

V. 1. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;"

Now, based upon the "glory" of the Son, in chapter 1, and "the death" of the Son in order to redemption of sinners, in Chapter 2, the writer says, "Wherefore", that is, since these things are true, and due to the great salvation which depends upon their being true, the children of God are exhorted to "consider" him in whom "God -----hath -----spoken" ( Heb. 1:1-2)

He says, "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling". Such as these by reason of their calling, are able to behold the wonderful things to which the writer refers. As to the unconverted, "he hath no form nor comeliness ---- no beauty" (Isa. 53:2), but to them "which believe, he is the preciousness" (Margin)(I Pet. 2:7).

They are called "holy brethren". They are "brethren" because the relationship rested upon the redemption provided by Christ through sacrifice. As Christ said, "my brethren" ( Heb. 2:12), and he was not ashamed to own them as such ( Heb. 2:11). They were "the many sons" of Heb. 2:10. They were called "holy" because they were "sanctified" (Heb. 2:11), "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once" (Heb. 10:10), "by which he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). Thus they are spoken of as "sanctified in Christ Jesus" (I Cor. 1:2) "by God" (Jude 1), "by the Spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:11). The whole transaction is spoken of as follows: "God hath ----chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our gospel" (II Thess. 2:13-14). Another similar text, but worded differently, is I Pet. 1:2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ".

1. "Elect", here, corresponding to "chosen" in Thessalonians.
2. "sanctification of the Spirit", same in both texts.
3. "belief", corresponding to "obedience" in Thessalonians.
4. "blood", corresponding to the purging element in "the gospel".

All of whom this is true are "holy brethren", as in our text. Brethren, because in the realm of redemption. Holy, because of the means by which the relationship was effected. This has nothing to do with the sanctification required of those already saved, and for which they are responsible as in I Thess. 4:3-I Pet. 1:15-16.

Notice, now, "partakers of the heavenly calling". The word "partakers" here, is the same as that in V. 14. The word is translated "fellows" in Heb. 1:9. It means, a participant. It is translated from "METOCNOS", signifying, sharing in, partaking of, it is translated "partners" in Luke 5:7. In our text, "the Holy brethren" are seen to "share in the heavenly calling". No one else does.

This calling is heavenly. Our Father is there (Luke 11:2). Our Saviour is there (Heb. 9:24), our citizenship is there (Phil. 3:20, our home is there (Jno. 14:2), our treasures are there (Matt. 6:20), our affection is there (Col. 3:1-2). Let us then "consider the apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."

The word "Consider" means to "look carefully into".

(1) "The Apostle". In this place alone, Christ is actually named "the Apostle". The truth which reveals his mission as such, is repeatedly set forth, but he is actually so named only here. He is called "the messenger of the covenant" in Mal. 3:1. Concerning him it is written, "The Father sent the Son" (I Jno. 4:14). The word "Apostle" means "one sent forth". As "the Apostle", Christ was sent of God to us, who spake in Son that we might have an understanding (Heb. 1:1-2)(I Jno. 5:20).

(2) The "High Priest". Christ represents us before the Father. Thus, as "the Apostle", he speaks to us for God, while as "High Priest", he speaks to God for us. Blessed sufficiency is found in this twofold ministry, manward and Godward, through our Lord Jesus Christ. As the priesthood of Christ will come up fully, later, we pass on now to "our profession".

The A. S. V. translates it "our confession". Confession or profession, is not necessarily possession, yet the Child of God is to hold fast his "confession", regardless of how many may confess, and act the hypocrite in so doing. Christ said, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whoso shall deny me before men, him will I

also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10: 32-33). We read that "Peter denied him" (Luke 22: 57). What does this mean then, in the light of Matt. 10: 32-33? It simply means that while the child of God on earth denies the Saviour by testimony of mouth or life before men, he is denied the benefit of the testimony of the High Priest before God in heaven. Let the believer repent of this denial, and get right with God, and the ministry of the High Priest in his behalf becomes active again.

We are seeing, in our age, before the scoffing skeptical spirit of men in general, for the things of God, a spirit of denial, failure to speak out against the sins of our day, and for the truth of God, and failure in personal holiness according to that truth. The result? Powerless churches, comprised of men and women who lack the courage to speak out against the trend of the times, even when the things they see and hear sicken their souls, even as the filth of Satan vexed the soul of Lot. Like Lot, however, we say, What can we do against such hosts? The answer is, be faithful in "our profession" to "the Apostle and High Priest" of it. Let us prayerfully "consider" him. All he requires of us is not to straighten the world out, but keep ourselves straight in it, so that he can, to the glory of his name, demonstrate in a gainsaying world, that his grace, through the obedience of a loving people, can conquer every foe and cause the weak to defeat the mighty. Nothing disturbs the world more than a man blessed of God. Think on this. If the world sees among the people of God, evidence of the same fears it has, it supposes that we have nothing worth sacrificing the pleasures of time and this world, to obtain, but when God's people sing out of hearts overflowing with the sense of God's goodness, grace and mercy, the world trembles. When the people of God evidence their liberty, the world has a sense of it's chains. One who is made conscious of his chains, will most likely seek to be free. It is not our business to be professional laugh makers, but rather, by contrast, convince the world of it's misery. A free people, in the blessedness of that freedom, will sing and praise God under the most miserable circumstances, Consider Paul and Silas, and such behavior troubles the world. The world needs to be troubled, and such troublers are needed. It was said of Paul and Silas, "These men ----do exceedingly trouble our city" (Acts 16:20). Such as believed not, said of them, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also" (Acts 17:6). "Our profession" will be most likely to appear most precious as we obey the exhortation to "consider the Apostle and High Priest of "it. When we consider" him, all that he expects of us will become important, most important. If this is not our conviction concerning our profession, then we haven't considered him. Have we?

V. 2. "Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house."

The Son was "faithful to him that appointed him", that is, a "faithful high priest in things pertaining to God" (Heb. 2:17). The Son was faithful as an Apostle from God to man, in the revelation of his will. "Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness" (Rev. 1:5), and he is faithful in behalf of man to God as High Priest (I Jno. 1:9) (Heb. 4: 16). Notice again, that it is through his work in our behalf that we are enabled to "hold fast our profession" (Heb. 4:14), and that "without wavering" (Heb. 10:23). Why? "for he is faithful that promised" (Heb. 10:23). We can safely depend on his promises. Let us therefore "hold fast our profession" in order to claim these promises made to the obedience of the children of God. Christ was faithful to God in the accomplishment of his will as the Apostle and High Priest of his appointment. He could say, "I do always those things that please him" (Jno. 8:29), on the way to the accomplishment of his appointments, and finally say, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (Jno. 17:4). The work had reference to all that was necessary to qualify Christ as the High Priest of our profession. Here distinguish between the work of Christ, as to the offices of Apostle and Priest, as to the sphere of their operation. Christ came to earth, that is, he was sent of the Father, and he spake on earth as "the apostle", and upon the fulfillment of the testimony of the prophets, "That Christ should suffer he hath so fulfilled" (Acts 3:18), and then since "If he were on earth, he should not be a priest" (Heb. 8:4), he went back to heaven, and sat down at the right of God, "Now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24). The absolute faithfulness of Christ is seen in both spheres. The "faithful witness" of God to men as "the apostle of our profession" and a "faithful high priest" for "the holy brethren" before God in heaven, He was, is, and shall ever be, faithful to all appointments. On this we can depend.

Would that he were able to depend on us.

Notice now that Christ is said to be "faithful ----as also Moses was faithful. Does this mean that Moses was faithful as Christ was faithful? Has any man ever been faithful as Christ is faithful? Surely no one would so contend. Yet our text seems to say so. What is the solution? Well, Christ is seen to be faithful in a spiritual sense, involving the revelation of truth, and the blessing of such as received it, accomplishing in his own person all that was necessary to that end, while Moses is considered as one faithful in following the blue print in the construction of a house (the tabernacle), the typical truth of which set forth the very work which Christ accomplished. It is written, "Thus did Moses according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he" (Ex. 40:16); yet to this same man God said, "die in the mount ----because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel" (Deut. 32:50-51). What then does Ex. 40:16 mean? It means that Moses built the tabernacle according to instructions and was therefore faithful as a servant "in all his house", so that that house did what God designed it to do in representing his Son. The Son was absolutely faithful in everything, represented by that house, necessary to enable the worshipper to approach God, and he was also absolutely holy and perfect in his own being, hence a greater than Moses is seen in him whom we are challenged to "consider the apostle and High Priest of our profession". When we see him as he is made known in the testimony which God gave of His Son, we see "the glorious God and our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ" and in so seeing, surely we must fall at his feet and worship. Moses was "faithful in all his house", but he who was greater than Moses was faithful "over his own house", which we shall show is not made with hands, to which he is the perfect example, leading us to glory. Surely his glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the Sea.

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"HEBREWS"

(3:3-6).

V. 3. "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."

As we study the life and work of Moses, we can understand why we have reference to the "glory of Moses". The history of his life, reveals the hand of God in his preservation. His character is a marvelous expression of God's power in forming human affection and faithfulness. His position as mediator of the Old Covenant was characterized by faithfulness to his appointment. God spake to Israel through him as no other in the Old Testament dispensation. God used him to catch up on his past creative acts, that is, Moses wrote the history of them. He was so great as a prophet that God likened his Son to him as such "like unto me", he said (Deut. 18:18). His accomplishments were again the display of the divine through him. The deliverance in Egypt, the Red sea passage, the wilderness journeyings. God gave the ten commandments and the whole law by him. Moses was worthy of glory, but our text says of Christ, that he "was counted worthy of more glory than Moses". This superiority is predicated of the greatness of the builder over what is built. Now notice: although Moses was used of God to construct the house, he was merely a part of that which he constructed, that is, he himself was a type with the house. The actual builder was pre-incarnate Christ. "By him were all things created" (Col. 1:16), "all things were made by him" (Jno. 1:3). Therefore, anything brought into existence according to divine instruction for divine purposes, is said to be "of him (God) through him (Christ)" (Rom. 11:36), "for him" (Col. 1:16). The house which Moses built was "according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount" (Heb. 8:5). Christ was the author of the "pattern" and the architect is greater than the building, as the building depends on the pattern. Christ, the builder, author of the pattern, has more honor than the house, which as a type of "better things to come" included Moses, who in certain ways typified Christ.

V. 4. "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God."

This affirms that wherever one finds a building, in the sense of the tabernacle, the proof of design, demanding intelligence, is present. If atheists, upon seeing a building, presuppose the action of intelligence, they ought, upon beholding the universe, presuppose divine intelligence: "Every house is builded by some man", but no man would have built the tabernacle, because it does not make sense, apart from the sense which God attributed to it. It makes sense in every part in the light of the truth, that is, in consideration of what God has revealed as to the typical significance of it's every part. The typical sense, however, depended not on the intelligence of Moses, because neither Moses nor any of the other prophets told us what all of the parts represented, but on the truth of Jesus Christ, for therein do we behold fully the teaching of the tabernacle, thus we read that the law was "not the very image of the things" of which it was "a shadow" (Heb. 10:1), although "the prophets have inquired and searched diligently" (1 Pet. 1:10), "they --- have not seen" (Jno. 20:29), what the shadow represented, yet they believed and were blessed.

Our text continues, "He that built all things is God". God was the architect, the author of the design of the house which Moses erected to typify our Lord in his redemptive work and our means of access unto God. God also "made", and that without hands, that which fulfilled the type (Heb. 10:5, 10, 20).

Keep in mind that "every house is builded by some man".

(1) "If it is a material house, it was builded by some man said to be "the image --- of God" (1 Cor. 11:7), that is, the building reflects the intelligence which God gave, of all his creatures, to man alone. The many buildings built by men reflect what the animal kingdom, in the building of it's places of habitation, never reflect, that is diversity. Instinct is not intelligence. A house presupposes intelligent action.

(2). If it is a spiritual building, God has built it. "And such a building can only be known by the word of God. The divine workmanship in the spiritual realm can only be discerned in the spiritual blessings experienced in the good pleasure of God. Since the overt obedience of the Christian must be conjoined with a corresponding spirit of worship, only the one so acting can discern for

himself the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe" (Eph. 1:19). Whether or not one is "strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16), is certainly known only to such as are thus strengthened, although the evidence of it may be discerned by others to a certain extent. In spiritual building we have (1) God as the workman (Phil. 2:13)(Heb. 13:20-21). (2) The word of God as the blue print according to which he works. (Rom. 8:2)(I Thess. 2:13), and (3) the love of God prompting response in the person wrought upon. (Gal. 5:6)(Rom. 5:5)(Jno. 14:23).

V. 5. "And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;"

The faithfulness of Moses is commended as a servant. As such, Moses did what God told him to do in the matter of building so as to represent accurately what he proposed to do in "the latter times", or "the last days" of Heb. 1:1. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (I Cor. 4:2). One ought to be faithful in anything that is entrusted to him, but especially is this true in spiritual matters. Paul had reference to "the mysteries of God" entrusted to "ministers of Christ" (I Cor. 4:1). This ministry has been entrusted since the close of the inspired Canon of scripture to the churches (II Cor. 5:18), as "the pillar and the ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15), carrying out the commission of Matt. 28:19-20, in the interest of the souls of men in the light of eternity. Shall we be less faithful regarding the truth, than was Moses in relationship to the representation of what we now have? Moses was faithful, yet he died for trespassing. How could this be? Well, he built the house exactly as God directed, thus he was faithful, but when he violated the will of God, he was judged as were others. Notice that the faithfulness of Moses, as related to the house, was "for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after". When he built the house, he did it as God commanded, and in so doing, the divine interest was represented; then when God's Son, to whom the testimony pointed, spake in these last days, the speech and deeds were exactly as typically represented. Moses' sin was in striking the rock which represented Christ, when God told him to speak to it. In Exodus 17:6, God had told Moses to strike the rock, but in Num. 20:8, God told him to "speak----unto the rock", but Moses "smote the rock twice", v. 11, and God told him he would not bring the children of Israel into Canaan, v. 12.

- (1) The Rock was Christ, according to I Cor. 10:4.
- (2) In being smitten, according to Ex. 17:6, it represented Christ as crucified.
- (3) In being spoken to, it would have represented Christ as approached by his people in making known their requests (Nu. 20:8). Moses, therefore, by his disobedience, misrepresented the truth, which, however, was not in "the house" which he built, and in which he was faithful as a servant.

V. 6. "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."

While Moses was a servant in a typical house designed to represent "better things to come", Christ is "son over his own house; whose house are we." Just as Israel deprived herself of the blessings of God by reason of her unfaithfulness to the truth which the house represented, which Moses built, so may "the house" over which Christ is head. The seven churches of Asia in Rev. 2 & 3, show how this may be done.

(1) Let us consider Christ as "Son over his own house". He is "head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1:22), "Christ is the head of the Church" (Eph. 5:23). It is his own house, because he "purchased it with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). The Church in Ephesus, over which Christ is "head", was said to be his "purchased possession" (Eph. 1:14). Paul said to "The Church of God at Corinth" (I Cor. 1:2), "ye are bought with a price" (I Cor. 6:20), and so he taught "in all churches" (I Cor. 7:17). Peter, in addressing a "spiritual house" (I Pet. 2:5), "the house of God" (I Pet. 4:17), "the flock of God" (I Pet. 5:2), said, "ye were ---redeemed----with the precious blood of Christ" (I Pet. 1:18-19). Thus we see why and how Christ is "over his own house".

- (2) "Whose house are we".

This speaks not to all Israel, but those from among Israel, said to be "par-

takers of the heavenly calling", thus called, "Holy brethren". (Heb. 3:1). Notice here, Paul tells such brethren that they are "partakers of the heavenly calling", while in writing to the Church of Ephesus, comprised of converted gentiles, he said, "ye are ----fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19). The only house Christ has in this world is the church. Tragically true it is, however, that too often he says, "I stand at the door and knock" (Rev. 3:20). It is the business of a church to conduct itself so as to enable its' head to occupy his proper relation to it, as the object of its worship, as the voice of its authority, and the inspiration of its zeal and activities.

(3) Thus we are brought to the condition of the relationship, "If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end". The word "end" here means "to set out for a definite point or goal." The goal for the church is arrived at through "the unity of the faith" (Eph. 4:13), and "the unity of the spirit" (Eph. 4:3), where such "unity" exists, the goal is reached, and the blessing enjoyed. The house is what it ought to be when the "end" for which it presently exists is obtained. This is our responsibility under God. If the conditions of worship are not met, the blessings promised to acceptable worship are not obtained.

(1) The worshippers are to hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing. Notice first "the confidence". This is based on the knowledge of the will of the head for the conduct of the members of the household. Our confidence can be no stronger than the assurance that our ways please him who is "head over the house". "His will" furnishes the basis of confidence (I Jno. 5:14)(I Thess. 5:18), by which we learn how "to please" him (I Thess. 4:1-2).

(2) His good pleasure is relayed unto us, by what he does in us when our ways please the Lord. This involves the "rejoicing" of the text. Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and is experienced when believers "walk in the spirit" (Gal. 5:22, 25).

(3). Hope is that which involves the ultimate outcome of the course which we follow. It "saves" us now (Rom. 8:24-25), in view of the distressing circumstances of the pilgrims path, and points us toward the "city ----whose builder and maker is God". Hope discounts the distresses of present circumstances and fixes its adoring gaze on the realization of the Saviours prayer, that we "be with him" where he is" (Jno. 17:24)..

We shall enlarge on "the house" when we get to the 10th chapter of Hebrews. Here we seek but to show just cause for the declaration of the superiority of "the Son" over Moses, as he is greater than all, and what the knowledge of the fact is to do for us.

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HEBREWS

(3:7-12).

V. 7-12. "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, Today 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 always err in their heart: and they have not known my ways.

So I swore in my wrath. They shall not enter into my rest.)

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

Our last lesson closed in consideration of those things essential to constituting God's people in the aggregate, "his (Christ's) own house". The writer said, "Whose house are we, ("holy brethren") v. 5, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end". We learned that "the confidence and the rejoicing" depended on "the profession" v. 1 (confession - margin), of which Jesus Christ is "the apostle and High Priest". Thus Paul later said, "Let us hold fast the profession (confession - margin) of our faith (hope - margin) without wavering" (Heb. 10:23). If we do this "we ("holy brethren" v. 1 - "his own house" v. 5) are made partakers of Christ" v. 14. In what sense? In the sense we share the "sufferings" of Heb. 2:10, concerning which "the Son" is the "captain", or as the margin says, "leader" or "originator", and concerning which Paul, in other places wrote "it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Phil. 1:29). As our "captain", or "leader", in this matter, he has left us "an example" (1 Pet. 2:21). When we are "partakers of Christ's sufferings" (1 Pet. 4:13), we are sustained by "hope" (Rom. 8:24-25), in anticipation of that hour when "his glory" shall be revealed" (1 Pet. 4:13), for it is then that we shall "also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4). It was in view of this that Paul wrote, "We reckon that the sufferings of this present time (when we share his sufferings) are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18). It is this "hope" by which "we are saved" now (Rom. 8:24). When we have "the fellowship of his sufferings" (Phil. 3:10), we enjoy "the rest" which is considered in the passage we are now studying as we shall show. This seems to be paradoxical, rest through sufferings, yet it is the principle throughout God's Word.

The exhortation is without doubt addressed to "holy brethren", v. 1, and each such has his personal responsibility to the "house", v. 6. In view of the responsibility of the house, to be such, as ordained of God, the exhortation is given, "wherefore --- Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the Living God" (v. 7, 12). All of the words between these two texts are a quotation of Ps. 95:7-11. The Psalmist addressed these words to those of whom he could say, "he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand" (Ps. 95:7). Then the Psalmist began with the words quoted in our lesson.

To ignore the subject under consideration is to engender confusion. The subject is not salvation of the sinner, but rest for the obedient saint. In the Psalm which Paul quotes, it was not deliverance from Egypt under consideration, but failure to enter the land where rest was promised to a people already delivered from the stroke of "the destroyer" (Ex. 12:23), by "the blood" (Ex. 12:13). When, however, we remember that God's purpose was not only to "bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Ex. 3:11), according to "his Covenant with Abraham" (Ex. 2:24), but also to "bring you in unto the land" (Ex. 6:8), and there give them "rest" (Deut. 12:9-10), "rest --- in the land" (Deut. 25:19). We see that the failure of Israel in type, was not related to getting out of Egypt, but to getting into the land. The land was where Israel was to possess her possessions by walking (Josh. 1:3), in connection with which possessions she was to have "rest" (Deut. 25:19), and it thus a type of the "faith" (II Cor. 5:7), by which we walk and "find rest" (Matt. 11:29).

1. The rest which is said to be given is related to the salvation of the sinner (Matt. 11:28). This is effected by "the gospel", in belief of which the sinner is enabled to know "the Son and "the Father" (Matt. 11:27), which is "life eternal" (John 17:3).

2. The rest which the redeemed are privileged to "find", results when they, as Christ said, "take my yoke" which he said "is easy" (Matt. 11:27, 30) of which John speaks by referring to "his commandments" as not being "grievous" (1 Jno. 5:3), as expressive of our love for God.

Now by comparing Ps. 95:7-11, with Heb. 3:7-11, and noting in both cases to whom the words are addressed, we can see that it is not the salvation of the sinner that is considered, but rather the blessing of the children of God, hence limited to the conditions of such blessing. Keep in mind that, as to Israel, it is typical, hence involves both the saved and the lost, while in "the house" the application is to "holy brethren", which are such only by regeneration (1 Cor. 1:30), in the merits of "one offering" (Heb. 10:14).

Now let us notice the quotation verse by verse:

V. 7-8. "----- Today, if ye will hear his voice,  
Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of  
temptation in the wilderness:"

"Today, if you will hear his voice". This is God's ever present exhortation to those out of fellowship with him. "Today". Now is the time to get right with God in all matters where we are at variance with his revealed will. "Today", now, while the opportunity is offered us, Let us not presume on his favor and thus "hardeneth his neck" (Prov. 29:1). The exhortation is, "harden not your hearts". Israel did, and 603,548 died in the wilderness. Paul said in 1 Cor. 10:11, that "all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and are written for our admonition." Let us therefore take warning from God, who so graciously has condescended to warn his people, instead of destroying them "as one man". David wrote:

V. 9. "When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works  
forty years."

(1) "your fathers tempted me." This word means "trying or challenging God" by men. Those who fell in the wilderness "tempted Christ" in this sense (1 Cor. 10:9). When God's people challenge God, he is fully able to meet their challenge.

(2). "Proved me". This word means "tested", and occurs in 11 Cor. 8:22; 1 Tim. 3:10, and in our text. In 11 Cor. 8:22, we read concerning one "whom we have often times proved diligent". In 1 Tim. 3:10, we read "let these (men for deacons) also first be proved"; thus they were tested as to the things affirmed of them. As to our text, God had said certain things concerning his Will for Israel, and had declared the conditions upon which he would bless as well as curse. Israel "tempted him", which brought on his chastening, and "proved him" in the chastening. Any man who tempts God will also thereof prove him. Israel learned this.

(3) "saw my works". Israel had ample opportunity to correct her ways in beholding the faithfulness of God regarding his covenant, but she did not profit from what she saw. Isn't this just as true today? How many of God's people in their disobedience, experience the chastening of God, yet refuse to recognize it as such, so as to repent and be corrected? It is in such as are "exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:11) that "fruit" is borne again.

V. 10-11. "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 swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)"

"I was grieved with that generation". Typically, the grief corresponds to the grief which results now when the children of God fail to "put off concerning the former conversation (behavior) ---which is corrupt" (Eph. 4:22). Read some of the characteristics of that behaviour in Eph. 4:25-31, in the midst of which Paul exhorts them to "grieve not the holy spirit of God" (Eph. 4:30). To so walk is to "walk as men" (1 Cor. 3:3), proof that they are "carnal" (1 Cor. 3:1), which if persisted in will eventuate in "death" (Rom. 8:13), as in 1 Cor. 11:30, 1 Jno. 5:16, James 1:13-15. This is what happened to that generation with which God was grieved in the wilderness.

Now what does "that generation" represent for us? Israel represents the believer today in a fourfold way.

(1) As saved by "blood" in Egypt (Ex. 12:12-13).

(2). as "brought out" ( Ex. 6:6) by power from the "hand of the Egyptians" ( Ex. 14:30).

(3). as "being carnal" looking back to the things of Egypt instead of looking forward to the things of Canaan; (Nu. 11:4-5)( Nu. 14:2-4), just as "carnal ----- babes" ( I Cor. 3:1) today. This is the generation with which God was grieved, according to our lesson. This generation represents the believer today who fails to "put on Christ" in the sense of Rom. 13:14. God said to Moses, "they shall not see the land" (Nu. 14:23), They did not believe concerning "the land" where the inheritance awaited the walking of the children of Israel ( Nu. 14:8, 11) ( Deut. 1:32) ( Ps. 106:24). This is exactly what the believer does today who fails to walk so as to obtain what God promises to walking, namely, rewards ( Col. 3:24) ( I Cor. 9:24).

(4) as being spiritual. Israel in the land represents the believer "in the faith" ( II Cor. 13:5), walking so as to "obtain ---by faith" ( Heb. 11:1, 2, 39), the promises made to walking which God has ordained.

Now notice, "They have not known my ways". This could not have reference to God's "way" of saving the sinner, for this was represented in Egypt and was behind them, therefore, "the ways" have reference to God's will for the conduct of his people, as Jeremiah wrote, "Stand ye in the ways -----and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" ( Jer. 6:16). This is exactly the application we are to make of Paul's exhortation in our lesson, as does Christ in Matt. 11:29. Israel failed regarding God's "ways" and thus did not obtain God's "rest" which depended on his "ways". It was "the rest" with which God rewards him who, according to God's "ways" fights the battles of conquest in the land.

V. 12. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

This text declares "an evil heart of unbelief" as being the cause "in departing from the living God". The "unbelief" of the text is not that which constitutes "the sin of the world" ( Jno. 1:29) ( Jno. 16:8-9), but that which obtains when God's people fail to act on his "ways" as Jer. 6:16. This is clear from the context. It is, in its application as made in the passage, related to responsibility regarding "the house" over which Jesus Christ is "Son" ( Heb. 3:6), just as it involves people related to the house in which Moses was faithful as a servant "for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after" ( Heb. 3:5) in the type. Neither speaks of the salvation of the alien sinner. The sin was possible in "brethren", which of course, were "the holy brethren" of v. 1. We know that unbelief on the part of God's people is evil and is a sin of the heart, that is, it may not be of "the works of the flesh" as "manifest" ( Gal. 5:19-21). For instance, Christ rebuked "his disciples" ----"how is it that ye have no faith?" ( Mk. 4:41, 40). He speaks here of their lack of faith in him to take care of them in the light of their circumstances, and is contrary to the truth of Rom. 8:28, I Pet. 5:7. Consider also Matt. 6:25-34, "O ye of little faith". Was this not Israel's trouble? ( Nu. 13:31-33). The Lord asked "How long will it be ere they believe me? ( Nu. 14:11). Faith in this matter was possessed by "Joshua ---Caleb" who said "If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land". Why? "the Lord is with us" ( Nu. 14:6, 8, 9). So is it now. ( Phil. 4:13) ( Matt. 28:20) ( Heb. 12:5-6). Surely "The weapons of our warfare are -----mighty through God" ( II Cor. 10:4). Let us use them and possess the "milk and honey" of the faith.

Notice that the departing is said to be "from the living God", not the dead gods made with the hands of men which must be carried by men in order to move, but the God who made man and carries him ( Jno. 21:18-19). The expression "living God" occurs four times in this epistle where Christ is seen as "The Son of the living God", according to Peter's confession ( Matt. 16:16). They are: (1) Heb. 3:12, (2) Heb. 9:14, (3) Heb. 10:31, and (4) Heb. 12:22. We shall consider each as they occur in the process of studying the book.

The warning is, "Wherefore -----Take heed, brethren ----". If each of us would ask ourselves why we fail to do what we know God's word tells us to do, what could we answer? Do we actually believe that any sacrifice we make in order to do what God's word teaches, is less than the blessing which God gives in answer? If we do not, do we not have an unscriptural regard for the blessings of God? If we say the blessings promised to obedience are greater than the price we pay in order to obtain them, and yet fail to pay the price, is this not unbelief, practically? The exhortation is, "Let us not be weary in well doing" ( Gal. 6:9), "be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" ( I Cor. 15:58), and

the promises are, in the same texts, "We shall reap if we faint not", and "your labor is not in vain in the Lord". If we would "find rest" we must bear the yoke, and this rest is not found apart from the yoke marks. Paul said, "I bear in my body the marks" (Gal. 6:17). God grant us forgiveness for the regard we have had for the things he has promised to the obedience of his children.

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"HEBREWS"

(3:13-19).

- V. 13. "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Having warned the "holy brethren" as to the possibility of "departing from the living God", Paul now proceeds to show what responsibility the brethren have toward one another in view of the possibility of that "departing". Notice, "Exhort one another daily, while it is called To day". This is a matter demanding consistent, energetic effort in intercession, and watchfulness. "Watch and pray" is our Lord's command (Matt. 26:41), "daily, while it is called Today", that is, do it while the opportunity for response is possible, for "the night cometh" (Jno. 9:4). God's exhortation to the "watchman" is "give them warning from me" (Ezek. 3:17). God's "counsel", "the words of the living God" (Jer. 23:36), must be used like a trumpet if God's people are to be "turned ---- from their evil way and from the evil of their doings" (Jer. 23:22).

Why this "daily" exhortation? "Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin". Notice the word "hardened". This word denotes an effect and suggests a process. One does not become hardened in this sense over night. The effect is observed in "departing from the living God", which in turn is evidenced in the one so departing, by a lack of love for God's word, a loss of a burden in prayer, and to those beholding, by a disregard for others and negligence concerning the assembly. Thus it is written, "let us consider one another to provoke to love and good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another" (Heb. 10:24-25). One who fails to do this is "hardened"; But how? "through the deceitfulness of sin". How often do we hear, "be not deceived" (I Cor. 6:9)(I Cor. 15:33)(Gal. 6:7); therefore, in recognition of the possibility, God's people are to be on their guard. Sin does not present itself in it's true light, nor herald it's effect. If it did, none but fools would be deceived by it. Let the believer in Christ ask himself this question, "Is my course 'ordered by the Lord'"? (Ps. 37:23). If it is, "he (God) delighted in his way" (same text), but when God delights in the conduct of his people, he has a way of letting his people know. Moses wrote, "If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey" (Nu. 14:8). The Land, to Israel, represented the faith to us. It was in the land, they were to walk and possess, while it is in the faith, we walk and possess, thus Paul exhorted believers to "examine yourselves to see if ye be in the faith" (II Cor. 13:5). It is written, "Trust in the Lord and do good ---- Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. 37:3-4). What does one who is able to "delight --- in the Lord" desire? David answers, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple" (Ps. 27:4). David had this exercise of enjoyment in the things of God at a time when he could say, "The Lord is my light ---- my salvation ---- the strength of my life" (Ps. 27:1). If the child of God is consciously devoid of such blessedness, he is being robbed by "the deceitfulness of sin", and unless it is recognized and put away, he is on the road to being "hardened". What effect does the word of God, which takes issue with those things that are robbing you of the enjoyment of God, have on your heart? Is there resentment for the truth, instead of grief for the sin? If so, you are being hardened. Hear the word of exhortation, "While it is called Today". "Hear ye, give ear, be not proud, for the Lord hath spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains" (Jer. 13:15-16).

- V. 14. "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;"

This verse is introduced by the word "For", and is designed to show that the exhortation of the preceding verse is to be obeyed in order to the blessing of this verse. It shows therefore, that "the deceitfulness of sins" is related to "departing from the living God" V. 12, on the part of "holy brethren", so as to prevent their being effective as "the house", in the sense of Heb. 3:6. Unless we are "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin", V. 13, we will "hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end", v. 14. That is, to the "end" for which "our profession" was appointed, namely the constitution and maintenance of "his own house". If we do this, "We are made partakers of Christ". The word

here translated "partakers" is translated "fellows" in Heb. 1:9, where Christ was said to have been "annointed ----- with the oil of gladness above thy fellows". Why? because "thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity". If then, his "fellows", or "companions" as the word "partakers" is given in the margin, shall so regard "righteousness" and "iniquity", they become "companions" or "fellows" in "the oil of gladness", and thus, as Israel when right with God, "delight thyself in the Lord" (Isa. 58:14).

Notice the expression, "hold the beginning of our confidence unto the end". Permit me to enumerate similar expressions in this book: (1) "Consider the apostle and High Priest of our profession" (Heb. 3:1).

(2) "If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3:6).

(3). "If we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (Heb. 3:14).

(4). "Let us hold fast our profession" (Heb. 4:14).

(5). "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering" (Heb. 10:23). If we "partakers (companions) of the heavenly calling" (Heb. 3:1) would be "his own house" (Heb. 3:6), and "companions" (Heb. 3:14) in our regard for "righteousness" and "iniquity", then we must "hold fast our profession" (Heb. 4:14). Timothy did this "in the house of God" (I Tim. 3:15), as he obeyed the commandment to "Hold fast the form of sound words" (II Tim. 1:13). The "sound words" here, are the same as "the profession of our faith" in Heb. 10:23 .

V. 15. "While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."

Here again, the writer refers to Ps. 95:7, 8. David based his exhortation upon what God did to Israel hundreds of years after it had happened as an example for generations following, as in Ps. 95, and in this dispensation, as in I Cor. 10:5-15, Paul plainly said, "these things were our examples to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted", v. 6. So is the subject treated in our lesson in Hebrews. Thus, "while it is said -----harden not your hearts", let us hear the exhortation lest as they, the time come, beyond the day in which they could have responded, we, too, come to that day.

Notice now, what we mean. God said, "how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?" (Nu. 14:11). God said this when Israel refused to act upon Caleb's words concerning the land, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people for they are stronger than we" (Nu. 13:30-31). God said Israel "have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land -----neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: -----as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness" (Nu. 14:22, 23, 32). They had sinned repeatedly against God, and God had forgiven them, but there was an end to his mercy as related to their conduct, and regard for what he would provide in the land. Scriptures related to us in this connection are: I Jno. 5:16, James 1:13-16, I Cor. 11:29-31, Heb. 12:5-13. We are to consider "the provocation" and what God did to Israel, so that we "harden not our hearts" and be visited with God's chastening.

V. 16. "For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses."

They had heard "his voice", yet "did provoke". It is written, "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Those who fell in the wilderness, the men of all the tribes except that of Levi, above 20 years of age, represent the knowledge of what is heard, "Every male from 20 years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war" (Nu. 1:20), "The Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them" (Nu. 1:47). The eleven tribes represent the responsibility to possess the reward of the inheritance by walking in the land, while the Levites represent the spiritual relationship which could not be lost in the wilderness. "The Lord God of Israel was their inheritance" (Joshua 13:33). God had said to them, "Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them; I am thy part and thine inheritance" (Nu. 18:20). Thus are we in redemption, "heirs of God" (Rom. 8:17), but as related to "the rewards of the inheritance" (Col. 3:24), we are "joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). Therefore, that which was lost in the wilderness and not possessed in the land, typifies what we lose by not "walking by faith", in

holding "fast our profession".

"Some -----not all that came out of Egypt by Moses" provoked God.

V. 17. "But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?"

This text tells who provoked God in relation to possessing the good of the land. "Them that had sinned". But was there anyone in the whole nation who did not sin? Of course not. Then what was the sin? The refusal to go and possess the land after God had demonstrated his power in delivering them from Egypt. Could not the same God bring them into the land in spite of any enemy? Before we condemn them, let us ask ourselves, If we could, in spite of the perversity of our own wicked hearts, condemn ourselves and justify God as to his testimony against us, and repent and believe in Jesus Christ to deliver us from our sins, and wrath, their just due, cannot we trust him now to do for us, on the conditions stated, what he has promised to do in the matter of "blessings in Christ"? Then why do we not rejoice in the possession of these blessings? Is it that "We have not because we ask not" (James 4:2), and do we ask not because we know in our hearts that our ways displease God, yet we are not willing to pay the price that we might eat of the good of the land according to God's definition of good? Yes, Israel fell, but to how many of us is the word of God, "ye are fallen" (Gal. 5:4), and how many hear the word, "Remember therefore from whence ye are fallen and repent and do the first works" (Rev. 2:5).

With whom was he grieved? Typically with those, then, as now, with such as "grieve ----the Holy Spirit" (Eph. 4:30. God was grieved with them "whose carcasses fell in the wilderness". It is written, "In all their affliction he was afflicted" (Isa. 63:9). "But they rebelled and vexed his holy spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them" (Isa. 63:10). What a grief this was to the God who loved them, and who "doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men" (Lam. 3:33). The God who said, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked -----Why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. 33:11). It is God's will that they "turn from his ways and live" (Ezek. 18:23). To his erring people, his cry is, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth ----wherefore turn yourselves and live" (Ezek. 18:32). The chastening of God is designed to effect this repentance and confession as to his people. God is grieved at our misconduct, and does not delight to afflict, yet his righteousness must deal with sin, and the believer must submit and be exercised thereby, or pay the penalty.

V. 18-19. "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. "

We see that "them that had sinned", of verse 17, were "them that believed not" of verse 18, but we also know in the light of the context, that the unbelief was not regarding redemption from Egypt, but deliverance from the wilderness into the land, where the responsibilities of the redeemed were to be assumed and the blessings enjoyed. "They could not enter in because of unbelief". Just as Christ says to us today, "Without me ye can do nothing" (Jno. 15:5), so Israel failed because she considered the land apart from God (Nu. 14:31). "The people ----are stronger than we". When they refused to act according to the will of God, and later presumed to possess the land without God, concerning which Moses said, "the Lord will not be with you" (Nu. 14:43), they were defeated by their enemies. We cannot fight the good fight of faith without the "captain of our salvation". If we go his way we will be victorious. If not, we will fail. He has appointed "the race" and decreed the rules. If we run the race according to the rules, we have his help and rejoice in the fruits of victory. Rest now in the midst of storm, and rest then in the midst of glory. Let us not make the mistake that Israel made, (1) of not going to the place of blessings and (2) seeking to go without the Lord. Such a course is bound to fail.

"They could not enter in", because they would not enter in according to God's instructions. To attempt to do God's work contrary to God's word, is the action "of unbelief" (Rom. 14:23). Let us not be guilty of it, if we would enjoy "the rest" which bearing "the yoke" promises. (Matt. 11:29).

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