

School of the Word
HEBREWS
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HEBREWS 10:19-31

Sequence

- Hebrews 10:19-31
- Within the letter
- Commentary
- Conversation

Hebrews 10:19-31

Heb 10:19 Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, **20** by the fresh and living way that he inaugurated 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 sincere heart in the assurance that faith brings, because we have had our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water. **23** And let us hold unwaveringly to the hope that we confess, for the one who made the promise is trustworthy. **24** And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works, **25** not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near.

Heb 10:26 For if we deliberately keep on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, no further sacrifice for sins is left for us, **27** but only a certain fearful expectation of judgment and *a fury of fire that will consume God's enemies*. **28** Someone who rejected the law of Moses was put to death without mercy *on the testimony of two or three witnesses*. **29** How much greater punishment do you think that person deserves who has contempt for the Son of God, and profanes the blood of the covenant that made him holy, and insults the Spirit of grace? **30** For we know the one who said, "**Vengeance is mine, I will repay**," and again, "**The Lord will judge his people**." **31** It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Within the letter

Drawing near and holding firmly in an unwavering faith (10:19–31)

Entrance into the sanctuary (10:19–25)

A new and living way (10:19–21)

Let us draw near (10:22)

Let us hold firm (10:23)

Let us stir one another up (10:24)

Not abandoning the assembly (10:25)

Deliberate sin (10:26–31)

Hebrews 10:19-21

Heb 10:19 Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, **20** by the fresh and living way that he inaugurated for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

- "Having therefore" = major shift of attention.
- A kind of inclusion with 4:14-16 (see text for parallels).
- Brothers and sisters = the first time since 3:1.
- Confidence (lit. boldness) based on Christ's work.
- Entrance: *eisodos* (common in Philo and Josephus).
- Blood of Jesus.

- Inaugurate could also mean to dedicate. Used also for the feast of Dedication.
- Jesus, thus, opened up a way that was closed.
- Curtain of the Temple: here “through” means “by means of” ... a summary of the teaching so far.
- Great High Priest: teaching of 7:1-10:18.
- House of God: the heavenly sanctuary.

Heb 10:22

Heb 10:22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in the assurance that faith brings, because we have had our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.

- Invitation to the whole community.
- Sincere = true.
- Assurance: Heb 6:11 But we passionately want each of you to demonstrate the same eagerness for the **fulfilment** of your hope until the end...
- Faith: Heb 4:2; 6:1, 12; 10:22, 38-11:1; 11:3-9, 11, 13, 17, 20-24, 27-31, 33, 39; 12:2; 13:7.
- In contrast to the earlier, Levitical sprinkling.
- Effective cleansing of conscience.
- Cf. I will sprinkle you with pure water and you will be clean from all your impurities. I will purify you from all your idols. I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh. (Ezek 36:25–26)

Heb 10:23

Heb 10:23 And let us hold unwaveringly to the hope that we confess, for the one who made the promise is trustworthy.

- Continued exhortation
- Early Christian vocabulary: hold, hope, confess, promise trustworthy.
- God’s faithfulness, see Deut 7:9; 32:4; Ps 89:24; Isa 49:7 LXX; 1 Cor 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor 1:18.
- Faithful: Heb 2:17; 3:2, 5; 10:23; 11:11
- The faithfulness of the community is thus the response to God’s faithfulness.

Heb 10:24-25

Heb 10:24 And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works, **25** not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near.

- Fourth exhortation: let us!
- Paroxsumos: cf. They had a **sharp disagreement**, so that they parted company. (Acts 15:39)
- Cf. My son, do what I command you and save yourself, for through your friend you have fallen into the hands of evil; go; do not falter; rather **spur** on even your friend for whom you stood security. (Prov 6:3)
- Love and work: For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love you have demonstrated for his name (Heb 6:10)
- If you’re not there, you can’t spur people on!
- The author distinguishes two groups: the infrequent and the apostates (cf. 2:1-4, 3:12, 6:4-6).
- Meetings: lit. *Episunagōgē*, a term otherwise found only in 2 Thess 2:1.
- Cf. When Jeremiah learned of it, he rebuked them and declared: “The place shall remain unknown until God **gathers** his people together again and shows his mercy.” (2 Macc 2:7)

- Q: has the “delay” made them weary?
- NB early Christian vocabulary (underlined).
- Old Testament prophets spoke of the “Day of the Lord” (cf. Isa 2:12; 13:6; Joel 1:15; 2:31; Amos 5:18; Zech 14:1), a day of divine judgment. Since early Christians called Jesus “Lord,” they spoke of the return of Christ (1 Cor 5:5; 1 Thess 5:2) as “the day of the Lord.” In some instances, they spoke of “the day of the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 1:8), “the day of the Lord Jesus” (2 Cor 1:14), and “the day of Christ” (Phil 1:10; 2:16). In other instances the phrase is abbreviated to “the day” (2 Tim 1:12, 18; 4:8; Heb 10:25).

Within the Letter

- Deliberate sin (10:26–31)
 - Fearful expectation of judgment (10:26–27)
 - Those who have trampled the Son of God (10:28–29)
 - Falling into the hands of the living God (10:30–31)

Heb 10:26–27

Heb 10:26 For if we deliberately keep on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, no further sacrifice for sins is left for us, **27** but only a certain fearful expectation of judgment and *a fury of fire that will consume God’s enemies*.

- Threatening note.
- There are two “ways” and one leads to destruction. Cf. Deuteronomy 27–28.
- Not the sin of not believing, but the the sin of abandoning what we once believed.
- The “hapax” of Christ’s sacrifice puts us in a special position.
- Fiery passion: an amalgam of Isa 26:11; Zeph 1:18; 3:8.
- Story: Deut 17:2–16, with addition of “without mercy” from Deut 13:6–10. See next slide.
- Scary “a fortiori” argument.
- Contempt, profane, insult: that is, abandoning the community.
- Contempt is lit. Tramples under foot — echoing “under his feet”.
- Spirit: given at baptism.

Deut 17:7 The witnesses must be first to begin the execution, and then all the people are to join in afterward. In this way you will purge evil from among you.

Deut 17:8 If a matter is too difficult for you to judge—bloodshed, legal claim, or assault—matters of controversy in your villages—you must leave there and go up to the place the Lord your God chooses. **9** You will go to the Levitical priests and the judge in office in those days and seek a solution; they will render a verdict. **10** You must then do as they have determined at that place the Lord chooses. Be careful to do just as you are taught. **11** You must do what you are instructed, and the verdict they pronounce to you, without fail. Do not deviate right or left from what they tell you. **12** The person who pays no attention to the priest currently serving the Lord your God there, or to the verdict—that person must die, so that you may purge evil from Israel. **13** Then all the people will hear and be afraid, and not be so presumptuous again.

Deut 17:14 When you come to the land the Lord your God is giving you and take it over and live in it and then say, “I will select a king like all the nations surrounding me,” **15** you must select without fail a king whom the Lord your God chooses. From among your fellow citizens you must appoint a king—you may not designate a foreigner who is not one of your fellow Israelites. **16** Moreover, he must not accumulate horses for himself or allow the people to return to Egypt to do so, for the Lord has said you must never again return that way.

Deut 13:6 Suppose your own full brother, your son, your daughter, your beloved

wife, or your closest friend should seduce you secretly and encourage you to go and serve other gods that neither you nor your ancestors have previously known, **7** the gods of the surrounding people (whether near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other). **8** You must not give in to him or even listen to him; do not feel sympathy for him or spare him or cover up for him. **9** Instead, you must kill him without fail! Your own hand must be the first to strike him, and then the hands of the whole community. **10** You must stone him to death because he tried to entice you away from the Lord your God, who delivered you from the land of Egypt, that place of slavery.

Heb 10:30-31

Heb 10:30 For we know the one who said, “*Vengeance is mine, I will repay,*” and again, “*The Lord will judge his people.*” **31** It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- I will get revenge and pay them back at the time their foot slips; for the day of their disaster is near, and the impending judgment is rushing upon them!” The Lord will judge his people, and will change his plans concerning his servants; when he sees that their power has disappeared, and that no one is left, whether confined or set free. (Deut 32:35–36)
- And no creature is hidden from God, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account. (Heb 4:13)

Conversation