



# A WARNING AGAINST UNBELIEF

*Hebrews 3:7-19*

## Opening Illustration: Story of Harry Randall Truman

### I. Link with last week: Hebrews 3:1-6

- A. Numbers 14:1-4
- B. Numbers 14:20-23

### II. The Failure of the Exodus Generation (vs.7-11)

*R. Kent Hughes: It all began so well— but ended so poorly. Of the six hundred thousand men (the million-plus Israelites who began so well), only two over the age of twenty ever got to the promised land— and that was forty years later. The rest fell, disappointed corpses in the desert. The grand and terrible lesson of Israel's history is that it is possible to begin well and end poorly. In fact, this tragic human tendency dominates much human spiritual experience.*

Doubting → Grumbling → Contempt → Hardness of Heart → Unbelief

*Tim Keller puts it this way: "a faith without some doubts is like a human body without any antibodies in it. People who blithely go through life too busy or too indifferent to ask hard questions about why they believe as they do will find themselves defenseless against either the experience of tragedy or the probing questions of a smart skeptic. A person's faith can collapse almost overnight if she has failed over the years to listen patiently to her own doubts, which should only be discarded after long reflection."*

Verse:	Question:	Answer:
Vs. 16	For who were those who heard and yet rebelled?	Was it not all who left Egypt led by Moses?
Vs. 17	And with whom was he provoked for forty years?	Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?
Vs. 18	And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest?	But to those who were disobedient?



Kent Hughes: *“Hardness of heart originates in unbelief, which produces contempt for God, which in turn shows itself in distinct behavioral patterns— namely, negativism, grumbling, quarreling, and disobedience. We owe it to ourselves to hold this practical mirror of God’s Word up to our hearts, so we can take an accurate reading of our spiritual pulse. What does our behavior indicate? A hardening, unbelieving heart? Or the blessed tenderness of a faithful heart?”*

Flannery O’Conner: *“I think there is no suffering greater than what is caused by the doubts of those who want to believe. I know what torment this is, but I can only see it, in myself anyway as the process by which faith is deepened. What people don’t realize is how much religion costs. They think faith is a big electric blanket, when of course it is the cross.”*

### III. Encouragement to Persevere Together (vs.12-15)

A. Ephesians 2:1-10



# Discussion Groups

1. Which voices cause you to doubt? Which voices are you looking to for hope and validation in the midst of struggle and trial?

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2. What causes you to doubt, grumble, or complain in your relationship with God?

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3. How does the Gospel give you hope in the “midst of the wilderness”?

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