

OSAS: The Hebrews 10:26-27 Controversy : Part 1

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My Position Regarding OSAS Doctrine, We Are Bought With A Price, Both God The Father And Jesus Kept Their End Of The Bargain, God Does Not Lie, God's Eternal Unshakable Word, Saved For Eternity, Sealed By The Spirit, Our Wicked Lying Deceitful Human Nature, Scriptural Warnings Regarding False Doctrines, Peace With God Through Christ, Saved By Grace Alone And Not By Our Own Works, Jesus Christ Is The Captain Of Our Salvation Our True Rock And Our Only Life Preserver

Note: Before investing your time in reading this current series, please read its companion series entitled "OSAS: Are We Once Saved, Always Saved?" so that you have a firm understanding regarding what this present series is based upon. Even if you are familiar with the OSAS doctrine, it is still advisable that you read the aforementioned series first. Thank you.

As I point out in the series entitled "OSAS: Are We Once Saved, Always Saved?", after a careful study of God's holy Word, I arrived at the conclusion that our Salvation and Redemption through faith in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ cannot be lost. In my opinion, to suggest otherwise is to really imply that our personal sins are much greater than God's amazing Grace, and Jesus' Sacrifice. I don't know about you, but I for one most certainly do not accept that belief; because for one thing, it turns our God of victory into a God of defeat. To say that our Eternal Salvation is not really eternal under all conditions is to suggest that Jesus lost, and the Devil won. To understand how I arrived at my current position, please read the aforementioned series.

Despite my personal understanding, and what I believe is plainly stated in the Scriptures, there are those people who still insist that our Salvation can be lost. In other words, it is as if to say that Jesus' Sacrifice was not good enough, strong enough, righteous enough, or lasting enough, to keep us saved. Stated another way, even though the Holy Scriptures inform us that we are bought with a price, such people are in essence saying that the Price that Jesus Christ paid for us by shedding His Blood, and dying on the Cross for us, was not high enough, or sufficient enough. Consider the following set of verses:

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
Matthew 20:28, KJV

"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
Mark 10:45, KJV

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Acts 20:28, KJV

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, KJV

"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men."

1 Corinthians 7:23, KJV

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Ephesians 1:13-14, KJV

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

1 Timothy 2:5-6, KJV

Taking this erroneous attitude to the extreme, one could even posit that God has not kept His end of the bargain. Exactly what "bargain" am I referring to? Please consider reading the article entitled "Backsliding, Divine Chastisement and the Divine Agreement" for an explanation. In other words, while Jesus kept His part of the deal by dying for humanity's sake, if we accept the view that our Salvation can still be lost after coming to Christ, then it is as if God the Father is saying "I am sorry, Son, but your Death on the Cross did not quite do it. There are still a few loopholes. There are still a few ways in which Believers can lose their Salvation, even though they have accepted your Sacrifice as the only valid Atonement for their sins."

What a ludicrous thing to suggest. The fact of the matter is that God most certainly does not lie. He gave His word to His Son, and His word is absolute and eternal. It's the sure word of prophecy. If He states that we are eternally saved once we come to Christ, then that is what we must believe. Consider the following group of verses:

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

Numbers 23:19, KJV

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"

Isaiah 46:9-10, KJV

"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."
Ecclesiastes 3:14-15, KJV

"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."
Romans 3:4, KJV

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"
2 Timothy 3:16, KJV

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"
Titus 1:2, KJV

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts . . . For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
2 Peter 1:19, 21, KJV

"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."
Psalms 138:2, KJV

"For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven . . . Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word . . . Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever."
Psalms 119:89, 14, 160, KJV

Thus, because God's word is so firm and eternal, we can be absolutely certain that once we repent and accept Christ's Death as Atonement for our sins, we are saved for eternity. There is nothing which can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. No one -- spiritual or physical -- can pluck us out of our Father's Hand. Consider the following verses and be encouraged:

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest

parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

Psalms 139:7-16, KJV

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

John 6:37, KJV

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

John 10:28-29, KJV

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:38-39, KJV

". . . for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Hebrews 13:5b, KJV

Not only are we granted Eternal Salvation, but as I likewise point out in articles such as "Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled?", the Scriptures inform us that Believers are sealed until the Day of Redemption. Exactly what is this Seal? As I explain in "A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: God's Promise of the Spirit", it is in fact the Holy Spirit. Once God the Father seals us, there is no breaking that seal. No one can break the Seal of the Spirit, which plainly declares that we belong to Him, because Jesus Christ purchased us with His own Blood; not Satan or demons, not human beings, and not the false doctrines of misguided men. Consider the following set of verses which mention the special Seal of God which all born-again Believers receive. Please note that because Jesus was sealed by His Father, we are likewise sealed through our faith in His Sacrifice:

"He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."

John 3:33, KJV

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

John 6:27, KJV

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Ephesians 1:13-14, KJV

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

Ephesians 4:30, KJV

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

2 Timothy 2:19, KJV

In stark contrast to the firm, sure, eternal nature of God's Word, consider now what the Scriptures have to say regarding the Devil's word, and the words of human beings. If anyone lies, deceives, and breaks their word, it is definitely us humans ourselves; and, of course, Satan. At the very least, we misunderstand certain verses, and we end up propagating a false doctrine; as in this case where some Christians claim that we can still lose our Salvation after coming to Christ. Consider the following verses:

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Genesis 6:5, KJV

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Jeremiah 17:9, KJV

"And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

Mark 7:20-23, KJV

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44, KJV

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

1 John 2:22, KJV

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

1 John 5:10, KJV

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

1 John 1:10, KJV

As I point out in a number of other articles, the reality of false doctrine infiltrating the Christian Church is nothing new. It has been around since the First Century, and some of the Apostles fought against such heresies quite fervently. It is for this reason that we find verses such as the following in the writings of the New Testament:

"Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."
Matthew 16:12, KJV

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"
Ephesians 4:14-15, KJV

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."
Hebrews 13:9, KJV

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."
1 Timothy 1:3-4, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"
1 Timothy 4:1, KJV

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;"
2 Timothy 4:3, KJV

As I have already plainly stated, I am convinced by the Holy Scriptures that once we come to Christ, we cannot possibly lose our Salvation, and then somehow hope to get it back. If this erroneous doctrine was really true as these misguided individuals propose, we would be constantly living in a state of uncertainty and fear. "Am I still saved today? Oh no; have I done something today and lost my Salvation? What do I need to do in order to get it back? Is God angry with me today?" One would go absolutely crazy living this way. This would certainly not be the peace of mind, heart and spirit that the Old Testament Prophets, Jesus and the Apostles all promised us in the following set of verses:

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."
Psalms 119:165, KJV

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."
Isaiah 26:3, KJV

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."
John 14:27, KJV

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."
John 16:33, KJV

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"
Romans 5:1, KJV

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."
Ephesians 2:13-18, KJV

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
Philippians 4:7, KJV

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight:"
Colossians 1:19-22, KJV

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."
2 Timothy 1:7, KJV

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."
1 John 4:18, KJV

As I have explained so many times before, and expounded upon in so many of my articles, if we are living in this constant state of fear and uncertainty regarding our Salvation, then it is really because we are depending upon ourselves, our own supposed "good works" and our own sense of self-righteousness to keep ourselves saved. This is obviously an absurd notion to entertain; because if we did not save ourselves to begin with, then neither can we keep ourselves saved no matter what we do. I have been down this road many times before in my writings, but allow me to share a few verses with you which support my position:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."
Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"
Titus 3:5, KJV

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."
Romans 11:6, KJV

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."
Isaiah 64:6, KJV

"If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"
Psalms 130:3, KJV

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one . . . But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"
Romans 3:10, 21-23, KJV

If you are interested in delving deeper into the topic of Grace versus works, then please consider reading articles such as "Free From the Fear of Death: Law and Works vs Grace", "Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts" and "Striving For Perfection: Are You a Sinless Saint?".

Looking at this issue from another perspective, a drowning man usually cannot save himself. He needs someone else to pull him out of the water. In this case, Jesus Christ is our only life preserver, and the Captain of our Salvation, who pulls us out of the water, and onto the Rock, which, of course, is Himself, as we see by the following verses:

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation [meaning Jesus] perfect through sufferings."
Hebrews 2:10, KJV

"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."
Revelation 17:15, KJV

"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."
Psalms 40:2, KJV

"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."
Psalms 118:22-23, KJV

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? . . . And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them."

Matthew 21:42, 44-45, KJV

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock [Jesus referring to Himself] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Matthew 16:18, KJV

"And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

Mark 12:10-11, KJV

"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."

Acts 4:11, KJV

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

1 Corinthians 10:4, KJV

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed [that is disapproved, rejected, repudiated] indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

1 Peter 2:4-8, KJV

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces . . . And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure"

Daniel 2:34, 44-45, KJV

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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OSAS: The Hebrews 10:26-27 Controversy : Part 2

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Verses Which On The Surface Seem To Not Support Once Saved Always Saved Doctrine, Hebrews 10:26-27, A Marvellous Book, The Old Testament Priesthood And Rituals Were Symbolic Of What Jesus Would Accomplish During The First Century, Jesus Is Our High Priest Intercessor And Mediator, Jesus Is The Final Sacrifice Who Was Offered Up One Time For All Sins, Holy Of Holies And Related Phrases, Authorship Of Epistles To Romans And Hebrews, Facts Which Point Towards Paul Being Author Of The Epistle To The Hebrews, Timothy's Involvement, Paul's Background As A Pharisee And A Hebrew, Travels Of The Patriarch Abraham, History And Genealogy Of Hebrew Nation, To Whom Is The Epistle To The Hebrews Directed?, The Misguided Practice Of A Redirected Audience, Hebrews Israelites Jews, A Vision For The People Of Our Own Time, Paul's Audience Was Actually The Unbelieving Jews In The Epistle To The Hebrews, Paul's Passion For His Hebrew Brethren, Paul Establishes A Connection Between Jewish Priesthood And Christ's Sacrifice Paul Endeavors To Take Away The Veil From Blind Jews' Eyes

Because they reject the Scriptures which clearly point to the fact that our Salvation cannot be lost once we obtain it through our faith in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the fact that Believers in Christ are sealed by the Spirit until the Day of Redemption, the people who embrace this misguided mentality, and who thus reject the "Once Saved, Always Saved" doctrine, find themselves in a predicament. As a result, they are forced to pick and choose certain verses from the Bible, which on the surface seem to support their wayward position. In their endeavor to defend and sustain their belief, one set of verses which are often mentioned by such Christians are the following:

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."
Hebrews 10:26-27, KJV

Let me begin by saying that the Epistle to the Hebrews is a marvellous work. It is a very in-depth and scholarly letter which clearly reveals the author's profound understanding of the symbolism which was hidden in the various rituals which were performed under the Covenant of the Old Testament, and how it all relates to everything which was accomplished by

Jesus Christ under the Covenant of the New Testament.

I will readily admit that when I first became aware of those two verses a number of years ago, I did find them troubling. In fact, because I did not properly understand them at that particular time, they did cast a degree of doubt in my mind regarding the sustainability of the "Once Saved Always Saved" doctrine. However, God and His Holy Spirit are faithful; and as I continued to delve into the Scriptures, and asked the Lord for understanding, I came to see how those two verses -- as well as a number of others -- have been misunderstood by many modern Christians.

If you are familiar with the contents of the Epistle to the Hebrews, you will know that one of its main themes is that the Old Testament priesthood -- and all of the services and sacrifices that were associated with it -- was a physical reflection of what Jesus would come to do during the First Century. In other words, as I point out in articles such as "Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God?", Jesus became the Final Sacrifice for sin, as well as our High Priest and Intercessor before God the Father. Following are a group of verses which support the latter two points:

"For verily he [Jesus] took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."
Hebrews 2:16-17, KJV

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;"
Hebrews 3:1, KJV

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."
Hebrews 4:14-15, KJV

"Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
Hebrews 6:20, KJV

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;"
Hebrews 8:1, KJV

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;"
Hebrews 9:11, KJV

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."
Romans 8:34, KJV

"Wherefore he [Jesus] is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Hebrews 7:25, KJV

As I amply explain in the aforementioned series, while the Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament era had to enter the Holy of Holies -- that is, the inner part of the Temple that was located behind the veil -- once a year in order to atone for the sins of the people, as we learn in Hebrews, as well as from a few other verses that are found in the New Testament, Jesus died one time for the sins of the entire world. As I said a minute ago, He became the Final Sacrifice for sin, as well as our Mediator. Consider these verses:

"Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin ONCE: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

Romans 6:9-10, KJV

"For such an high priest [meaning Jesus] became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did ONCE, when he offered up himself."

Hebrews 7:26-27, KJV

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in ONCE into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us . . . For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now ONCE in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself . . . So Christ was ONCE offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Hebrews 9:11-12, 24-26, 28, KJV

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ONCE for all."

Hebrews 10:10, KJV

"For Christ also hath ONCE suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:"

1 Peter 3:18, KJV

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

1 Timothy 2:5, KJV

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how

much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."

Hebrews 8:6, KJV

"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

Hebrews 9:15, KJV

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Hebrews 12:24, KJV

On a side note, it may interest you to know that the actual phrase "Holy of Holies" is not found anywhere in the King James Version of the Bible. This term was apparently adopted later on in history. In the Scriptures, the actual phrases which were used to describe the innermost sanctuary of the Tabernacle where the Ark of the Covenant was located -- and later the same place in the Temple as well -- include "the most holy place", "the holy place within the veil", "the oracle", "the inner house", "the most holy house" and "the holy place".

At this point, you may possibly be wondering how all of this information relates to Hebrews 10:26-27, and why it is even important to our current discussion. Well, quite frankly, it is very important; because if we do not properly understand all of this background information concerning the amazing symbolic connection between the rituals of the Old Testament priesthood, and what Jesus accomplished in the New Testament, neither will we understand what is being said in those two verses. It seems to me that this is precisely the problem with those Christians who believe that Hebrews 10:26-27 is saying that we can lose our Salvation after coming to know Jesus Christ. Let me refresh your memory by quoting those two verses again:

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

Hebrews 10:26-27, KJV

The first key to unraveling the true meaning of these verses is in understanding who the "we" is in the first verse, and also to whom this Epistle is directed. As I have mentioned before, while there is some debate regarding the authorship of this letter -- ancient scholarship became convinced that it was written by Paul, while modern scholarship has moved away from that position and says that the authorship is not knowable -- personally, I lean towards the belief that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by the Apostle Paul. In my opinion, this Epistle has the same scholarly tone as the Epistle to the Romans, which is likewise a magnificent work.

It is evident that the Epistle to the Romans was obviously addressed to the brethren in Rome, and that it was dictated by the Apostle Paul in Corinth to a Disciple named Tertius,

and was then delivered to the brethren in Rome by a sister named Phebe, who was a member of the Church that had been established at Cenchrea. According to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, Cenchrea was the eastern harbor of Corinth. All of these points can be easily proven by the following verses:

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ"
Romans 1:1-7, KJV

"I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord."
Romans 16:22, KJV

To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. [Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea.]"
Romans 16:27, KJV

I admire the Epistle to the Romans just as much as I enjoy the Epistle to the Hebrews. They are both masterful works. In Romans, the Apostle Paul launches into various powerful discourses which cover such themes as the nature of the true Jew, our battles against the sinful flesh and the old man, the bondage of the Law and works versus the Grace of God through Jesus Christ, and the Salvation of Israel. It may be considered heavy reading by certain people, but it is very thought-provoking, and it clearly reveals that as a former Pharisee, the Apostle Paul was strongly grounded in the Scriptures, and he certainly knew what he was talking about.

As I mentioned earlier, the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews is more ambiguous. In fact, it has been debated for literally centuries. Unlike the introductory verses which can be found at the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans where Paul clearly identifies himself as the author, we don't find any such verses in the introduction to the Epistle to the Hebrews. Neither do we find Paul's name mentioned anywhere else in this Epistle. The only identifiable information that we do have which may possibly help to point us to the author of this Epistle is the following, which can be found in the final verses of chapter thirteen:

"Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. Grace be with you all. Amen. [Written to the Hebrews from Italy, by Timothy.]"
Hebrews 13:23-25, KJV

In reading the previous verses, we need to realize that they are not saying that Timothy is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Just as Tertius wrote the Epistle to the Romans

for the Apostle Paul, the previous verses are also stating that Timothy wrote the Epistle as it was dictated to him by someone else. It is that someone else who says "I will see you". It is also that someone else who writes in the third person when he addresses Timothy as "our brother". As I said earlier, given the high level of scholarship and the in-depth knowledge that is revealed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, I lean towards the belief that it was authored by the Apostle Paul, who dictated it to Timothy. If you wish to disagree, that is fine, because the identity of the author has little bearing on the main points that I wish to make here.

Another point to consider is the fact that this Epistle was written to the Hebrews from somewhere in Italy. This point is revealing, because not only was Paul in Rome on several occasions, but we also know that Timothy -- or Timotheus -- was a close and constant traveling companion of the Apostle Paul. Furthermore, Paul considered him a very dear son in the faith. Finally, as I have mentioned before, Timothy in fact became the first bishop of Ephesus, as we see here:

"The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen. [The second epistle unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.]"
2 Timothy 4:22, KJV

So what we see then is that the Epistle to the Romans was written by Paul -- via Tertius -- from Corinth, while the Epistle to the Hebrews was possibly written by Paul -- via Timothy -- from somewhere in Italy, possibly meaning Rome. Please note, however, that Rome is never mentioned anywhere in the Epistle to the Hebrews, so it is a guess on my part. Both Epistles are very scholarly, and delve into issues which would require a person with a deep understanding of the history, laws, beliefs and rituals of the Jewish nation. In other words, the author would more than likely have to have been a Jew himself. The Apostle Paul would have met this criteria, being as he was a former Pharisee who had been instructed under Gamaliel, as we see by these verses:

"I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day."
Acts 22:3, KJV

"But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."
Acts 23:6, KJV

"Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."
Acts 26:5, KJV

"Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in

the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless."
Philippians 3:4-6, KJV

Please note that in the last set of verses, the Apostle Paul refers to himself as "an Hebrew of the Hebrews". Naturally, because Paul was a Hebrew, he spoke and wrote fluent Hebrew. Furthermore, when Jesus spoke to Paul as he traveled on the road to Damascus, He communicated with him in Hebrew. These points are again verified by the following set of verses:

"And when he had given him [Paul] licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying,"
Acts 21:40, KJV

"(And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,)"
Acts 22:2, KJV

"And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."
Acts 26:14, KJV

Thus we see additional circumstantial evidence which strongly supports my view that Paul may very well be the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Now it's time to get down to the meat of the matter regarding Hebrews 10:26-27. Paul has just spent ten chapters explaining in considerable detail the amazing and symbolic relationship between the Old Testament Levitical priesthood, and the life, work and mission of Jesus Christ during the First Century AD. Just as he did in his Epistle to the Romans, Paul has gone to great lengths to convince his audience of his views. Why has he done this, and exactly who is Paul's audience? Who is the "we" in the phrase "For if we sin wilfully"? Obviously, it is none other than Paul's very own biological brethren, the seed of Abraham, who were also known as the Hebrews. After all, is that not the name which has been assigned to this Epistle?

You see, as I point out in the article entitled "One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews", the word "Hebrew" signifies "one from beyond". It is in fact derived from the Old Testament name Eber -- also spelled "Heber" -- who was an ancestor of Abraham. "Eber" means "the region beyond". Furthermore, Abram is the first person in the Old Testament of the KJV Bible who is referred to as a Hebrew. Not only was Abraham descended from Heber, but as you may recall, Abraham and his family did in fact come to Canaan from the region beyond. They came from Ur of the Chaldees -- which today is a part of southern Iraq -- traveled up to Haran -- now a part of Turkey -- and then Abraham continued on with his wife Sarah and his nephew, Lot, to the land of Canaan. Consider this verse where Abraham is first called a Hebrew:

"And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram."
Genesis 14:13, KJV

For those of you who may possibly be interested in this kind of information, following is the genealogical record from Noah to Jacob, the latter of whom became the father of the Twelve Tribes of Israel:

Noah
Shem
Arphaxad
Salah
Eber
Peleg
Reu
Serug
Nahor
Terah
Abram (later known as Abraham)
Isaac
Jacob (later known as Israel)

While the Epistle to the Hebrews does not say exactly where these Hebrews were located to whom Paul was addressing his letter, it is my impression that this Epistle may possibly have been a general communication to the entire nation of Israel of the First Century. Some sources state that it may have been specifically directed to the Jewish Christians who were living in Jerusalem. I have some doubts regarding this possibility, which I will explain momentarily. The key point I would like for you to consider here is that, in my opinion, when Paul says "For if we sin wilfully", he is not talking to us Christians two thousand years in his far future.

As I mention in articles such as "Psalm 83 War False Doctrine Exposed!", that is one of the problems with certain people who teach the Scriptures today. They take certain prophecies, events and words that are directed to and concern people who lived two thousand years ago or longer, and they perform this "magical act" so that said verses are suddenly interpreted as being directed to and talking about us today, when sometimes that is not the case whatsoever. In many cases, if we want to know who a certain Book, Epistle or Prophecy is directed to, all we have to do is look at its name, or read some of its opening verses, in order to find the answer. If we took the time to follow this practice, we would soon discover that many of the things which we have been told apply to us today, really do not apply to us at all, or at least very little.

At any rate, as I have already made clear to you, all of the evidence suggests that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by someone who was very Jewish, and that it was addressed to people who would fully understand the historical events which are described in the letter; meaning the Hebrews -- or Jews -- themselves. Now, if we wish to adopt a rigid and technical position, we must recognize that the Jews were those people who were only descended from the tribe of Judah, who along with the tribe of Benjamin, received the area around the city of Jerusalem in central Israel as their part of the promised

inheritance.

In short, we can say that all Twelve Tribes were Hebrews and Israelites -- being descended from Heber, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or Israel -- but not all tribes were Jews in a very technical sense. However, as I have mentioned before, with the passage of time, the term "Jew" came to be applied to all of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who lived in Israel, or elsewhere, and who likewise practiced the Jewish faith.

But to reiterate my earlier point, it appears to me that the Apostle Paul was not directing his words in Hebrews 10:26-27 beginning with "For if we sin wilfully" to modern Christians who live two thousand years in his far future, as certain preachers and Bible teachers have proposed. Let me ask you a question. Have you thought about, or are you seriously concerned about people who may live two thousand years in our own future? Probably not. Your primary concern is with the people who live in the here and now. You want to reach them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, correct? So would the Apostle Paul have felt any differently in his own time? Yes, he clearly had a vision for people who would be saved in the future; but his immediate concern was with the people of his own time, and in particular, with his own Hebrew brethren. After all, this is in fact the Epistle to the Hebrews we are discussing here.

Furthermore, as I will now explain, I am not convinced that the author of Hebrews was directing his words to the saved Christians of the First Century either. After all, having already embraced Christ, they were more than likely already aware of the things which were being taught in the Epistle to the Hebrews. They already recognized Jesus as the Final Atonement for sin. They knew that Jesus was their one and only Mediator, Intercessor and High Priest. They understood how Jesus was the final fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament. They did not need these things explained to them in such detail; but there was someone else who most certainly did.

Based on these points, I believe that in the aforementioned verses, the Apostle Paul was making a general statement, and in fact issuing a stern warning, regarding unsaved Hebrews -- or Jews -- who lived during that era; because they were the ones who did not yet understand the things which we have just discussed. Earlier in this series, I asked you why Paul was going into such detail regarding the customs of the Old Testament Jewish priesthood, followed by explaining how it all relates to Christ's mission on Earth. Why was he making such a great effort to reach his audience, and trying so hard to convince them at that particular point in his life?

As we have already seen, the Apostle Paul was very zealous regarding his newfound faith. Furthermore, despite their own stubbornness and hard-heartedness, Paul possessed a passion for reaching his Hebrew brethren with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Just as the Epistle to the Romans is an excellent discourse regarding the penalty of sin, and demonstrates the sharp contrast between Law and Grace, and flesh and Spirit, as we have already discussed, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Paul spends ten chapters trying to help his Hebrew brethren

to understand the clear connection between the practices of the Levitical priesthood, and the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. He is endeavoring to tear down the veil which still covers many of their eyes, which he even mentions in these verses:

"Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away."
2 Corinthians 3:12-16, KJV

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."
Romans 11:25, KJV

Please go to part three for the conclusion of this series.

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OSAS: The Hebrews 10:26-27 Controversy : Part 3

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Paul Builds His Case Point-By-Point, Background Of Epistle To The Hebrews, Paul's Approaching Death And Martyrdom, Doubts Regarding Writings Of The Church Fathers, Untrustworthiness Of New Testament Apocryphal Works, Urgency Of Paul's Message To His Hebrew Brethren, Explanation Of Hebrews 10:26-27, "We" Is The Hebrews, Biblical Definition Of Sin And Transgression, Sin Wilfully, Guard The Word In Your Heart, Knowledge Of The Truth, Jesus Is The Living Word And The Truth, Will Of God, Old Testament Law And Rituals Were A Schoolmaster To Bring Jews To Faith In Christ, Free From Bondage Through Christ, Judgment And Fiery Indignation Shall Devour The Adversaries, 70 AD And First Jewish-Roman War, Handwriting Was On The Wall Decades Before Jerusalem's Fiery Destruction, The OT Prophets Jesus Apostles And Jewish Leaders Spoke And Wrote About It, The Prophet Malachi And "Ashes Under The Soles Of Your Feet", Caiaphas Plots To Kill Jesus, Jesus Offered Ample Warnings To Jews, They Sinned Willfully And Suffered Fiery Indignation Of God, My Closing Remarks, Suggested EPN Reading Resources List

Just as I do in many of my own articles, I believe that in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Paul patiently establishes his foundation point-by-point, before arriving at the key issue. He wants his Hebrew brethren to understand the relationship that exists between the practices of the Jewish priesthood and the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He wants them to realize that Jesus Christ is the final, ultimate Sacrifice for sin, and that through His Sacrifice, He has done away with the Old Covenant, established a New Covenant, as well as a new priesthood, with Himself at the head. Paul leads his Hebrew readers along one step at a time, in order to help them to understand that the only remedy for sin is simply faith in Jesus Christ. The remedy is no longer ritualistic temple services and the yearly sacrifices which were made by the Jewish priesthood. As we have already seen, Jesus put an end to that once and for all by offering up His own life.

After explaining these various points to his audience, Paul then presents his Hebrew readers with an ultimatum, as well as a stern, prophetic warning, which is revealed in the two verses which are the focus of this current series. Now, if you feel a little confused at this point in our discussion, please just keep on reading, and hopefully, everything will become clear to you as we continue.

According to certain sources, the Epistle to the Hebrews may have been written around 63-64 AD. Personally, I believe that it may have been one of the last, and perhaps even the final Epistle which was written by the Apostle Paul, prior to his death. This may explain why the Bible's compilers chose to place it at the very end of all of Paul's various Epistles. If 63-64 AD is a close to accurate date, this means that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written only a few years prior to the assumed martyrdom of the Apostle Paul in the year 67 AD.

The reason why I say "assumed", is because while the Bible does mention Paul appearing before Emperor Nero two times, as well as the fact that Paul was under house arrest for a period of two years; and while Paul himself makes mention of his approaching death, there are no specific verses in which the actual manner of his death, or the timing of his death, are mentioned. What the Scriptures do say is the following:

"And when he [Paul] had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them: And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar. And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band."
Acts 26:30-27:1, KJV

"And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him . . . And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."
Acts 28:16, 30-31, KJV

"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again."
Philippians 1:19-26, KJV

"Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all."
Philippians 2:16-17, KJV

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing . . . The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen. [[The second epistle unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.]]"
2 Timothy 4:6-8, 22, KJV

Any additional information concerning the Apostle Paul's death and martyrdom is derived from certain noncanonical sources, principal among them being the writings of the so-called "church fathers", which I do not fully trust. As I mention in other articles, my hesitancy to embrace those writings as Inspired Text is due in large part to the fact that those individuals were the early progenitors of what would eventually become the state-enforced religion of the Roman Empire -- that is, Roman Catholicism -- under Emperor Theodosius I during the late Fourth Century. Those writers lived during a time when serious compromise, worldliness, as well as a lust for power, had already infiltrated the Lord's Church. You will find these developments discussed in more detail in the article entitled "Pontifex Maximus: Pagan High Priest to Roman Catholic Pope".

Additional information concerning the fate of the Apostle Paul and the other Apostles and Disciples can be found in yet other questionable sources, such as the New Testament apocryphal writings. These writings include quite a number of acts, apocalypses, gospels and epistles which are of doubtful origin and authorship. I have read quite a number of these writings, and as I have mentioned before, none of them impress me as being Divinely Inspired. In fact, some of them are quite outlandish in their claims, and in my

opinion, reveal a strong influence by the Roman Catholic Church. This is evident by the propensity of that church to highlight suffering, piety, saintliness and good works, all of which are present in said writings.

At any rate, in my opinion, if Paul did write the Epistle to the Hebrews from somewhere in Italy, close to the end of his life, this fact helps to explain the urgency of the message, which I believe is being conveyed to the unbelieving Jews -- or Hebrews -- in that letter. If we consider what happened to the city of Jerusalem only a few years after that in 70 AD, Paul's message and ultimatum in Hebrews 10:26-27 seems even more clear to me.

In other words, at that particular time, Paul may have begun to sense by the Spirit that the end of his life was drawing near. The previous verses seem to support this view. He had already been persecuted in Israel, and all around the region of the Mediterranean Sea. Furthermore, due to his constant preaching of the Christian Gospel, he had pushed the emperor to the limit, and had in fact been brought before Nero on two different occasions. As a result, it seems to me that perhaps Paul wanted to make one final strong effort to reach his lost Jewish brethren -- the Hebrews -- with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, he penned the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which he greatly expounded upon the things which we have already discussed. After doing so in the first ten chapters, it is then that I believe that Paul offers his unbelieving Jewish brethren an ultimatum in the following verses:

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."
Hebrews 10:26-27, KJV

As I have already pointed out, to properly understand these two verses, the first thing we need to realize is who this "we" is. It should be evident to you by now that it is not talking about modern Christians. Neither is it referring to the Christians of the First Century. The "we" in fact means "we Hebrews", because Paul is writing to his fellow Hebrews who are still sitting on the fence in unbelief. In so many words, Paul is saying "Listen up! This is it! I have spent a major part of this Epistle explaining to you how Christ has brought an end to the Old Covenant system of sacrifices and the duties of the Levitical priesthood, and has introduced a New Covenant between God and man, which is based, not upon the blood of sacrificial animals, but upon His own Blood which was shed on the Cross. He is the final Sacrifice for sin, and He alone has become our true High Priest."

Paul then follows his remarks with a very serious warning to his Hebrew brethren, should they decide to make the wrong choice. Exactly what does Paul mean when he writes "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth"? We have already seen that the "we" is referring to Paul's audience, the Hebrews. But what does it mean to "sin wilfully". In fact, what is sin? As I explain in other articles, the Apostle John offers us a clear definition in the following verse:

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

1 John 3:4, KJV

The word "transgression" is derived from the Greek "anomia", which means to have contempt for or to violate the law. In this case, we know that it is referring to God's Law. This Greek word also means iniquity or wickedness, because to break or violate God's Law is both wicked and sinful. God's Law is His Word, as well as His Will for our lives. Thus, if we resist God's Will for our lives, and go against His Word, we are sinning against Him. We in fact become transgressors. It is not surprising then that King David was inspired to write the following verse in which he expresses a desire to guard God's Word in his heart, so that he will not sin against Him:

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Psalms 119:11, KJV

Returning to Paul's comments, he writes that this willful sinning occurs "after that we have received the knowledge of the truth". In other words, Paul appears to be telling his Hebrew brethren that God is a righteous God, and that He won't hold them accountable until after they "have received the knowledge of the truth". Then, having heard the truth, they must make a decision one way or the other. They must either accept it, or reject it. There is no middle ground. What is this "knowledge of the truth" of which Paul speaks? Jesus offers us a clear answer in the following verse that is taken from the Gospel of John:

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

John 17:17, KJV

So God's Word -- which is also His Law -- is likewise the Truth. Furthermore, we know from reading the Gospel of John that the Word of God took on human shape two thousand years ago in the form of Jesus Christ, and that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and the only means to the Father. It is only through Him that we can find remission of our sins, obtain Eternal Life, and inherit the Kingdom of God. These truths are made evident by verses such as the following:

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

John 1:14, KJV

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"

John 1:12, KJV

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 3:16, KJV

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

John 14:6, KJV

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

John 6:37, KJV

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

John 12:32, KJV

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

John 10:28, KJV

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Acts 4:12, KJV

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

1 Timothy 2:5, KJV

In short, the Work and Will of God for the Hebrews -- and for all people everywhere -- can easily be summed up in the following set of verses:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent . . . And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:29, 39-40, KJV

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2 Peter 3:9, KJV

This is the very same message that Paul is preaching to his Hebrew brethren in the Epistle to the Hebrews. However, due to their own hard-heartedness, we can say that Paul chooses to take the "long route" with them. In other words, as we discussed earlier, having once been a stubborn Jew himself, Paul realizes that he can't just hit his brethren over the head with the Gospel and expect them to accept it. Thus, he takes his time, carefully explains things to them, and then reveals to them the "bridge" that connects the rituals of the Old Covenant priesthood with the New Covenant which is founded upon the Blood of the sacrificial Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. As Paul explains in the following two verses, the Law of the Old Testament or Old Covenant era, served as a schoolmaster to bring the Jews to Christ, in order that they might be saved by faith, and not through the works of the Law:

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that

faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."
Galatians 3:24-25, KJV

This then is the "knowledge of the truth" which Paul tells his Hebrew brethren they must not willfully reject. This is likewise the very same truth that Jesus preached to the Jews in the Gospels. It is a truth which sets them free from the bondage of the Law, and from the sacrifices and rituals of the Old Testament era. As Jesus Himself told them:

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

John 8:31-32, 36, KJV

After explaining all of these things to his Hebrew brethren, it is then that the Apostle Paul offers a stiff warning to those readers who may reject the truths which he has shared with them, with the words "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." In other words, Paul is telling the Hebrews "Look; if you don't accept the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, you are in very big trouble, because there are no other sacrifices -- meaning animal sacrifices -- which are acceptable to God, or which will atone for your sins." We know that this is exactly what Paul is telling the unbelieving Hebrews, because as we have already seen, he spent the first ten chapters of this letter explaining to them how Jesus became the Final Sacrifice who died once for all men.

Paul then warns his stubborn brethren that if they persist in their obstinacy by rejecting the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, they will have nothing to look forward to but the "judgment and fiery indignation" of God Himself, "which shall devour the adversaries".

It should be evident to you that the word "adversaries" is referring to those Jews -- or Hebrews -- who continue to oppose God, by rejecting His Word and Will; and even more specifically, by rejecting the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. But what does Paul mean by "judgment and fiery indignation"? Because of the way in which some modern preachers and Bible teachers interpret these two verses in Hebrews, and falsely claim that they are referring to Christians who lose their Salvation, it should not surprise us that some people have come to believe that this phrase is referring to hellfire, the Lake of Fire, or some such thing. But is it really?

Personally, I am of the opinion that this phrase is referring to something entirely different. Let me remind you again who the audience was in this Epistle, and when this Epistle was written. As I mentioned earlier, Paul wrote this letter to his Hebrew brethren perhaps seven years prior to the terrible events of 70 AD, and quite possibly only a few years before the beginning of the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War, which began in 66 AD in northern Israel. As many of you will know, it was during that war that the Second Temple was burned to the ground, the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, and as many as one million Jews lost their lives to war, famine, disease,

crucifixion and other causes, while many others were forced into foreign slave labor. I discuss these events in more detail in other articles.

There is no doubt that the Jewish political and religious leadership, as well as Jesus Himself, and the Apostles and their followers saw the handwriting on the wall, and fully understood that the time was growing short, and that the Romans would soon pounce on Israel, and destroy the Jewish nation. The Prophets of the Old Testament -- such as Daniel -- certainly wrote about it. In fact, in thinking about the phrase "fiery indignation", I am reminded of the following verses that were written by the Prophet Micah:

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts."

Malachi 4:1-3, KJV

The previous verses certainly seem like a prophetic picture which perfectly describe the fiery destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple compound in 70 AD. In fact, it has been said that when the Romans made their final assault, many of the Jews sought refuge in the Temple compound, because they had embraced the erroneous belief that God would protect them there. Instead, they were all burned to ashes, just as the Prophet Malachi had warned them would occur.

The high priest Caiaphas likewise understood the delicate times in which he lived. Thus, when it came to deciding the fate of Jesus Christ, Caiaphas is recorded as having stated the following in the Gospel of John:

"And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death."

John 11:49-53, KJV

In other words, Caiaphas made the determination that Jesus had to be killed in order to appease the Romans, and prevent an even worse uprising by Jewish rebels and malcontents who might try to take advantage of Jesus' popularity.

Of course, as many of you will know, Jesus Himself offered ample warnings regarding the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple compound in such chapters as Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. Regarding the specific destruction of the Temple, consider the following verses:

"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."
John 4:20-24, KJV

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
Matthew 23:37-24:2, KJV

"And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
Mark 13:1-2, KJV

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."
Luke 13:34-35, KJV

"And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down . . . And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."
Luke 21:5-6, 20, KJV

Taking into consideration this preponderance of Scriptural evidence, it should be easy for you to understand that in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apostle Paul was delivering a very powerful and prophetic message to his fellow Hebrews, when he warned them of the "judgment and fiery indignation" which would result if they continued to "sin wilfully" after having "received the knowledge of the truth" regarding the life, mission and Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Sadly, as we have already discussed, many of the adversaries -- that is, the stubborn, recalcitrant Jews -- were indeed devoured by fire, because they failed to take heed to God's warnings to

them to repent of their unbelief. In thinking about this, I am reminded of two other verses which are found in Hebrews, which seem to support everything which I have shared with you here:

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God . . . For our God is a consuming fire."
Hebrews 10:31, 12:29, KJV

Is there any doubt then that the Apostle Paul knew exactly what was coming to the Hebrew nation, and that he was trying to convince his Jewish brethren to repent of their unbelief before it was too late? I hope that it is clear to you by now that Hebrews 10:26-27 has absolutely nothing to do with saved Christians losing their Salvation during the First Century, or even now. Those verses have nothing to do with Christians burning in Hell because they turned away from Jesus Christ. In my view, that is a misguided interpretation of those two verses which has been propagated by a lot of modern preachers and Bible teachers who reject the OSAS -- Once Saved, Always Saved -- doctrine.

In my view, it is clear that the Apostle Paul was writing to his own unbelieving Hebrew brethren. He was not writing to Christians who had already received Christ. In the future, and as my time permits, I may possibly write another article or two in which I will discuss other verses which have been erroneously used to try to convince Christians that they can lose their Salvation. We shall see.

With these thoughts I will bring this series to a close. I hope that you have found it informative, and I pray that it has been a blessing and an inspiration in your life. If you have enjoyed reading this series, please consider sharing its URL with your online friends. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter or Google+, I would also appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which are related to the topics which were discussed in this series. All of them are also located on the Endtime Prophecy Net web server:

A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: God's Promise of the Spirit
Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled?
Backsliding, Divine Chastisement and the Divine Agreement
Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts
Free From the Fear of Death: Law and Works vs Grace
Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God
One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews
OSAS: Are We Once Saved, Always Saved?
Pontifex Maximus: Pagan High Priest to Roman Catholic Pope
Psalm 83 War False Doctrine Exposed!
Striving For Perfection: Are You a Sinless Saint?

"Jesus Died Once for All Men" KJV Bible Verse List
"Jesus is Our Great Intercessor" KJV Bible Verse List
"Jesus is Our High Priest, and Priests" KJV Bible Verse List
"Jesus is Our Only Mediator" KJV Bible Verse List

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