

Making much of Jesus

present-day lessons from the letter to the Hebrews

Although written to Jews who had trusted in Jesus, and although drawing regularly on Old Testament references, the letter to the Hebrews has a very pressing contemporary significance.

This series of studies is intended to stir in our hearts both a deepening delight and a growing confidence in all that Jesus is and has done, imparting to us the fortitude and strength we need to serve Him faithfully in today's world.

You can find the background to this short series [here](#).

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4. Heading home (Heb.3.1-19)

[w/b Sunday 22nd September 2019]

“.. Today if you hear His voice ..”

Having highlighted who Jesus is by stressing first His divine glory (chapter 1) and then His full humanity (chapter 2), the writer now starts to explain what Jesus does.

By comparing Jesus with Moses the writer means us to see what Jesus has come to do as a great deliverance out of slavery and into freedom, out of the dominion of darkness and into the kingdom of God.

[Before attending a Community Group try on your own to consider all 7 questions - even though your Group may concentrate on just some of them. Key questions in this study are probably 2, 6 and 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. Read Hebrews 3.1-19. Start this study by reading through the whole passage: as ever there's real benefit in seeing the overall thrust of what the writer is eager for his readers to learn.

In a sentence, what is the message which comes through to you from this chapter?

What parts of the chapter encourage you, and what parts challenge you?

2. Read Hebrews 3.1. The writer has helped us to see Jesus for who He is through the opening two chapters: the exhortation now to fix our eyes on Jesus points us to what He does.

What from the first two chapters has most impressed itself upon you in relation to who Jesus is?

What are we to understand by "*the heavenly calling*" in which, as Christians, we share?

Why do you think the writer describes Jesus here as our "*apostle and high priest*"?

3. Read Hebrews 3.2-6. The writer draws a comparison here between Moses and Jesus to help us understand what it is that Jesus has come to do.

How does the ministry which Moses exercised shed light on the ministry which Jesus fulfils?

In what ways is Jesus similar to, and in what ways is He markedly different from, Moses, according to these verses?

4. Read Hebrews 3.7-8. A primary concern of the writer is to encourage and help his readers to 'hold firm to (their) confidence..': he draws on another OT quote to make his point.

What lessons about Scripture do you learn from the fact that the words of the psalmist (probably David) are here ascribed to the Holy Spirit?

That God speaks is a basic truth about Him (Heb.1.1): as you've 'heard His voice' through our 3 previous studies what specific steps have you taken by way of response?

5. Read Hebrews 3.7-11. Forty years of Israel's history are compressed into a few verses in Psalm 95 which the writer now quotes: there's a basic lesson he wants his readers to learn!

From what you know of the story how did the 'rebellion' of the people of Israel show itself during 'the time of testing in the wilderness'?

God had promised the land to His people - but here we're told that He '*declared on oath*' that this people would never enter it: how do you square these two?

6. Read Hebrews 3.12-15. It is for our instruction that the Scriptures have been given: thus the writer now applies the text he's been quoting to the circumstances of his readers.

Why do you think those who've been believers start to 'turn away from the living God'?

What practical step does the writer suggest we can take to avoid the failure of the people of Israel - and what might that look like for you?

7. Read Hebrews 3.16-19. The argument of the previous verses is now brought to a head with a series of rhetorical questions all of which point to a basic truth: no faith - no entry.

One of the writer's favourite 'pictures' is that of entering God's rest: how does that help you understand God's salvation in Jesus?

In what did the 'unbelief' of the Israelites consist? How might a similar 'unbelief' on our part find expression?