1-6)

Our world would look very different if it were not for the following seven prophets: Moses, Jesus, Muhammed, Joseph Smith, Charles Taze Russell, Mary Baker Eddy, Ellen G White. Those seven, all who have been called prophets, are partly or wholly responsible for Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science and the Word-Faith cult, and Seventh Day Adventism. Just seven people have influenced the religious outlook of over 4 billion people alive today, and that's not counting those who have rejected their teachings and chosen something else. It's not counting the hundreds of millions already dead influenced by those prophets. I think you'll agree that someone claiming to have heard from God, can mightily shape the lives and destinies of millions of people.

So it's no small thing to decide which prophet you're going to listen to. Listen to the wrong prophet, and you may end up shattering your life and joining him or her in Hell. In fact, God commanded Israel to not pity the false prophet once discovered, but to put him to death.

For a Jewish reader of the book of Hebrews in the first century, there was no doubt in their mind who had been the greatest prophet. For Jews of that day, descending order, after angels, the greatest of all people was Moses. Moses was far and away the hero of the Jewish people, the greatest prophet who had ever lived. He had been the one appointed and sent by God to deliver Israel from bondage. In that sense, he was an apostle. He was a redeemer. He spoke directly to God and saw God face-to-face. Through Moses came the special covenant that God made with Israel at Sinai. Through Moses came the Torah. The first five books of our Bible, known as the Pentateuch, or the Law, or the Torah, all came through Moses. Sometimes the Scriptures themselves are simply called Moses and the prophets. In the Gospels, we often read conversations where they say, "Moses commanded".

So great was Moses, that the book of Jude tells us of a dispute between Michael and Satan regarding the body of Moses. Moses was buried by God, and the location not revealed. It may have been that Satan sought to reveal the location, so that Israel might turn it into a shrine. After all, if they had begun to worship the bronze snake that Moses made, what would they do with the very bones of Moses? For many a Jew, the words of Deuteronomy 34 summed up their feelings, " 10 But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, (Deut. 34:10)

So, as the writer of Hebrews wants to show us the superiority of Jesus, and why we should draw near to Him, and not draw back, why we should hold fast to our confession, and not fall away, he is going to place the greatest of all prophets, Moses, side-by-side with Jesus. Having shown that Jesus is superior to angels both as God, and as the Second Adam, he is now going to move to human beings, starting with Moses, and then moving to Joshua, to Aaron, to Levi. First, he will have us compare Jesus and Moses, to see how they are similar. Second, he is going to contrast them, to see how they are different. Third, he is going to tell us what to do with Jesus, once we know.

I. Compare Jesus and Moses

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also *was faithful* in all His house.

There's a lot of confusion over who Hebrews was written to. Some have said only believers, others have said only unbelievers. We've said he no doubt had a mixed audience: Jewish believers; Jewish unbelievers, some intellectually persuaded and some not, and perhaps Gentiles attracted to Judaism.

But in this passage, the writer specifically addresses believers. How do we know? He says, "holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling". Not just *brethren*, because that *term* brethren can be used to mean compatriots, or even people from the same ethnicity. But *holy brethren* refers to Christians. Christians have shared in a special calling. Heaven, which is to say, God, has called us by name, and called us to come to Him.

The writer wants believers to do something here. He wants us to consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. The word for consider means to pay careful attention, to think carefully about. Jesus is the ultimate Apostle, one appointed and sent, and Jesus is the ultimate High Priest.

We often learn about things by comparison. You learn of something's quality when you experience something of higher quality or lower quality. That's true of food, of clothes, of cars, of music, of books. And while it's not a great habit to spend all your time comparing people with each other, it's sometimes necessary. Here in Hebrews it becomes crucial to do a comparison between Moses and Jesus, because the audience of this book is in danger of thinking that they can go back to the Law established by Moses, or perhaps they think that Jesus and Moses are both valid ways, parallel tracks that will get you to God.

So the writer says, stop and carefully consider Jesus in comparison to Moses.

Moses and Jesus are actually very similar. The parallels between Jesus and Moses are actually striking. Here are some of them:

Both Jesus and Moses were in danger at birth, when a ruler declared all Hebrew boys were to be killed. Both were hidden in Egypt. Both were placed in an unusual crib – one a basket, the other a manger.

Moses gave the Law to Israel at Mount Sinai. Jesus announced the new law on the Sermon on the Mount.

Moses fed the people with manna. Jesus fed the 5000, and then explained that He was the true Bread. Moses fasted for 40 days and forty nights when receiving the Law. Jesus fasted 40 days and 40 nights at the beginning of His ministry.

Moses' face shone with reflected glory when he came out of the Tabernacle. Peter, James and John saw Christ's face shining on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Moses' brother and sister challenged him. Jesus' half-brothers and sisters did not believe in him.

Now he draws on a passage from Numbers chapter 12.

5 Then the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood *in* the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. 6 Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I,

the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. 7 Not so with My servant Moses; He *is* faithful in all My house. 8 I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?" (Num. 12:1)

This incident occurs when Miriam and Aaron begin to speak against Moses for marrying an Ethiopian woman. God defends Moses, and this is how He does it. He says, with all the other prophets in Israel, I give them messages through the medium of dreams at night, or visions in the day. But with Moses, I speak to Him directly. He speaks to Me face to face. He sees the very form of God, the manifestation that God took when Moses went into the Tabernacle.

This makes Moses the greatest human prophet, because he had unmediated message from God to the people. And this is God's comment on Moses: He is faithful in all my house.

The writer says, Jesus was just like that. Jesus was faithful to the One who appointed Him, God the Father. What Moses was appointed to do, he did, and what Jesus was appointed to do, He did.

But as similar as they were, the writer is now going to move from similarity to dissimilarity, from a comparison of how they were alike to contrasting them.

II. Contrast Jesus and Moses

3 For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. 4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things *is* God.

Here's the jolt. Jesus is judged to be worthier, greater, more glorious than Moses. In fact, in the original language, the words "more glory" are at the beginning of the sentence, for emphasis. "Of more glory is this one counted worthy than Moses".

How so? As the Designer, Owner, and Builder of house is more important than the house itself, so is the Jesus more important than Moses. You might admire a house, a building, a structure. But as you stand there gazing at its beauty, eventually what do you ask? Who built this? What ingenuity! What creativity? What attention to detail! What thoughtfulness! Your admiration for a inanimate structure pushes you to admire the human intelligence that built it.

The writer says, Moses is like one of the pillars in a house. He is faithful, and good. He might even be the strongest and best pillar in the house, and the most ornately decorated, and the most impressive in size and load-bearing ability. But he is still part of the house.

But what is the implication of verse 4?

Everything has an origin, God is the builder of all things, including the household that Moses is a part of. And since the comparison is being made between Moses and Jesus, what is implied here about who Jesus is? He is the builder of the house, meaning He is God. This is a Creator-creature distinction.

Staying with the idea of a house or a household, the writer again makes a comparison.

5 And Moses indeed *was* faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken *afterward*, 6 but Christ as a Son over His own house

Now the picture shifts from a building with its Builder, to the idea of a household. In Roman times, a

household was a family, with extended family living under one roof. You would also have several servants, managers working in there. The word for what Moses was is a rare word, and it is a higher rank than a slave. It means one who attends on others freely.

But even so, Moses is a worker, a servant, an attendant in the household. But who is he serving? He is serving the family. If there is a son in the household, and he is playing close to the steward, the steward is still to serve the son, because the son is family. In fact, the household belongs to that son by inheritance.

So in the same way, Moses is a valuable servant in the family of God. Both the Old Testament people of God in Israel, and the New Testament people of God in the church are one household of faith. Moses is a valuable servant in that household. As was David, Isaiah, Daniel, Peter, Paul. But Jesus is the Son to whom the household belongs. This is an Owner-servant comparison.

How did Moses serve? One of the ways was that he witnessed or testified to things which would be spoken in the future. Moses was not writing about himself, as much as he was writing about the coming Son.

Joh 5:39 "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. 45 "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is *one* who accuses you-- Moses, in whom you trust. 46 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" (Jn. 5:45-47)

After Jesus rose from the dead, He taught His disciples that Moses had actually been prophesying of Jesus all along. **Luk 24:44** Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."

The clearest prophecy that Moses made about Jesus is in Deuteronomy 18.

15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, 16 "according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' 17 "And the LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good. 18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. 19 'And it shall be *that* whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require *it* of him. (Deut. 18:15-19)

Notice what Moses says. One day, God is going to raise up a Moses-like prophet. When God had thundered from Sinai, the people had begged Moses to instead serve as the intermediary, to hear God's words and relay them to the people. In exactly the same way, this ultimate Prophet was going to be one of them, one of the Hebrews, but He would hear the exact words of God, stand as a mediator between them and God, and relay God's Word to them. And while God dealt severely with people who did not listen to Moses, God would not tolerate at all disobedience to the final and ultimate Prophet – Messiah.

Moses was a great prophet-priest, but not the greatest. Remember that of the three anointed offices, prophet, priest, and king, Scripture has several people who held two of the offices, but no one held all three. Moses, being from Levi, and given permission to be in the Tabernacle, was a prophet-priest. Samuel, Ezekiel and Jeremiah were also prophet-priests. Saul, David, Solomon were all prophet-kings. Melchizedek is the only recorded king-priest. But only Jesus is the prophet, priest, and king.

As great a prophet-priest as Moses was, he didn't lead the people into rest.

As great as Moses was, he sinned.

As great as Moses was, he was not the Mediator. He entered the Tabernacle, but only his brother could go into the Most Holy Place.

As great as Moses was, his glory faded. But John tells us of Jesus.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. 16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*. (Jn. 1:14-18)

The ultimate Prophet, who reveals God, whose glory does not fade, who entered the Most Holy, who is also the High Priest and King, is Jesus. In Islam, the cry is Allah is God, and Muhammad is his prophet. The Bible says, Yahweh is God, and Yeshua is his prophet. But not simply a fallible prophet who reports the Word of God like Moses, but the very Word Himself. The Creator, the Owner, the one through whom God has spoken to us in the last days.

So what should we do, once we have compared and contrasted Jesus and Moses?

III. Continue With Jesus

whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end. (Heb. 3:6)

In verse 1, we were told to carefully consider Jesus, the Builder and the Owner of the Household of God. Now he tells us that we are part of that household, if we meet a certain condition.

Hold fast means to firmly continue in, to maintain. It has the idea of adhering, retaining, firmly. We will see it again in verse 14.

Heb 3:14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,

What does this mean? If Christ is superior to Moses, then those who are partakers of the heavenly calling will cling to Him in faith, retain their trust and belief in Him, and keep believing in Him. Their confidence that He is Messiah, and their rejoicing in the hope He brings, is a way of saying, faith in Christ.

We are in Christ's household if we firmly hold on to Christ. For how long? Verse 6, in the Majority text, says, to the end. To the end of our earthly sojourn, till the race is finished, till your last breath, you continue with Christ.

It's so important to understand how the writer of Hebrews uses these calls to perseverance. He doesn't give them as conditions for retaining your salvation. He gives them as conditions for revealing salvation. He doesn't write, you will one day be partakers of a heavenly calling, and one day make it into the household of God, if you hold fast to Christ. No, he says, we are already partakers of Christ, already part of His household, if we persevere in faith to the end. This is not a condition of achieving salvation, it's a condition for revealing salvation. It's not a condition of how to be saved; it's a condition of finding out if you are. This is the parable of the soils in one verse. Those who fall away, reveal they were never good ground, never that which was planted by the Father.

To say that the writer is telling us we will be saved if we keep hanging on, would contradict two fundamental theses in this book: one, that Christ's work is finished. Two, that Christ perpetually and permanently prays for His people. If your salvation is in a conditional state, then on some level, Christ's sacrifice did not cover whatever future lapse or infringement you might make. Second, if your salvation can be lost, then somehow Christ must at some point have stopped praying for your faith, or the Father having refused to keep you from falling.

No, the way we know we're part of the house is by remaining as part of the house. 31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. (Jn. 8:1)

So, then if you're a true believer, then there's no danger of you falling away? Yes, from God's point of view. But you don't get to see all God sees. You see your life and your faith one day at a time. And if someone claims to have accepted Christ and seems to believe for fifty years, and then denies Him, that person, according to this text, was never part of the household. The person who believes, and keeps believing to the end, always was part of the household.

So if there are two angels watching the race of church history, one might say to another, "All these athletes running this race. Who are the true Christians?" The other says, "the ones that finish". "You mean the ones that drop out stop being Christians?" "No," says the other, "Only God's children finish. He distinguishes them by giving them a perseverance that the devil's children do not have."

So, perhaps someone asks, if you only know a true Christian by who finishes, then how can you have assurance of salvation? Do you only get assurance on the day you die?

No, that's not assurance, that's when faith turns to sight. That's when God's seal on you is made clear.

But you can have assurance today. How? By the fact that you are running today. But the assurance is conditional on cleaving to Christ, and continuing to do so, every day. I have assurance today. But I don't get assurance of salvation today for May 2019. How will I have assurance of salvation in 2019? When May 2019 rolls around, and I'm still continuing with Christ, still running, I will have assurance – God has sustained my faith. I have not drawn back and forsaken Christ. God has given me faith for today, and it is sufficient for me to say, "I am part of the household of faith today."

Spurgeon said on this passage, "Final perseverance is an absolute necessity of a child of God. We do not prove ourselves to be a part of the house if we move about like loose stones."

You won't if you are truly considering Jesus. If you are meditating on His excellence, on His being the only three-office Anointed One, on being superior to the angels, fully God, fully Man, our compassionate High Priest, our great prophet, our true King, you will not look back to the old life. You will not look to the side to other religions, and other options. You will only look forward, to the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus the Messiah.