

Jesus is Greater

## **Believers are warned against unbelief**

2/7/21

My father-in-law keeps a top 10 movie list on his person at all times.

My favorite movies tend to follow a two types of storylines:

1. Against all odds, I overcame. We overcame.
2. There is a hero who overcomes on our behalf, many times at the cost of their own lives.

The Four Chapter Gospel

1. Creation
2. Fall
3. Redemption
4. Restoration

Scripture is a consistent retelling of these four chapters, building up to and climaxing with this being shared through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In previous weeks:

### **Hebrews 1:1–2**

<sup>1</sup> In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

<sup>2</sup> but in these last days **he has spoken to us by his Son...**

**Heb 3:3:** Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses

This week: Believers are warned against Unbelief

**Heb 3:7–19** “So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’ ” See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end. As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.” Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies perished in the wilderness? And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.”

The second, third, and fourth chapters of the gospel are in view here.

To walk through this passage, let's look first at verses 15-19

vv. 15-16 – Captivity – Chapter 2 of the Gospel

As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.” Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt?

v. 17 – Wilderness – Chapter 3 of the Gospel

And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies perished in the wilderness?

vv. 18-19 – Promised Land – Chapter 4 of the Gospel

And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.”

The author of Hebrews to his audience: You could be just like them.

Several observations:

The author's audience is compared to the wilderness generation.

“So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts **as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did.** That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’ ”

God gets angry?

“So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. **That is why I was angry with that generation;** I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ **So I declared on oath in my anger,** ‘They shall never enter my rest.’ ”

What does this mean? Does it mean Moses didn't enter God's eternal rest? (hint: it does not mean that Moses fell short of eternity with God, rather for Moses it means he doesn't enter the Promised Land. For us, it serves as a warning about maintaining belief/trust in Jesus all the way to the finish...to our Promised Land...to eternity with God.)

“So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that

generation; I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.' So I declared on oath in my anger, **'They shall never enter my rest.'** ”

Hardening of heart is a secondary outcome. What comes first? That's where the rest of our passage goes: Failing to hear/heed his voice, failing to encourage one another, failing to hold fast to our original conviction, failing to hear from the Son (recall 1:2!)

“So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, **do not harden your hearts** as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, **'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.'** So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.' ”

God speaks. The Holy Spirit speaks! Today. Here. Now. To us. Are we hearing him this morning?

**“So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice,** do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation; **I said,** 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.' So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.' ”

PHYSICAL realities point to SPIRITUAL realities:

- Captivity in Egypt points to captivity to sin
- Wilderness points to life in Christ (Does this strike you as odd? It shouldn't. But many times we want to experience life in Christ as more similar to the Promised Land than the Wilderness. BUT, unlike those long ago, may our trust in Jesus INCREASE amidst these trials of life!)
- Promised Land point to Eternity with God

Hebrews 3:12-14

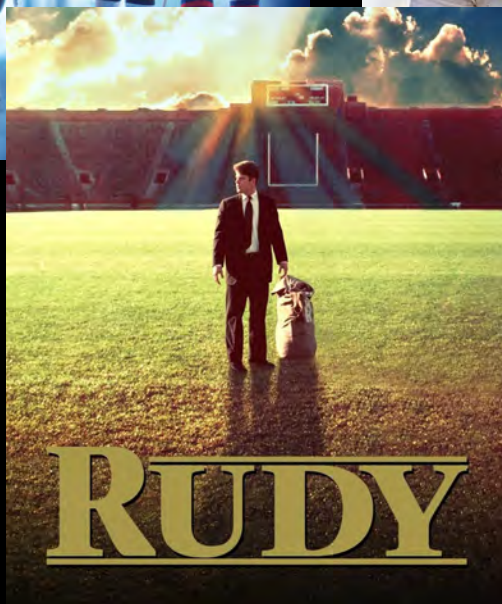
“See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

“YIBAMBE!”

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

“WAKANDA FOREVER!” – CHRIST FOREVER!

We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.







# THE FOUR CHAPTER GOSPEL

CREATION

*Chapter*

1

FALL

*Chapter*

2

REDEMPTION

*Chapter*


3

RESTORATION

*Chapter*

4



The image is a composite of a landscape photograph and overlaid text. The background is a photograph of a rugged mountain range with sharp, jagged peaks, seen from the perspective of looking out from a dark cave. The cave's interior is visible on the left and right sides, framing the view. The sky is filled with heavy, grey clouds. The foreground inside the cave is dark and rocky, with some debris. Overlaid on the center of the image is the text 'JESUS IS GREATER' in a large, white, serif font. Below this, a black rectangular box contains the text 'Believers are warned against Unbelief' in a white, serif font.

# JESUS IS GREATER

Believers are warned against Unbelief

## Hebrews 3:7–19

<sup>7</sup> So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, <sup>9</sup> where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. <sup>10</sup> That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ <sup>11</sup> So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’”



## Hebrews 3:7–19

<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. <sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.

## Hebrews 3:7-19

<sup>15</sup> As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.” <sup>16</sup> Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? <sup>17</sup> And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies perished in the wilderness? <sup>18</sup> And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? <sup>19</sup> So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.





## Hebrews 3:15-16

<sup>15</sup> As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.” <sup>16</sup> Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt?



## Hebrews 3:17

<sup>17</sup> And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies perished in the wilderness?



## Hebrews 3:18-19

<sup>18</sup> And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? <sup>19</sup> So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.





# Captivity



# Wilderness



# Promised Land



Captivity

Wilderness

Promised  
Land



Fall

Redemption

Restoration

“You could be just like them.”



## Hebrews 3:7-11

<sup>7</sup> So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, <sup>9</sup> where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. <sup>10</sup>

That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ <sup>11</sup> So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’”

## Hebrews 3:7-11

<sup>7</sup> So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, <sup>9</sup> where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. <sup>10</sup> That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ <sup>11</sup> So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’”

## Hebrews 3:7-11

<sup>7</sup> So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, <sup>9</sup> where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. <sup>10</sup> That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ <sup>11</sup> So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’”

## Hebrews 3:7-11

<sup>7</sup> So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, <sup>9</sup> where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. <sup>10</sup> That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ <sup>11</sup> So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’”



## Hebrews 3:7-11

<sup>7</sup> So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, <sup>9</sup> where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. <sup>10</sup> That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ <sup>11</sup> So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’”

Captivity

Wilderness

Promised  
Land



Fall

Redemption

Restoration

## Hebrews 3:12

<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. <sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.

# Physical realities point to spiritual realities

Captivity

Wilderness

Promised  
Land

Captive  
to sin

Life in  
Christ

Eternal  
Rest



## Hebrews 3:12

<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. <sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.



## " YIBAMBE "

"yibambe" is either a stand-alone word or part of a couple of phrases -- which include "yibambe icimile" and "yibambe amandala" -- and means "hold off" or "hold fast"


## Hebrews 3:12

<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. <sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.



**WAKANDA  
FOREVER**



The image is a full-page background featuring a dramatic landscape viewed through the dark, irregular opening of a cave. The cave's interior is in deep shadow, with the rough, textured rock walls visible on the left and right sides. Outside the cave, a rugged mountain range with sharp, jagged peaks stretches across the horizon under a sky filled with heavy, grey clouds. The foreground inside the cave is a rocky, uneven path leading towards the light. The overall mood is one of mystery and grandeur.

# JESUS IS GREATER

BOOK OF HEBREWS