

# HEBREWS

(Primary textbook: Holy Scriptures. Primary translation: NIV.)

## VI. JESUS' SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF IS SUPERIOR TO THE SACRIFICES OF THE OLD COVENANT AND SETS US FREE FROM SIN (9:1-10:39)

- A. The Tabernacle and Its Tools (9:1-5)
- B. The Day of Atonement (9:6-10)
- C. Jesus' Sacrifice Cleanses Our Conscience (9:11-14)
- D. Jesus' Death Inaugurates the New Covenant (9:15-22)
- E. Jesus' Sacrifice Was Once for All (9:23-28)
- F. Old Covenant Sacrifices Could Not Take Away Sin (10:1-4)
- G. Christ Offered His Body to Make Us Holy (10:5-10)
- H. Our High Priest Now Reigns (10:11-14)
- I. Witness of the Holy Spirit through Jeremiah (10:15-18)
- J. Let Us Draw Near to God and Spur One Another On (10:19-25)
- K. The Judgment of God on Those Who Keep Sinning (10:26-31)
- L. Reminder of Earlier Suffering (10:32-34)
- M. The Need to Persevere (10:35-39)

(This lesson will cover Section J and Section K.)

Hebrews 10:18 concluded the “theological” section of this letter. The closing chapters follow with practical applications of its truths to the needs and problems of its first readers. Much of the previous part of the letter has dealt with the sacrifice and high priesthood of Christ under the New Covenant. Now the discussion turns to what those things should mean to readers in their present circumstances.

One man writes: “The sacrifice has been provided, the ransom for sin paid – the way to God is open. Good news, this!”

### **J. Let Us Draw Near to God and Spur One Another On (10:19-25)**

1. Therefore, brothers, since we have what? To enter where? How? (v.19)

“Therefore” – This word indicates a conclusion drawn from a preceding argument. Here the word is based upon the careful argumentation about Jesus and all He has done, beginning actually at 1:1 and running through 10:18.

2. By what kind of way? Opened for us, where? That is, His what? (v.20)

Because Jesus sacrifices Himself and became an acceptable substitute, He is the “way” to God.

3. And since we have what? Over what? (v.21)

Not only is Jesus a son over God's house by virtue of who He is (1:2, 3, 5), not only our brother by virtue of His incarnation (2:11, 14), but now priest over us by virtue of His sacrifice and resurrection. Our sin notwithstanding, we have every reason to enter the presence of God with confidence.

4. Let us draw where? With what? How? (v.22)

5. Having what sprinkled? For what purpose? (v.22)

The blood of Jesus, applied to our lives, removes from us the guilt of sin and the need for any guilty feelings which might cause us to refrain from entering the presence of God. We receive the inner cleansing of the conscience that we need.

6. Having what washed? How? (v.22)

The pairing of "body" with "heart" suggests an outward act of washing which coincides with the inner cleansing that takes place. Our writer has recognized the foundational role which baptism (immersion in water) plays in initiating the New Covenant relationship with God (6:1), and the New Testament includes clear evidence that immersion was practiced for the remission of sin (Acts 2:38). Paul, for one, had been baptized to "wash away" his sins (Acts 22:16). Both eternal (guilt) and internal (feelings of guilt) barriers to drawing near to God are removed by His sacrifice when it is applied to our lives and we trust in its sufficiency.

Note the words here of one commentator: "There can be little doubt that in verse 22, the author of Hebrews was referring to Christian baptism. As Peter suggests, baptism is more than merely the washing of the body; it is also the 'pledge of a good conscience toward God' (1 Peter 3:21). In this divinely authorized expression of one's faith in Christ and His gift of grace, the believer is born again, 'born of water and the Spirit' (John 3:5). Thus he experiences the 'washing of rebirth, and renewal by the Holy Spirit' (Titus 3:5). His body is washed with water, and through the Holy Spirit, his heart is made new by the blood of Christ."

7. Let us hold, how? To what? For He who promised is what? (v.23)

8. And let us consider how we may do what? Toward what two? (v.24)

9. Let us not give up doing what? As some are what? (v.25)

10. But let us do what? And all the more as we see what? (v.25)

### **K. The Judgment of God on Those Who Keep Sinning (10:26-31)**

The neglecting of the assembly of the church must have been the outward mark of a more serious condition on the part of some of these Hebrew Christians. Also, the writer may have been suggesting that absenting oneself from the gatherings of the believers may lead to more serious state of sin. At any rate, the writer warned his readers against the dreadful state of apostasy.

11. If we do what? After we have received what? What is left? (v.26)

Having exhorted his readers to (1) draw near to God, (2) hold unswervingly to their hope, and (3) spur one another on, our author now contemplates the alternative possibility.

12. But only a fearful expectation of what two? (v.27)

13. Raging fire that will do what? (v.27)

Such will be the inescapable fate of all of those who are found to be “the enemies of God.” And such will any of us be should we persist in a purposeful choice of deliberate and continual sin.

14. Anyone who did what? They died, how? On whose testimony? (v.28)

The imposition of the death penalty on the testimony of at least two witnesses is recorded both in Numbers 35:30 (as punishment for murder) and in Deuteronomy 17:6 (as punishment for idolatry). These are particularly heinous acts but the purposeful choice of deliberate and continual sin is also described in the most horrific terms.

15. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be what? Who has done what? (v.29)

16. Who has treated what as an unholy thing? Which had done what? (v.29)

17. And who has insulted Whom? (v.29)

Such apostasy can result only in the severest judgment and condemnation on the part of God. When the most extreme punishment under the old covenant is considered and compared to what people do to the Son, His blood, and the Spirit when they “deliberately keep on sinning,” it is clear that (1) they are even more deserving of punishment and (2) their punishment itself should be more severe. As one man writes, “Since the ‘lesser’ punishment was death, it is frightening to consider what punishment could possibly be worse than death itself (see ‘raging fire,’ verse 27).” Note also Hebrews 6:4-8.

18. For we know Him who said what two sayings? (v.30)

These verses are not quoted in their entirety. Only the relevant phrases are cited. They amount to a promise of judgment which includes the punishment of evil. God Himself claims the sole right to judge and our writer later refers to Him as “the judge of all men” (Hebrews 12:23). And God Himself will do the avenging and repaying.

19. It is what kind of thing? To fall into what? (v.31)

The tense of this verse is intimidating both because of what it conveys and the abruptness of the expression. This sobering truth calls to mind the solemn words of Peter in 1 Peter 4:17: “For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the Gospel of God?”

## ***“Making Disciples for the Master”***