

Books of The Bible

The Severity Of The Warnings Of Hebrews - Second Warning

Introduction

The second great warning in Hebrews is found in chapter 3:6-14. It is built around the word “if”. “Whose house are we, IF” (ch. 3:6); “For we are made partakers of Christ, IF” (ch. 3:14). There must be no watering down the severity of these words for on these “if’s” hangs the eternal destiny of the individual. Remembering that there is no salvation for an unbeliever, and if the individual does not “hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end” (ch. 3:6) and “hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end” (ch. 3:14), there is no salvation and no heaven, but a fearful looking for of divine judgment.

- a) On this matter hangs the truth or error of eternal salvation. Will I hold the presented truth that the man Jesus is the Son of God, the last sacrifice for sin, and through the work of Christ firm to the end of my days? If I do not hold it fast and stedfast then I am not part of His house (ch. 3:6). Neither am I made a “partaker of Christ” (ch. 3:14).
- b) The danger of neglecting “so great salvation” (ch. 2:3).
- c) The second warning (ch. 3-4) is not a matter to be considered at some future time for two reasons:
 - i) The repeated exhortation, “To day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts” (ch. 3:7; 15), and gives several reasons not to take the warning of chapter 2:3 lightly.
 - ii) Second, if one does treat this casually, there are dire consequences for unbelief. In mind they are brought back to their history after coming out of Egypt. They were in the wilderness and refused to enter their inheritance, the rest God had promised them. The attitude of intimating the inability or truthfulness of God is exceedingly serious and for such God declared, “I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest” (ch. 3:11).

Who Was The Warning For?

The easy answer is that since the book is written to the Hebrews and no New Testament book is written to the unsaved, therefore these warnings must have to do with Christians. Like all simplified answers, it ignores the fact that a number of New Testament epistles, while written to believers, acknowledge unconverted among them. Any verse taken out of context is a failure to “rightly divide the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). This begs the question, were the following books written to believers? Consider the warnings in them:

- a) “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. If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul, am made a minister” (Col. 1:21-23).
- b) “Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. IF that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life” (1 Jn. 2:24-25).
- c) “It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself” (2 Tim. 2:11-13).
- d) When the New Testament Epistles are carefully read, there will be found warnings in them which are applicable to waverers and the unconverted. Hebrews is no different.

The Word “If”

Some would desire to change the word “if” to “since”, which in some places is acceptable. However, not in this passage for that then makes the assumption that all the Hebrews to whom he was writing were believers. The passage would then read, “Since ye hold fast”, and indicates a present possession, something the writer is not saying. The word “if” is in the subjunctive mood which indicates a hypothetical situation which is a distinct possibility. Only the future will present more evidence as to whether the individual is a believer or not.

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**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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