

Hebrews: A Bridge from the Old to the New

Hebrews Chapter 10b

Christianity: A Superior Faith (Verses 26-39)

A Grave Warning against Apostasy (Verses 26-31)

An apostate is a person who moves toward Jesus Christ, hears and understands His gospel, and is on the verge of a saving belief, but then rebels and turns away. Apostasy is the sin of the apostate.

26-27 The writer spoke rhetorically when he said “we”, because he excluded himself at the end ^{Hebrews 10:39} of the passage. In the Greek, the phrase “deliberately keep on sinning” means intentional, habitual evil acts, and this type of behavior had dire consequences under the Mosaic law ^{Exodus 21:14, Numbers 15:30-31}. Moreover, an apostate cannot be saved, because they have rejected the call of the Holy Spirit ^{Matthew 12:30-31} to the only sacrifice that can cleanse their sin. Fear is inevitable, because judgement and the fires of hell ^{Matthew 13:49-50} are inescapable for people who receive the truth, then choose to reject God ^{Isaiah 26:10-11, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9}. As a matter of fact, it would have been better for them to have never known the truth at all ^{2 Peter 2:21(20-22)}.

28 The Mosaic law and principles calls for a conviction by 2 or 3 witnesses ^{Deuteronomy 17:2-7, 19:15, Matthew 18:16}.

29 Others referred to Jesus as “Son of God” ^{Luke 4:3, John 1:49}, but He preferred “Son of Man” ^{Mark 9:12, Luke 6:5}. Anyone who rejects Jesus has treated Him with disrespect (symbolically “trampled...under foot” ^{Micah 7:10}), exhibited contempt for His gift of sanctifying ^{John 17:19, 1 Corinthians 6:11} covenant blood ^{Exodus 24:8, Matthew 26:28} and grieved the Holy Spirit ^{Isaiah 63:10, Ephesians 4:30} deserves the worst kind of punishment ^{Matthew 11:22-24}.

30-31 The author reminded the reader that God (specifically Jesus), the creator of “all things” ^{Colossians 1:16-17}, declared His right and plan to judge ^{John 5:22} His people ^{Psalms 135:4} in these OT quotes ^{Deuteronomy 32:35-36}. Those who follow dead gods will receive just punishment ^{Galatians 6:8} (a raised “hand” ^{Isaiah 19:16}) from Jesus.

The “wrath” or “vengeance” of Jesus is punishment times seven ^{Leviticus 26:21} for relentless hostility to Him.

A Confirming Encouragement (Verses 32-39)

32 The Christian readers were reminded of their hearing and believing the Gospel, followed by persecution. Genuine believers are called into suffering ^{1 Peter 2:20-21(19-21)} as a blessing ^{Matthew 5:10-12}, because it is done “for Jesus” ^{Philippians 1:29-30}. In light of eternity, the persecution is short ^{2 Corinthians 4:17(16-18)} and God promised to restore ^{1 Peter 5:10} those who face the trial with the right attitude ^{Acts 16:22-25, 1 Peter 4:13} and do not fall ^{Matthew 11:6}. Jesus will redeem those who stumble ^{Matthew 26:31}, but not the fallen apostates ^{Matthew 13:20-21}.

33 As with Jesus ^{Luke 13:31}, true believers often faced personal persecution ^{1 Corinthians 4:9-13, 1 Thessalonians 2:14}, but were also called on to support fellow believers experiencing oppression ^{Philippians 4:14, 2 Timothy 1:16-18}.

- 34-36** Being of one body/spirit ^{1 Corinthians 12:13}, they stood with imprisoned believers ^{Ephesians 3:1, Hebrews 13:3} and rejoiced ^{Acts 5:41(40-42)} in the face of trials (the loss of worldly possessions) resulting from their being associated with Jesus ^{Philippians 1:27}. The author then encouraged them to continue in their faith ^{2 Timothy 1:8}, because with each well-handled trial, they were gaining in their spiritual maturity ^{Romans 5:1-5, James 1:2-4} and straining forward ^{Philippians 3:14(12-14)} confidently ^{Ephesians 3:12, Hebrews 10:19-25} toward being in the eternal presence of God Almighty and gaining their imperishable inheritance ^{1 Peter 1:3-4(3-5)} and vast heavenly treasure ^{Matthew 6:19-21}. This was in contrast to the apostates, who threw it all away ^{Deuteronomy 32:18}. Jesus modeled perfect behavior in the face of persecution, placing Him in the center of God's will ^{John 8:28-29}. He calls Christians to do the same ^{Matthew 5:48}, especially in His last earthly command of obedience ^{Matthew 28:18-20}.
- 37-38** The OT paraphrase ^{Habakkuk 2:3-4} spoke of the responsibility of believers to "live by faith" ^{Romans 1:17} and always be ready ^{Matthew 24:42, 25:13, Luke 12:40} for the soon return (Second Coming) ^{Revelation 22:20} of Jesus.
- 39** The author concludes this section by summarizing the contrast between the majority of people who hear the truth, but are drawn to physical desires ^{Philippians 3:18-19} or earthly riches ^{1 Timothy 6:9-10} and fall away to destruction ^{Matthew 7:13-14}, while the minority may have doubts ^{Jude 22-23}, but remain faithful ^{Matthew 25:21,23}.

Leviticus 26:21 If you remain hostile toward me and refuse to listen to me, I will multiply your afflictions seven times over, as your sins deserve.

Deuteronomy 32:18 You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.

Psalms 135:4 For the LORD has chosen Jacob to be his own, Israel to be his treasured possession.

Isaiah 63:10 Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them.

Matthew 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 7:13-14 For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Matthew 12:31 And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.

Matthew 13:20-21 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

Matthew 13:49-50 The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:21 Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!

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Luke 12:40 You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come ... when you do not expect him.

John 5:22 Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,

John 8:28-29 The one who sent me is with me; ... for I always do what pleases him.

Acts 5:41 The apostles [rejoiced] because they [were] counted worthy of suffering disgrace for [Jesus].

Romans 1:17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

Galatians 6:8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Ephesians 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Philippians 1:29 For it has been granted to you ... not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him,

Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward...

Philippians 3:18-19 ...many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.

1 Timothy 6:9-10 People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ... the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

2 Timothy 1:8 So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God,

2 Timothy 1:16 May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains.

Hebrews 13:3 Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

1 Peter 1:3-4 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you,

1 Peter 2:20-21 But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow...

1 Peter 4:13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ...

1 Peter 5:10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

2 Peter 2:21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.

Jude 22-23 Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear – hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

Revelation 22:20 He who testifies ... says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

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