
Words of Truth

Hebrews 3:5-6

By: Brian A. Yeager

As our studies continue in this third chapter, we read this: *“And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 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”* (Hebrews 3:5-6). A major point in this text is not just Moses as a messenger from God, but his faithful living. We’ve already, in this context, read about Moses’ faithfulness (Hebrews 3:2). Let’s take some moments and consider why that matters so much.

Consider how that a messenger of God needs credibility. That credibility comes through one living what he teaches (I Timothy 4:13-16). In this manner, Moses’ life was a testimony in itself. Moses was repeatedly called “the servant of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 34:5, Joshua 1:1-2, Joshua 1:13, Joshua 8:31, Joshua 8:33, Joshua 11:12, Joshua 12:6, Joshua 13:8, Joshua 14:7, Joshua 18:7, Joshua 22:2-5, II Kings 18:12, II Chronicles 1:3, and II Chronicles 24:6). Think about what Jesus said when teaching about faithful servants in two different contexts: *“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season... And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath”* (Matthew 24:45 and Luke 12:42-44).

Moses’ faithful living was a testimony of the things which were spoken after him. Think about what Moses said when he prophesied of Christ: *“The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him”* (Deuteronomy 18:15-19; cf. Acts 3:18-26). Now, Moses was considered higher than a prophet in that God spoke to Moses mouth to mouth (Numbers 12:5-8). The Jews knew that. These things speak to Moses’ credibility.

Now, think about the point being made. Moses was faithful. All Jewish Christians would certainly concur with that conclusion. What they needed to do was look at how Moses prophesied of Christ and said they needed to hear Christ (Acts 7:20-37). Later in this epistle, it is stated that Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater than the riches of Egypt (Hebrews 11:24-27). The Jews trusted Moses (John 5:45). Now, they needed to show the fruit of that trust. It's time to turn fully to Jesus. Moses lived that and taught that!

To the end of turning to Jesus, the point was made that Jesus is more than a servant in the house. He is the Son over His own house. Moses was an order taker. Jesus is the order giver. As members of the body of Christ we should fully understand this language. The house being referenced is the church (I Timothy 3:15). Jesus is the builder of the church (Matthew 16:13-18). Jesus is the head of His body, the church (Ephesians 1:22-23, Ephesians 5:22-33, and Colossians 1:18-24). Jesus is evidently higher than Moses. What discussion is there in that fact? Even in the days of Moses, Jesus was their spiritual Rock (I Corinthians 10:1-4).

Now, the application that is significant to be made is that they [we too] were only the house of the Lord if they held fast till the end. We will see later in this epistle, that those to whom this letter was sent were not growing as they needed to and they needed to make changes (Hebrews 5:12-6:12). There was not going to be some coming, secondary, plan of salvation for those that refused to turn fully to Christ (Hebrews 10:22-38). Since they held Moses in such high admiration, they needed to recall the consequences that came upon those who were not continuously faithful until the end (Numbers 20:1-13 and Deuteronomy 34:1-5). The writer of this letter doesn't go to that point. As we proceed through this letter, the rest of this chapter and into the next we'll be reading about Israel's transgressions in the wilderness.

Whether it is in thinking of the times of old or of Christ Himself, holding fast the confidence firm unto the end is a reoccurring message. What good is it to start, but then turn backwards (Proverbs 26:11 and II Peter 2:20-22)? When our Lord returns to judge the world, Judgment will begin with His house (I Peter 4:17-19). If you read the context of Ephesians 5:22-33, you read that the church is to be glorious, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing (Ephesians 5:27). Think about why Paul wrote this: *"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus"* (Colossians 1:28).

To the first century Jewish reader of this letter, it was time to let go of their admiration of Moses. Their affection for Moses was standing between them and Christ. For us, we need to be mindful that we are the house of our Lord. Like them then, we are only collectively the house of the Lord IF we are faithful. When we read through letters, such as Revelation that was written to the seven churches in Asia (Revelation 1:1-4, Revelation 1:9-11, and Revelation 22:16), we find that the Lord will withdraw Himself from entire congregations (Revelation 2:1-3:22). We belong to Christ and need to walk accordingly (Colossians 2:6).