

Hebrews 10:26-39

This section is the fourth of the five warnings in Hebrews. That this warning is addressed to unbelievers is clear from verse 39. Believers **cannot** be headed for perdition. In contrast, by the very act of belief, believers are saved from perdition. After clearly showing the superiority of Messiah's (Jesus') sacrifice over the Mosaic sacrifices (in particular the Yom Kippur sacrifice) and encouraging the Jewish "believers" ("let us") to move forward in their relationship with Jesus and other believers there is now another warning to those Jewish "believers" who are merely professors but not possessors.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

- This warning is not for all unsaved people. It is addressed to those who after being enlightened **wilfully** reject Jesus.

Joseph Thayer in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* defines **wilfully** (Greek, *ekousios*) as "Voluntarily, willingly, of one's own accord: tacitly opposed to sins committed inconsiderately and from ignorance or from weakness."

Vines defines **wilfully**: "deliberately, with settled intention, not by a sudden impulse of the will."

Thomas Hewitt, on *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Epistle to the Hebrews*, says the fact **wilfully** "is placed first in the Greek for emphasis, shows that the deliberate and continual rejection of Christianity is a decision of the will which acts contrary to what one would have expected from the knowledge of the truth which has been received."

The only other place this word is used in the New Testament is 1 Peter 5:2.

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;"

- Sin, here, is a condition not a one time act.
- Vines comments that *sin* here, "is in the present continuous tense, signifying, not an act or a series of acts, but a condition."
- These people have understood the truth of the gospel

Delitzsch, writes about **knowledge** (*epignosis*): "When *epignosis* is used, there is the assumption of an actual direction of the spirit to a definite object and of a real grasping of the same: so that we may speak of a false *gnosis*, but not of a false *epignosis*. And the Writer, by the use of this word, gives us to understand that he means by it not only a shallow historical notion about the Truth, but a living believing knowledge of it, which has laid hold of a man and fused him into union with itself."

John 16:7-11

- 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.
- 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
- 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;
- 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;
- 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

2 Peter 2:18-22

- 8 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.
- 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.
- 20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.
- 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.
- 22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

- These people can't be saved. In rejecting the truth they are sealed in this condition.

Psalm 106:1-15 (verses 14-15)

- 14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.
- 15 And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

2 Thessalonians 2:8-12

- 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:
- 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,
- 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.
- 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:
- 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

2 Thessalonians 2 passage is addressing people in the Tribulation period who have received the "mark of the Beast."

- The strong delusion is sent upon people after the "Wicked" is revealed "whose coming is after the working of Satan." This refers to the coming anti-Christ, who is revealed after the pre-tribulation rapture. Thus, it only pertains to people in the Tribulation period.
- Revelation 12-14 show that the timing of this "delusion" is at the middle of the Tribulation period and after when people receive the mark of the Beast, Revelation 13:16-18, and their eternal destiny is now sealed, Revelation 14:9-11.

This is not "the sin of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit!" - Matt. 12:31 (vs. 14,22-32)

27 **But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.**

For those who reject the gospel there is only judgement - John 3:17,18; 36.

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Devour is in the present active infinitive meaning it will forever devour, never cease.

Charles Spurgeon preached a message from Psalm 7:12 on December 7, 1856 titled "Turn or Burn." This is the teaching of this passage. Those who have turned from the truth will burn in the Lake of Fire for ever. Revelation 20:11-15

28 **He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:**

Here the writer quotes from Deuteronomy 17:2-7 to give a historical witness.

Despised means to reject, to refuse, to slight

The only other time this word is used in the New Testament is in Mark 7:9.

"And he said unto them, Full well ye **reject** the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."

29 **Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?**

If people were rightfully judged for their sins under Mosaic Law how much worse will it be if one willfully rejects the testimony of the prophets and the conviction of the Holy Spirit about Jesus. These people reject:

The love of the Father - 1 John 5:9-12

who hath trodden under foot the Son of God who gave His Son to die

The love of the Son - John 10:18

hath counted the blood of the covenant shed willingly by Jesus the Son

The love of the Holy Spirit - John 16:8

done despite unto the Spirit of grace who is the One who convicts people of sin

despite - εὐβριζῶ - en-oo-brid'-zo - Meaning: to insult

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

Judgment comes from God. One can not escape it. This is not "vengeance" in a negative sense but is the full application of justice to all parties.

31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

The context is speaking of apostates, lost people, and not saved people.

Can we grasp the awfulness of this thought?

In the midst of this severe warning to professing believers the writer encourages true believers to continue on in their faith with 3 reminders. God has promised to reward believers for their perseverance in times of difficulty and service for Him. This promise parallels the promise of Hebrew 6:10 - "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." - to believers in the midst of that warning passage.

1. REMEMBER YOUR FAITHFULNESS, AND HIS PROVISION, THROUGH PERSECUTION

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

Remember: A memory can be a good or a bad thing.

A believer should focus on the good things of God - Philippians 4:8.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Certainly this can start with remembering our salvation and from where we came (Psalm 40:2-3).

" He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."

The command here, though, is to remember how God has worked in your life after you have been saved, "after ye were illuminated." The Greek word for remember means "call over in your mind, one by one." The sufferings of these Christians had been going on for a long time, "ye endured a great fight of afflictions." The Greek word for fight spoke of an athletic contest and in the second century was used of martyrdom.

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

These believers were ridiculed and held in contempt for their beliefs, "were made a gazingstock."

Two actions were happening to the believers that made them "a gazingstock":

1. By reproaches and afflictions

They were being ridiculed and persecuted for living a godly (Christian) life - 1 Peter 4:12-16

- 12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:
- 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.
- 14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.
- 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.
- 16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

2. Because they supported those who were suffering for their faith

To identify with believers is to invite ridicule and persecution.

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

Believers are commended for helping other believers even when it meant personal loss.

Galatians 6:2 "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

They could do what they did because they new Heaven and an eternal reward waited them.

Hebrews 11 will develop, through the example of faithful men and women, our hope.

2. REMEMBER YOUR PROMISE OF REWARD FOR FAITHFULNESS

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

Don't lose faith. There is a great reward ahead for you.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

Patience means to hold steadfast, unmoveable; one writer suggests the context here is holding your position in battle even when the bullets are whizzing past.

A desire to do the will of God and the ability to exercise patience is intertwined - Colossians 3:1-4.

- 1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
- 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
- 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.
- 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

The promise is heaven. 1 Peter 1:3-4

- 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

The emphasis is on how soon the coming will be (imminent).

3. TRUE FAITH OR SPURIOUS FAITH IS THE CHALLENGE

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

This verse starts the section on faith that goes through 12:2. Faith is foundational to our walk with the Lord. Following the Mosaic Law, or any works system, doesn't please God. Only faith!

There are those who will "draw back." These are the professing believers.

1 John 2:19

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

Any one who draws back, leaves Christ, and goes back to their old ways displeases God, and as the next verse says go into perdition..

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

Those people who draw back go to perdition. Wuest defines perdition as "the destruction which consists in the loss of eternal life; eternal misery, perdition."

True believers do not draw back but go on to the saving of their soul. This teaching mirrors the promise of Hebrews 6:9 in the previous warning of Hebrews.