

# Falling Into The Hands Of The Living God

**Introduction.** God's promises of salvation to all who believe and obey Him are encouraging and uplifting (1 Peter 1:1-5). On the other hand, nothing is more grim and frightening than God's warnings of condemnation to those who choose to live in sin.

Hebrews 10:26-31 contains one of those grim messages from God about what it means to be condemned. In fact, it may be the most sobering warning in all of the scriptures. As we study this passage remember that it is just as relevant today as it was long ago.

## I. ***God Has A Positive Purpose For The Negative Message***

- A. There are a lot of warnings in the scriptures about judgment.
  - 1. John the Baptist (Matthew 3:12).
  - 2. Jesus (Matthew 8:11-12; 10:28; 25:46; Mark 9:43-48).
  - 3. Paul (Colossians 3:6; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).
  - 4. Peter (2 Peter 2:4, 6, 9).
  - 5. Jude (Jude 6-7, 14-15).
- B. The reason God sent these solemn messages is to warn us away from the condemnation sin inevitably brings (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).
  - 1. The fact that God sent Jesus to suffer and die so we could be forgiven shows how much God wants everyone to be saved (Romans 5:6-9).
  - 2. Although God is longsuffering, these warnings are real and they tell us what awaits if we spurn His grace (Hebrews 12:15-17).

## II. ***What Does It Mean To Be Lost?***

- A. Experiencing a fearful or terrifying judgment by God (vs. 27).
  - 1. "Judgment" is an opinion, evaluation, or decision given concerning anything. In most cases it refers to a time when God sentences the ungodly (2 Peter 3:7).
  - 2. An anonymous author wrote, "Most people are bothered by those scripture passages which they cannot understand. But for me, the passages in scripture which trouble me most are those which I do understand."
- B. Facing God's fiery indignation (vs. 27).
  - 1. The word "indignation" means "jealousy" and refers to righteous anger or wrath from God (Romans 2:7-9; Colossians 3:6).
  - 2. The reason it is called "fiery" is because God's wrath is described as punishment by fire in several places (Matthew 25:41; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).

- C. Being subject to the destruction that all God's adversaries will endure (vs. 27).
1. "Devour" means "consume" and describes the ruin and destruction of all the condemned (cf. Philippians 3:18-19).
  2. An "adversary" is someone who is opposed to truth (1 Corinthians 16:9; Philippians 1:28; cf. 1 Timothy 5:14; 1 Peter 5:8). The enemies of the Lord must perish.
- D. Experiencing punishment that is worse than death (vss. 28-29).
1. Under Moses' law apostates were put to death without mercy (Deuteronomy 13:6-10). There was no reprieve.
  2. A worse punishment, which will be eternal, awaits those who reject Christ (Matthew 10:28; 13:41-43; Luke 16:22-24).
- E. Facing all this without hope of any mercy from God (vss. 28-29).
1. Today even most sinful people share God's mercy but someday they will be totally cut off from all of God's mercy and kindness (Matthew 5:45; James 2:13).
  2. Many who have always "gotten by" in the past probably think they will plead, weep, or win God's mercy in end, but they will not.
- F. Facing God's vengeance (vs. 30).
1. Vengeance normally brings to mind infliction of injury, harm, or humiliation on a person by another who has been harmed by that person.
  2. Biblical vengeance is an appropriate divine retribution which proceeds out of divine justice. It is what justice demands for breaking divine law.
- G. Experiencing an fitting recompense for iniquity (vs. 30).
1. "Recompense" literally means "a giving back in return" (Romans 12:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:9).
  2. Sometimes it is used in a good sense but here it means receiving a deserved punishment (Hebrews 11:26; cf. 2 Corinthians 5:10).
- H. Facing condemnation which is absolutely sure and certain (vs. 30).
1. The terms "will" and "shall" indicate certainty if we turn our back on the gospel.
  2. If that prospect is disturbing to you, it is because God intended it to be disturbing.
- I. Facing a frightening destiny (vs. 31).
1. He is not like the idols of wood or stone which have no life, and which are not to be dreaded, but he always lives. God will never cease to exist, and the punishment which He is capable of inflicting will last forever.
  2. Some think preachers should avoid this type of Bible passage, accentuating the positive and eliminating the negative. The right

kind of preaching includes making people tremble at the prospect of being lost (Acts 24:25).

### III. ***Will This Warning Affect Your Life?***

- A. If you are a faithful Christian, it should to effect you in three ways.
  - 1. It should make you indescribably grateful that Christ died to save you from eternal condemnation (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).
  - 2. It should make you determined not to draw back to destruction (Hebrews 10:35-39). Jesus died so you can escape. Nothing is worth being lost (Matthew 16:26).
  - 3. It should make you determined to do whatever you can to save others. This means telling others what God has said, and living so others will listen to what you say.
- B. If you were once saved but slipped back into sin you should let God's warning motivate you to repent while there is time (Hebrews 2:1-3; 3:12-13; 4:1, 11; 6:4-6; Revelation 2:5).
- C. If you are not a Christian, you need to let the doctrine of hell move you to obey now. It will be tragic to die without Christ and subject to the wrath of God (John 3:36).

**Conclusion.** Seattle's famed Kingdome -- home of the Seahawks, Mariners, and at times, the SuperSonics -- was destroyed in March of 2000. Maryland-based Controlled Demolition Incorporated (CDI) was hired to do the job of imploding the 25,000-ton structure that had marked Seattle's skyline for over 20 years.

Extreme measures were taken to ensure no one was hurt. CDI had experience with more than 7,000 demolitions and knew how to protect people. Engineers checked and rechecked the structure. The authorities evacuated several blocks around the Kingdome. Safety measures were in place to allow the countdown to stop at any time if there were any concerns. All workers were individually accounted for by radio. A large public address system was used to announce the final countdown. In short, CDI took every reasonable measure and more to warn people of the impending danger.

The Bible teaches of a final judgment on this sinful world. Like the engineers who blew up the Kingdome, our heavenly Father has spared no expense to make sure everybody can "get out" safely. He warns us through our consciences, through the prophets, through the Bible, through the church, and through His Son. This is not the time to rationalize, postpone, delay, or excuse yourself by saying that there are hypocrites in the church. This is the time to do what needs be done to insure you meet God with salvation not wrath.