

Hebrews 10:26-31 part three

Let's first read the passage together:

Heb 10:26-31

*For **if we** go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. 28 **Anyone** who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much severer punishment do **you** think **he** will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which **he** was sanctified, and has insulted 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 terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

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We are continuing to assess whether this passage is talking about believers who can lose their salvation, or unbelievers who face the vengeance and fury of God.

What statements suggest that these people were or could have been saints – believers in Christ, possessing eternal life?

Verse 26 says that had received the knowledge of the truth.

Verse 29 says that he had been sanctified by the blood of the covenant.

Verse 30 says that the Lord will judge His people.

Verse 26 says nothing about the man believing in Christ or the gospel. He simply received knowledge of the truth.

This is just like tasting the good word of God in Heb 6:5.

He hung around the assembly and heard the truth. But he did not believe it.

How do we know? Because he sinned willfully.

This is NOT talking about adultery or lying or stealing.

It is talking about THE SIN of the book of Hebrews: **UNBELIEF.**

Heb 3:7-19 and Heb 4:1-7 identify the sin as unbelief.

Verse 30 of Hebrews 10 says that the Lord will judge His people.

*30 For we know Him who said, "**VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY.**" And again, "**THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.**"*

Here the writer of Hebrews quotes the book of Deuteronomy. The passage comes from the song of Moses, which is the last message to the nation of Israel before the death of Moses and the appointment of Joshua to succeed him.

Turn to Deut 32:35-36

This is NOT a reference to the enemies of Israel.

“His people” is Israel as a whole.

But the whole was composed of righteous and wicked.

God could only bring justice to the righteous by destroying the wicked.

This refers to the retribution which God would inflict upon His people- Israel. He would punish the wicked in Israel who oppressed the righteous.

“The Lord will judge His people.” The Lord will make a just ruling. He will separate the wheat from the chaff. He will separate the faithful from the idolatrous and wicked among His people.

The Lord will vindicate the righteous and condemn the wicked. The righteous are the Jewish believers while the wicked are the Jewish unbelievers.

The Jewish audience for the book of Hebrews would have understood the reference and how it applied to them.

*Heb 10:28 **Anyone** who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.*

*29 How much severer punishment do **you** think **he** will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which **he** was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?*

The wicked among the Jewish audience for Hebrews will be condemned to the Lake of Fire (severer punishment than physical death) .

He trampled under foot the Son of God. He regarded as a common thing the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified. He had insulted the Spirit of grace.

Unbelieving Israel in the Old Testament rejected the law of Moses.

The unbelieving Jews in the first century rejected the Son of God.

They will receive the personal wrath of the all-powerful Living God who will exact His revenge on those who held His Son in utter contempt.

Verse 29 makes the strongest case for asserting that he was a believer.

*and has regarded as unclean [a common, unimportant thing] the blood of the covenant by which **he** was sanctified,*

Isn't someone who has been sanctified by the blood of the covenant a believer who possesses eternal life?

Not necessarily. The Bible uses sanctified and sanctification in a number of ways. The Greek word means "set apart".

It can apply (and often does) to believers, but is also applied to objects, places, and even people who are not saved.

For example:

Matt 23:17-19

1 Tim 4:1-5

1 Cor 7:14

So what does it mean here in Hebrews 10:29?

*and has regarded as unclean [a common, unimportant thing] the blood of the covenant by which **he** was sanctified,*

Notice the word “covenant”.

The death of Christ on the cross effectuated the end of the Mosaic Covenant.

Christ has made the first covenant – the Mosaic Covenant – obsolete.

Heb 8:7-13

The Lord’s covenants are always with Israel. The first covenant was established by God with the nation of Israel.

On the night of Passover, every person in the nation of Israel had been set apart or sanctified by the blood of the lamb that was placed on the lintel of each home.

But this does not mean that the Spirit regenerated all of them. Many had no faith in God.

They shared the same blessings as all the rest when they were liberated as slaves and given the promise of a great land flowing with milk and honey.

However, they were tested in the wilderness to determine who really believed in and trusted the Lord, and who did not. Most did not believe.

Profession is one thing; possession is another.

*and has regarded as unclean [a common, unimportant thing] the blood of the covenant by which **he** was sanctified,*

The person in Hebrews 10:29 had joined himself with the saints, but he left and went back to Judaism. He was not a believer in Christ.

What else is said about this one who was sanctified by the blood of the covenant?

Well, he regarded that blood as a common thing, Not sacred.

What does it not say? It says nothing about eternal salvation, or the sanctification of the Spirit.

One other point is sometimes made to show that these were in fact believers:

Could these punishments in Hebrews 10:26-31 are temporal in nature, not eternal? The believer loses rewards but is not condemned and sent to the Lake of Fire.

But is that true?

What are the severe consequences awaiting this second group?

*27 but a **terrifying expectation of judgment** and **THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES** [quotation from **Isa 26:11**, also found in **2Th 1:7-9**]*

*30 For we know Him who said, "**VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY.**" [quotation from **Deu 32:35**]*

*And again, "**THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.**" ."* [quotation from **Deu 32:36**]

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

What are the warnings that this person is given? He will face:

- judgement,
- the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries,
- severer punishment than physical death, .i.e.' the second death
- facing the vengeance of God, and
- falling into the hands of the living God who will take His revenge on His enemies

This is not talking about rewards that can be lost by a believer. This is talking about punishments awaiting the wicked – the unbeliever.

Heb 10:26-31

So who is this person?

He was an **apostate**.

He was apostate from the faith he once professed. He claimed to be a believer in Christ, but in fact he was a pretender. He heard the good news but refused to believe it.

What is **NOT** said about him/them?

- That he believed in Christ.
- That his sins were forgiven.
- That he was born again.
- That he had received eternal life.
- That he was justified (Declared righteous by God).
- That he was regenerated by the Spirit.
- That he was indwelt by the Holy Spirit.
- That they was sealed with the Holy Spirit.

Here are several New Testament passages that talk about apostates and apostasy:
(With us, but not of us)

Act 20:28-30

Galatians 2:4

2 Timothy 3:1-9

Titus 1:15-16

Hebrews 2:1-3; 3:7-13, 18-19; 4:1-6; 12:21-29

1 John 2:18-23; 4:1-6

Jude 3-19