

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Hebrews 10: 26-31

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. Today, we will continue reading Hebrews chapter 10, verses 26 to 31.

Yesterday, we began reading the fourth section of exhortation and warning from the author of Hebrews. He has already expounded on the surpassing identity and status of Jesus Christ, as well as His richer and more complete ministry. The new covenant established by Jesus Christ with His blood is far more beautiful than the old covenant. He has opened for us a new and living way, leading directly to the Most Holy Place in heaven. He serves as the High Priest in heaven, interceding for us, and He reigns and governs in God's house on earth.

Having received such great grace, we ought to come before God with full confidence, holding fast to the certain hope, living a sweet church life in love, stirring up love among the saints, encouraging one another to do good, and most importantly, not forsaking our gathering together. No matter how great our faith, how beautiful our hope, or how abundant our love, if the saints cannot gather together, it all becomes empty talk.

Thus, Paul, after expounding profound and rich revelations in Romans, comes to Romans 12:1, saying, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service". He returns to the practical side, urging the saints to present their bodies. If we do not gather, how can we present our bodies?

Dear brothers and sisters, I hope we all remember this word: we must not forsake our gathering. If you are truly busy and can only spare two hours a week, that time should be for Sunday worship, gathering with all the saints to break bread in remembrance of the Lord. This is a meeting personally instituted by the Lord and a testimony for Him—this is the purpose of the church's existence. When we come

to church on Sunday, we must not be mere guests but join in service. This is the purpose of our salvation: to serve the living God.

After the author finishes his words of exhortation, he begins two sections of warning. Today, we will read the first section of warning. What is the warning about? Verse 31 says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" This is the author's solemn warning. Let us first remember this serious warning, and then we will go back and read verse by verse.

Verse 26: "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,"

After receiving the knowledge of the truth, if we sin willfully, there remains no more sacrifice for sins. This verse is often misunderstood and cited as evidence that one can lose salvation after being saved. I hope we can all set aside our previous understanding of this verse and follow my line of thought to try to understand it.

Here, it mentions the sacrifice for sins. In Leviticus 4, various ordinances regarding the sin offering are detailed. That chapter repeatedly explains how priests, leaders, or the congregation of Israel, when they sin unintentionally, should offer a sin offering. But this verse speaks of sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth. Some people instinctively react, saying that if a saved person sins willfully, they lose their salvation. Is that really the case?

Let me first give the answer: No. When reading Scripture, we must be careful and not divorce it from its context. First, the author does not say this is a saved person but rather one who has received the knowledge of the truth. What truth? It is the truth the author has painstakingly emphasized in these chapters: Christ, with His blood, established the new covenant, serving as the High Priest in the heavenly tabernacle and governing God's house on earth.

Upon hearing this truth and gaining this knowledge, a person can respond in two ways: First, they accept Christ as their lifelong Savior and become a saint saved by

grace; second, they reject it and remain in unbelief. Let's break these two scenarios apart. In the first case, after becoming a Christian, they may still have sins they cannot overcome and continue to commit. Some may even knowingly sin deliberately, which I think is quite possible. If the saints are honest with themselves, many of you may currently be in such a struggle.

Hebrews 9:12 says, "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." This speaks of Christ accomplishing eternal redemption once for all. Then Hebrews 10:12 says, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God."

Thus, for repeated sins, Christ does not need to be crucified again and again. He offered Himself once and completed eternal redemption. If willful sins could not be forgiven, the author would not say, "there remains no more sacrifice for sins." That would be nonsense, since Jesus Christ's sacrifice was once for all. What the author should mean is that the sacrifice for sins has no effect for those who sin willfully. Since the author says "there remains no more sacrifice," it is clear he is addressing the second scenario.

When a person hears that Christ's one-time sacrifice removes sin and still refuses to believe or accept it—not only that, but deliberately sins, thinking there are other ways to atone—the author clearly and definitively states there is no other sacrifice for sins. Christ has completed the great work of redemption: if you accept it, it's yours; if you don't, there is no other way. If a person believes in Christ and accepts the grace of redemption, they are saved and delivered from that great death. If they still have sins they cannot overcome or even sin willfully, it shows they are not a victorious Christian and are not yet complete on the path of sanctification.

This may be the condition of every one of us. As long as we continue walking on this path of faith, if we sin—whether it's a sin we cannot overcome, an unintentional sin, or even a willful sin—and we apply the precious blood of Christ and confess our sins before God, our sins are forgiven. If we persistently do this, we can become increasingly holy. This is a lifelong lesson for each of us.

As to whether we can become overcoming Christians, we must still look to Christ's grace and, among the saints, love one another and encourage good deeds—we still have hope. However, for those who hear the truth but do not believe or accept it, the author strongly points out there is no other sacrifice for sins. We must recognize that unbelief is a sin, and it is the greatest sin.

For the Hebrews, they understood the priests' sacrifices. Now, having heard the truth that Christ's one-time sacrifice atones forever, if they do not believe, they can no longer offer sacrifices. No matter how they sacrifice, it cannot remove the sin of unbelief. Thus, the author of Hebrews says, "there remains no more sacrifice for sins"—they cannot remove the sin of unbelief.

In John 16:8-9, Jesus foretold that when the Holy Spirit comes, He will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. Of sin, because they do not believe in Christ. Unbelief in Christ is the root of grave sin. Once a person believes, all their sins are borne by Christ; if they do not believe, their sins remain on them.

In Mark 9, when Jesus came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, He met a father whose son was possessed by a demon that the disciples could not cast out. Jesus said to the father in Mark 9:23, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." (NKJV) Jesus meant that the father's unbelief was the main reason the demon couldn't be cast out. Hearing this, the father immediately cried out in Mark 9:24, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief." (NKJV) Translated directly from the original, it's "My unbelief, help me, Lord."

Dear brothers and sisters, how often are we in the same condition? In many things, we fail to believe and thus miss out on much grace. In such cases, we too must ask the Lord to help us, remove our unbelief, and enable us to accept God's Word and promises with simple faith.

Verse 27: "But a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries."

We've established that the one who sins willfully in the previous verse is an unbeliever. Sinning and unbelief are a deadly combination. Today, they can only tremble in fear, awaiting the judgment of the last day. Hebrews 9:27 says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." The outcome of this judgment is a fiery indignation. Those who do not believe and sin willfully will fall into the burning fire along with Christ's enemies.

Verse 28: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:"

If someone violated Moses' law—for instance, if they killed someone—Numbers 35:30 states, "Whoever kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the testimony of witnesses: but one witness is not sufficient testimony against a person for the death penalty." A murderer, upon the testimony of two or three witnesses, would be put to death without mercy.

Moses was merely God's servant, and the law of Moses was given by God, executed through Moses among the Israelites. This law was established with the blood of sacrifices. If someone despised Moses' law, they died without mercy. This sets up the point that Christ is far greater than Moses. Christ is God's Son, equal in essence, glory, and honor with God. Christ established a more beautiful new covenant with His own blood. If despising Moses' law resulted in death without mercy, what should happen to those who despise Christ?

Verse 29: "Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?"

To tread underfoot the Son of God: Christ, originally the Son of God, equal with God and not considering it robbery, humbled Himself according to the Father's will and

plan to become a lowly man to accomplish God's redemption. The most exalted One made the greatest sacrifice, yet was rudely trampled upon and treated with the cruelest methods. Even after completing salvation and ascending to sit at the Father's right hand, He is still slandered and insulted by unbelievers. This is the first offense against Christ.

The second is counting the blood of the covenant, by which He was sanctified, as an unholy thing. Christ shed His precious blood to cleanse people's sins and bring peace to their consciences. With His blood, He inaugurated the new covenant, ushering in a new era. His blood sanctifies people; yet this most precious blood is regarded as common, and the blood that accomplished the great work of redemption is despised. This is the second offense.

And doing despite unto the Spirit of grace: The Holy Spirit applies the redemption accomplished by Christ to those who believe. The Spirit is the means by which God bestows grace upon people. Those who insult the Spirit of grace have no share in God's grace. While salvation depends on human free will and choice, it is the Holy Spirit who first works in the heart, softening it. The Spirit's grace is a crucial key to salvation. A person who treads underfoot the Son of God, counts the sanctifying blood as common, and insults the Spirit of grace—what punishment will they receive? How much severer should their punishment be?

Verse 30: "For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.'"

The audience of Hebrews was Hebrew saints familiar with the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, God repeatedly said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." They slighted God's Son and despised the salvation accomplished by Him, and God will surely avenge His Son and repay those who persecuted Him with cruel means. "The Lord will judge His people"—God's judgment begins with His household. The Jews prided themselves on being God's chosen people, not realizing that one day God would judge them. Those who do not accept the salvation of Jesus Christ cannot stand before God.

Verse 31: “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

God’s hand has many aspects. It can be a hand of protection and grace, or a hand of striking and destruction. For those who believe and accept Christ’s salvation, God’s hand grants grace, protection, and blessing. But for those who resist salvation, God’s hand strikes, destroys, and brings ruin. Falling into the hands of the living God is a terrifying thing.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You for Your grace! Grant us the wisdom of salvation to accept You as our lifelong Savior and help us escape that great death. As we walk the path of sanctification today, we confess that often we believe too late, or sometimes we cannot believe at all. Have mercy on us, Lord, and help us in the things we cannot believe, enabling us to turn back and focus on Christ. It’s not about what we can do, but let us truly see that Christ has accomplished salvation for us. By the help of the Holy Spirit, may we expand the measure of our faith and strengthen our hope, knowing Your promises do not fail. Bless my daily life. I pray in the holy name of Jesus Christ.