

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS



3. A Warning to God's House

(Leader's Notes)

Introduction

In the Book of Hebrews we see Jesus as the one who is over God's House, and that House is made up of believers like you and me. However, as we go through the chapters of this book we are warned about being careful not to drift away, and exhorted to run the race to the end. The book alternates between teaching wonderful truths about Jesus, with warnings and encouragements for God's people. In this study we will look at a warning that was given that uses the Children of Israel as an example.

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 3:7-19

- ❖ How were the Children of Israel tested in the wilderness? How did they respond? Hebrews 3:8-11, Deuteronomy 8:2
(They faced many difficult situations – no food, water etc. God used these to test his people. Sadly they responded by hardening their hearts, even though they had seen him work many miracles.)
- ❖ These verses quote from Psalm 95. How does it describe God's feelings towards his people? V9-10
(God was angry with his people and it says that they tested him!)
- ❖ Do you think Christians sometimes do what the Children of Israel did, and test God? How is it possible to do that?
- ❖ What warnings are we given from the example of the Children of Israel? V12-13
*(To guard our heart from unbelief and turning away.
To guard our heart from being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.)*
- ❖ What suggestions are given in this passage to help us overcome these dangers? V13-14
(To encourage each other daily and to hold on firmly to our faith.)
- ❖ In v8 we are told that the Israelites Moses had led out of Egypt had 'hardened their hearts'. This is a dangerous thing to do. What sins are linked with hardening our hearts? V18, 19
(The sin of disobedience and unbelief. Note: unbelief is not necessarily lack of belief in God, but not trusting him in areas of our life.)
- ❖ How did God judge his people? V11, 17-19
(They were not able to enter God's rest – i.e. they were not able to enter the Promised Land and died in the wilderness.)

These warnings are given for our benefit, so let's discover what God is saying to us. Just as God had promised the Children of Israel a land flowing with milk and honey, and rest for their enemies, he promises us an abundant life in Christ, with freedom from the bondage of sin.

Reality Check

Has unbelief or disobedience kept you from inheriting God's promises in your life? What should you do about it?

- ❖ On the other hand, what advantages are given to those who trust and obey the Lord? V14, 4:1
(They will share in Christ and will be able to enter his rest.)

Conclusion

The warnings and promises given are not just speaking about the future, but our present life. We are urged to look at the example of the Children of Israel so we don't make the same mistakes they did. God does not want us to miss all he has for us now because of unbelief and disobedience, but he wants us to enter into the things he has planned for His House.