

Knowing and Growing in Christ  
 Hebrews 3:7-11 (Week 10) 04/07/2024  
 Do Not Harden Your Hearts

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

*<sup>7</sup> Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice,  
<sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness,  
<sup>9</sup> where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years.  
<sup>10</sup> Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’  
<sup>11</sup> As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’”*

- Thanks \_\_\_\_\_ for reading our passage.
- After a two week break for **Palm Sunday and Easter**,
- Today, we return to our study through the letter to the Hebrews.
- And since it’s been a while, let me begin by reviewing **the main purpose of this letter**.
- **The author**, a **Jewish Christian**, writes to **his fellow Hebrews... Why?**
- Because they’re facing **both pressure from the Jews** to reject Christ and return to **Judaism**.
- And **imminent persecution** from the **Romans** who regard **Christians** as a threat to their Empire.
- And these trials result in the temptation to drift away from **the gospel of Jesus Christ**.
- So, the author takes up the task of **exhorting** his readers to stand firm in their faith.
- Now one of the ways he does this is by proclaiming **Christ’s superiority over all things**.
- Including the **Prophets, Angels** and as we saw three weeks ago in **Hebrews 3:1-6 Moses**.
- These **Jewish Christians** had grown up **revering Moses**,
- And they needed to understand just how much greater Christ is than **Him**.
- So the author uses two illustrations to show **Christ’s Superiority to Moses**.
- **First**, in **Hebrews 3:3** he writes...

*<sup>3</sup> For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself <sup>4</sup> (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) (Hebrews 3:3-4)*

- Jesus is greater than Moses like **builder of a house** is greater than the house he built.
- In other words, Jesus is greater than Moses because **he is God and he made Moses**.
- **Then Second** in **Hebrews 3:5-6** we read...

*<sup>5</sup> Now Moses was faithful in all God’s house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, <sup>6</sup> but Christ is faithful over God’s house as a son... (Hebrews 3:5-6)*

- Jesus is greater than Moses like a **son is greater than a servant in the house**.
- The Son rules over the house, he rules over the servants (like Moses)

- So, **the author of Hebrews** is **saying...**
- Jesus created all things including Moses and he is the Ruler of all things including Moses.
- Therefore, why would you drift away from Christ and return to Judaism.
- Because Jesus is superior to **Judaism greatest Hero (Moses)**
- **That's what we looked at three weeks ago.**
  
- Now in our passage for today, **the author** takes us back to the time of Moses.
- But his **purpose remains** the same.
- He continues to exhort his readers not to drift away from the gospel.
- To stand firm in their faith and hold tightly **to Jesus Christ.**
  
- Having established **Christ's superiority over all things including Moses.**
- He turns to **his other** main method of **exhortation.**
- That is, he **warns his readers** of **the consequence of rejecting Christ.**
- The **Consequences of hardening your heart to the voice of God.**
- Having a hard heart towards God's voice means resisting, rejecting, not believing, not trusting in what God says, **not trusting in the good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ.**
  
- We saw this already in **Chapter 2** when he **warned against drifting** away from what they had heard about Jesus (that is the gospel).
  
- So, here in chapter 3 we have the two-pronged exhortation the author uses throughout the letter.
- It's like **the carrot and the stick method of motivation.**
  
- The **carrot** is before us.
- As we see and understand **the greatness and glory of Christ** who is superior to all things.
- And the **stick** is behind us, **warning** of the consequences **for rejecting Christ in all his glory.**
- And both combine to encourage and exhort us to not harden our hearts to the voice of God (the gospel of Jesus Christ).
  
- And that brings us to our text for today, the stick, the warning of grave consequences.
- In these verses the author will take us back to a time in Israel's history when God used Moses to deliver his people from slavery in Egypt.
- A time when the people of God hardened their hearts to the voice of God, **and therefore experienced grave consequences.**
  
- And this is a warning to all Christians against hardening our hearts to the voice of God.
- And speaking of the voice of God, **the author of Hebrews** precedes this warning, which is found in the Old Testament, by reminding his readers of...

## 1. The Inspiration and Relevance of Scripture

- This is a key theme found throughout the book of Hebrews.
- As the writer exhorts, encourages, and warns his fellow Jewish Christian to remain faithful to Christ in the midst of pressure, suffering and persecution,
- he continues to quote **Old Testament Scripture** as the authority (the basis) for what he is saying.

- He expects his readers to take the Bible **as their authority**.
- **As truth** which they are **required** to obey.
- And the reason **he gives for this** is that **Scripture** comes from God, **it is the Word of God**.
- Remember, he established this **in the first two verses of his letter**.

***<sup>1</sup> Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,***

- That is **the Old Testament**.

***<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son... (Hebrews 1:1-2)***

- That is **the New Testament**
- God spoke, **scripture is divine in origin**; it is the word of God,
- And God **chose to communicate** his words through **human authors**.
- And we see this truth again in **Hebrews 3:7**.
- **The author is going to give a quotation from** Old Testament Scripture (Psalm 95:7-11).
- **And he prefaces it**, not with the words “as the Psalmist says”, **but with** the words...

***<sup>7</sup> Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says... (Hebrews 3:7)***

- So, before he quotes from **Psalm 95** he makes it clear that these words **are from Spirit of God**.
- They are divine in origin, **God spoke through the prophets**.
- The author is affirming not only what he said at the beginning of this Letter..
- But what **Holy Spirit Inspired Peter** wrote in **2 Peter 1:21**..

***<sup>21</sup> For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21)***

- And what **Holy Spirit Inspired Paul** wrote in **2 Timothy 3:16**...

***<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God... (2 Timothy 3:16)***

- From these and other verses we understand that the Bible **is inspired by the Spirit of God**.
- That Scripture is the product of **the Holy Spirit** taking the things (words, ideas, thoughts) of God and giving them to **us through human writers**.
- And not only that, the Holy Spirit continues to speak to us by applying God’s Word to our hearts and minds.
- That’s what we will see when we get to **chapter 4** where the author says...

***<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)***

- The word of God is not just **inspired for its original recipients**.
- It continues to **be inspired for our lives today**, therefore it is **extremely Relevant**.
- For it is **living and active** in our lives NOW.

- As we read it for ourselves or hear it preached,
- As we take the word of God through our mind,
- It does a **work in our souls, our spirit our hearts.**
- And this is what we see in **Hebrews 3:7-8.**

***7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, (Hebrews 3:7-8)***

- **Notice the word TODAY!**
- To show that God’s Word is “**living and active,**”, the writer emphasizes its relevance “today.”
- In the Scriptures, he says, **the Holy Spirit of God** “speaks today” (present tense)
- Even though the passage he quotes from (**Psalm 95**) was written **approximately 1,000** years before the book of Hebrews and **3,000** years before TODAY.
- And the events that are described in **Psalm 95** took place during the **Exodus approximately 1,500** years before the book of Hebrews was written and **3,500** years before TODAY.
- This passage (as well as all Scripture) is relevant to its original readers,
- and it is Relevant to US TODAY.
- **God, through his word, still speaks “today.”**
- The word was **relevant** when the **Psalmist wrote it,**
- it continued to be **relevant** when the author of Hebrews quoted it,
- And it continues to be relevant today.
- **Why, because THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS...**
- It is the word of God, it comes from, **it is inspired by the Spirit of God**
- **And God never changes.**
- So, the word of God, **all of it** when understood and interpreted properly, is for you and me.
- And so, **the warning that follows is for you and for me....**

***7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts... (Hebrews 3:7-8)***

- **Do not harden your heart to what God is saying to you through his word today,** right now.
- And that takes to our second point...
- This warning, found in the Inspired Relevant word of God, is...

## **2. The Illustration of Israel’s Rebellion**

- As I mentioned our passage (**Hebrews 3:7-11**) is a quotation from **Psalm 95** which takes us **back to the Exodus.**
- It refers to events that happened in Israel’s history,
- namely, the people’s rebellion against Moses (God) during their wandering in the wilderness.

- The writer of Hebrews uses this situation as a warning because it clearly **illustrates** the consequences of a hard heart, of unbelief, of rejecting the voice of God.
- And this Illustration follows directly from what we saw in the previous passage.
- Remember, the writer is **showing Christ's superiority to Moses**.
- He says that Jesus is the builder of God's House and the Son over God's house and at the end of **verse 6** he makes it personal...

***6 ...we are [God's] house, if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope. (Hebrews 3:6)***

- Put simply we are God's house; we are part of God's family **if we remain steadfast in our faith**.
- And then, beginning in **verses 7**, the author gives us an example of **what the opposite looks like**,
- This is a **warning from the time of the exodus**:

***7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, 9 where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. (Hebrews 3:7-9)***

- These **verses summarize** a time in the life of Israel that every Jew would have been extremely familiar with.
- And for us to **grasp the warning** being given to us TODAY, we need to become familiar with this time as well.
- What we find in **Hebrews 3:7-9** is a summary of **events found in the Book of Exodus**.
- God **through Moses** with **10 powerful plagues**, delivered Israel from **slavery in Egypt**.
- **After the 10<sup>th</sup> Plague, the angel of death**, Pharaoh finally agreed to release Israel from bondage.
- However, they hadn't gotten very far when he changed his mind.
- AND Pharaoh's army pursued Israel to the Red Sea.
- But there the Lord (through Moses) powerfully parted the sea and made a **passage for Israel**.
- God then caused the sea to swallow up the **Egyptian army**.
- All this is found in **Exodus Chapters 13 and 14**.
- God faithfully and **powerfully delivers his people**.
- However, **in chapter 16** we read that after the people arrived in the desert across from the Red Sea they immediately **began complaining**.
- Beginning in **verse 2 of Exodus 16** we read...

***2 And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, 3 and the people of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." (Exodus 16:2-3)***

- At first, we may find it **hard to believe** that these people,
- having just personally experienced the **deliverance and power God**,
- would so quickly **harden their hearts** and begin grumbling complaining.
- But if we are honest, we are often no better.
- We can have the same bad attitudes when facing difficulties that are far less than potential starvation and thirst in a desert wilderness.
- We too have been powerfully experienced God's delivery from slavery to sin and death.
- And yet we still complain about all kinds of things,
- God why did you allow this bad person to succeed instead of me?
- God why is my neighbor such a jerk?
- God why can't I get a raise like all the fast-food workers?
- God why do I have to go through this sickness, this difficulty, this hard situation.
- Basically, when things don't go how we think they should, we whine to God... **why me?**
- Instead of, **in gratitude for all God has done**, trusting that He knows what is best for us and will meet our every need as he sees fit.
- So don't think this warning is not for you, because you and I are all too often just like Israel.
- Who even when the Lord graciously sent manna from heaven,
- the people continued to complain and disobey.
- And **Exodus 17 begins with more complaints and rebellion.**

***<sup>1</sup> All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD... (Exodus 17:1)***

- The writer of Hebrews tells us in **verse 8** that **this was a time of testing**.
- God had powerfully delivered his people.
- And now was testing their faith in him through difficult travels in the desert.
- And unfortunately, **the Israelites fail miserably**.
- Beginning in **verse 2 of Chapter 17** we read...

***<sup>2</sup> Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" <sup>3</sup> But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" <sup>4</sup> So Moses cried to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." (Exodus 17:2-4)***

- And even though the people are rebelling against God and his appointed leader Moses.
- God was gracious and he sent Moses to strike the rock with his staff,
- and water came out from the rock to provide for the people.



- Moses then named the place **Massah** and **Meribah**, which mean “**testing**” and “**rebellion**,”
- The two words we see used in **verse 8 of Hebrews 3** to signify God’s displeasure at his hard-hearted people.

***8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, (Hebrews 3:8)***

- **God tested his people, and they failed they continually rebelled against Him.**
- And their greatest revolt is recorded in the **book of Numbers**.
- In **Numbers 13** we read that **as Israel approached** the promised land,
- They sent out **12 scouts** (one from each tribe) to spy out the Land in preparation for their entry.
- However, the scouts came back and delivered a fear filled report:
- In **Numbers 13** beginning in **verse 27** we read...

***27 ...“We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large.... 30 But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it.” 31 Then the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are.” (Numbers 13:27-31)***

- Only two of the spies, **Joshua and Caleb** urged the people to enter the promised land.
- In **Numbers 14**, Joshua pleaded with the people,

***8 If the LORD delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. 9 Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them.” (Numbers 14:8-9)***

- **But the people did rebel, they did not heed the words of Caleb or Joshua.**
- In fear and with hard unbelieving hearts, they cried out that God who had delivered them from Egypt now sought to kill them in Canaan.
- They refused to obey, they refused to believe that God would protect them,
- They refused to go forth into the Promised Land,
- They even tried to stone **Joshua and Caleb**, who had stood up against their **unbelief**.
- It was at this moment **that the glory cloud of the Lord appeared at the tabernacle**,
- bringing one of the most **sobering** moments in all of Scripture.
- In **Numbers 14:11** we read...

***11 And the LORD said to Moses, “How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? 12 I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.” (Numbers 14:11-12)***

- **God was fed up with the rebellion and unbelief of “His People.”**
- **So much so that He threatened to reject them and make Moses a great nation.**
- But Moses pleaded with the Lord for their lives,
- arguing that if God struck down the Israelites now his name would be **scandalized** among the nations.
- Moses begged God to glorify himself by forgiving the people:
- **Verse 19...**

***19 Please pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt until now.” (Numbers 14:19)***

- And God did spare them, but he also **punished them**, as recorded in **Hebrews 3:11**.
- Quoting **Psalms 95:11**, the author **recalls God’s terrible words**,

***11 As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’” (Hebrews 3:11)***

- **The nation of Israel** would enter the Promised Land,
- but none of **this hard-hearted unbelieving generation** would be left when that happened.
- Instead, they would wander **forty years in the desert**.
- Only when the last of the **rebellious adults had died**,
- leaving only Joshua and Caleb, who trusted the Lord, was Israel permitted to enter the land.
- This is **the illustration of rebellion and unbelief that the author of Hebrews wants us to understand**.
- **And it is apt, because** there are **several parallels** we can draw between the Christian life and Israel at the time of **the Exodus**.
- Like the Israelites, who were powerfully delivered from slavery in Egypt,
- every man or woman who has come to salvation in Christ has been powerfully delivered by God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, from slavery to Sin.
- Also, like Israel of old, we are headed toward a land of promise, which is our heavenly inheritance.
- But the point the author of Hebrews is making,
- The parallel he is drawing in this passage is that just as the Israelites endured a time of testing in the wilderness, so too is this present life a time of testing for the **believer**.
- Again **verses 7 & 8 of Hebrews 3...**

***7 ...“Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, (Hebrews 3:7-8)***

- The thing that **we Christians** do not often understand is that **this is our time in the wilderness**,
- Life in this world, **living as Peter said as elect exiles**, can be a time of difficulty, sorrow, pain and even persecution.



- We've yet to reach the **Promised Land**
- We are still in **the wilderness**,
- and the sooner we realize this, the better.
- This helps answer the question of **Why me?**
- "Why does God allow things to go wrong in my life?"
- or "**Why are things so hard?**"
- The answer is **that today is the day of testing**, and the day of our rest is yet to come.
- **Yes**, we are headed for the **promised land**, but we are not there yet.
- Therefore, today God calls us to **live by faith and not by sight**.
- And for every Christian, that faith is sure to be tested.
- ***Trials will manifest the reality of our faith, or the lack thereof.***
- As **A. W. Pink** writes:

***Testings reveal the state of our hearts—a crisis neither makes nor mars a man, but it does manifest him. While all is smooth sailing we appear to be getting along nicely. But are we? Are our minds stayed upon the Lord, or are we, instead, complacently resting in His temporal mercies? When the storm breaks, it is not so much that we fail under it, as that our habitual lack of leaning upon God, of daily walking in dependency upon Him, is made evident. (A. W. Pink)***

- To his readers then and know, the author of Hebrews is saying,
- I know you are having trouble, pain and sorrow, pressure to reject Christ, persecution for your faith.
- But **let me warn you my brothers and sisters, don't be like Israel during the Exodus.**
- Don't **fail the test**, don't harden your heart to what God says and done.
- **Don't rebel against God for that path leads to wrath and not rest.**
- So, we've been warned with **the illustration from Israel's rebellion.**
- And this stick, **along with the carrot of Christ's greatness**,
- Is meant to exhort us, warn us to not harden our hearts to the voice of God.
- But God doesn't just leave us to ponder this warning.
- He wants to help us **avoid going the way of Israel.**
- He wants us to pass the test (tests) as we journey through the wilderness heading for the promised Land.
- He wants our hearts to remain soft towards him even when life punches us in the face?
- He wants us to hold fast to our faith,
- continuing to believe the voice the word of God that calls us to faith in Jesus Christ.
- And so, with the warning God also provides instructions for how to avoid a hard heart.
- In fact, next week (in verses 12-19) we'll look at some very clear instruction.

- But in our text for today, we find what I am calling **an implied instruction**.
- This is our third point, **and I believe it's foundational to keeping our hearts soft (filled with faith in God and his word)**. And that is...

### 3. The Importance of Knowing God's Ways

- In **verse 10** the Lord tells us **what Israel's problem was**.

***<sup>10</sup> Therefore I was provoked with that generation,***

- God was **provoked by the rebellion and unbelief of the generation** that he delivered from slavery in Egypt.

***and said, 'They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.'** (Hebrews 3:10)*

- They went astray in their heart; they hardened their hearts to the voice of God.
- Even though they'd experienced his deliverance, his mercy, his steadfast love for them.
- They didn't believe he would continue to care for them, provide for them.
- **Why?**
- Again, their problem was an astray, a hardened heart.
- And why was their **heart not right**,
- Well, the **implied answer** here in verse 10 is that **they didn't know God's ways**.
- This was the same thing God said about **Israel in Isaiah 1:3**

***<sup>3</sup> The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand. (Isaiah 1:3)***

- How remarkable that these Israelites did not know God after all they had seen and heard and received from Him.
- They saw God's care for them as he powerfully delivered them from Egypt.
- And they continued to see God's care for them as he provided for them in the desert.
- How could they not have **known his ways**?
- The point is that while they had enjoyed God's works, **they had not reflected on his ways**.
- They had not allowed him to penetrate their hard hearts.
- They were interested in what God did for them, **but not in God himself**.
- And this my friends is all too often our problem.
- We want what God provides but we don't want God himself.
- We want him to meet our needs, but we don't want him to meddle in our lives.
- And here's the deal, this is not an option that God offers.
- He doesn't say okay, here's PLAN B, for those who just want me to show up when they're in need.
- And here is PLAN A for those who want to actually know me, to enter into relationship with me to trust and obey ME.

- **PLAN A is the Only Plan God offers.**
- And the importance of this **cannot be overstated.**
- This is life and death, **eternal salvation**, and **eternal separation from God.**
- We see this clearly in Jesus' great prayer to the **Father in John 17**, where our Lord said,

***3 And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (John 17:3)***

- Eternal life (Salvation) is not a matter of knowing God's blessings,
- it is a matter of knowing him,
- understanding his character and his ways,
- and more and more trusting him in all things.
- Therefore, if you are not growing in your knowledge of God, your understanding and appreciation of his ways, your relationship with him.
- **let this be a warning to you.**
- **Like rebellious Israel, you will not enter the promised land, you will not find rest, you will only experience the wrath of God.**
- Therefore, we are to be students of God's character,
- We can and should learn what God is like through what he does in and through our lives,
- **But God has chosen to clearly reveal himself and his ways in His word.**
- Therefore, we must daily go to his word asking...
- "What does this Scripture tell me about God, about his character, and about his ways?"
- "How can I know him better and trust him more?"
- The study of the attributes of God is one of the most vital of all subjects,
- for to know God is to trust him and to worship him with both awe and gratitude.
- **Charles Spurgeon** was right when he said of the study of God:

***It is a subject so vast, that all our thoughts are lost in its immensity; so deep, that our pride is drowned in its infinity... But while the subject humbles the mind, it also expands it. Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as a devout, earnest, continuing investigation of the great subject of the Deity. (Charles Spurgeon)***

- When we, through study of God's word, here is voice and allow it to fill our thoughts we are transformed our hearts are not hardened.
- We gain new and right perspectives not only on God's ways but how those ways are worked out in our lives.
- Let me give just one example of this.
- Suppose (like Israel) you are facing a great test in your life.
- Your in the wilderness and things are dry and life is hard.
- Well, you could harden your heart to the voice of God.
- You could grumble and complain, you could whine Why Me God.

- **What did I do to deserve this?**
- Why is this sickness, this financial loss, this relational difficulty happening to ME!
- Haven't I been a Good Christian.
- OR you could know and trust in God's ways as revealed in his word, which again and again makes the point that this life is a time of testing, and the tests are ultimately for your own good.
- That's what James who was also writing to Jewish Christians, famously declares in the opening of his letter...

***<sup>2</sup> Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4)***

- God's ways are to test our faith.
- Why? Because for those who trust in him these tests produce steadfastness and maturity.
- Therefore, instead of hardening our hearts (grumbling and complaining) about life's difficulties.
- When we know and believe and trust in God's ways we can REJOICE even in times of trouble.
- But if you want PLAN B, if you want the gifts while having no real interest in the Giver,
- If you want heaven without knowing the ways of its creator and sustainer.
- Then your heart will grow hard, and you will not **persevere through the trials of this life.**
- So, you need to ask yourself,
- **when circumstances turn against me,**
- When life gets hard, and the blessing of God seem far off and can only be seen with eyes of faith.
- Will you harden your heart to God.
- Or will you, knowing his ways, continue to trust in Him?
- Again, Israel provides the warning...
- Throughout their time of testing in the desert...
- God's ways were on display.
- He was there as a pillar of fire guiding them.
- He was there providing them with manna from heaven.
- He was there giving them water from the rock.
- and He was there miraculously working so that their clothes and shoes did not wear out.
- During their time of testing, God continued to show his ways of grace and love and mercy for his people.
- And yet they complained all through their forty years in the desert,
- They never truly learned who God was,
- They never understood his glorious ways of caring for them.
- Instead, they continued to complain and rebel.

- And here is the warning for us,
- If you in times of testing, or any time for that matter behave like ancient Israel and harden your heart against God.
- If you only desire for God to provide you with what you want.
- Refusing to know him, to know his ways.
- And complaining when God doesn't behave like you think he should.
  
- Then be warned, **what the Holy Spirit said of Israel** will be said of you as well:

***<sup>9</sup> where you put me to the test and saw my works for many years. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I was provoked with you, and said, 'You always go astray in your heart; you have not known my ways.' <sup>11</sup> As I swore in my wrath, 'You shall not enter my rest.'" (Hebrews 3:10-11)***

- The stakes are extremely high, life and death, wrath or rest, heaven, and hell.
- And next week as we finish up Chapter 3, the Holy Spirit through the author of Hebrews will continue to encourage and instruct us in not hardening our hearts to the voice of God.
  
- Would you pray with me, as Brian comes forward to lead us in communion.