

Abraham, Isaac & Jacob

The Custodians of the Covenant and their Descendants *Part 11*

Acts 3 AMPC

1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour (three o'clock in the afternoon),

2 [When] a certain man crippled from his birth was being carried along, who was laid each day at that gate of the temple [which is] called Beautiful, so that he might beg for charitable gifts from those who entered the temple.

3 So when he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them to give him a gift.

4 And Peter directed his gaze intently at him, and so did John, and said, Look at us!

5 **And [the man] paid attention to them, expecting that he was going to get something from them.**

6 But Peter said, Silver and gold (money) I do not have; but what I do have, that I give to you: **in [the [a]use of] the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk!**

7 Then he took hold of the man's right hand with a firm grip and raised him up. And at once his feet and ankle bones became strong and steady,

8 And leaping forth he stood and [b]began to walk, and he went into the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

9 **And all the people saw him walking about and praising God.**

10 And they recognized him as the man who usually sat [begging] for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement (bewilderment, consternation) over what had occurred to him. 11 Now while he [still] firmly clung to Peter and John, all the people in utmost amazement ran together and crowded around them in the covered porch (walk) called Solomon's.

12 And Peter, seeing it, answered the people, *You men of Israel, why are you so surprised and wondering at this? Why do you keep staring at us, as though by our [own individual] power or [active] piety we had made this man [able] to walk?*

13 *The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our forefathers, has glorified His Servant and [c]Son Jesus [doing Him this honor], Whom you indeed delivered up and denied and rejected and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had determined to let Him go.*

Note: _____

14 *But you denied and rejected and disowned the Pure and Holy, the Just and Blameless One, and demanded [the pardon of] a murderer to be granted to you.*

15 *But you killed the very Source (the Author) of life, Whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.*

16 And His name, through and by faith in His name, has made this man whom you see and recognize well and strong. [Yes] the faith which is through and by Him [Jesus] has given the man this perfect soundness [of body] before all of you.

17 *And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance [not aware of what you were doing], as did your rulers also.*

Note: _____

18 *Thus has God fulfilled what He foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ (the Messiah) should undergo ill treatment and be afflicted and suffer.*

19 So repent (change your mind and purpose); turn around and return [to God], that your sins may be erased (blotted out, wiped clean), that times of refreshing (of recovering from the effects of heat, of [d]reviving with fresh air) may come from the presence of the Lord;

20 And that He may send [to you] the Christ (the Messiah), Who before was designated and appointed for you—even Jesus,

21 Whom heaven must receive [and retain] until the time for the complete restoration of all that God spoke by the mouth of all His holy prophets for ages past [from the most ancient time in the memory of man].

22 Thus Moses said to the forefathers, The Lord God will raise up for you a Prophet from among your brethren as [He raised up] me; Him you shall listen to and understand by hearing and heed in all things whatever He tells you.

23 And it shall be that every soul that does not listen to and understand by hearing and heed that Prophet shall be utterly [e]xterminated from among the people.

Note: _____

24 Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel and those who came afterwards, as many as have spoken, also promised and foretold and proclaimed these days.

25 You are the descendants (sons) of the prophets and the heirs of the covenant which God made and gave to your forefathers, saying to Abraham, And in your Seed (Heir) shall all the families of the earth be blessed and benefited.

26 It was to you first that God sent His Servant and Son Jesus, when He raised Him up [[f]provided and gave Him for us], to bless you in turning every one of you from your wickedness and evil ways.

This is Paul speaking to the New Testament Church in Romans 11...

Romans 11:1-5 AMPC

1 I ask then: Has God totally rejected and disowned His people? Of course not! **Why, I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin!**

2 No, God has not rejected and disowned His people [whose destiny] He had marked out and appointed and foreknown from the beginning. **Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?**

3 Lord, they have killed Your prophets; they have demolished Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.

4 But what is God's reply to him? I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal!

5 **So too at the present time there is a remnant (a small believing minority), selected (chosen) by grace (by God's unmerited favor and graciousness).**

Note: _____

Romans 11:11-25 AMPC

11 So I ask, Have they stumbled so as to fall [to their utter spiritual ruin, irretrievably]? By no means! **But through their false step and transgression salvation [has come] to the Gentiles,** so as to arouse Israel [to see and feel what they forfeited] and so to make them jealous.

12 Now if their stumbling (their lapse, their transgression) has so enriched the world [at large], and if [Israel's] failure means such riches for the Gentiles, think what an enrichment and greater advantage will follow their full reinstatement!

13 **But now I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles,** I lay great stress on my ministry and magnify my office,

14 *In the hope of making my fellow Jews jealous [in order to stir them up to imitate, copy, and appropriate], **and thus managing to save some of them.***

15 *For if their rejection and exclusion from the benefits of salvation were [overruled] for the reconciliation of a world to God, what will their acceptance and admission mean? [It will be nothing short of] life from the dead!*

16 *Now **if the first handful of dough offered as the firstfruits [Abraham and the patriarchs] is consecrated (holy), so is the whole mass [the nation of Israel]; and if the root [Abraham] is consecrated (holy), so are the branches.***

17 ***But if some of the branches were broken off,** while you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among them to share the richness [of the root and sap] of the olive tree,*

18 ***Do not boast over the branches and pride yourself at their expense. If you do boast and feel superior, remember it is not you that support the root, but the root [that supports] you.***

19 *You will say then, Branches were broken (pruned) off so that I might be grafted in!*

20 *That is true. **But they were broken (pruned) off because of their unbelief (their lack of real faith), and you are established through faith [because you do believe]. So do not become proud and conceited, but rather stand in awe and be reverently afraid.***

21 ***For if God did not spare the natural branches [because of unbelief], neither will He spare you [if you are guilty of the same offense].***

22 *Then note and appreciate the gracious kindness and the severity of God: **severity toward those who have fallen,** but God's gracious kindness to you—provided you continue in His grace and abide in His kindness; otherwise you too will be cut off (pruned away).*

23 ***And even those others [the fallen branches, Jews], if they do not persist in [clinging to] their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.***

24 For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and against nature grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much easier will it be to graft these natural [branches] back on [the original parent stock of] their own olive tree.

25 **Lest you be self-opinionated (wise in your own conceits), I do not want you to miss this hidden truth and mystery, brethren: a hardening (insensibility) has [temporarily] befallen a part of Israel [to last] until the [c]full number of the ingathering of the Gentiles has come in,**

Note: _____

Paul told the New Testament Church that the Jewish people, the descendants of Abraham, were pruned off because of their choices, not some external force. Paul is telling the gentiles, the non jewish people that the same fate awaits you if you choose to not habitually be obedient to God's Word, (not to an alway changing religion or denomination) that you too, will be pruned off. You were once attached but are no longer as a free will decision.

So, let's address the ideology of: Once saved always saved, eternal security, losing my salvation, predestination and many other terms that religion(s) teach. Are these things true? What do they mean or imply? What does God's Word say? Here is Paul addressing the New Testament Church.

There are numerous Bible passages that speak to: you were once with God, had the promise of eternity with Him but because of your choice, lack of faith (faith without acts of obedience) it will lead to death.

Romans 11:20-21 AMPC

20 That is true. But they were broken (pruned) off because of their unbelief (their lack of real faith), and you are established through faith [because you do believe]. So do not become proud and conceited, but rather stand in awe and be reverently afraid.

21 For if God did not spare the natural branches [because of unbelief], neither will He spare you [if you are guilty of the same offense].

Real Faith = Habitual Acts of Obedience

James 2:26 AMPC

26 For as the human body apart from the spirit is lifeless, **so faith apart from [its] works of obedience is also dead.**

Jude 3-7 AMPC

3 Beloved, my whole concern was to write to you in regard to our common salvation. [But] I found it necessary and was impelled to write you and urgently appeal to and exhort [you] to contend for the faith which was once for all [a]handed down to the saints [the faith which is that sum of Christian belief which was delivered [b]verbally to the holy people of God].

4 **For certain men have crept in stealthily [[c]gaining entrance secretly by a side door].** Their doom was predicted long ago, ungodly (impious, profane) persons who **pervert the grace (the spiritual blessing and favor) of our God into lawlessness and wantonness and immorality,** and disown and deny our sole Master and Lord, Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).

Matthew 24:11 AMPC

11 And many false prophets will rise up and deceive and lead many into error.

5 **Now I want to remind you, though you were fully informed once for all, that though the Lord [at one time] delivered a people out of the land of Egypt, He subsequently destroyed those [of them] who did not believe [who refused to adhere to, trust in, and rely upon Him].**

6 And angels who did not keep (care for, guard, and hold to) their own first place of power but abandoned their proper dwelling place—these He has reserved in custody in eternal chains (bonds) under the thick gloom of utter darkness until the judgment and doom of the great day.

7 [The wicked are sentenced to suffer] just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the adjacent towns—which likewise gave themselves over to impurity and indulged in unnatural vice and sensual perversity—are laid out [in plain sight] as an exhibit of perpetual punishment [to warn] of everlasting fire.

Revelation 3:1-6 AMPC

1 And to the angel (messenger) of the assembly (church) in Sardis write: These are the words of Him Who has the seven Spirits of God [[a]the sevenfold Holy Spirit] and the seven stars: I know your record and what you are doing; you are supposed to be alive, but [in reality] you are dead.

2 Rouse yourselves and keep awake, and strengthen and invigorate what remains and is on the point of dying; for I have not found a thing that you have done [any work of yours] meeting the requirements of My God or perfect in His sight.

Note: _____

3 So call to mind the lessons you received and heard; continually lay them to heart and obey them, and repent. In case you will not rouse yourselves and keep awake and watch, I will come upon you like a thief, and you will not know or suspect at what hour I will come.

4 Yet you still have a few [persons'] names in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes, and they shall walk with Me in white, because they are worthy and deserving.

5 *Thus shall he who conquers (is victorious) be clad in white garments, and I will not erase or blot out his name from the **Book of Life**; I will acknowledge him [as Mine] and I will confess his name openly before My Father and before His angels.*

Note: _____

6 ***He who is able to hear, let him listen to and heed what the [Holy] Spirit says to the assemblies (churches).***

This is John revealing all other 65 books to the church...

Revelation 22:10-21 KJV

10 *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*

11 *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

12 *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

13 *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*

14 ***Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.***

15 ***For without are dogs,** and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

16 ***I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.** I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Why would Peter, Paul, Jude, John and Jesus all throughout the New Testament tell the believer to be on guard? To warn against listening to false teaching? To know the signs of Jesus return so not to be caught unaware?... these verses are for the believer, not the unbeliever.

So, is a Child of God "Once Saved, Always Saved," or can they so sin as to be lost? One of the major points of Calvinism is "the eternal security of the believer" or the "perseverance of the saints." It is also called "impossibility of apostasy," or simply "once saved, always saved."

This doctrine teaches that it is impossible for a child of God to so habitually sin as to fall from grace and be eternally lost. It is based on the belief that salvation is unconditional (predestined), so there is nothing a person can do to be saved; and once he is saved there is nothing he can do to be lost.

This doctrine is one of the five major points of Calvinism. It is often called "the eternal security of the believer," "perseverance of the saints," "impossibility of apostasy," or simply "once saved, always saved." Several major denominations (and non denominational) officially believe the doctrine, though some do not emphasize it and as a result the members or attendees may not be aware of it.

For instance, the Westminster Confession adopted by many Presbyterian churches, states:

"They whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved ... Nevertheless they may, through the temptations of Satan ... fall into grievous sins..." (Book of Confessions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1967 Ed., Sec. 6.086-6.088).

The Philadelphia Confession, adopted by many Baptist churches, is almost identical to the above. Sam Morris, "Pastor" of the First Baptist Church, Stamford, Texas, expressed the doctrine in its most extreme form as follows:

"We take the position that a Christian's sins do not damn his soul! The way a Christian lives, what he says, his character, his conduct, or his attitude toward other people have nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul ... All the prayers a man may pray, all the Bibles he may read, all the churches he may belong to, all the services he may attend, all the sermons he may practice, all the debts he may pay, all the ordinances he may observe, all the laws he may keep, all the benevolent acts he may perform will not make his soul one whit safer; and all the sins he may commit from idolatry to murder will not make his soul in any more danger ... The way a man lives has nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul." (Morris, A Discussion Which Involves a Subject Pertinent to All Men, pp. 1,2; via Handbook of Religious Quotations, p. 24)

It would be very comforting if this doctrine were true. However, if it is not true, then it would be a very dangerous doctrine because it would give people a false sense of security. People would not be on their guard against sin, and would not see any need to repent of sins, if they thought they would still be saved eternally despite their sins.

If however they will be lost for sins (habitual disobedience) and they do not repent of, then such people are in grave danger. It vitally important for us to know what the Bible teaches and not what religions says.

Matthew 24:11 AMPC

11 And many false prophets will rise up and deceive and lead many into error.

We can all agree that there is security for those who serve God faithfully, who are habitually obedient to His Word, His Commands, His Precepts. If we study God's word diligently and honestly, if we strive to overcome sin in our lives, and if we diligently repent and ask forgiveness for our sins, then we definitely have assurance and security regarding our eternal destiny.

The question, however, is whether it is possible for a child of God to cease being faithful, to become disobedient, fail to repent, and so be lost.

Part 1: Evidence that a Child of God Can Sin and Be Lost

A. Passages Warning Christians about the Danger of Sin

The Bible teaches that there are conditions a person must meet in order to receive forgiveness and become a child of God. Likewise there are conditions one must meet to continue faithful after becoming a child of God. Many passages warn us to be careful to meet these conditions else we will not receive eternal life. In each case we will note first that the passage is addressed to children of God. Then we will note that we are warned to avoid sin or we will be lost.

John 15:1-6 - We must bear fruit or be cast off or pruned away.

John 15:1-6 AMPC

1 I am the True Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser.

2 Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit [that stops bearing] He cuts away (trims off, takes away); and He cleanses and repeatedly prunes every branch that continues to bear fruit, to make it bear more and richer and more excellent fruit.

3 You are cleansed and pruned already, because of the word which I have given you [the teachings I have discussed with you].

4 Dwell in Me, and I will dwell in you. [Live in Me, and I will live in you.] Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in (being vitally united to) the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in Me and I in him bears much (abundant) fruit. However, apart from Me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing.

6 If a person does not dwell in Me, he is thrown out like a [broken-off] branch, and withers; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, and they are burned.

John 15:1-6 KJV

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Disciples are described as branches "in Christ" (v2,5, etc.) who have been cleansed by His word (v3). But if they don't bear fruit and abide in Christ (v2,4-6), they will be taken away (v2), cast into the fire and burned (v6). (Abiding in Jesus and bearing fruit requires obedience - 1 John 3:6,24; John 15:10; Gal. 5:19; etc.)

Romans 8:12-17 - We must live according to the Spirit, not the flesh.

Romans 8:12-17 AMPC

12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, but not to the flesh [we are not obligated to our carnal nature], to live [a life ruled by the standards set up by the dictates] of the flesh.

13 For if you live according to [the dictates of] the flesh, you will surely die. But if through the power of the [Holy] Spirit you are [habitually] putting to death (making extinct, deadening) the [evil] deeds prompted by the body, you shall [really and genuinely] live forever.

14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

15 For [the Spirit which] you have now received [is] not a spirit of slavery to put you once more in bondage to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption [the Spirit producing sonship] in [the bliss of] which we cry, Abba (Father)! Father!

16 The Spirit Himself [thus] testifies together with our own spirit, [assuring us] that we are children of God.

17 And if we are [His] children, then we are [His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [sharing His inheritance with Him]; only we must share His suffering if we are to share His glory.

Romans 8:12-17 KJV

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

This is addressed to children of God (v16).

We are warned not to live according to the deeds of the flesh but be led by the Spirit. If we live according to the flesh, we will die (v13). This cannot be physical death since we all die physically regardless of how we live. This death is the opposite of the life we receive if we follow the Spirit.

To be heirs of Christ, we must be led of the Spirit (v14) and suffer with Christ (v17). It is conditional and depends on our life.

Galatians 6:7-9 - We must sow to the Spirit, not the flesh.

Galatians 6:7-9 AMPC

7 Do not be deceived and deluded and misled; God will not allow Himself to be sneered at (scorned, disdained, or mocked [a]by mere pretensions or professions, or by His precepts being set aside.) [He inevitably deludes himself who attempts to delude God.] For whatever a man sows, that and [b]that only is what he will reap.

8 For he who sows to his own flesh (lower nature, sensuality) will from the flesh reap decay and ruin and destruction, but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

9 And let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time and at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint.

Galatians 6:7-9 KJV

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

This is addressed to members of the church (1:2), sons of God by faith (3:26). [4:6] We will reap as we sow. If we sow to the spirit (i.e., if we produce the fruit of the Spirit - 5:22-25), we will reap eternal life (v8).

Galatians 5:19-25 AMPC

19 Now the doings (practices) of the flesh are clear (obvious): they are immorality, impurity, indecency,

20 Idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger (ill temper), selfishness, divisions (dissensions), party spirit (factions, sects with peculiar opinions, heresies),

21 Envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you beforehand, just as I did previously, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes] is love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness (benevolence), faithfulness,

23 Gentleness (meekness, humility), self-control (self-restraint, continence). Against such things there is no law [[a]that can bring a charge].

24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus (the Messiah) have crucified the flesh (the godless human nature) with its passions and appetites and desires.

25 If we live by the [Holy] Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. [If by the Holy Spirit [b]we have our life in God, let us go forward [c]walking in line, our conduct controlled by the Spirit.]

If we sow to the flesh (do the works of the flesh - 5:19-21), we reap corruption (6:8), which is the opposite of eternal life. In this case, we cannot inherit the kingdom of God (5:21).

We reap eternal life if we don't grow weary in doing good (v9). Note: "Be not deceived." Yet "once saved, always saved" is a doctrine that deceives many into thinking they will still reap eternal life even if they sow to the flesh.

Note: _____

1 Corinthians 9:27 & 10:12 - We must control our bodies and avoid sinning like Israel did.

1 Corinthians 9:27 AMPC

27 But [like a boxer] I buffet my body [handle it roughly, discipline it by hardships] and subdue it, for fear that after proclaiming to others the Gospel and things pertaining to it, I myself should become unfit [not stand the test, be unapproved and rejected as a counterfeit].

1 Corinthians 9:27 KJV

27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

9:25-27 - Paul, who was an apostle and therefore a child of God, was striving to gain the imperishable crown (v25). He had to discipline his body and bring it into subjection lest he himself be disqualified (NKJV; "a castaway" - KJV; "rejected" - ASV). (KJV elsewhere translates this word "reprobate" - 2 Cor. 13:5; Rom. 1:28; 2 Tim. 3:8; Tit. 1:16).

1 Corinthians 10:12 AMPC

12 Therefore let anyone who thinks he stands [who feels sure that he has a steadfast mind and is standing firm], take heed lest he fall [into sin].

1 Corinthians 10:12 KJV

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

10:1-12 - Israel is an example showing us the importance of avoiding sin. The people to whom this warning applies ("we," "us") include the church, sanctified saints (1:2; cf. 1:9), and the apostle Paul.

This is an example and admonition to us (v6,11). We should not lust after evil (v6), commit idolatry (v7), commit fornication (v8), etc. One who thinks he stands, must take heed lest he fall (v12).

In context, this means he will not receive the crown Paul described (9:25-27). 6:9,10 show that people guilty of these sins won't receive the kingdom of God.

Note: A person who believes in "once saved, always saved" thinks he cannot fall. This passage is addressed to just such people and shows that they are the ones in the very greatest danger that they will fall!

Hebrews 3:6,11-14; 4:9,11 - We must avoid rebelling like Israel.

Hebrews 3:6-14 KJV

6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

Hebrews 4:9-11 KJV

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

This is addressed to "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling" (v1). Israel failed to enter God's rest because they lacked faith and obedience. We too must guard lest we have an evil heart of unbelief, departing from God (v12), and become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (v13).

To partake with Christ, we must hold fast our confidence (faith) firm to the end (3:6,14). If we do so depart, we will not enter the rest God has for us (4:9,11). Note that receiving the eternal reward is conditional on continued faithfulness.

Hebrews 10:26-31,39 - We must avoid willful sin.

Hebrews 10:26-31, 39 KJV

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

Hebrews 10:26-39 AMPC

26 For if we go on deliberately and willingly sinning after once acquiring the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice left to atone for [our] sins [no further offering to which to look forward].

27 [There is nothing left for us then] but a kind of awful and fearful prospect and expectation of divine judgment and the fury of burning wrath and indignation which will consume those who put themselves in opposition [to God].

28 Any person who has violated and [thus] rejected and set at naught the Law of Moses is put to death without pity or mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

29 How much worse (sterner and heavier) punishment do you suppose he will be judged to deserve who has spurned and [thus] trampled underfoot the Son of God, and who has considered the covenant blood by which he was consecrated common and unhallowed, thus profaning it and insulting and outraging the [Holy] Spirit [Who imparts] grace (the unmerited favor and blessing of God)?

30 For we know Him Who said, Vengeance is Mine [retribution and the meting out of full justice rest with Me]; I will repay [I will exact the compensation], says the Lord. And again, The Lord will judge and determine and solve and settle the cause and the cases of His people.

31 It is a fearful (formidable and terrible) thing to incur the divine penalties and be cast into the hands of the living God!

39 But our way is not that of those who draw back to eternal misery (perdition) and are utterly destroyed, but we are of those who believe [who cleave to and trust in and rely on God through Jesus Christ, the Messiah] and by faith preserve the soul.

This is speaking to those who know the truth (v26) and have been sanctified by the blood (v29). It is discussing the Lord's judgment on "His people" (v30).

We are warned not to sin willfully (v26). As long as we go on sinning willfully (NASB - v26), there is no sacrifice for sin. (This is not discussing what will happen if such people repent and change but what our condition is as long as this conduct continues.)

Such people are trodding underfoot God's Son (v29), doing despite to the Spirit of grace, counting the blood by which we were sanctified unholy (v29). Their only future is fierceness of fire (v27), sorer punishment than physical death under the law (v28f), vengeance from God (v30). This is why we must not shrink back to perdition (v39).

2 Peter 1:8-11; 2:20-22 - We must grow in Christ instead of returning to the world.

2 Peter 1:8-11 AMPC

8 For as these qualities are yours and increasingly abound in you, they will keep [you] from being idle or unfruitful unto the [[a]full personal] knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).

9 For whoever lacks these qualities is blind, *[[b]spiritually] shortsighted, [c]seeing only what is near to him, and has become oblivious [to the fact] that he was cleansed from his old sins.*

10 Because of this, brethren, be all the more solicitous and eager to make sure (to ratify, to strengthen, to make steadfast) your calling and election; **for if you do this, you will never stumble or fall.**

11 Thus there will be richly and abundantly provided for you entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:8-11 KJV

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: **for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:**

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

1:8-11 - This is spoken to those who have obtained like precious faith (v1), escaped the corruption of the world (v4), and been purged from old sins (v9). We must add to our lives the qualities listed (v5-7). If we do, we make our calling and election sure so we don't stumble (v10), but we receive the abundant entrance to the everlasting kingdom (v11). Note there is security for the believer, but it is conditional on growing and adding these qualities.

2 Peter 2:20-22 KJV

20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

2 Peter 2:20-22 AMPC

20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through [the full, personal] knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in them and are overcome, their last condition is worse [for them] than the first.

21 For never to have obtained a [full, personal] knowledge of the way of righteousness would have been better for them than, having obtained [such knowledge], to turn back from the holy commandment which was [verbally] delivered to them.

22 There has befallen them the thing spoken of in the true proverb, The dog turns back to his own vomit, and, The sow is washed only to wallow again in the mire.

2:20-22 - This is still talking to people who have escaped the pollution of the world (v20), knowing the way of righteousness (v21). [cf. v1,15] We are warned not to become entangled again in the world (v20), turning from the holy command (v21). If we do, we are worse off than we were before we knew the truth (v20). We are like a dog returning to vomit or a sow returning to mire (v22). [cf., v1,3]

But if "once saved, always saved," then this dog is much better off after returning to the vomit than he was before.

Romans 6:12-18 - We must not let sin reign in our bodies.

Romans 6:12-18 AMPC

12 Let not sin therefore rule as king in your mortal (short-lived, perishable) bodies, to make you yield to its cravings and be subject to its lusts and evil passions.

13 Do not continue offering or yielding your bodily members [and [a]faculties] to sin as instruments (tools) of wickedness...

...But offer and yield yourselves to God as though you have been raised from the dead to [perpetual] life, and your bodily members [and [b]faculties] to God, presenting them as implements of righteousness.

14 For sin shall not [any longer] exert dominion over you, since now you are not under Law [as slaves], but under grace [as subjects of God's favor and mercy].

15 What then [are we to conclude]? Shall we sin because we live not under Law but under God's favor and mercy? Certainly not!

16 Do you not know that if you continually surrender yourselves to anyone to do his will, you are the slaves of him whom you obey, whether that be to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience which leads to righteousness (right doing and right standing with God)?

17 But thank God, though you were once slaves of sin, you have become obedient with all your heart to the standard of teaching in which you were instructed and to which you were committed.

18 And having been set free from sin, you have become the servants of righteousness (of conformity to the divine will in thought, purpose, and action).

Romans 6:12-18 KJV

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

These were baptized into Christ (v3,4), set free from sin, and become servants of righteousness (v18).

They are warned not to let sin reign in their bodies nor present their members as instruments of sin (v12,13). The result of that would be death (v16). This must be spiritual again, since all die physically. The wages of sin, even for those here addressed, is death, in contrast to eternal life (v23).

Hebrews 6:4-8 - We must avoid falling away.

Hebrews 6:4-8 KJV

*4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,
5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,*

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

Hebrews 6:4-8 AMPC

4 For it is impossible [to restore and bring again to repentance] those who have been once for all enlightened, who have consciously tasted the heavenly gift and have become sharers of the Holy Spirit,

5 And have felt how good the Word of God is and the mighty powers of the age and world to come,

6 If they then deviate from the faith and turn away from their allegiance —[it is impossible] to bring them back to repentance, for (because, while, as long as) they nail upon the cross the Son of God afresh [as far as they are concerned] and are holding [Him] up to contempt and shame and public disgrace.

7 For the soil which has drunk the rain that repeatedly falls upon it and produces vegetation useful to those for whose benefit it is cultivated partakes of a blessing from God. 8 But if [that same soil] persistently bears thorns and thistles, it is considered worthless and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

This is addressed to those once enlightened, who tasted the heavenly gift and the good word of God and were partakers of the Holy Spirit (v4,5). We are warned not to fall away (v6). If they continue in this pattern of life (implied), they cannot be restored. They are crucifying Jesus afresh and putting Him to an open shame (v6). Their destiny is to be burned like a field of thorns (v8).

Revelation 3:5; Exodus 32:30-33 - We must avoid having our names removed from the Book of Life.

Revelation 3:5 AMPC

5 Thus shall he who conquers (is victorious) be clad in white garments, and I will not erase or blot out his name from the Book of Life; I will acknowledge him [as Mine] and I will confess his name openly before My Father and before His angels.

Revelation 3:5 KJV

5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Exodus 32:30-33 AMPC

30 The next day Moses said to the people, You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin. 31 So Moses returned to the Lord, and said, Oh, these people have sinned a great sin and have made themselves gods of gold!

*32 Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—**and if not, blot me, I pray You, out of Your book which You have written!***

33 But the Lord said to Moses, Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him [not you] out of My book.

Exodus 32:30-33 KJV

30 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.

31 And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.

*32 Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; **and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.***

33 And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

Those whose names are in the book of Life will enter the eternal city, but those not in it are cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 21:27; 20:12-15). But people whose names are in the book, may be removed because of sin (Ex. 32:30-33). Those guilty of sin CANNOT enter the city (Rev. 21:27). But those who overcome will not be blotted out of the book (Rev. 3:5). [Rev. 22:18,19]

Why would God continually warn of the danger of sin and being lost if it cannot happen? God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33). Why waste time warning us about dangers that cannot happen anyway?



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