

II. THE DEMANDS OF CHRIST'S SUPERIORITY (Hebrews 3:7-19)

A. The Reference from the Past (Hebrews 3:7-11)

1. The association of the reference—"Wherefore" (Hebrews 3:7)
 - a. The verse opens with the word *Wherefore* and immediately goes into a parenthetical statement.
 - b. The parenthetical statement extends from verse 7 to verse 11, and is entirely made up of a quote from an Old Testament passage.
 - (1) The Bible makes parenthetical statements in at least two ways.
 - a) With offsetting parentheses (i.e., Genesis 35:18)
 - b) With offsetting commas (i.e., Hebrews 1:1-2)
 - (2) Parenthetical statements are inserted with purpose, but are not necessary for the understanding of the passage.
 - (3) That being said, the passage before us reads as "Wherefore...Take heed, brethren," (Hebrews 3:7, 12).
 - c. The word *Wherefore* refers back to the last phrase in Hebrews 3:6.
2. The passage of the reference (Hebrews 3:7-11; Psalm 95:7-11)
 - a. The author of the passage
 - (1) An unnamed human penman
 - (2) The Holy Ghost (Hebrews 3:7; see also 2 Samuel 23:2; Acts 1:16; Acts 28:25; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21)
 - a) The men were moved
 - i) The men used of God to give us the Bible are never said to have been inspired. However, the Bible does teach that the men were "moved" (2 Peter 1:21).
 - ii) When the Bible says that these men were moved, it means they did not speak of their own will, but their words were dictated by the Holy Ghost.
 - iii) These men had no ultimate control over what they spoke (as pertaining to the scripture) but were moved, manipulated, and controlled by God.
 - iv) The extent of control God exercised over the men is mentioned in several passages.
 - (a) When Moses proclaimed his inability to speak, God rebuked him and let him know that He could work through a willing servant (Exodus 4:10-12).
 - (b) The words proceeding out of Jeremiah's mouth were put there by God (Jeremiah 1:6-9).
 - (c) This truth is confirmed by David's confession (2 Samuel 23:2).
 - b) The words are from the Holy Ghost
 - i) The medium through which God communicates with mankind is words.
 - ii) The Bible plainly teaches that the words given were from the Holy Ghost (Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; Acts 28:25; 1 Corinthians 2:13; Hebrews 3:7).

- b. The comparison of the passage
 - (1) Verse 7
 - a) “To day if ye will hear his voice,” (Psalm 95:7)
 - b) “To day if ye will hear his voice,” (Hebrews 3:7)
 - (2) Verse 8
 - a) “Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, *and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:*” (Psalm 95:8)
 - b) “Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:” (Hebrews 3:8)
 - (3) Verse 9
 - a) ”When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.” (Psalm 95:9)
 - b) “When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.” (Hebrews 3:9)
 - (4) Verse 10
 - a) ”Forty years long was I grieved with *this* generation, and said, *It is* a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:” (Psalm 95:10)
 - b) “Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways.” (Hebrews 3:10)
 - (5) Verse 11
 - a) ”Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.” (Psalm 95:11)
 - b) “So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)” (Hebrews 3:11)
 - c. The source of the source
 - (1) The day of temptation in the wilderness (Hebrews 3:8); Note: This statement alone points the Bible student to the wilderness wanderings (Exodus 17:2, 7; Numbers 14:22; Deuteronomy 6:16; Psalm 78:18, 40-41, 56; Psalm 106:14).
 - (2) When the fathers tempted the Lord, proved Him, and saw His works forty years (Hebrews 3:9)
 - d. The historical admonition—“Harden not your hearts” (Hebrews 3:8)
 - e. The historical example referenced (Hebrews 3:8b-11)
 - (1) As in the provocation (Hebrews 3:8b; see Psalm 78:40-41)
 - (2) As in the day of temptation in the wilderness (Hebrews 3:8b)
 - (3) When the fathers tempted the Lord (Hebrews 3:9)
 - (4) When the fathers proved the Lord (Hebrews 3:9)
 - (5) When the fathers saw His works for forty years (Hebrews 3:9)
 - (6) The Lord was grieved with that generation (Hebrews 3:10).
 - (7) God swore the people would not enter into rest (Hebrews 3:11).
- 3. The purpose of the passage
 - a. The present danger of hard hearts (Hebrews 3:8)
 - b. The present likeness to the wilderness wanderings (Hebrews 3:8-9)
 - c. The concern for entering into rest (Hebrews 3:11)

B. The Warning in the Present (Hebrews 3:12-15a)

1. Take heed (Hebrews 3:12)

a. The audience of the warning—"brethren"

- (1) The initial thought would be that this is a continuation of the original audience of "holy brethren" (Hebrews 3:1).
- (2) However, there is reason to believe that the audience is broadened with the exclusion of the word "holy", because the latter part of this chapter and the first part of the next are going to include warnings for those who fail to exercise faith in the gospel of Christ (see Hebrews 4:1-2).
- (3) In fact, the remainder of this chapter and a good portion of the next major on Israel's failure to enter the land of promise (see Numbers 13:1-2, 16-33; Numbers 14:1-39). With that being said, it is imperative to consider the nature of this historical event.
 - a) The command to search the land (Numbers 13:1-3)—initially requested by the Israelites (Deuteronomy 1:20-23)
 - b) The choosing of the spies (Numbers 13:4-16)
 - c) The mission of the spies (Numbers 13:17-20); Note: Moses emphasized the land and its provision according to God's promises. Half of God's promise was that they were coming to a land flowing with milk and honey. If this half was true, then certainly God would fulfil the second half of His promise—that He would give them the land.
 - d) The carrying out of the mission (Numbers 13:21-25)
 - e) The report of the mission (Numbers 13:26-33)
 - f) The rebellion of the people (Numbers 14:1-4)
 - g) The pleading of God's men (Numbers 14:5-9)
 - h) The rejection of God's people (Numbers 14:10)
 - i) The anger of the Lord (Numbers 14:11-12)
 - j) The mediatorship of Moses (Numbers 14:13-19; Psalm 106:23-26)
 - k) The judgment of the Lord (Numbers 14:20-24)
 - l) The new plan from the Lord (Numbers 14:25-39)
 - m) Note: Faithlessness was the sin that kept the Israelites from entering the land of promise (Hebrews 3:19).
 - i) Their faithlessness was identified as "whoredom" because they chose to believe the evil report of spies over the words of God (Numbers 14:33).
 - ii) Consider the things said in Numbers 14 concerning faithlessness (Numbers 14:9, 11, 19, 27, 37).
 - n) Note: These people followed Moses out of Egypt, but their hearts were still in Egypt. In other words, they left Egypt because of the signs, but never had a relationship with the Saviour that brought them out of Egypt. The same was true of many Hebrews in the New Testament.

- b. The concern of the warning
 - (1) Lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief
 - a) Historically, this was said of those who (Hebrews 3:10)
 - i) Always erred in their hearts
 - ii) Did not know God's ways
 - b) At present, the warning was to those who might come short of trusting Christ as Saviour, though they had initially followed Him because of the signs or initial appreciation of His teachings and message.
 - (2) In departing from the living God
 - a) There remained no sacrifice for sins for those who refused the gospel and grace of Christ (Hebrews 10:26-29).
 - b) God would have no pleasure in the souls that drew back (Hebrews 10:38-39).
 - c) There would be no escape for those who turned away (Hebrews 12:25).
- 2. Exhort one another (Hebrews 3:13)
 - a. The recipients of exhortation—"one another"
 - (1) The Jews as a whole were not open to Gentile conversion much less Gentile ministers.
 - (2) If someone was going to effectively exhort these early Jews, it would have to be other Jews (Hebrews 10:24-25).
 - b. The frequency of exhortation—"daily, while it is called To day;"
 - c. The concern of exhortation
 - (1) Lest any of you be hardened
 - (2) Through the deceitfulness of sin
- 3. Be steadfast (Hebrews 3:14)
 - a. The present truth—"we are made partakers of Christ,"
 - (1) As stated previously, the word *partakers*, in and of itself, does not suggest that people were saved.
 - (2) The idea of partaking is a common thread in Hebrews and must be considered in light of its surrounding context. Consider Hebrews 2:14 for the scriptural definition of *partake*.
 - a) Partakers of the heavenly calling (Hebrews 3:1)
 - b) Partakers of Christ (Hebrews 3:14)
 - c) Partakers of the Holy Ghost (Hebrews 6:4)
 - d) Partakers of chastisement (Hebrews 12:8)
 - e) Partakers of His holiness (Hebrews 12:10)
 - (3) However, in this context the phrase "*made partakers of Christ*" does seem to suggest salvation.
 - b. The future proof—"if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;"
- 4. Harden not your hearts (Hebrews 3:15a)
 - a. The suggestion of a time constraint—"While it is said,"
 - b. The time suggested—"To day"
 - c. The remedy of a hard heart—"if ye will hear his voice"
 - d. The outcome of refusal to heed—"harden not your hearts"

C. The Example of Old (Hebrews 3:15b-19)

1. The division in the days of Moses (Hebrews 3:15b-16)
 - a. The identification of the time—"as in the provocation" (Hebrews 3:15b)
 - (1) The Lord warned the people not to provoke the angel sent before them in their wilderness journey (Exodus 23:20-21).
 - (2) The Lord confirmed that Israel did indeed provoke Him by not trusting Him to enter the land of promise (Numbers 14:11, 23).
 - (3) Even though the focus of this provocation is likely found in Numbers 14, the children of Israel continued to provoke the Lord. (See also Psalm 78:17, 40, 56, 58.)
 - a) From Egypt to the Jordan (Deuteronomy 9:7)
 - i) In Horeb (Deuteronomy 9:8-21; Exodus 32:1-35)
 - ii) At Taberah, Massah, Kibrothhattaavah (Deuteronomy 9:22)
 - (a) Taberah (see Numbers 11:1-3)
 - (b) Massah (see Exodus 17:7; Deuteronomy 6:16)
 - (c) Kibrothhattaavah (see Numbers 11:31-34)
 - iii) At Kadeshbarnea (Deuteronomy 9:23; Deuteronomy 1:19-33)
 - b. The identification of those dissenting (Hebrews 3:16)
 - (1) Their number—"For some"
 - (2) Their opportunity—"when they had heard"
 - (3) Their choice—"did provoke"
 - c. The identification of those believing (Hebrews 3:16)
 - (1) Not all that came out of Egypt by Moses
 - (2) For example, ...
 - a) Moses (Not mentioned because of the foreknowledge of God)
 - b) Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 14:30)
 - c) Their little ones (Numbers 14:29, 31); Note: These did not necessarily believe, but were not charged with the consequences of unbelief.
2. The dissenters grieving the Lord (Hebrews 3:17)
 - a. The question of the dissenters—"with whom was he grieved forty years"
 - b. The suggestion of dissent—"was it not with them that had sinned"
 - c. The consequences of dissent—"whose carcasses fell in the wilderness"
3. The consequences of the dissenters (Hebrews 3:18)
 - a. The issue at hand—they "believed not"
 - b. The outcome—He "sware...that they should not enter into his rest"
4. The example to the present audience (Hebrews 3:19)
 - a. So we see
 - b. They could not enter in because of unbelief.