



## 8: Better Than Moses

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honour than the house. For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house,

Hebrews 3:1 – 6a

Jesus is way better than anyone or anything that came before and way better than anyone or anything yet to come. That’s what the writer of the Book of Hebrews wants us to be convinced of and he’s building a water-tight case. He’s told us that Jesus is God’s final word. He’s told us everything belongs to Him, He made everything and He holds it all together. He’s told us Jesus is the exact image of God. He’s told us He is God and that now He’s seated, enthroned, at the right hand of the Father in glory. He’s told us that Jesus is way better than any of the angels and He’s told us that Jesus is the perfect man to represent us before God, but He still hasn’t finished.

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets.”

Hebrews 1:1

Of all the prophets through whom God spoke to the fathers there was none who demanded to be heard and none who commanded respect like Moses and that’s why the writer of the Book of Hebrews continues to build his case for following Jesus by showing us that Jesus is superior to Moses. In these verses he invites us to place Moses alongside Jesus and compare the two.

### Think About Jesus!

The word therefore (verse 1) links these verses with everything that’s already been said about Jesus: in the light of all that’s been said about Him He’s worth considering, it’s an entirely appropriate thing to do. But the

word “consider” calls us to more than just some brief thought. The writer means us look closely at Jesus with careful attention. He means us to think till we see clearly and fully understand what we’re seeing and if you could read his original words you would see that this is a strong call to action. So, you must set your mind to think long and hard about Jesus, it’s only reasonable that you should.

John Brown, a minister in Edinburgh in the early 1800’s who wrote a commentary on Hebrews says about verse 1:

"This is a duty of radical importance to Christians. It is because we think so little, and to so little purpose, on Christ, that we know so little about Him, that we love Him so little, trust in Him so little, so often neglect our duty, are so much influenced by 'things seen and temporal,' and so little by 'things unseen and eternal.'"

John Brown

- ◆ *Do you agree with John Brown? How will you set about giving Jesus the kind of thought the verse calls for?*

Before we move on from verse 1, there are two other things you should notice. They’re to do with the way the writer addresses his readers.

## Holy Brothers

First he calls them holy brethren and that’s a reminder to us that there’s a relationship that ties all Christians together. It exists because they share a common relationship to both Jesus and the Father. It also reminds us that those who follow Jesus are separate from the world and devoted to God; they’ve been set apart from sin to live a life of obedience. Everyone who belongs to Jesus belongs to a very special family.

## Partakers Of The Heavenly Calling

The second thing to notice here is that he calls them “partakers of the heavenly calling.” To partake or share in the heavenly calling means that you have been called from heaven and you’ve been called to heaven. In other words this world is not home and you are on a journey. But I think something more is intended with these words.

Judging from the use of similar phrases in other parts of the Bible I think it’s fair to say that “the heavenly calling” is not just a call to heaven, it’s also a call to all the blessings that go with being Christian: the blessings of salvation, both the ones we enjoy now and all the others that we’ll experiences when we get to glory.

- ◆ *What are some of the blessings we all enjoy as Christians?*
- ◆ *The words "holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling." strike at the core of how we think about ourselves. What, practically, do they mean for you?*

## Consider Jesus, Apostle And High Priest

The way Jesus is described in verse 1 leads nicely into the rest of the paragraph. The Jesus we confess (“of our confession”) is an apostle and He is our High Priest.

This is the only place in the Bible where Jesus is called an apostle. An apostle is one who is sent; Jesus has been sent by God. In the Old Testament Moses isn’t specifically called an apostle but in the mind of a Jewish reader he would have been considered to be the greatest one ever sent by God to the people of Israel. So it’s appropriate that the name should be applied to Jesus here. The writer is taking up again the thought with which he opened the book and is now going to show that He is a better apostle than Moses.

In the same way the name "High Priest" links chapter 2 verse 17 to chapter 4 verse 14 where the thought of Jesus as our High Priest will be taken up again. Taken together both names continue the idea of Jesus as our mediator:

But the main point here is that Jesus has been sent by God to man, as was Moses, and He also appears before God in man's behalf, as did Moses.

## Jesus Is Better Even Than Moses

The words of verses 2 to 6a are straight-forward and self explanatory, if we bear in mind that the word "house" refers to a "household" or "family," not a building.

The writer is careful to point out that he isn't taking away from the respect due to Moses. Moses is highly regarded and rightly so. Although, this time, he doesn't use any direct quotes from the Old Testament to establish the point it seems likely that God's words from Numbers 12 were in his mind.

"My servant Moses;  
...is faithful in all My house.  
I speak with him face to face,  
Even plainly, and not in dark sayings;  
And he sees the form of the LORD.

Numbers 12:7 – 8

Even so, Jesus is better than Moses in every respect: Moses was a faithful servant in God's household but Jesus is a faithful son of the family and master of the household.

- ◆ *What differences between Jesus and Moses are highlighted here and why are they significant?*

It's worth noting that it's in the very same household over which Jesus is master that Moses was a faithful servant in. Israel, of the Old Testament, and the church, of the New, are one.

- ◆ *Why is that a noteworthy point?*

### In Summary

So then, consider Jesus alongside Moses. Moses played a big — a vital — part in the religion of Israel. Israel's faith was centred on the revelation that he brought to them from God. But Moses was a servant; Jesus is the master.