

# THE STAND

## PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE HEBREWS CHAPTER 10



### Chapter 10 Commentary

If you've ever been to Disney World, you understand that the executives at Disney World have attempted to create an all inclusive experience for their guests. They intentionally seek to design an interactive experience to captivate all your senses and pull you into a different world. As an adult, it's easier to see the big picture of Disney World; as a child, the experience is much different.

At Disney World even the resorts and hotels are created to be fun. Each hotel in the Disney World resort has a theme. From the moment you walk in the door of the hotel, you are overwhelmed by everything Disney. For instance, when you walk into Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge, you immediately feel like you've been transported to a resort in the African Safari. There are rope bridges, huge trees and animals right there in the lobby. It's fun to see a child walk in one of these resorts at the very beginning of their vacation and see their face. They are certain this must be the highlight of the vacation. It's like a huge indoor playground right outside your bedroom. What more could a kid ask for? Little does they know, the hotel is simply a glimpse of what is to come.

In Hebrews 10, the writer once again reminds his audience that the Law and the sacrificial system was simply a shadow or glimpse of something better. It's similar to the hotel. The designers at the Animal Kingdom Resort specifically took different elements throughout the Animal Kingdom Park and recreated them on a smaller scale inside the hotel. The hotel was never meant to be the main attraction, but the elements in the hotel give you a glimpse of what's to come. Few people would ever visit Disney World and say the hotel was the best part of the vacation. Each morning, the hotel environment reminded them of something better awaiting through the hotel doors.

The writer of Hebrews really wants his audience to see that the Law and the sacrificial system had served their purpose. Part of their purpose was to point to something better. The writer clearly says that the offerings cannot take away the sins of those that are still holding on to the sacrificial system. In fact, the offerings themselves are not even what God really desires. God put the sacrificial system in place and commanded the people to follow it, but we see that the sacrifices were not ultimately what God desired. Hebrews looks back on a Psalm of David to prove this point. David realized that sacrifices and offerings are not ultimately what brought God pleasure; man walking in the will of God was what God intended.

Just as the writer summed up the priesthood in Chapter 8, the writer sums up the true meaning of the sacrificial system here in Chapter 10. He goes on to remind his audience that Christ walked in the perfect will of God and become a sacrifice for all men. It's through the will of Christ that we are sanctified through His sacrifice. This is the way Christ wanted it. It was his desire to die for mankind and bring them back into communion with the Father. This one-time sacrifice has perfected believers for all time, and it has established a covenant that is solely based on the sacrifice of Christ, not on human effort. As Jeremiah has said, God will remember our sins no more.

For these new Jewish Christians, the new covenant offered a new way of life. These new believers were no longer seen offering sacrifices at the Temple or coming before the High Priest to communicate with God. This new way of living had sparked persecution of these new Christians. The Jewish community was no more tolerant of Christ-followers than they were of Christ Himself. In fact, we see one of the main reasons the book of Hebrews was written was to encourage these new followers during this persecution. The writer will attempt to address some new ways of life for the people so they do not fall under the pressure of persecution.

As the writer begins to talk about this new way of life, he reminds his audience that the Temple veil is gone and that we have access to God, Himself. The writer is truly saying that we can live every day of our lives in the very presence of God. No longer were the people being held to a Law they could not keep, but they were asked to follow the heart of Christ. Christ said the greatest command was to love God and love one another (Matthew 22:37). The writer of Hebrews tells his audience to support one another and encourage one another to do these good deeds. The writer really encourages the audience to continue doing what the new Christians were doing just a few years earlier before mass persecution set in.

The book of Acts paints a picture of the first church as a people completely changed by the message of Jesus. They were regularly meeting, sharing meals and even sharing their possessions with those who had need. In response to the message of Christ, this group made radical changes in their lives. The writer of Hebrews urges his audience to continue in this way of life. He encourages them to continue to meet regularly and encourage each other more each day. This is a good reminder for us today. Accountability and community are so important in the life of Christ-followers. When we regularly make a point to meet with other believers and begin to share our lives with each other, we are more likely to stand strong when bad things in life happen. Community also helps us to focus on the needs of others, just as Christ commanded. When this first century church met together, they were not gathering in a church building for worship as we do today, they were meeting in homes to share meals and engage with one another on a different level. Worship services and events can offer a way for you to connect with God and other believers, but true Christian fellowship happens when life is shared with other believers.

It may have been hard for this 1st Century church to live this type of communal life because of persecution from the Jewish community. See, these people thought they could go back under the old system until the persecution ceased, then return to Christ. Once again, the writer attempts to convince his audience this is a bad idea. Hebrews 10:26 says, "If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left." He once again reminds the people that the Old Covenant's sacrificial system is obsolete. The blood of bulls and goats no longer has any bearing on sin. These non-believers that have heard the message and choose to walk away from Christ will face judgement.

The idea of judgement was a familiar topic for a Jew. From the beginning of the first covenant, God claimed vengeance would be His and He would judge the people of Israel. When Christ died, God poured out all His wrath on Jesus. The gift of salvation through Christ means we no longer have to experience judgement based on our own self-righteousness. When God looks at the life of a Christ-follower, He sees the righteousness of Christ. If people choose to go back under the old system to avoid persecution, they are running the risk of falling in the hands of the living God and standing on their own. However, those who continue to claim the salvation of Jesus Christ will no longer face this same judgement because they are covered by the blood of Christ.

The writer acknowledges that this persecution can be harsh. Men and women have been thrown in jail and even had their possessions stripped from them because of their belief in God. He reminds the crowd that these believers knew that they had a better possession in the hope of Jesus Christ. The writer knows that many in this crowd do believe in Christ. He also knows that now is the time for them to step up and stand strong. Through their stand and encouragement of others, this community of believers can rise above the persecution and spread the message of Jesus Christ.

Today, there are many who have faith in Christ, but when persecution comes we shy away from our belief. In order for the message of Christ to be made known we must stand strong, accept and endure persecution and be confident in Christ. The things man might strip from us in this world simply pales in comparison to the inheritance we have through Jesus Christ.

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# Personal Study Questions

The purpose of these study questions is to help you get into God's Word. We hope that through a personal encounter with God's Word, He will reveal His Truth and allow you to understand His story first hand.

1. The Hebrews writer continually reminds his audience that Christ has completed the sacrifice needed and stands as High Priest before God. By Chapter 10 you might consider it overly repetitive, but what are some things about God that you have to continually be reminded of?

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2. Psalm 40, a Psalm of David, is quoted when the writer explains that burnt offerings never ultimately pleased God. Go back and read Psalm 40. What is the general idea of the Psalm? Is it a Lament? Praise? Realization of God? or something else?

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3. What part of the Temple does the writer compare Christ too? (v20)

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4. As part of a community of believers, how do you regularly encourage others to love and do good deeds?

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5. Near the end of chapter, the writer acknowledges that persecution may rise and when it does, Christians must take a stand. What two things does the writer mention happened to these 1st Century Christians?

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6. Have you even endured persecution for Christ, if so, how?

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