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# Words of Truth

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## Hebrews 3:7-11

By: Brian A. Yeager

After the establishment of Christ' authority over His own house, we read this: *"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest)"* (Hebrews 3:7-11). These statements, while in a different context, should be familiar to the student of the Old Law and the Psalms. We read very similar wording in Psalms 95:7-11. We will partially readdress this in the next chapter of the Hebrew letter (Hebrews 4:7).

Again, authority is established in the statements forward. Not only is this a quote of a Psalm, but in case someone would miss it, the Holy Ghost is the author of the words being set forth (II Peter 1:20-21). The children of Israel had a long history of hardened hearts, being rebellious, and being stubborn (Exodus 32:7-9, Deuteronomy 31:14-29, II Kings 17:7-14, II Chronicles 30:1-8, II Chronicles 36:11-16, and Nehemiah 9:7-38). Some generations were worse than others (Jeremiah 7:26-28). The problem didn't cease in the first century either (Acts 7:51-60). Solomon wrote this about those whom have a hardened heart: *"Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief"* (Proverbs 28:14).

The provocation that was written of here and in the ninety-fifth Psalm is accounted of in Numbers 13:1-14:38. The purpose was to humble them and prove them. That was forty years of correction. They were not abandoned by God for those forty years (Deuteronomy 29:1-9). Rather, they saw God's work for those forty years. Notice: *"All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the*

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*LORD thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him” (Deuteronomy 8:1-6).*

Think about God being grieved with the generation the Hebrew writer is referring to. Their grieving God didn't stop as they were sentenced to forty-years in the wilderness. The Psalmist wrote this: *“When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant. But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again. How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy” (Psalms 78:34-42).*

They refused to know the ways of the Lord (Psalms 147:19-20). Like all whom err from the ways of the Lord, that was their choice and that choice has consequences (Proverbs 1:22-29). Even long after, Israel continued to make the choice to not know the Lord (Jeremiah 9:6 and Hosea 5:4). So, God swore in His wrath that that generation would not enter into the land meant for Israel (Deuteronomy 1:34-35). The lesson therein is that those whom reject the will of God will, at some point, meet His wrath (Romans 1:16-32 and Ephesians 5:6).

As these points are read, let it stand out to us that God has feelings. He sees what they or we do and can be grieved. We first read about God being grieved with the actions of man prior to His flooding of the earth (Genesis 6:1-6). He can be “vexed” by sinful actions (Isaiah 63:10). He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11). Consider what Jesus did when He came to the city of Jerusalem: *“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation” (Luke 19:41-44).*

What God desires, both then and now, is clear. Consider these statements: *“Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways... The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (Psalms 81:13 and II Peter 3:9).* If we continue to be God's faithful children, in Christ Jesus, we are those whom will be delivered from the wrath to come (II Thessalonians 1:6-10). Therefore, BE FAITHFUL!