

Lesson Fourteen — Fourth Warning

Day One — The Sacrifices

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In the past two weeks we have studied the comparisons of three major areas. We have compared the priestly ministries, the old and the new covenants, and the earthly and heavenly tabernacles. This week we come to Hebrews chapter ten. Chapter ten begins with one more comparison — that of the sacrifices. But then we move right into the fourth warning. Ready to begin?

Day One — The Sacrifices

Please pray for your week's study. Pray for the others in your class as well.

We have one more comparison to study. We need to see how Jesus' sacrifice put an end to all sacrifices. Read through this section a couple of times and then answer the questions.

Hebrews 10

1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING THOU HAST NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY THOU HAST

¹ This day's study will be essential in understanding the fourth warning. Please plan your week so you will have enough time to complete it.

PREPARED FOR ME; 6 IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN THOU HAST TAKEN NO PLEASURE.

7 “THEN I SAID, ‘BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE ROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO THY WILL, O GOD.’” 8 After saying above, “SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN THOU HAST NOT DESIRED, NOR HAST THOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them” (which are offered according to the Law), 9 then He said, “BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO THY WILL.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second. 10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, 13 waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. 14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

List all the comparisons you see in this passage.

According to v. 1, what can the Law *not do*?

If the Law *could perfect* those who draw near, what would have been different (v. 2)?

Why can the Law not cleanse the worshipers to the point that there is no consciousness of sins?

And because the Law cannot cleanse the worshipers to the point of having no consciousness of sin, what had to happen?

Compare vv. 4 and 11.

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Compare vv. 10 and 14.

Now notice v. 12. We looked at this verse last week and compared that fact that Jesus sat down after He made His sacrifice, but the high priest in the earthly sanctuary was always standing. The implication here is that the ministry of the high priest in the earthly sanctuary was never finished! They had always to keep ministering. But Jesus' sacrifice so completely fulfilled the Law that He sat down, having finished what God gave Him to do *with respect to sin*. (For an intended purpose, would you please underline the last sentence you read? I will want to draw your attention back to it a little later.) Now read the verses below where Jesus states He has finished the work on the cross, then Hebrews shows the fact that Jesus sat down.

John 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit.

Hebrews 1: 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Hebrews 10:11 And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, 13 waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.

Hebrews 12: 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

In these passages, what do you see that Jesus did first, prior to sitting down?

And in these verses, it mentions that while Jesus is sitting, He is waiting for something. What is it?

Before you end for today, go back to the sentence I had you underline. That sentence is with respect to Hebrews 10:12. Now compare this thought with Hebrews 9:28. What is the implication here? Do you see what the forward focus is? Yet it is all based upon what Christ already did. Cool!

Well, you have done enough work for the day. There is enough here for you to chew on. As you stop for the day, ask the Lord to help you to meditate upon these things, teaching you all that He wants you to know.

Day Two — Therefore, Let Us...

The author is drawing us closer to the fourth warning. But it appears he really desires us to understand the present ministry of Christ. Even though we covered vv. 10 and 14 yesterday, let's begin there today anyway.

Hebrews 10

10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all....14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. 15 And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, 16 “THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM,” He then says, 17 “AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE.” 18 Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.

This passage deals with two things. First, it deals with believers being sanctified through the sacrifice of Christ, and the fact that His sacrifice covers all time, not ever needing to be repeated again. Second, the author draws us back to God's dealings with Israel and the old and new covenants. This may be a bit confusing to see, but hang in there for a moment. In v. 10, *who* has been sanctified?

Verse 14 repeats the idea. Now read v. 15 carefully. What does the Holy Spirit do, and to whom?

Now notice the phrase “for **after** saying...” The author then quotes an Old Testament passage which deals with the future of God's dealings with Israel, after which the author writes, “He **then** says...” quoting another Old Testament passage which has to do with God remembering the sins of Israel no more. In the end, the author concludes, that there is no longer any need for sacrifices, because the sacrifice of Christ is complete. Do you see that?

So, what does all of this have to do *with us*? If the old and new covenants have to do with Israel (cf. Heb. 8:8-13), what does any of this have to do with Christians — believers of this dispensation?

It has much to do with us. The sacrifice of Christ has also sanctified *us*! And because of that, the author goes on to deal with us...

Hebrews 10

19 Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, 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 full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good

deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

Now the author draws upon our knowledge and understanding of the tabernacle and the ministry of the high priest (things he laid out in chapters seven through nine), and brings forward the idea of the work of Christ in His present ministry — that of ministering on behalf of Christians, a cleansing for their sins. And because of that we can do several things. We'll list those things.

Make a list of all the things the author says we can (and should) do (vv. 22ff.):

Since therefore, brethren, let us . . .

And before we close for the day, why is it we can do all of this vv. 19-21?

Day Three — Leading Up to this Warning

As we draw closer to this fourth warning, let's be sure we remember where we are in the Book of Hebrews and where we've been.

Chapter one lays the foundation of the book, presenting seven Old Testament passages, all of which have to do with some facet of the coming kingdom. This foundation must be in place in order to understand this epistle. Note that chapter one ends with mentioning the inherited salvation — a future time.

Chapter two contains the first warning. We are warned to be careful not to drift away from what we have heard from the Father through the Prophets and the Lord Himself. A drifting away from these things (things mentioned in chapter one) will bring about a just recompense. Then the author stated plainly what he was speaking about — *the world to come which will not be subjected to angels* (v. 5) — a future time.

Chapters three and four deal with the second warning. This warning deals with our striving to enter the Sabbath rest and gives the Children of Israel as an example of how they failed to enter the rest in the promised land through unbelief and disobedience. We must *not* follow their example, but rather, through faithful obedience, strive to enter the rest, not the one which Joshua gave, but the rest out ahead about which David wrote — a future time.

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Chapter five speaks of the high priestly ministry of Aaron, then of the high priestly ministry of Christ, with His blood having been offered as a propitiation for our sin. The author leads us to look from this present ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary to the future ministry of Christ when He comes as a King/Priest after the order of Melchizedek in the Messianic Era — a future time.

A comparison is made between the milk of the word and the meat of the word, the latter having to do with the word of righteousness, surrounding an understanding of Melchizedek.

Chapter six spells out six things which are elemental in our spiritual growth, and the author admonishes us to press on to maturity. Herein is the third warning. If the Lord allows (and He may or may not) a believer to press on to maturity — coming into an understanding of these things — *and **then** the one falls away*, there is no repentance on the part of God concerning the future inheritance, the rest. (The Children of Israel did just that. They came to a full knowledge of the blessings which God had in store for them in the promised land, but they didn't believe what He had told them about it, and became disobedient — refusing to go in. He turned them back to the wilderness [not back to Egypt], and even though they repented, they could not change the mind of God concerning their inheritance in the land.) However, pressing onto maturity gives us a great understanding of what the hope is before us, and this hope which has to do with the coming era, becomes the anchor to our soul.

Chapters seven through the first half of chapter ten flow together to make a large parenthetical thought, that of the present ministry of Christ, with a view to the future. Everything here propels us forward. Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is on behalf of believers, offering us cleansing for our sin as we travel this journey to the Promised Land. But this ministry is only until a future time when He comes in the kingly priesthood of Melchizedek.

Also, the old covenant, having to do with the Law and the earthly kingdom in Israel is to be replaced by the new covenant with Israel, when God will write His Law on their hearts in the coming age. God will forgive them and remember their sin no more. If that is so, how much more will the present ministry of Christ cleanse us from sin, and give us hope.

All that is pictured from the Old Testament throughout the Book of Hebrews draws our attention forward to a coming time. The priesthood of Aaron was to be replaced by a better priesthood; the old covenant will be replaced by a new and better covenant; the rest Joshua gave only foreshadowed the better rest that Jesus will bring; the hope offered to Israel in the land points toward a better hope. And during the present time, Christ offers us hope and cleansing from sin through His present ministry with a view to His future ministry.

Now...coming into a clearer understanding of these things, we come to the fourth warning. We will observe the text today and then look at it more closely tomorrow. Take Hebrews chapter ten sheet from your Appendix and carefully observe the complete chapter, placing emphasis on vv. 26ff. Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to teach you, and then ask Him to allow you to meditate on this passage throughout your day. Below is a space for notes if you make any.

NOTES on Hebrews chapter ten:

Tomorrow's study is a long one. Be sure to give yourself enough time for it. (This is one that will be necessary for you to work through, otherwise you may not understand things discussed in class or in the lecture.)

Day Four — The Fourth Warning

At this point in the Book of Hebrews one might be wondering, "Why did I allow myself to come into this knowledge? It is too difficult, too frightening! Now, am I responsible? Perhaps ignorance really is bliss."

Are you feeling a little like that? I can understand it if you are, but let me reassure you. Coming into this understanding is what Life is all about! There is more blessing than we can possibly imagine in understanding these things! It is why the Apostle Paul said that *any light, momentary affliction is not to be compared to the eternal weight of glory!* It is exactly what he meant. Exactly what he had personally striven for.

Even now I pray for you.

"Oh my precious Lord and Savior, will You send your Holy Spirit in great measure to the one doing this study right now? Will You overwhelm them with the sense of the pleasure You have in them, as they but continue to press on? Will You encourage them in the greatest of ways even now, Lord, as they read the words of this prayer of mine? Will You give them a sense of excitement and encouragement as they grow in the knowledge of You and Your coming kingdom? Thank You, Lord. You are so faithful and true! Amen."

Yesterday you observed Hebrews chapter ten, with emphasis on vv. 26ff. Verses 26-39 contain the fourth warning. You may have come away from that observation with a sort of dread. (I hope not, but it is possible.)

As we begin today, will you take a moment to write down in your own words what the fourth warning is on your sheet in the Appendix entitled *The Five Warnings of Hebrews*. It is explicitly stated in vv. 26-39.

This is a very stern warning. In fact so stern, that some might be inclined to think that it is not directed toward believers. But the text *and* the context will not allow that thought, even for a moment. Yesterday we spelled out the *context* leading up to this fourth warning, reviewing every chapter leading up to it. The context is only dealing with believers and their future hope.

The *text* of this warning is also dealing with the future hope — a hope reserved *only for believers*. It has nothing to do with unbelievers! Sinning willfully will never condemn a non-saved person, for, in having a lack of faith in Christ as the Passover Lamb, has already condemned him (John 3:18). Christ's blood on the Mercy Seat in heavenly sanctuary is not offered as propitiation for the sin of the unsaved, only for the saved as they fall into sin, then repent.

So what does this fourth warning have to do with in regards to believers? How should it be applied? Please pray for more understanding.

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Lesson Fourteen Fourth Warning

Comparing the third and fourth warnings may help in understanding just what is involved in *sinning willfully*. Is the author dealing with *all* willful sin, or willful sin *in particular*? Let's look at it.

Do you remember that the three and a half chapters preceding this fourth warning constitute a large parenthetical thought dealing with the priesthood of Christ? And though this is with good purpose in its placement, sometimes it is helpful to go back to the third warning, take out the parenthetical thought, and read the fourth warning exactly on the heels of the third. Let's try that. I have printed it for you.

The third warning —

Hebrews 6

3 And this we shall do, if God permits. 4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame.

For in the case of whom?

If they do what?

What becomes true, and why?

So let's say that God does allow us to press on to maturity, and we do become enlightened, and taste the heavenly gift, and do partake with the Holy Spirit, and do taste the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come. What if we *then*.... Watch how the fourth warning follows the third warning —

Hebrews 10

26 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 certain 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.

For if *who* goes on sinning willfully?

After what?

Then what?

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In v. 29, what three things has the person done to deserve punishment of this kind?

What has the blood of the covenant done to the one who is treating it as unclean?

Did you catch similarities between the two warnings? They are as follows—

From Hebrew 6 —

For in the case of those who have once been enlightened ...and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance...

and from Hebrews 10 —

...For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins...

This would be the reason God may not allow maturity to take place.

But, as shown in Hebrews chapter ten, *if God **does** allow* one to come to this maturity, and that person receives *the knowledge of **the truth***, then falls away, what happens?

But the question must be considered — What truth? *What truth* is the text and the context of the Book of Hebrews referring to here? Check it out and write it down.

If, after receiving a knowledge of this truth — concerning the things connected to maturity...things related to Melchizedek...things concerning the age to come — then falls away through sinning willfully (against this knowledge [Heb. 10:26]), what is awaiting that person (10:26ff)?

This passage is not dealing with generic sin. We all will fall into willful sin in different facets of life. And it is for this expressed purpose Christ is presently ministering in heavenly sanctuary. He is presently ministering, on our behalf, a cleansing of sin, as we are still in a body of flesh with all its attributed weaknesses. And if we avail ourselves to Him as our High Priest through confession and repentance, we are washed clean and the sin is *taken away*, and remembered no more — ever!

Rather, this warning is dealing with willful sin on the part of the one who *has been allowed to come to maturity* (third warning), and after doing so, he falls away from *this knowledge*, sinning willfully against it (fourth warning). That believer can expect a very harsh judgment. Check the text and see if this makes sense.

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It is important to see the connection between the third and fourth warning here. In fact, all five warnings found in the Book of Hebrews have to do with the same thing, only each reveals a different aspect of the overall thought. All the warnings have to do with missing one's inheritance in the coming age. Please understand this!

The Apostle Peter speaks of something similar in his second letter when he states—

II Peter 2

20 For if after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge [^{<1922>}epignosis] of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. 21 For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them.

Peter is dealing with the work of the false teachers in the Church (2:1ff), especially in the last days (*cf.* II Pe. 3:3), which is the same work of the false prophets in the Old Testament. And if a person comes to the knowledge (epignosis) but turns back to the world, then...well, Peter's words speak to the matter.

Going back to Hebrews chapter ten, what about this person's treatment of the Holy Spirit at the end of v. 29? What has this person done to the Holy Spirit?

The same idea is given in Hebrews 6:6. What is the overall thought running through these passages?

Look what Jesus thinks about doing something in a similar instance. This is not exactly the same, but the idea of rejection is similar.

Matthew 12

31 "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. 32 And whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age, or in the age to come.

Go back and underline what two time frames Jesus says will be held against them.

And look what Paul says to the Church at Ephesus —

Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

The result of this kind of treatment of the Holy Spirit in this area is spelled out in Hebrews 10:30, 31. These verses are self-explanatory. What does it say?

Just in the way of encouragement, go ahead and read the remainder of chapter ten. (I hate to leave you today on such a note, but you've studied enough for one day.) When you are finished reading the remaining passage, would you go back to the prayer I prayed for you at the beginning of today's lesson and personalize it, praying to the Lord for yourself. Then, please, please commit to Him your faithfulness.

Psalms 135:14 For the LORD will judge His people, And will have compassion on His servants.

I pray you will receive His compassion in that day, having been a faithful servant.

Day Five — Some Words of Encouragement

Today we will complete Hebrews chapter ten. But chapter ten is not to be separated from chapter eleven. Therefore, we'll cover the historical portion of this passage, but we'll reserve the implication at the end of chapter ten for next week when we begin chapter eleven. Be sure to pray for your study today.

Skim over yesterday's work so that you will be in context. Then read the passage below.

Hebrews 10

32 But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, 33 partly, by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. 34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one. 35 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. 37 FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY. 38 BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM. 39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving [Lit. *saving*] of the soul.

(It may be noted that the Book of Hebrews was written prior to 70 A. D.. This may be assumed by the fact that the author wrote extensively about the work of the high priests in the Most Holy Place in the temple. His words evidence the fact that work was still going on in the temple during the time the author wrote this epistle. The temple was destroyed in 70 A. D. by Rome. Sacrifices and the work of the priests became impossible after that point because all sacrifices were required to be done in the courtyard of the temple.)

Persecution has always been part and parcel with this message. From the days of Moses and the prophets, when God spoke to His people concerning *obedience* relative to the land, rest and inheritance, even to this present day,

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persecution has been the lot of a child of God who would believe, live out, and carry on this message. Let's reread this passage and think through a few things. Look at vv. 32-34. Circle the phrase *after being enlightened* in v. 32. From the preceding context and warnings, what do you think the author is referring to when he uses this phrase?

List the things which were endured as part and parcel of the *great conflict of sufferings*. In other words, what did they have to endure *after having been enlightened*?

The end of v. 34 explains why they endured such treatment. Why was it?

Not forgetting all that we have learned throughout this epistle — all the author has been dealing with in the warnings — what would the author be referring to as a *better possession, an abiding one*?

In your own words, summarize the encouragement the author gives his readers in vv. 35-39.

We'll pick it up next week. This was a tough lesson. Please continue to pray that you will continue to have a seeking heart and one that is open to the Holy Spirit. See you in class.