

From Hebrews 3: The Master Decision
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From Hebrews 3: THE MASTER DECISION
PART 1: REVEALED REPRESENTATIONS OVER OBSERVATION v.7-11 (a)

#1. One may live on the foundation of the powers of observation. *And observation is the search for experience-derived information.* But the one who desires to live by biblical faith is expected to transcend observation, in favor of mapping revealed representations upon all parts of temporal life.

#2. This, then is *the master decision*. From Genesis 3 forward, men have preferred observation over revelation; and largely trusted in it.

#3. At Kadesh Barnea (Numbers 13, 14), the Israelites turned away from revealed representations and turned back to the power of human observation. That did not please the Almighty. Founded on the meaning of that event we are warned: "Today if you hear His voice [revealed representations], do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, as in the day of trial in the wilderness" v.7.

#4. All men make observations about materiality, but that is carefully *proscribed (or prohibited) by the word of God* and by the nature of biblical faith. Everywhere in Scripture, the test of faith is whether or not one will elevate revelation above the powers of observation.

#5. This particular act of faith is usually a substantial problem for believers, at least initially. So, a not-so-modern heresy has been developed. The ideology is that observation and revealed representations each have their own spheres. The Bible tells of "spiritual matters", while common sense observation is the work horse of temporal experience.

#6. Israel applied that heresy in the Sinai. The perceived problem: Observation as experience-derived information is usually contradictory to revealed representations. Therefore, it must be so that the powers of observation necessarily should be used to control the reach and the meaning of the word of God.

#7. The Lord does not like that. "Therefore I was angry with this generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart, and they did not know My ways' v.10.

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PART 2: REVEALED REPRESENTATIONS OVER OBSERVATION v.7-11(b).

#1. Observation, as experience-derived information, assured the Israelites that the conquest of Canaan was destined to fail. The cities were too well fortified. Their enemies boasted of decisive numerical superiority (Numbers 13, 14; Psalm 95:8-11).

#2. The people of God in that circumstance *effected a moral collapse*. Revealed representations had promised them that the material advantages of the Canaanites would have no bearing on the outcome of the conquest.

#3. The Israelites, had gone "astray in their heart" v.10. That "generation" v.10, placed no trust in the revealed representations given them by God. Their *errant reasoning*, founded upon the powers of observation, had dramatically changed the historical situation; because the Lord changed it. "As I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter my rest" v.11. Hence, "and saw My works for forty years" v.9.

#4. The master decision, which affects the situational totality, is whether or not believers put faith in *the Word of God above faith in information*. In the contemporary world, as is always the case, that is adjudged as lunacy, irrelevance and irrational.

#5. In other words faith in God and in the Bible must remain in the firm, unrelenting grip of human observation. Yet, Hebrews 3 defines such thinking and behavior as "unbelief" v.19.

#6. Even and especially in the churches, we find that same anti-faith, anti-revelation cognitive underpinning.

#7. There is a reading of Scripture that disavows any contradiction between revelation and information. Some doctrines have been selected and cherished because they do not challenge in any way human observation. Water baptism, is such an example.

#8. In the personal cauldron of life, we can observe and then coordinate behavior to it, thinking it "reasonable". Or we can represent any situational totality by the language manifold of the Bible. And that, in spite of the very real contradiction. But that takes courage and the exclusive trust in the chosen words of "Holy Spirit" v.7.

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PART 3: THE GULF BETWEEN REVEALED REPRESENTATIONS and THE POWERS OF OBSERVATION
v.1-4.

#1. Observation as the pursuit of *experience-derived information*, is the relation of man --> to the material universe and to time. The usual human priority. But, revelation is the relation of God --> to man. And that shifts circumstantial outcomes away from observation to revealed representations.

#2. "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession" v.1.

#3. Revelation has the power to change the status of men in time. They can become "holy"; changing their relation --> to the Lord and to others. Men, in time can become "partake(rs)" of a revealed purpose.

#4. "Faithful(ness)" is *the absolute necessity*. "He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house" v.2.

#5. To be faithful, neither Jesus nor Moses, in their temporal mission, functioned on the foundation of human observation. These are men of faith.

#6. The reason: Both of those men understood that observation-derived information had nothing to do with outcomes!

#7. Proof: Many saw Jesus crucified and knew of His burial. Observation guarantees that once dead, things stay dead. Observation cannot explain the Resurrection morning (Luke 24). The Israelites trapped at the Red Sea (Exodus 13, 14) reached observational conclusions. Then the Almighty parted the waters.

#8. Mapping the revealed truth of Scripture on to situation and circumstance changes all the rules.

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PART 4: FAITH IN REVEALED REPRESENTATIONS IS LINKED TO OUTCOMES IN TIME v.12-19.

#1. In this text and in many others, the meaning of the terms "faith" and "faithlessness" is directly linked to temporal outcomes.

#2. "Take care, brethren, that there not be in anyone of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God" v.12.

#3. Here is the persistent problem of biblical belief. In its biblical context, trusting in *observation and experience-derived information, over faith in revealed representations, is sin* v.13.

#4. Here was the sin of Israel in the desert v.15; Psalm 95. Put plainly, in the difficult and even dangerous situations of life, whatever they may be, the believer is required to map revealed representations onto the situation; even though contradictory to observation. This is done in the belief that the Lord will oblige the outcome according to His power and in recognition of true faith.

#5. Such thinking and behavior is flatly contradicted by the powers of observation. Observation rates acting on faith in circumstance as an unnecessary risk.

#6. The Israelites trusted purely in observation and in its corresponding behavior. They turned back v.18! "So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief" v.19.

#7. The present contemporary perspective is that observation supplies the control mechanism for faith. And that is a sin.

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PART 5: THE REVEALED REPRESENTATIONAL CONTINUUM v.5.

#1. "Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later" v.5.

#2. There are two possibilities.

- One: The powers of observation will limit the reach and the strength of faith in the Word of God.
- Two: Faith in the revealed language manifold will control and when necessary displace observation.

#3. The Almighty generated a revealed language continuum starting with the Mosaic testimony (the Old Testament) and leading to "those things which were to be spoken later" (the New Testament).

#4. This revealed representational continuum regulates the distinction between the two possibilities for human thought, speech and behavior.

#5. Consistent with the entire perspective of Scripture from Moses to Christ, is that faith suppresses the report of the powers of observation and displaces them by representing situations, circumstances, events and states of being by generalization from the Word of God.

#6. Adam and Eve (Genesis 3) consciously pursued observation, rejecting revealed representations.

#7. Abraham and Sarai chose observation over revealed truth (Genesis 16).

#8. Abraham, in a supreme demonstration of faith, trusted in revealed representations and acted accordingly (Genesis 22).

#9. At the Red Sea, the Israelites put into evidence their lack of faith in the revealed promises of God (Exodus 13, 14).

#10. The disciples of Christ, witnessing His death and burial, found their faith in Him shaken (Luke 24).

#11. Both Jesus and Moses knew that that the powers of observation stand in direct contradiction to the revealed truth. They understood that true faith stands between observation and revealed representations. It pushes back on the first and grasps hold of the other.