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## *Into Thy Word Bible Study in Hebrews*

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### ***Hebrews 3:1-6: "Jesus is Greater than Moses!"***

**General idea:** Jesus Christ is God and thus He is greater than the ones who paved the way of faith to the peoples. Moses was the supreme of all prophets, whereas Christ is Lord over all. Moses led the house of Israel, but Christ built it. Jesus is not just a messenger, He is the Message; He is not just our priest; rather, He is The High Priest. He walked this earth to show us who He is and what we can be in Him. He showed us faithfulness; we can show Him our faith too. Likewise, Moses, who walked in faith and trusted in God, modeled a Way for the Jews and all peoples of earth. He was entrusted to lead the house of Israel and so he did by conviction and action. He was the giver of God's law and precepts and deserves our reverence and respect. But, Christ is greater than all, including Moses. For He created Moses and all that there is. Moses is the house and Christ is the builder of that house. Moses was a servant of God whereas Christ is God. Moses was a walking, living illustration of how God works and that He requires from us faith and obedience. Thus, as Moses did and as Christ demonstrated, we too are to remain faithful and true in God, through Christ, by the Way of the Spirit. Seek His truth, consider His precepts, and walk in His ways by trust. Be filled with courage and confidence because of who you are in Him.

### **Contexts and Background:**

This passage points out a major problem in the practice of any religion, here being Judaism. It can easily become an idol. Just as misguided Christians in the Middle Ages sought relics from the holy land, today people seek miracles and signs without substance and/or chase false end time predictions and movements, while the main thing gets left out. The Jews so idolized Moses, they forgot who he was and what he pointed to. Thus, the author carefully points out that Christ is Lord and superior to Moses to realign their focus on the main thing, Christ as Lord. Some Jewish Christian groups, like the Samaritans, thought Moses was an apostle of sort and perhaps superior to Christ Himself. The argument is made very clearly that Moses is to be revered, but he is merely a commissioned messenger; Christ is the Message.

### **Commentary, Word and Phrase Meanings:**

- *Holy brothers.* The title of Christians at this time, meaning those who are sanctified by Christ. The word "Christian" was profane and used by those who hated people who followed Christ and then later, was picked up in a servant stance as the name for those who profess Christ as Lord. Here, it is designating the recipients of this letter and calling them to pay careful attention to what is being said (Acts 1:16; 1 Cor. 3:1; Heb. 3:12; 10:19).

- *Who share.* Means to belong to Christ and in so doing, we can partake of His blessings. It is also a call to hold on to Him and to seek Him—as place Him first in all things and situations. This is an aspect of perseverance by our faith and confidence in Christ, as Moses had confidence in God to use him to lead His people to the promise land.
- *Heavenly calling.* This has several meanings, one being a call to persevere in the faith and grow in Christ. And then to focus on what is important—Christ and our inheritance and reward of heaven to come and not on earthy pursuits. This also denotes our invitation to salvation, which comes from heaven and leads us back to heaven. Our life on earth is a mere shadow to what is most important: Christ, His Kingdom, and Heaven to come (Heb. 9:15; 11:16).
- *Fix your thoughts / consider Jesus.* Means to “contemplate” and/or meditate, as to put your mind upon Christ and do so thoroughly so to increase our fidelity in Christ. This is also a call to eagerly trust Him, as who better can help us deal with life and the challenges we face? Thus, we are to pay attention to Christ and what He has taught, and in all things, have confidence and faith (Matt. 6:33).
- *Apostle.* Means "one who is sent" as in a messenger, as Moses was sent and as the Father sent the Son (Matt. 10:40; 15:24; Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48; John 4:34; 5:24, 30, 36-38; 6:38). This is not referring to the 12 Apostles directly. Jesus is referring here that He is sent by God and faithfully completes His mission. Thus, He is the supreme Apostle who then sends and leads all others in Him apostles and us. Moses was sent to lead his people out of slavery and Christ was sent to lead us out of the slavery of sin (Mark 6:30; John 6:38; 20:21; 1 Cor. 1:1; Heb. 2:14-15; 4:3-9; 10: 5-10).
- *High priest.* Here referring that Moses and Christ had direct access to God face to face, Moses as the servant and Christ as the Creator. This was also the role of Aaron and his lineage who did so ceremonially, to mediate man’s sin and to please God by making atonement—a shadow to what Christ does for us permanently (Num. 12:8; Heb. 1:2,10).
- *We confess/profession.* It means our “confession of faith,” that we make a lasting pledge that transcends our will so as we are living a life that is bought by Christ, we live for Christ by our word and our deeds through His Word and Spirit by faith and obedience (Rom. 12:1-3; 2 Cor. 9:13; 1 Tim. 6:12-13; Heb. 4:14; 10:23-25, 35-36).
- *He was faithful.* This is a form of *Midrash*: giving or pointing to a precept of a text without citing the text (how the Jews interpreted Scripture). In Judaism, meaning God honors Moses, thus he is important and is to be respected. It is a call for us to be faithful stewards of His principles and Way. In Judaism, this also pointed to the Sabbath rest we receive in eternity that is our reward. This Jewish prelude

may also been messianic, pointing to the “salvation-rest” of Christ's redemption (Num. 12:7-8; 1 Chron. 17:4).

- *Jesus has been found worthy.* From Deuteronomy 18:15-18, Moses' faithfulness had no parallel; Jesus demonstrated His faithfulness as Moses and as the text predicted. The question to us now is, how do you demonstrate being an authentic?
- *Greater honor than Moses.* To the Jews, Moses was the greatest human being ever, even more than Abraham. He gave the law, saved them from slavery, set up their traditions and priesthood, and remained loyal and faithful to God in the midst of adversity.
- *Builder of a house.* A statement of Christ being Divine and distinct from the Father. Also a contrast of God's house and a mere building, and to say how foolish to think someone who was created is greater than the Creator. Jesus is the actual builder of the house of Israel and the Kingdom of God, while Moses was merely playing a part in it.
- *Said in the future.* Moses foresaw and predicted the messianic future fulfilled in Christ (Num. 12:7-8).
- *A servant/faithful in all God's house.* Moses was a unique servant in God's house; Christ is the Servant leader to the universe and Church. Both deserve dignity and respect, but Christ is worthy of reverence and worship (Num. 12:7).
- *Faithful.* This denotes the acceptance of God's truth and more, by being submitted to them and Him. This is the essence of obedience from our trust relationship with God as demonstrated by Moses and Jesus Christ.
- *Testifying.* The Law, Tabernacle, and Moses' primary roles were to point to God's holiness, His regulations, and thus humanity's need for redemption and a Savior—who was Christ to come. Moses was the deliver paving the way for The Deliverer (John 5:46-47; Heb. 9:8-11, 24; 10:1).
- *A son over God's house.* Distinct contrast, as Moses was in the house and Christ is over the house. In Jewish tradition, the eldest son took over the family estate and/or business; he was the sole or primary heir. Here, Christ is Heir of all things. God's house was not the Tabernacle or Temple; it was God's people and Christ the Shepherd of us all: those who are His faithful, the faithful remnant of Israel, and then those who accepted Christ (Heb. 10:21).
- *We are his house.* The house is God's people, The Church, which is made up of the people who profess Christ and live faithful lives (1 Sam. 2:35; 2 Sam. 7:16; Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:5).

- *Hold on to/hold fast.* If we belong to God, then we are called to respond to God by living by faith and trust in Christ. Our faith proves what He has done in us, when we persevere through life, we show Christ to the world (Psalm 95; Heb. 6:11; 10:23).
- *Courage and the hope.* Determination of faith is the characteristic of a faithful child of God. This is a call to persevere, which reveals the depth of our character and trust in our Lord. If we do not come through trials stronger in Him and a better use for others, something is very wrong in our spiritual lives and our thinking process. Like the Parable of the Sower, our faith did not take root and the wind blew us away perhaps because we were never a Christian in the first place (Matt. 13: 24-43).
- *Boast/rejoice.* The Christian life is one of hope, wonder, excitement, and contentment. He is our all in all so we can have the confidence and distinction to *be glad in it* (1 Chronicles 16:10-11; Psalm 16:11; 37:4; 92:2-3; 97:1; 118:24; Matt. 5:12; John 10:10; 15:11; 16:33).

### **Devotional Thoughts and Applications:**

This passage gives us a call to our spiritual formation; and to do so, we must think, study, and ponder how His principles are to affect and impact us as He is Christ the Lord. We are to see Him, believe in Him, know Him, and thus obey Him so our entire life is infused in Him and His Way. Thus, we are called to make this happen by seeking His truth, His teachings, and to walk in His ways by trust. We are then called to do this with hope because He gives us the confidence to have courage and empowerment of faith, all because of who we are in Christ (Rom. 12:1-2; Heb. 2:9; 12:1-2).

Jesus understands us and the ways and opportunities and obstacles of life in a fallen world; He knows the temptations of sin, what we feel, and how to praise God. He is sympathetic with our plight in life and is concerned what we do with all that we face. He is our example and the One upon whom we are to focus. Are you sensitive to Him? Do you pay close attention to the reality and veracity of Christ? To His Word and precepts? If not, what is in your way that could possibly be greater?

### **The Essential Inductive Questions** (for more Inductive questions see [Inductive Bible Study](#)):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?

8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

***Additional Questions:***

1. Who is the most important person you have ever met? A celebrity, political figure, or? How did it feel to meet them?
2. Why is it people are attracted to fame and celebrities? How does this affect your faith and Christian life?
3. How have you seen Christians demonstrate to you how to remain faithful and true in Christ? How have you done so to others?
4. How has Christ been greater in you over the years? Who are the people in your life that paved the way of faith to you and others? How should they be honored?
5. How is Christ your High Priest? What have you done to demonstrate who He is and what others can be too?
6. Can you think of a walking, living illustration of how God works and what He requires of us? How do your faith and obedience grow by the motivation and example of others?
7. Since our reality on earth is only a mere shadow to heaven, how are you encouraged and strengthened?
8. What are some of the consequences you have seen of a lack of obedience and faith?
9. How are you filled with courage and confidence? What can your church do to encourage and equip you?
10. Do you pay careful attention to what is being said by His Word and Spirit? Do you consider and contemplate on His precepts?
11. How does Jesus get you through life? How could He do this better? What do you need to do?
12. What have you observed as a major problem in the practice of any religion? How can Christianity easily become an idol? What can you do to make sure it is not so for you and those God has entrusted you with?