

THE NEED TO HEED | Hebrews 3:7-19 | Pastor Mark Bofill | July 17, 2022

I. The Holy Spirit Speaks (7). II. The Holy Spirit Warns (8-12). III. The Holy Spirit Remedy (13-18)

INTRO: The text that I've chosen today points out the importance of heeding God's warnings. – In this passage, the writer of Hebrews reminds the Hebrew Christians of the possibility of **APOSTASY**, which left thousands of Israelites dead in the wilderness journey. **Listen to the five main WARNINGS in the epistle:**

1. Not to neglect so great a salvation (2:1-4)
2. Not to come short of the promised rest (3:7-4:13)
3. The danger of sloth, standing still, and falling away (5:11-6:12)
4. The warning against sin, and drawing back to perdition (10:26-39)
5. The warning against falling short of God's grace, and refusing him who speaks (12:15-29)

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKS (7) – Who is really teaching the Hebrew Christians here...**The Holy Spirit!** In regard to all-scripture, the Holy Spirit is the true author! (2 Pet 1:20-21) says, that we are to know that *"no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,"*²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (cf. Acts 1:16, 3:18; 1 Pet 1:11).

A. Now (7a) – Notice the first word in the quote from Psalm 95... **"TODAY!"** – Today, is time of reference with a present tense emphasis. It can mean **NOW!**

B. If We Listen (7b) – Notice that the Spirit goes on to give us the conditional word **"IF."** That is, *"if" you will hear His voice.* – The problem with the Israelites in the wilderness, is that **"They did not LISTEN"** to what was spoken to them. They literally became **"Dull of hearing,"** (Heb 5:11)

- We must learn to sift out the voices and allurements of this world. (Col 3:1,2).
- In order to develop a keen spiritual perception... we must **"Learn to Discern"** his voice: (John 10:27) *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*

Closing Thought: *Hearing the voice of God then is CONDITIONAL. "If" we want to hear Him speak, then we need to take the time to listen to His voice and **be ready to obey His Voice!***

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT WARNS (8-12) – The author then used the example of the Israelites and their wilderness wanderings to reveal how an apostate spirit originates.

A. Rebellion Begins in the Heart (8-9) – *"Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness,⁹ where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, and saw My works forty years."*

1. Verse 8 plainly tells us that **a heart that is hardened, is a heart that will not hear God!**
2. Verse 9, reveals that even though they **"SAW"** God's work for 40 years, they failed to listen to and obey God's voice. This problem is especially bad because a hardened heart is the next step in the progression towards apostasy. **Notice the progression...**

Dull hearing (7) > Hard heart (8) > Spiritual blindness (9) > Ignorance (10) > No peace (11) > Evil heart of Unbelief (12a) > Departing from God (12b), which ultimately is APOSTASY!

3. It was in this **"wilderness wandering"** where, *"your father's tested me."* They continually **"murmured"** and **"complained"** to Moses, which really was directed towards God.

B. Apostasy Angers the Lord (10-11) – “Therefore I was angry with that generation...”

1. **Another reason for God’s anger (10b):** “Because they always go astray in their hearts.”
2. **A final reason for God’s anger is caused by their lack of relationship (10c):** “*and they have not known my ways.*” They knew of God, but they did not know God personally to understand His ways.
3. **In verse 11 we see the results of STRAYING** – It provokes God to wrath, causing Him to revoke **the Rest** that He designated for them to enjoy. – The word “**REST**” describes the “end of wandering and Restlessness”

The Writer Now Warns to...

C. Beware of Departing (12) – He pleads with his holy Hebrew brethren (3:1); those who were *partakers of the heavenly calling*; of **the dangerous possibility of apostasy!** Why?

1. **Because UNBELIEF is produced** as one is “hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”
2. **When STUBBORNESS sets in** the desire to heed the Word of God diminishes – It happened to Israel, it was possible for the Hebrew Christians, and it can still happen to us!

Closing Thought: The conclusion is simple: *The Holy Spirit warns His people not to rebel against the Lord.*

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT REMEDY (13-19) The antidote to apostasy is TWOFOLD.

A. Exhort One Another (13) “But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today...” This is how a believer **avoids becoming an unbeliever!**

1. **Constant Mutual Edification** helps prevent the “hardening” that comes from sin’s deceitfulness.
2. **Assembling Together** is an important part of receiving this exhortation (Heb 10:24-25) “*And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: ²⁵ Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some, but **exhorting one another**: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*”
 - a. In (Acts 20:7) the early church assembled on the first day of the week
 - b. The text declares that exhortation is **NEEDED DAILY!**

B. **Conditional Participation (14)** – “*For we are made partakers of Christ, “**IF**” we hold the *beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.*” Once again, we see the **CONDITIONAL NATURE** communicated by use of the word If. (*Our choice to participate with Christ or Not!*)*

Repeated Emphasis (15) – If the first mention in (3:7) was important, the Hebrew Christians were NOW encouraged to receive this **double-emphasis of the NEED TO HEED**. “**Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.**”

What then is the Need to Heed? It is to attentively listen God’s voice with the intent to obey His will for your entire life, so that you can enjoy your rest in Him.

Closing Thoughts: The **DANGER** of being hardened through the deceitfulness of sin IS REAL **CHURCH!** – So great that the writer brings it up one more time, **Read (16-19)!**