

Heed, Not Harden!

Hebrews 3:6-11; Psalm 95

East Berlin Community Church

Pastor Keith A. Mosebrook

April 27, 2025

Introduction

- Some passages of Scripture are easy to interpret, but difficult to apply.
- Other passages of Scripture are both difficult to interpret and apply. Many of them are found in the “warning” sections of the book of Hebrews.
 - Is he addressing genuine followers of Jesus Christ, believers or is he addressing those who are on the verge of believing, but have yet committed their lives to Christ?
 - The writer to the Hebrews is concerned that a group of Jewish believers are in danger of deserting, turning back from following Christ, and returning to the safe confines of Judaism.
- The readers are encouraged to fix their eyes on Jesus. Trust Him and not turn back to Judaism.
 - Jesus Christ is the ultimate role model of faithfulness to God in the face of extreme suffering.
 - Moses, the “father of the Jewish nation” is also an example of faithfulness
- We are part of Christ’s household *“if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.”*
 - **The different roles God plays and we play in our salvation**
 - **In the past... (initial stage)**
 - **God’s part: To select.**
 - Ephesians 1:4-- *“chose us in Him before the foundation of the world”*
 - **Our part: To believe.**
 - John 6:29-- *“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”*
 - Ephesians 2:8-9-- *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”*
 - **In the present... (progressive stage)**
 - **God’s part: To make us holy.**
 - **Our part: To trust and obey.**
 - Philippians 2:12-13-- *“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.”*
 - **In the future... (culmination stage)**
 - **God’s part: To give us eternal life and to keep us safe forever.**
 - John 6:39-- *“This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.”*
 - John 10:28-- *“And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”*
 - Romans 8:30-- *“Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”*
 - **Our part: To persevere in our faith! Continuance is proof of the reality of our faith.**
 - John 6:68-69-- *“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

- The warning sections in Hebrew are directed to all of us-- to those on the fence regarding Jesus, and those who have made a profession of faith in the past, but who are in danger of drifting away.

“Heed, Not Harden!” Hebrews 3:7-11; Psalm 95

A. Scriptural Foundation: Psalm 95

- Psalm 95-- *“Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. For the LORD is the great God, and the great King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth; The heights of the hills are His also. The sea is His, for He made it; And His hands formed the dry land. Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you will hear His voice: “Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, as in the day of trial in the wilderness, When your fathers tested Me; They tried Me, though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, “It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they do not know My ways.’ So I swore in My wrath, “They shall not enter My rest.””*
1. **The invitation to worship God through praise, humble submission, and reflection on our continuing relationship as “his people”, “his sheep” under his care.--** Psalm 95:1-6
 2. **The warning not to harden our hearts by failing to act on the truth.--** Psalm 95:7-11. This forms the section quoted by the writer to the Hebrews in Hebrews 3:7-11

B. Scriptural Application: Hebrews 3:7-11

1. **The Exhortation: “Do not harden your hearts”**
 - Hebrews 3:7-8-- *“Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness.”*
 - a. **We are exhorted to “hear the voice of the voice of God”.**
 - b. We must do so **TODAY!**
 - c. **Failure to respond immediately to the voice of God leads to “hardening our hearts”.** That is the danger of hearing but not heeding or doing God’s word.
 - d. **Some people willfully harden their hearts by refusing to heed God’s word and Spirit.**
2. **The Illustration: The Children of Israel in the wilderness wanderings.**
 - Hebrews 3:8-10-- *“Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.’”*
 - a. **God richly supplied the Israelites’ needs but they also experience “trials in the wilderness” which tested their faith.**
 - b. **The Israelites also tested or “tempted” God by asking for more proof or evidence of God’s care for them.**
 - Exodus 17:1-2-- *“Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, ‘Give us water, that we may drink.’ So Moses said to them, ‘Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?’”*

- c. **No evidence is sufficient for one who does not want to believe.**
 - Luke 16:31-- *"If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead."*

- 3. **The Warning: God does not take unbelief lightly!**
 - Hebrews 3:10-11-- *"Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.' So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'"*

 - a. **God is extremely angry when people fail to trust Him. The "wrath" of God!**

 - b. **The Israelites failed to trust God, and thus the unbelieving generation did not enter into the promised land.**
 - Numbers 14:21-23-- *"But truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD— because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it."*

 - c. **Because of unbelief, we are in danger of not entering into the promised "rest".**