

## Intimacy with God

### Hebrews 1:1–5 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

<sup>2</sup>has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

<sup>3</sup>who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

<sup>4</sup>having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

- *The Epistle to the Hebrews looks at some of the prophetic analogies found in the Old Testament in order to see with greater clarity the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to obtain greater insights into the Gospel message.*
- *The writer of Hebrews emphasizes the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ over angels, over the Old Testament sacrifices, prophets, the Old Testament high priests, and over Moses, having ushered into existence a better covenant.*
- *Some of the analogies found in the Old Testament are comparative, while others are contrastive.*

### Hebrews 3:1–13 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>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.

<sup>7</sup>Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you will hear His voice,

<sup>8</sup>Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,

<sup>9</sup>Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years.

<sup>10</sup>Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.’

<sup>11</sup>So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’ ”

<sup>12</sup>Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

<sup>13</sup>but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

- *Hebrews, Chapter three, provides words of encouragement and also words of warning.*
- *We are encouraged to step out in faith and put our complete trust in Christ so that we, as believers, will be able to experience and receive all that God has for us.*
- *Chapter three begins with the words, “Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.”*
- *We are called “holy brethren,” because those who put their faith in Jesus Christ are justified and righteous before God by the blood of Jesus Christ in our reborn spirit.*
- *If we are called “holy,” then God wants us to learn to walk in holiness by His grace.*
- *Being called “holy” implies we have been chosen and separated for a special purpose. The verse continues to describe that purpose by saying we are “are partakers of the heavenly calling.”*
- *The Greek word for “calling” used here means, “the state of having been called to a particular task and/or relation.” The idea of “calling” can also imply an invitation we have received which requires a response.*
- *To describe this calling as “heavenly” signifies that it is not only a divine calling, but also one we will benefit from for all eternity.*
- *One of the greatest attacks from the enemy is to feel we have no real purpose in life. Lacking purpose can lead us to live lives of dissipation, just as it says in Proverbs 29:18, “Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained, But happy is he who keeps the law.” (NASB95).*
- *The question is how do recognize our “heavenly calling” and how do we begin to walk in it?*
- *The next part of the verse addresses this question, “consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.”*
- *The Greek word “consider” means “contemplate, to give careful consideration to something, to think about very carefully.”*

- *We need to carefully consider everything about Jesus Christ. He needs to be foremost in our minds, our hearts, and our lives. We must establish and reinforce the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ in our lives, “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.” (Colossians 1:16, NKJV).*
- **“consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus” – The Greek word for “confession” means “to express openly one’s allegiance to someone; an expression of total confidence in someone.” The confession of our faith in Jesus is an unreserved bold statement of His faithfulness, power, and divine character.  
He is worthy!**
- *As we contemplate this heavenly calling and how wonderful, lofty and eternal it is, we may begin to feel inadequate or even overwhelmed, especially in the light of our weaknesses, frailties, and past failures.*
- *However, the author prefaces Hebrews 3:1 with the word, “therefore” when he introduces our heavenly calling, referring to the previous verses in chapter two.*

#### **Hebrews 2:16–18 (NKJV)**

**<sup>16</sup>For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.**

- *Christ does not aid angels, but He aids those who have put their faith in Him, those who through the new birth are the spiritual seed of Abraham.*

**<sup>17</sup>Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.**

- *Christ is not only present to help us. He came as a man to become that merciful and faithful High Priest, so He could make propitiation for all our sins and failures by dying in our place on the cross.*

**<sup>18</sup>For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.**

- *Christ came as the Son of Man and “He Himself has suffered, being tempted” but without sin, living the perfect life, so that through the life of Jesus Christ in our reborn spirits He is able to live through us a victorious and fruitful life.*
- *All this is the “therefore” or preamble to Hebrews 3:1: Christ’s promise to aid us; that He took all our sins and failures upon Himself at Calvary; that He lived*

*a perfect life though He was tempted as we are, and He is there to supply all that we need to live a victorious life.*

### Hebrews 3

<sup>2</sup>who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house.

- *This verse uses the example of Moses being faithful in all His house as a prophetic comparison of how Christ was faithful to the Father in all that He had appointed and predestined for Christ to fulfill.*

<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.

- *This verse contrasts Jesus with Moses, showing the superiority and pre-eminence of Jesus Christ.*
- *The One, Jesus Christ, has more glory than Moses, because He is the One who built the house.*
- *The builder of the house is more honoured than the house He built.*

<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.

- *The author of Hebrews continued to reinforce the prophetic comparison between Moses and Christ by saying, “Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward.”*
- *Moses is a wonderful example of a faithful man who truly yielded to the grace of God. God used Moses to establish the Law which Jesus Christ’s life would fulfill.*
- *The Jewish people regard Moses as the greatest of their prophets, for through him God delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt. Through Moses they received the Law, through Moses the Levitical covenant between God and Israel was established, and through Moses came the Messianic promise, “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.” (Deuteronomy 18:15, NKJV).*
- *“but Christ as a Son over His own house” - Although Moses is counted in high esteem by the Jews and seen as a prophetic type of the Messiah, the*

*prophetic contrast is even more apparent, because God is infinitely greater than anything or anyone He has created.*

- *In addition to these wonderful Messianic revelations of Jesus is a warning to believers, “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.”*
- *This verse contains a conditional promise “that we will be part of His own house” if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.*
- *For us to understand what it meant to be part of Christ’s house we must read it in the context of the prophetic analogy that is given.*
- *Christ is depicted here as our High Priest using Aaron as a prophetic picture.*

**Exodus 40:38 (NKJV)**

<sup>38</sup>**For the cloud of the LORD was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.**

- *First, we see that Israel as a nation is called “the house of Israel,” so it is not referring to a building, but a nation.*

**Exodus 2:1–3 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup>**And a man of the house of Levi went and took as wife a daughter of Levi.**

<sup>2</sup>**So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months.**

<sup>3</sup>**But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river’s bank.**

- *Beyond Israel being called “a house,” each tribe of Israel is called “a house,” so we can correctly say that there were twelve houses in Israel.*
- *Exodus, Chapter 2, describes the birth of Moses and it is clear from this that Moses as well as his brother Aaron were part of the house of Levi.*
- *The house of Levi had a special relationship with both God and with Aaron the high priest.*

**Numbers 1:52–53 (NKJV)**

<sup>52</sup>**The children of Israel shall pitch their tents, everyone by his own camp, everyone by his own standard, according to their armies;**

<sup>53</sup>**but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the Testimony, that there may be no wrath on the congregation of the children of Israel; and the Levites shall keep charge of the tabernacle of the Testimony.”**

- “The children of Israel shall pitch their tents, everyone by his own camp, everyone by his own standard, according to their armies; but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the Testimony” – *All the children of Israel pitched their tents in a specific location, but the house of Levi were designated the location immediately around the tabernacle complex.*
- *The Levites were given a very special place, closest to the presence of God!*

#### Numbers 3:12 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup>“Now behold, I Myself have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the children of Israel. Therefore the Levites shall be Mine,

- *God speaks about the Levites in a very special and endearing way, “the Levites shall be Mine.”*

#### Numbers 8:18–19 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup>I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn of the children of Israel.

<sup>19</sup>And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the work for the children of Israel in the tabernacle of meeting, and to make atonement for the children of Israel, that there be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel come near the sanctuary.”

- *The house of Levi not only had a special relationship with God, but they also had a very special relationship with the high priest.*
- “I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel” – *God gave the Levites as a gift to Aaron from among all the children of Israel.*
- *What an honour to be counted by God as a gift to the high priest.*

<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.

- *Therefore when it says, “Christ as a Son over His own house,” it is not speaking of salvation, but a special intimacy and closeness to God that He is offering each of His children.*
- *What is it that allows us to experience that special place of intimacy and friendship with God?*
- *“If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end”*
- *1. To hold fast confidence in God—steadfast faith in God.*

- *2. Rejoicing of the hope—joyful expectation of what God has promised.*
- *3. Firm to the end—perseverance; not allowing discouragement to cause us to quit or grow disheartened.*

### Hebrews 3

<sup>7</sup>Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you will hear His voice,

<sup>8</sup>Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,

- *We need to be attentive to the Holy Spirit as He speaks to us and not simply dismiss Him when He speaks to our hearts.*
- *We must not allow the worries of this life, the love of riches or pleasures to drown out the voice of the Holy Spirit.*

<sup>9</sup>Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years.

- *No matter how many times God proved Himself to Israel, every time they encountered a new difficulty they began to complain and murmur against God and to doubt if He would be faithful this time.*
- *Israel would either worry and doubt when things didn’t go well or they would murmur against God’s provision even when things were going well.*

<sup>10</sup>Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.’

- *Why didn’t Israel come to know the ways of God?*
- *Because they never spent time communing with God.*

<sup>11</sup>So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’ ”

- *Israel robbed themselves of the blessing of entering into God’s rest by not fully trusting Him.*

<sup>12</sup>Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

- *Unbelief causes us to look to other things to provide our needs and give us security and satisfaction. This results in us departing from the living God—backsliding.*

<sup>13</sup>but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

- *We need to stay in fellowship and encourage one another in prayer.*
- *What enabled Moses to be faithful?*
- *Moses did something that most of the rest of Israel failed to do. Moses daily spent time in God's presence and learned to know His heart.*

#### **Numbers 12:5–8 (NKJV)**

**<sup>5</sup>Then the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward.**

**<sup>6</sup>Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream.**

**<sup>7</sup>Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house.**

**<sup>8</sup>I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?"**

- *The vast difference between Moses and all the other prophets is that God spoke to Moses face to face even as a man speaks to his friend.*
- *We as believers have a wonderful privilege, because we can approach God as our Father!*

#### **Matthew 6:6 (NKJV)**

**6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.**

- *In Matthew 6:6 we see some components of prayer:*
- *"Go into your room" – The Greek word for "room" can mean "a storage chamber, storeroom; a chamber esp. an inner chamber; a secret room."*
- *"Shut the door" - We need to shut and lock the entrance of our souls from the distractions of this life when we are praying.*
- *"Pray" - The next thing we are to do when we are in that secret place is actually pray.*
- *When we are in that secret place and the door is shut we are to pray to our Father.*
- *Verbalizing prayer helps to focus and concentrate our attention.*



- *Pray to your Father who is in that secret place.*
- *“Your Father who sees in secret will reward you” - Prayer is to be a place of expectation and faith.*
- *Being rewarded for praying does not mean just an answer to a specific prayer, but a much greater reward—the will of God being manifested.*
- *The greatest consequence of consistency in prayer will not be seen in a sudden and abrupt change, but by the effect it has in the total transformation of our lives and those around us over the course of our lifetime.*

**Matthew 6:7 (NKJV)**

**7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.**

- *This verse is a caution regarding having a correct attitude.*
- *This reinforces that prayer is a relationship with God.*
- *What is the difference between vain repetition and persistency in prayer?*
- *Our focus and attitude.*
- *In prayer, in the presence of God is when we encounter God and begin to know His ways and His thoughts and our confidence in Him blossoms.*
- *Through studying the Bible we can learn God’s ways, but in prayer we experience God’s ways.*