

“Greater Than Moses”
Hebrews 3:1-6
(Preached at Trinity, November 19, 2023)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citation will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Over the first two chapters the author has stressed in infinite superiority of Jesus over the angels. Beginning with Chapter 3 our attention will be turned to the superiority of Jesus over Moses. This is a high boast before the Jews who couldn't imagine anyone greater than Moses. In **Verse 1** we are commanded, "Consider Jesus." Think on Him. Meditate upon Him. Examine Him carefully. This is the use of the mind for which it was created. Our highest contemplation.
2. As we've seen, the author has a particular purpose in mind. He is writing to a largely Jewish Christian community who had suffered greatly for their faith. They had suffered personal insult. Some had been rejected by their families. They had lost their property and livelihoods. For some, their love of Christ had grown cold. Some had fallen away, returning to Judaism and others were on the brink.
 - A. The author is holding Jesus high. He is far superior than anything to which these Jewish Christians might be tempted to return. The Book of Hebrews admonishes them and us to hold fast to Jesus Christ, the Author and finisher of our faith, our Savior and Redeemer. Besides Him there is none else.
 - B. Over and over the reader is encouraged to press on in the Gospel even in the midst of trials. The author stresses the fearful consequences of turning back and falling away.

Hebrews 3:12 NAU - "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God."
Hebrews 10:31 NAU - "It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
Hebrews 12:29 NAU - "for our God is a consuming fire."
3. Beginning with **Verse 2** the author describes Jesus as infinitely superior to Moses. Moses is commended for his faithfulness. Both Jesus and Moses were faithful in their calling. Faithfulness is required of all of God's servants.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 KJV - "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."
4. Moses was faithful in the discharge of all that God appointed him to do.

Exodus. 40:16 NAU - "Thus Moses did; according to all that the LORD had commanded him, so he did."

5. By “house” we can understand “household.”
- A. The building metaphor is one we see often.
Ephesians 2:19-22 NAU - "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit."
- B. In the NT the Church is referred to as God's household.
1 Timothy 3:14-15 NAU - "I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; ¹⁵ but in case I am delayed, *I write* so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth."
Galatians 6:10 NAU - "So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."
6. God's household was entrusted to Moses and he was faithful in his stewardship. In Leviticus we find over and over:
Leviticus 8:4 NAU - "So Moses did just as the LORD commanded him."
7. The faithfulness of Moses was not at all surprising to the Jews. But the author declares the super abundance of Jesus' faithfulness, a faithfulness that far exceeds every other exercise of faithfulness.
 They were both prophets. They were both apostles or messengers sent by God. They were both priests. They were both kings.
 Moses was one of the few in Scripture to bear the titles of prophet, priest, and king. Samuel also carried out the duties of prophet, priest, and king.
 Among men, there were none greater than Moses. But Jesus is infinitely superior.
- I. The greatness of Moses
- A. Moses stood as a type of Christ.
1. He was God's deliverer.
 2. He was Divinely chosen as mediator to God's people. His life was miraculously preserved as a child.
 3. He was intercessor for God's people.
 4. He was prophet, priest, and king
- A.W. Pink – “All of God's early dealings with Israel were transacted through Moses. He was a prophet, priest, and king on one person, and so united all the great and important functions which later were distributed among a plurality of persons.”
- a. As prophet he served as God's spokesman to Israel. He was the greatest of Israel's prophets.
Deuteronomy 34:10 NAU - "Since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face"
 - b. As priest he served as mediator and intercessor for Israel.
 - c. As king he served as Israel's mighty leader long before Israel had a monarchy.
 Matthew Henry – “The years of the life of Moses are remarkably divided into three forties: the first forty he spent as a prince in Pharaoh's court, the second a shepherd in Midian, the third a king in Jeshurun.”

Deuteronomy 33:4-5 NAU - "Moses charged us with a law, A possession for the assembly of Jacob. ⁵ "And He was king in Jeshurun, When the heads of the people were gathered, The tribes of Israel together."

- B. Moses was a great man, yet he was a man and subject to the failures of men.
1. Moses was sometimes overcome with anger. This would ultimately keep him from entering into the promised land.
 2. He was plagued by doubts and fears.
 3. He was a type of Christ, but was infinitely beneath Christ.
 4. The charge to the Hebrews and to us as well is not consider the angels or consider Moses. It is consider Christ.
 5. Moses himself declared a greater Prophet than him would arise.

Acts 3:22 NAU - "Moses said, 'The Lord God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed in everything He says to you.'"

II. Jesus was perfectly faithful in every way.

- A. He was and is our great High Priest.
1. Upon the cross, after offering up His own blood, He shouted, "It is finished."
 2. But then He was raised where He continues as our High Priest, ever making intercession for us.
- Romans 8:34 NAU** - "who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us."
3. Moses is dead but Jesus is alive. He will return for His people.

- B. Moses was faithful in caring for the house of God—God's people.
1. Moses lead them faithfully through the wilderness.
 2. But Jesus is far superior. Moses cared for the house of God. Jesus, on the other hand is the builder of the house.
 - a. Jesus is the Head of the church. He is the Redeemer of the church. He is the source of life to the church.
 - b. Jesus is the maker and builder of the house in which Moses was a servant.

Hebrews 3:4-5 NAU - "For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. ⁵ Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant"

3. It is interesting that the author is comparing Jesus with Moses but in **Verse 4** he states that God is the builder of the house, a clear reference to the deity of Christ who is above all and over all. On the other hand, Jesus is the faithful Son of God.
- Hebrews 3:6 NAU** - "but Christ *was faithful* as a Son over His house-- whose house we are"
4. Moses was a faithful servant over God's house. Jesus was a faithful Son over God's house.

- C. As the faithful servant over God's house Moses' job was to direct men to Christ.
1. Moses was God's covenant servant. He received the Law, He received the priesthood and the Tabernacle. But it all had a focus upon the greater faithful Servant. Moses duty was to speak of things to come.
Hebrews 3:5 NAU - "Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later;"
 2. Jesus Christ came to establish and seal the New Covenant with His own blood. Moses served as God's prophet. Jesus served as God's greater Prophet. Everything in the Old Covenant pointed to Christ. The Tabernacle spoke of God dwelling with man. Jesus is Immanuel. The sacrifices of bulls and goats pointed to the great atoning work of Christ on the cross.
Hebrews 10:1 NAU - "For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near."
 3. Paul reminds us that Moses fed Israel with manna from heaven and gave them water from the rock. But Jesus IS the Bread from Heaven and Jesus IS the Rock.
1 Corinthians 10:1-4 NAU - "For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; ³ and all ate the same spiritual food; ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ."
 4. Jesus is the full revelation of God's eternal redemptive purpose. This was portrayed vividly at the Transfiguration.
 - a. Jesus was transfigured with radiance and glory.
Matthew 17:1-2 NAU - "Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. ² And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light."
 - b. We caught a glimpse of this in **Chapter 1**
Hebrews 1:3 NAU - "And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power."
 - c. Suddenly, there appeared with Him two figures from the past— Moses and Elijah. Moses represented the Law, Elijah represented the Prophets – the Law and the Prophets speak to God's revelation. Jesus, however, was God's full revelation to man.
Hebrews 1:1-2 NAU - "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world."

- d. God affirmed this with a word from Heaven.
Matthew 17:5 NAU - "a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"
- e. Jesus was the fulfillment of the Law and Prophets represented here by Moses and Elijah. All of the Bible points to Christ. Jesus overshadowed Moses and Elijah in His brightness. After the voice came from Heaven, "Listen to Him" Moses and Elijah were gone.

Conclusion:

1. The point here is vividly clear. These Hebrew Christians were suffering for their faith. Some were tempted to abandon Christ and return to their Jewish roots. The author is reminding them of the futility of such thinking. All of the Old Covenant was progressively revealing God's redemptive purpose in Christ. Why would you turn to the shadow when the brightness of the noon day was upon you?
2. There will always be temptations to abandon our faith. But where would we go? Are you tempted to compromise your faith. The Book of Hebrews reminds us, keep your eyes upon Jesus.
Hebrews 3:1 NAU - "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession"
3. Do you see the importance of the church? It is the representation of God's house today. Richard Phillips reminds us:
"There is therefore no greater privilege than membership in the church. There is no greater calling than the Christian's calling to offer his gifts and talents, time and money to the work of the church. A Christian who gives all his energy to his job, uses her talents only for personal gain, who spends his money all on himself, neglecting the work of the church which will last forever, is simply a fool. Such a person does not realize that the church is the body, the temple, the bride of the exalted Jesus Christ, who even now reigns on high and soon will come to rule on earth forever."¹

¹ Richard D. Phillips, *Hebrews*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006), 88.