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## *Into Thy Word Bible Study in Hebrews*

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### **Hebrews 10:19-25: *The Full Assurance of Faith!***

**General idea:** God calls us to persevere—no matter what. While we are here on earth, we can go before the Father in worship and prayer, boldly entering Heaven. Each Christian has the great privilege that the high priest had only once a year. We have access to Him all the time; what is greater than that? And it's all because of the blood of Christ shed on our behalf! This is what our new life in Christ is all about; He has opened up a world for us to enter where we could never go before, all because of what He did for us. We can go into the presence of the Most Holy God, trust Him, and have confidence in Him so we can lead our lives with pure hearts, forsaking evil desires because of His promise that has been given and kept; God is trustworthy, so we can be faith-worthy. We have Christ's empowerment and His assurance for living. We can hold onto Christ tightly, and not waver when times are bad or we can't see where we are or are going. As we are encouraged to persevere, we can encourage others to trust in Christ, have hope for living, and endurance in life and/or in any opportunities or setbacks we face. We can love and have outbursts of love and worship instead of stress. Let us meet in fellowship with one another as one day, Christ will return and He wants us to be ready by exercising faith and confidence in Him now.

### **Contexts and Background:**

In this passage, the author addresses his readers and hearers, including himself, to say that we must pay attention to Christ with faith and hope. He is giving encouragement to show an essential aspect of faith; it is trusting in Christ, but not blind faith because we know in whom we trust. This gives us assurance. We do not need to go to an altar or a priest, since Christ fills that role Himself. Jesus now asks us to come, where before, we had to stay away and give a sacrifice that was very temporary; in addition, if one's heart was not right, the sacrifice was not accepted. Now we can go before Him anytime and anywhere. In context, we are also given four conditions, 1. *Sincere heart*; 2. *Undivided allegiance*, as in loyalty to Christ and His Church; 3. *Full assurance of faith*; 4. *Hearts sprinkled and Bodies washed*. The question is why do we not, or why do we do so, so rarely? The point to us is: are we filled with gratitude for who and what He has done?

### **Commentary: Word and Phrase Meanings:**

- *Therefore, brothers.* A reminder that we are all a part of the body of Christ, in community with one another and in unity with Christ from His work. Therefore, we are never alone, away from God, or away from one another (unless you isolate yourself, as these early church folks were seeking to do).

- *Confidence.* Meaning we have the ability to be bold and go before God because He has saved us, renewed us, and empowered us. We do not earn or deserve this outpouring; it is a gift of love and grace. (Heb. 2:1-4; 4:15).
- *Enter the Most Holy Place,* Meaning we have access to God's Heavenly Temple where before, in the earthy copy, only the high priest had access, and then only once a year. This is a monumental opportunity and shows us the depth and magnitude of how much we have been saved.
- *Blood of Jesus.* The sacrificial death and following resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ appeased the wrath of God for us. Because He did this, we can receive salvation, as well as the joy and honor of receiving forgiveness for our sins. God was more merciful with us than we could ever be with anyone else, or could ever deserve. No matter what we go through from persecution or loss, we could never even catch a glimpse of what Christ gave to us through grace (Matt. 5: 3-12; Rom. 5:9; Rev. 1:5-6)
- *Through the curtain.* This represents the presence of God and refers to the Temple and the veil that hid God's presence from the people, because no one with sin can approach Him. The ark of his covenant was kept behind the veil. Here Jesus tears the veil so we can approach God in an understandable and able manner. In context, this is a metaphor—that Jesus is the veil that was torn for us, His body torn to open the way for us to enter into God's presence, and to know and worship Him. This is also further argument for how Jesus is superior to Moses and the Law (Ex. 25:10-22; Lev 26:11-13; Num. 12:7; Duet 10:1-2; 2 Kings 25:8-10; Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:38; Heb. 3:6; 6: 13-20; 9:3, 23; 10:19-20; Rev. 3: 10-13; 4:6-8).
- *Over the house of God.* A contrast to Moses who was the "house," as in lineage of Law and Covenant. Now, Christ is over all, as in "Lord of the house." In Jewish tradition, the eldest son took over the family estate and/or business; he was the sole or primary heir. Here, Christ is Heir of all things. God's house was not the Tabernacle or Temple; it was God's people and Christ the Shepherd of us all: those who are His faithful, the faithful remnant of Israel, and then those who accepted Christ (Heb. 3:1-6).
- *Draw near.* Meaning an invitation to enter the presence of God. Now for the Christian, it is worship and our personal relationship with Christ. This means we have clear, uninhibited access to God because of Christ (Gen. 4:2-15; Psalm 15; 73:28; Jer. 30:18-22; Matt. 27:51; Rom. 5:1-2; Eph. 2:13-22; Heb. 4:16; 7:19-25; 12:28; 3:15-16; 1 Pet. 2:4-10).

- *Sincere/ true heart.* Being dependable and faithful without ulterior motives are the practical applications and exhortations of Christ's precepts with a willingness to do them (Psalm 24:4; Jer. 24:7; Matt. 15:8).
- *Full assurance of faith.* Meaning commitment; our faith does not hesitate because we are trusting in and following Christ. This sets us up for the coming chapter 11 and the *hall of fame* of faith, what godly people do with faith. Salvation is not for us to just be saved and sit in a pew; it is for us to be impacted so we can be an impact to others.
- *Hearts sprinkled.* Referring to the change and renewal of our heart and mind when we receive Christ's work and gift of grace and are thus released from a guilty conscience. This is about who Christ is and what He has done, and that we have freedom because of His once-for-all sacrifice (Rom. 1:8-15; 1 Cor. 11:4; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:1; Philemon 4).
- *Bodies washed.* This means a spiritual cleansing. Priests who went through the cleansing rituals could enter God's presence. We are cleansed before God's sight; what an animal sacrifice did in the OT law, now Christ has done permanently for us, and we are washed so we can enter God's presence. (Ex. 24:8; 29:4; Lev. 16:4; Rom. 12:1-3; Heb. 9:13-14; 1 Pet. 1:2). This is now symbolized in our baptism as our initiation in our new life as we become identified in and with Christ by His work. In the Old Testament Law, this prepares us to worship God, for our sins are temporarily hidden. Now in Christ, we are cleansed by the new covenant (Ex. 30:19-21; Lev. 8:6; 14:7-9; Ezek. 36:25-29; Eph. 5:26)
- *Hold unwaveringly/fast to the hope.* Meaning to be unshakably confident—without doubt or hesitation—in our trust in Christ. The reason is because Christ is faithful, even when our friends and circumstances are not. Thus, our confidence is in Christ, not the people in the church or how we are tested or treated either inside or outside the church walls (Acts 21:26; Rom. 3:24-26; 2 Tim. 2:13; Heb. 3:1-14; 6:18-20).
- *Spur/provoke/stir up one another.* Meaning to stimulate another in hope, as in being an encourager. This is not just a spiritual gift; rather we have a duty to do it, even when we do not feel like it. This is the support, using our spiritual gifts, all working as a team. This is the strength of the church; without it we will fail. When we are encouraged, when we feel down—we are lifted up. The people with the gift of encouragement will be able to coordinate this; all Christians are able and called to do it. This also means to encourage people who are thinking of leaving the church to stay, and those who have left, to come back (Rom. 15:14; 1 Thess. 5:14; Eph. 4:15-16)!

- *Toward love.* Hope, faith, and love are a triad of primary virtues from which character and Fruit flow out, by the work of the Holy Spirit. This is the foundation of the practice of the Christian life, our practical application and exhortation, and what it means to be transformed and renewed so we are changed and can be change agents in others' lives as well. Faith is also in community and mutual, as we each partake in Christ and need one another to grow further in our pilgrimage of Christian living. In so doing, we share Christ and therefore proclaim Him to those who do not know Him (1 Cor. 13; Col. 1:4-5; 1 Thess. 1:3; Heb. 3:7-19).
- *Let us not give up/neglecting meeting together.* Do not give up or neglect or abandon the faith or the fellowship. Meaning "concord," we are better together than separate; we have harmony and strength, whereas as individuals, we are on our own and thus weak. We are called and made to function as a community; our only foe is our own pride that leads to our own destruction (Prov. 6:9; Matt. 27:46; Rom. 9:14-29; 2 Cor. 4:9; 2 Tim 4:10-16; 1 Thess. 2:1; 2 Pet. 3:9; Rev. 2:1)!
- *Encourage one another.* Be confident, optimistic, and faithful by one another's faith, practicing prayer and using our gifts as a community. Having *perseverance* means having confidence in God so we trust Him in difficult situations, and still see and trust in His grace and love. This means having the resolve and determination not to be faint in our relationships or situations, so we will be able to persist in dealing with stress and can accomplish what God calls us to. When we do this together, we encourage one another. We can do this by being encouraging with Christ-like temperament (2 Chron. 32:1-8; Esther 7; Luke 16:22-31; 18:9; Acts 19:8-10; 26:19-23; Rom. 15:14-16; Gal. 6:9; Phil. 1:6; 12-14, 25; 2 Tim. 2:25; James 5:7-12).
- *Day approaching/drawing near.* Referring to when Jesus will come back a second time. The point is not *when* he comes or *how*, but rather how we build our faith so when he does come, we are prepared. Theories of end times do nothing to prepare us; only the buildup of our faith does (1 Thess. 5:2, 4; 2 Thess. 1:10; 2:2; Heb. 9:8; 12:26-27; 2 Pet. 3:10).

### **Devotional Thoughts and Applications:**

Worship is a covenant and call from our Lord to come before Him and meet with Him with reverence, gladness, and joy. This is about how we *draw near* and give God the recognition and admiration that He deserves. Praise is our motivation of an impassioned, changed heart, with an emotional and mindful exaltation of our gratitude for what God has done. It is a call to know Him intimately and express appreciation to Him with honor and thanksgiving, doing so with passion, sincerity, conviction, and in reverent fear and trembling. Worship is the aptitude, attitude, and practice of expressing the desire to know our Lord and Savior further, and being grateful for Who He Is and what He has done for us. Worship and praise

are the giving of our best to Him. And, we do this because we are His; we give Him our heart that is already His. He has given His best to us already; in addition, we are enveloped into His eternal love and care for pure and useful purposes. This has nothing to do with musical prefaces or orders of worship. It is the matter of a changed heart that responds back to Christ who is the audience of our worship, as we are the performers.

**The Essential Inductive Questions** (for more Inductive questions see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

***Additional Questions:***

1. How do you feel when you visit a new church fellowship for the first time? What do you look for and expect?
2. Why do some Christians today seek to isolate themselves from fellowship, as these early church folks were seeking to do?
3. Why does God call you to persevere no matter what? How do your worship and prayer come into play and help? How can they better do so?
4. Do you realize that you have access to God all the time? What is greater than that? How is this a great privilege? How are worship and prayer great privileges?
5. If someone asked you what your new life in Christ is all about, what would you say?
6. Because you have access to God's presence, how does this help you trust Him, and have confidence in Him? How does this help you lead your life with a pure heart, free from evil desires?

7. How do you hold onto Christ so you do not waver when times are bad or when you can't see where you are or where you are going? How can you hold to Him more tightly?
8. How do love and outbursts of love and worship help you with reducing stress? How can it? Are you filled with gratitude for who Jesus is and what He has done?
9. Why is the assembling of believers so essential for our mutual growth and learning as well as for faith and encouragement?
10. How are hope, faith, and love the foundation of the practice of the Christian life? How can you make this work of the Spirit in you into practical applications?
11. In what area do you need to be encouraged to persevere in tough times? What can you do to be more encouraging in helping others to trust in Christ? Why is this so essential to building a healthy church fellowship?
12. Do you know people who need hope for living and endurance in life for the opportunities or setbacks they face? If so, what can you and your church do about it?