

What have we seen thus far in reading from the book of Hebrews: We have seen that the Hebrew Scriptures reveal that Messiah, the Lord Jesus, is greater than the angels who appeared to the Old Testament Fathers and to Moses who received the law at their hands. The revelation of the law that was given to Moses was binding upon Israel and those that despised it perished under the wrath of God. The first warning of Hebrews 2:1-3 declares that we have even greater responsibility to hear and to do the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was greater than the angels. Having solemnly charging us not to let these things slip away, the writer of Hebrews then speaks of the purpose for which all things were created: to unite all things under the authority and hand of man in Jesus Christ. God did not so care for the angels and did not provide salvation for them when they fell, but He did provide for the sins of mankind because He appointed a Captain for their salvation, even the Lord Jesus Christ who received the inheritance that Adam had lost by his sins. This is a great mystery and was only revealed at the coming of Christ, as Paul says in Ephesians 3:

“3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.” (Eph 3:3-6 AV)

You might say that the book of Hebrews is an unpacking of Paul's writing to the Ephesians in chapter 3 of this mystery and only revealed at the coming of Christ. This is the promise of Christ at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed Are the Meek, for they shall inherit the earth." When this is fully unpacked in the New Testament, we see that the inheritance is the World to Come, and the meek are those, both Jew and Gentile, who have trusted in Christ and received the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Today, I would speak of the second great warning: this is found in Hebrews 4:

“12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end; 15 While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.” (Heb 3:12-15 AV)

We will consider this great warning, which is an amplification of the first one. Earlier, we are warned not to **neglect**; now we are warned not to **harden** our hearts. We will consider this warning by doing three things: First, Whose voice we are not to harden ourselves against; Second, What it is that we are solemnly called to hear; Third, What is to be gained or lost.

- I. Whose Voice? Heb. 3:1-6. It is the voice of the Captain of our Salvation: who is now called our Apostle and High Priest. Here we see Christ in the three-fold office for which He was anointed to be our Savior: Prophet, Priest, and King. As we saw last week, he was perfected through sufferings and now reigns from glory over His Own house, the church.
 - A. House, here, means temple and all that pertains to the worship and the service of God.
 - B. Moses built his house and was faithful; but Moses' house was not meant to endure, but was a servant and his house was meant to be a testimony of those things which were to come, and are now revealed in Jesus Christ.
 - C. Jesus was not a servant, but the Son of God, over his own house.
 - D. Jesus has more glory than Moses and His house has more glory than that of Moses.
 - E. God is the source of all things, and the Lord Jesus, as Prophet, Priest, and King is Lord over the house that He built. He told his disciples that He would build His church, and the gates of hell would not prevail against it.

F. It is the voice of the Son of God that we are not to harden our hearts against. The former word came by various means and by many prophets; in these last days God has spoken by His Son, who is the heir of all things. Heb 1:

"1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" (Heb 1:1-3 AV)

II. What is this voice of the Son of God speaking. He is speaking the Gospel, which is the only message of salvation in all the history of the world.

A. The good news of our inheritance is preached to us as well as to the Jews. Hebrews 4:2.

B. This was also predicted by Christ in John 10 when He said that He had sheep that were not kept in the fold of Israel, but these also would be called and there would be one fold and one shepherd.

C. Hence, in Christ, the world to come would be the inheritance of both Jew and Gentile in the House of our Lord Jesus Christ.

D. Moses' house is compared to Christ's house in Romans 10:

1. Verse 5: Moses said, "Those who do those thing shall live in them...."

2. Vs. 6-13: Christ says, "Whoso believes on Him shall not be ashamed, for there is not difference between the Jew and the Greek, for those that call upon the name of the Lord have one Lord, for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

E. This Gospel of faith was preached from the Garden of Eden, the figure of man's inheritance and eternal rest.

1. It was preached to Adam and Eve and all the patriarchs of the Old Testament as we read in Hebrews 11: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, all the martyrs.

2. But it was hidden in figures and shadows and not openly proclaimed until the Lord Jesus came and sin was put away and its full light burst upon the world in all its splendor. The flesh of Christ must be rent so that the veil in the temple could be torn so that the veil could be removed from the hearts of both Jews and Gentiles so that the glory of the light of Jesus Christ could shine forth in all its splendor.

3. The faithful in the Old Testament were true and obeyed the message given by Moses, but they did not receive the promised inheritance, for they waited for the church, unto whom the ends of the world are come, as we read in the following:

"³⁸ (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth. ³⁹ And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: ⁴⁰ God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." (Heb 11:38-40 AV)

"¹ ¶ Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; ² And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; ³ And did all eat the same spiritual meat; ⁴ And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. ⁶ ¶ Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. ⁷ Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. ⁸ Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. ⁹ Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. ¹⁰ Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. ¹¹ Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (1Co 10:1-11 AV)

F. It has always been about Christ, from the beginning of the world; yea, even before the beginning for it was always the purpose to draw all things together under the authority and power of the One Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. Finally, What is to be lost, or gained, by hearing the voice of the Son of God and giving ourselves up to His gospel.

A. Simply stated: it is the world to come. 2 Peter 3:

"¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. ¹¹ ¶ Seeing then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, ¹² Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. ¹⁴ Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2Pe 3:10-14 AV)

B. This inheritance is called by various names in Scripture: heaven, eternal life, Zion, eternal glory, paradise, presence of the Lord, and so forth.

C. The inheritance of the saints has never been on this earth. Jesus expressed it clearly in John:

"¹ ¶ Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also. ⁴ ¶ And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. ⁵ Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? ⁶ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. ⁷ If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." (Joh 14:1-7 AV)

Application: As Peter put it, "What sort of people ought we to be?" Peter answers his own rhetoric:

1. Peaceful. Heaven should begin now in our own souls. We have rest now. This peace is expressed in our Sabbath worship, our rest: Question 103 of the Catechism.

2. Spotless. We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, that is, from the love of the world. Our treasures are in heaven; our reward is in heaven; our affections are to be there, and there must be no spot of love for the world in all that we do.

"¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." (1Jo 2:15-17 AV)

3. Blameless. Without fault of all kinds.

4. This is the mark toward which we shoot; we will shall not attain it in this life, but we live in the full persuasion that we are not of the world and live by a different standard than do men of the world. Paul put it this way:

"¹ If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. ² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. ³ For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. ⁵ Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: ⁶ For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: ⁷ In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. ⁸ But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. ⁹ Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; ¹⁰ And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." (Col 3:1-10 AV)

May God bless you. Amen and Amen.