

Hebrews 10:19-25 – Boldness to Approach

Under the new covenant, there is a change in the priesthood. Jesus is our eternal high priest. Gone are the constant sacrifices under the Mosaic law. Jesus offered himself as the once for all sacrifice to remove sins. He presented his own blood before God the Father when he entered the true sanctuary in heaven. The old tabernacle and temples are gone. The Aaronic priests are gone. The sacrifices under the Mosaic law are gone. We now have a better priest, who is the mediator of a better covenant, who serves in a better sanctuary who has offered a much better sacrifice.

Read Hebrews 10:19-25.

In verse 19, why do we have confidence to enter the holy places? See 10:10, 14. ESV has “the holy places” NKJV has “the Holiest”. NASB has “the holy place”. NIV has “the Most Holy Place”. Is this verse talking about “the Holy Place”, “The Holy of Holies”, both or the heavenly sanctuary? What allows us to have access to the holy places? (10:19)

In verse 20, how was our access (way) to God in heaven described? How were we given this access? The “curtain” alludes to the inner curtain which separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. How was access to God opened to us through Jesus’ flesh? ESV and NIV have “opened for us”. NKJV has “consecrated for us”. NASB has “inaugurated for us”. ESV, NKJV and NIV all have “flesh” while NIV has “body”. These translations cover a range of ways the original words can be translated into English. TDNT (Vol. VI, p. 766-767) translates this verse as follows: “which (access) he has newly established for us by a new and living way through the veil, i.e., his flesh”. (10:20)

In verse 21, what is “the house of God”? The phrase “house of God” occurs 67 times in I and II Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah. Outside those books, the phrase only appears 7 times in the Old Testament. It appears 4 times in the New Testament. Three of those occurrences are from the gospels’ accounts of David receiving the bread of the presence. Jesus is our great priest over the house of God. What is the significance of this statement? KJV translates “great priest” as “high priest”. (10:21)

A number of commentators note that verse 19 begins the second section of the letter which is mostly application based. The first section of the letter was mostly doctrinal. Verses 22, 23 and 24 all begin with “let us” which is typical of application. What are we exhorted to do in verse 22? Many translations have “sprinkle clean” or something like that. BDAG translates this part of the verse as “after we have purified our hearts of an evil conscience”. How are our hearts cleansed from an evil conscience? How are our bodies washed with clean water? (10:22)

In verse 23, what are we exhorted to do? What is the confession of our hope? ESV, NKJV and NASB all have “the confession of our hope”. NIV has “the hope we profess”. In this context BDAG says “confession” means a “statement of allegiance, as content of an action, confession, acknowledgment that one makes”. What encouragement is there for us to hold onto our hope without wavering? (10:23)

In verse 24, what are we exhorted to do? BDAG says that in this context “consider” means “to think about carefully, envisage, think about”. In what ways can we stir up others to love and good works? BDAG says “stir up” means “rousing to activity, stirring up, provoking”. (10:24)

In verse 25, what are we warned against doing? BDAG says that “neglecting” means “do or carry on something in a negligent manner, be remiss”. What happens when Christians are isolated from one another? (10:25)

From verse 25, what is one of the things we do when we meet together? The word “encourage” in the original text is used 109 times in the New Testament. This is the same word that was used in 3:13, “But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today’”. The word has a range of meanings like “call to one’s side”. In this context, BDAG says it means “to urge strongly, appeal to, urge, exhort, encourage”. (10:25)

ESV, NKJV and NIV all have “Day” capitalized. NASB has “day” in lower case. What “day” is drawing near? (10:25)

Why do you think some Christians do not regularly attend a local church? Is watching a service on TV the same as personally attending? Obviously there are times when Christians are not able to attend church due to physical and medical conditions. (10:25)

Is a Zoom Bible Study a violation of verse 25? What are the advantages and disadvantages? Did Paul ever have Zoom Bible Studies? That’s a joke son! You’re supposed to laugh.