

The Five Warnings of Hebrews

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CHAPTER 7

THE DANGER OF DENYING (PART 2)

How long has it been since you heard a message on hell? It has been quite a while hasn't it?

Perhaps many of you have never heard a message on the Lake of Fire. While I have read sermons on the subject, I have never heard one myself. This is not a very popular subject, and is neglected by default of those who do believe in it.

But, beloved, if there is not a hell to be saved from, then there is absolutely no need for a Saviour to rescue us from it. A Saviour is meaningless without a certain death. While I am not going to speak on hell in this lesson, I do want to relate its truth to unbelievers.

We who are believers have experienced the Lord's so great salvation. We have come to know that He saved us from an eternal death. We are saved and that salvation is eternal (Hebrews 5:8-9). This eternal salvation is eternal judgment (Hebrews 6:2). This is why it is so great salvation because He born our eternal judgment in a point of time.

The believer's problem, then, can never be eternal salvation or eternal judgment. That issue stands settled. "**We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul**" (Hebrews 10:39).

Our problem as believers is not a matter with sin that would cause us to lose our eternal salvation, but it is with sin that would cause us to lose the Lord's blessing in our lives, and may even cause us to lose our lives in a premature physical death.

- Our problem is with time, not with eternity.
- Our problem is with our physical life, not our eternal soul.
- Our problem is with physical death, not eternal death.

This is the issue before the Hebrew Christians, and it is the issue with us also.

Some sins are small, but others are not. Some things we do are relatively unimportant, while other things are very important. This is why 1 John 5 speaks about sin not unto death, and about sin unto death. We are to stop and take heed to ourselves and our actions "**for our God is a consuming fire**" (Hebrews 12:29).

This verse closes our study today but I want you to notice that this is NEVER spoken in reference to unbelievers. GOD is not, and never will be, a consuming fire in reference to unbelievers. For unbelievers He will be an eternal fire that will consume nothing. However, in reference to the believer He is a consuming fire that will consume all that is wood, hay, and stubble, and all that is thorns and briars. He will even take away our lives if we are completely displeasing to Him.

Never say, "It couldn't happen here; it couldn't ever happen to me." This is the attitude at the time of CHRIST when they said: **"If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves; that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets"** (Matthew 23:30-31).

There is not any sin that we as believers are not capable of committing. This is why we are to take heed to ourselves lest we fall (I Corinthians 10:11-12; 1 Timothy 4:16; Hebrews 4:11).

We saw last lesson that the route of any failure is a progression involving three stages.

(1) It begins with failing to appropriate grace. **"Lest any man fail of the grace of God"** (12:15a).

(2) The next step is having bitterness in the heart. **"Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled"** (12:15b). (Bitterness in the heart leads to murmuring with the mouth, and this leads others to sin also).

(3) The final step is open contempt of what is our responsibility of our privilege. **"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright."** (Either one of these two sins permanently disqualifies one from service and from blessings therein).

Concerning these three things we are to search out ourselves and our hearts carefully, to give inspection, to oversee continually lest these things come into our lives unexpectedly and undetected.

No one sins any other route. We fail to appropriate GOD's grace for the situation or trial. This leads us to have bitterness in our hearts to GOD for allowing this hardship or difficulty to come upon us. What is in our hearts ultimately comes out and it defiles us and others. All this in turn causes a final state in which we settle for the temporal rather than the eternal; for the here-and-now rather than the hereafter; and for the material rather than the spiritual. We fail to patiently endure.

This is what Esau did, and his decision was irrevocable. We are capable of doing the same thing.

Here is a young man or a young woman. The Lord has called them to the mission field. The way to Bolivia, or India, or Morocco is long and hard. They fail to appropriate the grace necessary for the way and for the testings along the journey. Then everything caves in. "GOD is not really concerned about me. He really does not love me. If He loved me He would have provided for me and given me a life partner." Then the person falls in love with someone not called to the field

and they are married. They made a decision that is irrevocable. They have missed the perfect will of GOD and must now settle for the remainder of their lives for that which is His second best, His 20th best, or His 200th best.

Having given the exhortation not to fail (Hebrews 12:12-17), we come to a second section.

2. The Believer's Privileges and Position, 12:18-24.

The believer must understand his privilege and his position today or he cannot understand why the Lord will judge him so severely for disobedience. The author of this book states this truth both negatively and positively.

a. Negatively, 12:18-21.

To go back to the law and the Temple is to go back to a system of terror. The law was a system of terror. "**Do you not hear the law,**" the writer is saying.

The contrast here is between the Old Testament revelation and its responsibilities with the New Testament and its responsibilities and privileges.

b. Positively, 12:22-24.

The one was "terror"; the other is "grace" and far superior privileges. The emphasis is not on the city, but on the One living in the city. Look at the occupants of the city.

- (1) JESUS, the Mediator of the New Covenant.
- (2) Church of the Lord JESUS CHRIST (which began at Pentecost and will end at the rapture).
- (3) GOD, the Judge of all.
- (4) Spirits of just men made perfect (the Old Testament saints who are not a part of the church nor ever will be).
- (5) Angels, i.e., the holy angels (the two-thirds that did not follow Satan in his rebellion).
- (6) Blood of Sprinkling, i.e., the mercy seat, or the throne of grace as it is called in Hebrews.

This is the city we are looking for, not some earthly city.

Abel was the very first person to offer blood sacrifices. It was a testimony from then on, even though he was dead, that this is GOD's only method of acceptance and only way of approach (cf. 11:4).

But now there is a greater witness than that of Abel, because there is greater blood in a greater place that is continually speaking to men. The blood of JESUS CHRIST is GOD's only means of acceptance and only way of approach.

3. The Final Warning, 12:25-29.

In light of the better blood in a better place, and all the superior privileges we possess, there is a far greater obligation and responsibility that is ours.

:25 -- "**See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh.**" Literally it is "He who is right now speaking" (present tense).

This ties the Epistle of Hebrews and its message into one unit.

"God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His son" (Hebrews 1:1-2).

"Therefore . . . how shall we escape" (Hebrews 2:1,3).

These Hebrew believers in grace who reject the present voice of the Lord are guilty of a far greater sin than their fathers. Their fathers did not escape; so much more will they not escape.

Compare Hebrews 10:29, "**how much more sorer punishment.**" with Hebrews 10:30, "**The Lord will judge His people.**"

It is not salvation, but temporal punishment that is in view here (cf. I Corinthians 11:31-32).

:26 -- The One who spoke on Sinai is now the One who speaks from Heaven in grace and bids us come. He is yet to speak one more time, and the last time He comes and speaks it will be in judgment.

You had better be right with Him. It is one thing to be out of step with an earthly monarch. It is something else to be out of step with the Sovereign of the universe.

The prophecy quoted here is from Haggai 2:6 and refers to the second coming of CHRIST. It pictures judgment which precedes the coming of a new age.

The shaking of the earth will be the purifying judgment and the removal of all things in conformity to the holiness of the Lord and not subject to the King.

GOD will yet do this for Israel. You had better be found on the right side in that day. The judgment in A.D. 70 was just a pre-picture of that final judgment that will occur.

:27 -- Those things that can be shaken show they are temporary. What is unshakable manifests it is eternal.

The Temple and the old covenant as prophecied are shakable and therefore temporary. The New Jerusalem and the new covenant are unshakable and eternal. The Temple will be completely destroyed. The old covenant will pass away but both the New Jerusalem of the new covenant with the house of Israel will last forever. The shaking is viewed as already in process.

:28 -- The final appeal is given to "believers."

Believers are looked upon as in a process of receiving a kingdom. At the present time the Mediator is still in Heaven. The establishment of this kingdom on earth with the New Jerusalem over the earth is definite and sure, yet it is still unseen. We must abide faithful, and obtain grace so as to patiently endure for our reward until He comes or until He calls. In the meantime we are

to serve the Lord acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

You do not love someone you do not respect. You cannot love the Lord unless you respect Him. The Lord will judge His children. You had better take heed and reverence Him. No child will deliberately sin without paying the full price in discipline from the Lord.

Acceptable service to GOD is in the called out assembly, not in returning back to the Temple and offering sacrifices.

:29 -- The exhortation closes and the warnings are over. But the discipline awaits all who will not heed.

Hebrews begins with the Son speaking, and it ends with the blood of the Son continuing to speak from Heaven as an eternal witness.

~ end of chapter 7 ~
