

~Other Speakers S-Z: David Servant:

Moses was and is, of course, revered among Jews, as he is the human agent whom God used to deliver Israel from Egypt and to convey the old covenant Law. So you can imagine what non-believing Jews would say to Christian Jews who had abandoned the ritualistic and ceremonial aspects of the Mosaic Law: "We know that what we have is from God! We cannot forget all that He did to deliver to us His holy revelation!"

That argument is quite valid, of course, yet someone greater than Moses has appeared, bringing additional revelation that harmonized with and fulfilled Moses' revelation. In fact, that Greater Person is the One who made Moses so great! So naturally, the Greater Person is worthy of more glory (3:3-4). The author compares Moses' ministry to Christ's with an analogy that contrasts a servant in a household to a son over that same household. Moses was a faithful servant "in" God's "house" (3:5), but Jesus was a faithful Son, not "in" God's house, but "over" God's house (3:6), a big difference!

All who believe in Jesus are blessed to be in God's house over which His Son presides, but our remaining in His house is not guaranteed. This is so clear from what we have read today that only a theologian could miss it. The author of Hebrews writes, "Christ was faithful as a Son over His house---whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end (3:6). Notice the conditional "if."

So we must continue in faith if we expect to remain in God's house. And only those who are currently in a house could be in any danger of not remaining in that house. Thus, the author is not writing to "potential believers who were considering Christ," regardless of what some theologians tell us in a desperate attempt to preserve their man-made doctrines.

So the author admonishes his Jewish Christian readership---using Old Testament scriptures---to beware of hardening their hearts as did those under Moses' leadership, which resulted in their not entering the rest God had promised them. The lesson is obvious and it becomes even more obvious as we keep reading. Although the Israelites were chosen by God, delivered from Egyptian bondage, received special care from God, and were led to a land of promise, most failed to enter that promised land because of their unbelief (3:19). Theirs was not an example we want to follow.

The evidence is overwhelming that the author of Hebrews was writing to Christian believers. Yet, because of the many admonitions and warnings it contains against falling away and forfeiting salvation, those who promote the doctrine of unconditional security go to great lengths to persuade us that the author was writing to Jews who were only considering Christ. Yet any child can understand this:

Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (3:12-13).

Note that the warning is addressed to "brethren." The author was not addressing "Jewish brethren," but "holy brethren" according to 3:1, those who were "partakers of a heavenly calling" and who considered Jesus to be their Apostle and High Priest. They are admonished to be cautious that none have an "evil, unbelieving heart" that would lead them to "fall away from the living God" (3:12). How can those who are alienated from God, as are all unbelievers, "fall away" from Him? Moreover, why would the author admonish unbelievers, who all possess unbelieving hearts, to "take care that there be not in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart"? Why would he admonish unbelievers, who are all slaves of sin, to "encourage one another" so that none will become "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin"?

So, we are indeed "partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end" (3:14). That's what I'm planning on doing! How about you?