



## NG Study Guide: Hebrews 3:1-6 :: “Jesus is Greater Than Moses” [10.1.23]

### Love God + know the Bible better:

1. Read the passage cited above, and try to answer the questions below before your group meets.
2. Regularly review the notes at the bottom.

### The Study

**Thesis:** The great existential quest is to be delivered from the weight of this fallen world, and be delivered to a better or even ideal Promised Land. If someone doesn't feel that Jesus is doing the job (or will do the job) they will be tempted to seek another deliverer. Yet, Jesus is a unique Deliverer, better than any other. So commit to Christ.

**Subject: Jesus is greater than Moses**

**Object: Commit to Christ**

*Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup> who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. <sup>3</sup> For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. <sup>4</sup> For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. <sup>5</sup> And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, <sup>6</sup> but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.*

**Context:** *Hebrews* is written to Jewish Christians who were being discriminated against for their faith, scorned by family and friends. The letter repeatedly exhorts believers to appropriate and appreciate the greater reality of Jesus, remain steadfast in their faith, and experience the greater glory Jesus offers compared to any claimed substitute. *Hebrews* is especially relevant today to anyone contemplating deconstructing their faith, because the author systematically establishes that Jesus is superior to any claimed substitute.

The *therefore* (1) refers to the second chapter where we discover Jesus is the Savior who has delivered many sons to glory through the cross (the gospel message).

#### **A. Consider Moses (2,5)**

At the time of Jesus it is not difficult to imagine Jews wearing WWMD bracelets – “What Would Moses Do?” In the proverbial Mount Rushmore of Judaism, Moses is the most prominent figure, before Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David.

The rabbis considered Moses the greatest man ever. For a first century Jewish Christian contemplating deconstructing their faith, Moses is the most prominent substitute.

Moses is twice described as faithful (v.2 *Moses also was faithful*), and (v.5 *Moses indeed was faithful*).

Consider the scope of Moses' influence as a deliverer in the Bible:

- 1. Chose God rather than pleasure and treasure of Egypt (Hebrews 11:23-27, Exodus 2-3).** Moses had tremendous riches, power, glory and unimaginable worldly pleasure as Pharaoh's son, but chose to follow God and be available as a deliverer (Exodus 2-3, Acts 7:25).
- 2. Foretold the plagues and salvation through the Passover lamb (Hebrews 11:28, Exodus 4-12).** Moses was the prophet who foretold each of the ten plagues and the deliverance from death by appropriating the blood of the lamb.

**3. Entered the Red Sea (Hebrews 11:29, Exodus 14).** Moses led God's people in faith trusting God to part the waters and deliver the Jews from Pharaoh's pursuing army.

**4. Reflected the glory of God and the old covenant (Exodus 34:29-35, 2Corinthians 3).** As Moses received the covenant from God on Mt. Sinai he reflected the glory of God such that his face shone. The people were afraid when they saw him glowing so he covered his face. Paul noted the covering and fading glory of the old covenant compared to the new.

**5. Delivered the Law (Exodus 20-31, Galatians 3:21-25).** Moses met with God on Sinai and faithfully delivered the covenant to God's people. Yet, as Paul observed the law was not intended to make us right with God by our performance, but to reveal our need for a Savior who would make us right through faith (**and show us how to live in community with God and others**).

**6. A prophet who foretold the One who would come (Deuteronomy 18:15).**

Moses was amazingly faithful in 40 years of leading the Jews out of Egypt and through the wilderness to the edge of the Promised Land. Moses foretold the coming Messiah (The Prophet) whom God's people would follow. Moses was a prophet, but not The Prophet.

**7. Moses was faithful (Numbers 12:7, Numbers 20:1-13)**

The author of Hebrews quotes Numbers 12:7 where God declared Moses faithful in all His house (2). Moses faithfully led God's people for 40 years. Yet, he wasn't perfectly faithful. At Kadesh, the people cried out for water in the desert. Moses prayed to God, and God directed him to speak and the rock would bring forth water. Moses in his frustration called God's people rebels and struck the rock twice (Numbers 20:1-13). Moses misrepresented God to the people, God was not angry at them. As a consequence he would not enter the Promised Land with God's people.

**B. Consider Jesus (1-6)**

The author of Hebrews esteems Moses, but also helps us to better understand the superiority of Jesus. We are told to *consider ... Jesus* (1). To consider means to examine, focus upon, discover true meaning, value, and lessons taught.

*For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses* (3). Why is Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses?

**1. Jesus is honored as Son (Hebrews 3:5-6, Matthew 3:16-17, Matthew 17:1-5)**

*Moses was faithful as a servant, but Christ a faithful Son* (5-6). At Jesus' baptism He is honored by the Father with these words, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Similarly, at the Mount of Transfiguration as Jesus prepared to go to the cross the Father again affirms, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" In contrast to Moses, Jesus is perfectly faithful and a Son.

**2. The Apostle (1)**

*Apostle* means sent one or ambassador. Jesus is the perfect ambassador (Hebrews 1:1-2). Jesus uniquely represents God to man (John 14:7-9). Jesus is The Prophet foretold by Moses representing God to man (Deuteronomy 18:15).

**3. The High Priest (1)**

Jesus uniquely represents man to God as priest, mediator and intercessor. He is the great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14), and always lives to make intercession for God's people (Hebrews 7:25). In contrast, Moses was unable to carry to God the weight of all the people's burdens (Exodus 18). Moses was a priest (Psalm 99:6), but never a High Priest.

**4. The Owner and Builder of the house (3-6)**

Six times we see the term "house" referring to the people of God rather than a building. Moses was faithful in his role of building the house, but was a servant or God's worker (5) on the project. In contrast, Jesus builds, designs, and He is the owner of the house.

**5. Jesus is God (4)**

*He who built all things is God* is a reference to the deity of Jesus as the builder of the house (See also, Hebrews 1:2, 10). John's gospel begins with the declaration, "All things were created through Him..." (John 1:3). Paul likewise notes, "All things were created through Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16). Since Jesus is God, He is clearly greater than Moses.

## **6. Jesus delivers grace and truth (John 1:17)**

“For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). The law reveals the righteousness of God, but no one is able to perform the law perfectly (Romans 3:23). It is the grace of God that gives His righteousness through faith in Christ. Moses brought the people to the edge of the Promised Land but could not deliver them to the desired destination. It is Joshua who leads them in (Joshua 3). Joshua is a picture of Jesus. Joshua, and Jesus are the same in Hebrew, *Yeshua* and mean “God is salvation or deliverer.”

## **7. The Deliverer**

Moses led a physical exodus from Egypt. Jesus leads a greater spiritual exodus from death to life. Moses’ deliverance was made possible as the wrath of God came upon Pharaoh’s son (10<sup>th</sup> plague). Jesus deliverance made possible as God’s wrath came upon His Son. It is a greater deliverance of redemption.

In Mathew 16, Peter rightly identifies Jesus as the Christ (Messiah). Then Jesus took Peter (James and John) to the Mount of Transfiguration where Jesus would reveal His glory (deity). There on the mountain Elijah and Moses appeared with Jesus. Peter suggested erecting three tents for them, implying they were equals. Then the Father declared, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!” The disciples looked again and saw only Jesus (Matthew 17:1-8).

## **C. Consider whose you are, and where you’re going (1,6)**

### **1. You are set apart to Jesus (1)**

*Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus (1).* You are *holy* or set-apart to God. We are made holy by Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, not by our moral performance. *Our confession* is the declaration that Jesus is Lord and Savior/Deliverer (Matthew 10:32, Romans 10:9).

### **2. You are partakers of heaven (1)**

You are *partakers of the heavenly calling*, because Jesus is faithful to deliver (John 14:1-6). Knowing that you are passing through this life and this world to eternity with Jesus in glory should change your experience of this life.

### **3. Your commitment to Christ will be tested (6)**

*Whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end (6).* Endurance is evidence of real faith. Salvation is based on faith on Christ’s work on the cross not our works. Those who remain steadfast in Christ have confidence, joy and hope of His promises, and they are partakers of the heavenly calling. If you’re struggling with your faith consider John the Baptist. He correctly identified Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (The Messiah) (John 1:29). Later, when John was in prison there were some apparent doubts whether Jesus was truly the Christ (Matthew 11:3). So he sent messengers to Jesus. Jesus told them to report what He was saying and doing (His words and works were fulfillment of prophecy and reveal He is the Messiah). Jesus never rebuked John for asking; and His response reveals the tender way He helps us in our struggles (Matthew 12:20).

As Peter observed, to whom shall we go? Only Jesus can offer eternal life (John 6:68). So commit to Him!

## **Study Guide Qs**

**Q1. Why is Moses a great example to believers?**

**Q2. Since Jesus is worthy of greater glory than Moses how can we honor Him?**

**Q3. How might anticipation of heaven impact how believers live today?**

**Q4. What advice would you give to help someone commit to Christ?**

## **“Disciples Who Dig Deeper” (optional or alternative study)**

**1. Contemplate where people might look to be delivered from the weight of this fallen world (other than Jesus). Consider their virtues, and how they might obscure the true Deliverer Jesus.**

**Love your neighbors (inside + outside the group) better:**

1. Who would like to share how they sought to befriend or build relationship with their neighbors inside or outside the group?
2. Are there some needs that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbors inside or outside the group?

#### Disciples who make disciples:

1. Who would like to share how they recently sought to make disciples?
2. Here is a disciple making idea to consider for the weeks ahead:

Enjoy a local park in your community and/or take a walk through your neighborhood. Pray for your neighbors and look to engage and get to know a neighbor.

#### Prayer [Loving God and Neighbors better]:

Close the NG meeting with a time of group prayer. Encourage each participant to pray, but don't force anyone to pray. Encourage the group to keep their prayers brief so that each person can pray.

#### Notes:

**1. Preparation and participation:** Group participants should read the teacher's notes contained in this study guide prior to your meeting and be prepared to discuss the content. Remember the purpose of preparation and participation is to accelerate growth as disciples who loves God supremely, loves neighbors like self, and make other disciples who do likewise. **Seek to involve as many group participants as possible.** A good group discussion time allows people to get to know the passage and one another better.

**2. Consider what about the passage is particularly exciting, challenging, or confusing?**

If a leader is uncertain about a question of doctrine or theology don't hesitate to follow-up with your coach during the week. Then revisit the issue(s) when the group gathers next time.

**3. The "Disciples Who Dig Deeper" section provides some optional or alternative study and discussion activities.** As a group leader, you can choose to focus on the "Disciples Who Dig Deeper" section, include part of that section in your group meeting, or not use it at all. Try to give the group sufficient notice so they can be prepared for the meeting.

**4. The "Love your neighbors" section encourages participants to love neighbors inside and outside the group better.** As a leader, discuss this section frequently.

**5. The "Disciples who make disciples" section provides a helpful idea, and encourages participants to be disciples who make disciples.** Leaders should regularly encourage the group to review and discuss this section.

