

A STUDY OF HEBREWS

Drawing Near, Not Falling Away - Chapter 10:19-39

I. Review of Chapters 1-10

A. Jesus Christ is the greatest and final Prophet and enthroned Son of God.

1. Therefore we must pay closest attention to His Gospel... (1:1-2:18)

B. Jesus Christ is infinitely greater than Moses and gives eternal, not just temporal, rest.

1. Therefore we must persevere in faith lest we fall like those in the wilderness... (3:1-4:13)

C. Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest who sympathizes with us in our suffering and temptation.

1. Therefore we who have profound needs must fly to God's throne of grace... (4:14-5:10)

D. [A short detour due to the dullness of hearers (5:11-6-20)]

1. Warning against apostasy (6:1-12)
2. Assurance of God's promise (6:13-20)

E. The mysterious Melchizedek, the OT priest-king, is a foreshadow, or 'type', of the coming Christ.

1. Therefore flee to the eternal, oath-sealed, Melchizedekian sinless human sacrifice for sin (7:1-28)

F. Jesus Christ's heavenly priestly ministry mediates a more glorious new covenant (8:1-13).

G. A clear conscience, access to God, and true forgiveness comes only through Christ's blood (9:9-28)

H. Christ's sacrifice once-for-all has secured the eternal new covenant; nor more sacrifices needed (10:1-18)

"[Those to whom the letter is addressed] cannot now, after the full and careful instruction our author has given them, pretend to be ignorant that any reversion to the shadowy forms and sacrifices of the Mosaic law can only mean the negation of the Christian gospel. There follows, appropriately, a prolonged and powerful exhortation to lay firm hold of the blessings of the new covenant which God has made available to them through the mediation of Jesus Christ, our sole Redeemer and Lord."

- Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *Hebrews*, 404.

II. Text: Hebrews 10:19-25 – Drawing Near With Assurance

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God,²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Heb 10:19-25)

1. What are the two "indicatives" (though more are implied) and the three "imperatives" (though more are implied) for the reader to consider?

"[Exciting one another to love and good works] was the way and practice of Christians of old, but is now generally lost, with most of the principles of practical obedience, especially those which concern our mutual edification, as if they had never been prescribed in the gospel."

- John Owen, *Hebrews*, vol 6, 520.

III. Text: Hebrews 10:26-31 – A Stern Warning

For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb 10:26-31)

1. To whom are these words directed?:
 - a) Unregenerate professors of faith;
 - b) Regenerate professors of faith;
 - c) Non-professing unbelievers;
 - d) (a) and (c) only;
 - e) (a) and (b) only;
 - f) (a), (b), and (c)

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." (Amos 3:2)

2. Explain the words "how much more..." in v. 29? Why the distinction between Old Testament and New Testament punishments for apostasy?

IV. Text: Hebrews 10:32-38 – Comfort of Better Things

But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, ³³ sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. ³⁴ For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. ³⁵ Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. ³⁷ For,

"Yet a little while,

and the coming one will come and will not delay;

³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith,

and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him."

³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

(Heb 10:32-39)

*"Their enemies overran the houses now left empty and began to loot them, dividing up the contents like spoils of war."
- Philo of Alexandria, on 38 A.D. eviction of Christians from their homes*

1. (For all you 5-Pointers!): Is it better to say "perseverance of the saints" or "preservation of the saints"?
2. What was it that enabled these Christians to "joyfully accept the plundering" of their property (see ch. 11)?