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THE LOOKOUT

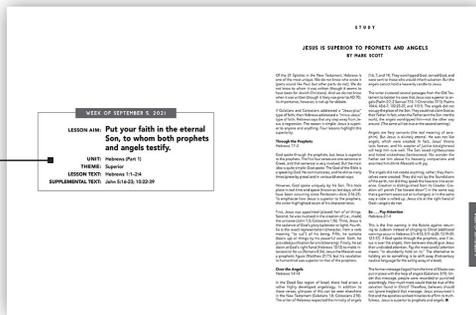
SEPTEMBER 2021

Unit: HEBREWS (Part 1)
Theme: SUPERIOR

Overview: Not everything that is new is improved. But when it comes to the salvation history of the Bible, Jesus is superior to everything in the Old Testament. In the first of three months of study from the Epistle to the Hebrews, students will learn of Jesus' superiority over the prophets, the angels, and Moses. They will also learn of the superior sacrifice Jesus makes and the superior covenant he brings. Students will learn to embrace God's wisdom, pray earnestly for revival, witness God's miracles, and avoid the heartache of disobedience.

HOW TO USE

Each week has a **lesson aim**, **lesson text**, and **supplemental text**.



Tab indicates the week of each lesson.

Each week features three sections: **Study**, **Application**, and **Discovery**.



Use the **Discovery** questions to study, discuss, and apply the Scripture passages in a group or class.

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2021

LESSON AIM: Hold firmly to your confidence and hope in Jesus.

UNIT: Hebrews (Part 1)

THEME: Superior

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 3:1-6

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT: Matthew 17:1-8; John 5:41-47;
Deuteronomy 5:1-22; 18:15-18

JESUS IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES

BY MARK SCOTT

Bible scholars are united in the Bible's use of typology, but they are divided as to what extent the Bible uses typology. Typology is a person, thing, or event that prophetically prefigures some later fulfillment in the Bible. The fulfillment is called the antitype. Some Bible scholars demand that later revelation must "name it and claim it" for it to be a true type. Other Bible scholars are broader in their embrace of intentions and fulfillments. Comfort levels differ. If the Bible does not connect the fulfillment dots, we certainly must be careful about declaring a typological connection.

Our text probably shows signs of typology. The writer of Hebrews makes the case that Jesus was superior to everything and everyone, including the ginormous person of Moses (though Louie Giglio calls Moses "The Little Leader"). Was Moses in fact a "type" of Christ (Deuteronomy 18:15-18)?

MOSES

The three most significant characters in the Old Testament were Abraham, Moses, and David (though Job, Noah, and Daniel also are commended highly—Ezekiel 14:14, 20). Abraham was the father of Israel, David was the singer of Israel, but Moses was the redeemer and law-giver of Israel. Moses wrote more than any of the others combined. For a man who had platform paralysis (Exodus 4:10), Moses used many words.

The text said Moses was *faithful in all God's house*. Even though Moses questioned his calling, doubted whether God's people would receive his message, failed to honor God before the people (on one occasion), and fearfully fled into the wilderness when his murder of an Egyptian was exposed (Exodus 3:11; 4:1; Deuteronomy 3:26-28; Acts 7:29), he still made faithful choices and endured "disgrace for the sake of Christ" (Hebrews 11:24-28).

Moses was willing to be a *servant*. The word for *servant* used here is not the one typically used; rather, it is the Greek word *therapon* that means "minister" or "attendant" or "one who is faithful to a superior." As God's servant, Moses was *bearing witness* to what God would yet do in the future (John 5:46). Moses bore up under incredible pressure as he led God's people (Acts 7:35-41). He was

not unlike someone else who would be rejected by his own people as well (John 1:11).

JESUS

Jesus was called an *apostle* (one sent from God) and *high priest* (a concept that will be developed thoroughly in Hebrews). He too was *faithful to the one who appointed him*. Jesus was consumed with doing the Father's will (John 5:19). This may be why Jesus was called faithful and true (Revelation 19:11). Jesus was *found worthy*—even more so than Moses. Jesus was worshipped as such in Revelation 5:9-14.

While Moses and Jesus are similar, there is one huge difference. Jesus was a *Son*, while Moses was a *servant*. That is no small thing. Jesus' identity is what makes him superior to Moses. Moses was *called* by God, but Jesus was *sent* by God. Moses *descended* from the priestly family, but Jesus was the high priest. Moses was faithful to God, but Jesus was in total solidarity with God (John 8:58). Moses compromised his leadership in the wilderness, but Jesus succeeded in his leadership in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). When Moses "is read," a veil covers the face of the reader, but Jesus enables believers with unveiled faces to behold the glory of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:15-18).

HOUSE

In the Bible, the word *house* can mean many things. Sometimes it simply means a physical house. Paul told the Corinthians they had "houses" in which to eat (1 Corinthians 11:34). The word often means "household." This would be a synonym to "family." For instance, Noah built an ark to save his family (Hebrews 11:7). The word sometimes means "tabernacle." David was frustrated that the ark of the covenant was in a tent and voiced his frustration to Nathan. But God told Nathan he had not dwelt in a "house" since the exodus (2 Samuel 7:1-7). Finally, the word *house* can mean "temple." Jesus said the Jewish "house" (temple) would be left desolate (Matthew 23:38).

In this passage "house" is both a metaphor for God's people in general and the church in particular. *Brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling* is church language. The writer even says, "We are his house." It could not be clearer. But the key to remaining Jesus' house is to *hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory*. ■

APPLICATION

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

BY DAVID FAUST

Robert Frost wrote, "Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in." A humorist added his own twist: "Actually, home is the place where, when you live there, something has to be fixed!"

Obviously, "every house is built by someone" (Hebrews 3:4a). No house ever emerges from rubble because wood, metal, and glass spontaneously fall into place. If an ordinary house requires an architect to draw up blueprints and a builder to put all the pieces together, doesn't the universe require a creator? "God is the builder of everything" (v. 4b).

What kind of house would God build? Paul said, "God's household . . . is the church of the living God" (1 Timothy 3:15). Peter wrote, "You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5). God's prophets and apostles served as construction workers, building a spiritual temple where the Lord dwells with his people (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). "Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house" (Hebrews 3:5); however, he was not the homeowner. That distinction belongs to Jesus, who "is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory" (v. 6).

Taking Care of God's House

To illustrate our responsibilities in the church, consider how you care for your own home.

Keep it clean. Floors need to be vacuumed and mopped, furniture must be dusted, and dishes need to be washed. In the church, sin should be confronted and confessed.

Do preventive maintenance. Storms are coming, so think ahead. Missing shingles must be replaced. Leaky windows must be caulked. Likewise, to weather the

storms ahead, church members must learn how to pray, serve, and think biblically.

Invest in upkeep. It takes a lot of money and elbow grease to keep a house in good repair. Home improvements often cost more and take longer than expected. "By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures" (Proverbs 24:3-4). Faithful stewards don't take God's house for granted. They plan carefully and give generously to keep it strong.

Now and then, freshen up the decor. Over time, rooms need new furnishings and fresh coats of paint. While the church's foundational beliefs remain unchanging, new methods and technologies help us communicate with relevance in a changing culture.

Protect it from vandals and thieves. Just as we lock our doors and windows for security reasons, the church must guard against savage wolves that harm the sheep.

Open it to others. Our churches and homes should be places of hospitality—"hospitals" nurturing souls back to health. Referring to the temple in Jerusalem, Jesus said, "My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Mark 11:17). His church puts out a welcome mat inviting sinners like ourselves from every ethnic group to come and join the family.

An ancient prophet challenged the people, "How is it that it's the 'right time' for you to live in your fine new homes while the Home, God's Temple, is in ruins?" (Haggai 1:4, *The Message*). Until we move into our mansions in Heaven, let's take care of God's house!

Personal Challenge: How much time, effort, and money do you invest in the place where you live? How does this compare with what you invest in the Lord's church? ■

DISCOVERY

BY MICHAEL C. MACK

1. With whom did you discuss Jesus' true identity last week? How did that go?
2. What challenges did you face over the last week?

Ask two people to read aloud **Hebrews 3:1-6** one after the other, preferably from different Bible versions. Then ask a third person to summarize the passage. Remind them to keep it simple and brief.

3. If you were a Jewish Christian living in the first century and heard this section being read, what might you want to discuss about it?
4. Let's dig deeper:
 - What can you deduce about the people to whom this letter was written?
 - What comparisons and contrasts are made between Moses and Jesus?
 - Why was it important for the writer to convince his Jewish readers that Jesus was greater than Moses?
 - The writer used the construction of a house (or household) as an analogy. What roles do God, Jesus, Moses, and we play in this house?
5. What do you learn about Jesus from this passage?
6. What do you learn about yourself?
7. What specifically does it look like when you "fix your thoughts on Jesus" regularly?
8. As members of God's household (the church), we are to care for each other, encourage each other, and build one another up. How can you strengthen another part of the house that is in need?
9. Based on our study and discussion, complete this sentence: "This week, I will . . ."
10. What support do you need to keep your thoughts fixed on Jesus this week?

For Next Week: Read and reflect on **Hebrews 10:1-18**. You can also read next week's supplemental texts as well as the Study and Application sections as part of your personal study. ■