

# ONE BIBLE, ONE STORY: THE EPISTLE to the HEBREWS

## Hebrews 3:1-19—Moses and Wilderness Generation

### Last Week's Main Points

- Warning that the greater revelation under Jesus requires a greater response from us
- Jesus became like us in his flesh, suffering, and even temptation
- Jesus our trailblazer

### I. Introduction – Wandering through Kuala Lumpur: A destination without a route

“You can't get out in between and it's very hard to walk from those stations because there isn't a pedestrian walkway..... best take a cab. How on earth [could] you manage to cross over from the old railway station to the mosque? I mean, there is this 4 foot metal barrier between the busy roads.”

### II. Literary Context

Chapter 1 Christ's Superior revelation, status over angels

Chapter 2 Status over angels and our greater response, glory and honor of humanity

Chapter 3 Christ has more glory and honor than Moses, enduring as the house of God

Chapter 4 Rest in the land lead by Joshua vs. Heavenly rest

### III. Large group teaching: Hebrews 3:1-6

1. Why did the author select Moses as the next topic considering the themes of the previous chapter? What about Moses makes him an effective OT figure with which to contrast Jesus? How does this contrast reflect the general attitude of Hebrews towards the old covenant?
2. The faithfulness of Christ appeared in 2:17, the first time his priesthood is mentioned. Why is faithfulness a key attribute for the portrait of Jesus as a high priest? Why might this attribute be reiterated as we are told to “consider Jesus”?
3. The concept of “house” becomes the point of transition between Moses and the 2<sup>nd</sup> warning passage. What does the author mean by “house”? What is the tone of this passage and how does it compare with the author's tone in passages such as 3:1?

#### IV. Table group discussions: Hebrews 3:7-19

1. Read the remaining portion of Hebrews 3 (quote comes from Psalm 95:7-11). Noting the “therefore” that starts this section, how does this 2<sup>nd</sup> warning passage in Hebrews relate to the hinge verse at the end of last section (v. 6)?
2. Hebrews uses the wilderness generation as a key negative example. From this verse and its OT allusions (if needed briefly consult Exodus 17:1-8; Numbers 14:1-20), what were their sins?
3. What about the wilderness generation and their sins make them such an apt example? How does their example contrast with Jesus and with Moses? In light of this negative example, reexamine the command to “consider Jesus” in 3:1.
4. One prominent commentator on Hebrews, Ernst Kasemann, entitled his book *The Wandering People of God*. Hebrews will weave three images of “entering” into its arguments as pictures of the Christian life.
  - (1) We are the wilderness generation seeking to enter the rest of the Promised Land
  - (2) We are God’s people on a festival journey to enter Mount Zion
  - (3) We are worshipers seeking to enter God’s temple to worship in His presenceHow has your life been like the wandering pilgrimage of God’s people? How does the theme of “pilgrim people” relate to verses 3:6 and 3:14?

#### V. Application and Reflection

- In addition to considering Jesus, the author of Hebrews calls us to “encourage one another” as a remedy to hardness of heart. How has the mutual encouragement of Christians worked in your life? What ways have you or could you exhort people in your life to faithfulness? This week, write a note or email to a fellow Christian to encourage their faith journey.
- The unfaithfulness of the wilderness generation was especially offensive to God because they had seen His works (Hebrews 3:9). For a journal entry, write out a “map” of the journey you have been on and how you have seen God work. Recounting His past acts of faithfulness will encourage us to “hold our original confidence firm to the end (v. 14).

#### VI. For Next week

- Read and reflect upon Hebrews 4:1-14 for next week with Donald.
- *For further exploration:* Read Exodus 17:1-8 and Numbers 14:1-20 carefully to get a full picture of why the author of Hebrews used the wilderness generation as an example of unfaithfulness.
- *For further exploration:* One of the thematic ways to organize the book of Hebrews is by Old Testament people and institutions that are contrasted with Jesus, the Son. Review Chapters 1-4 and start of list of these comparisons. Each week as you read ahead, add new points of comparison to your chart to help you remember the flow of Hebrews.