

Hebrews

Dr. Charles "Buddy" Parrish

May 10, 2023



Hebrews 3:1-6

- The preacher here continues methodically on, having begun with the assertion that Jesus Christ is the ultimate revelation of the Father and that Christ and Christ alone is the door to the Father's throne. To drive home the point, he begins by pointing out Christ's superiority over the prophets and the angels. But now he strikes at the very heart of the Jewish faith by asserting Christ's superiority over Moses.
- Today many church-goers would simply shrug at the idea that Jesus was greater than Moses, but in the Jewish faith, in the 1st century and still today, it is impossible to calculate the importance of the unique place the figure of Moses holds. It was Moses to whom God spoke face to face. It was Moses to whom the Ten Commandments were given. For the Jews, the Law of Moses, extrapolated out from the Ten Commandments, is the most important thing in the world. The Law of Moses determines virtually everything about their lives: what they wear, what they eat, where they go or don't go, who they associate with, who they marry, every aspect of their lives. If you are trying to reach the Jewish people for Christ, convincing them of Christ's superiority over Moses is your foremost point. Without it, you really have no case.
- The story of the conflict between Moses and Aaron and Miriam in Numbers 12:1-8 cements the importance of Moses in the story of the Jewish people (read). In the Jewish mind, it is impossible to conceive of another person closer to God than Moses.
- "But consider Jesus", the preacher asks his hearers. The word he uses here is *katanoein*. It means not to merely take a look at something, but to look deeply into it so that the inner meaning, the truth of the thing, can be clearly seen and understood. When Jesus says to consider the lilies of the field, He is not asking us to take a casual glance at the flowers. Rather, the Lord is asking us to look deeper into what God can teach us in each part of His Creation. So "consider Jesus". Take a long hard look. Look past His Galilean upbringing. Look at who He *really* is.
- Who is Jesus really? He is "the Apostle". Nowhere else is Jesus called an apostle. But the word literally means "one who is sent forth". The Jews used the word to designate

the messengers of the Sanhedrin. Greeks used the word to designate ambassadors. The "*aspostolor*" is one who is sent forth with all the authority of the sender. So we are to understand Christ as "the Apostle" in the purest sense of the word. He was sent forth from Heaven with all the authority of God Himself.

- Jesus is the High Priest. This is a subject the preacher will return to in greater detail as he moves through the sermon. The High Priest is the one who literally stands in the gap between God and humanity. To do this the priest must be able to speak for people to God and speak for God to people. Who better to do this than the Son of God who was born to a woman? Jesus is the perfect High Priest because He is perfectly God and perfectly human.
- Having laid this out, how then is Jesus superior to Moses? Here in vss. 2-6 the word "house" is used in a double sense, meaning both a building and a family. Now Moses is worthy of honor because he was a faithful member of God's household to be sure. But Christ is the builder of the house, as the preacher has already shown (1:2). Is not the builder greater than what was built, just as the creator is greater than what was created? Moses did not write the Law, he simply distributed what was given him. Nor did Moses build the house, he simply served in it. Moses was perhaps the chief servant in God's house, but Christ was the SON. Moses by experience was able to learn a little about God. Jesus was God! Thus it is clear as to how Jesus is superior to Moses.
- Next, the preacher brings the metaphor to the present. While it is still true that the whole world and all the universe is God's house, the Church is uniquely His house and it is for His unique purpose that the Father brought the Church into being. 1 Peter 2:5, 4:17 and 1 Timothy 3:15 all speak of the church as the household of God. Each of us is a stone, a piece of the building of the church and each of us will remain as strong stones if we "hold fast our confidence" and our hope until the end when we see Jesus face to face.