

Faith: The Better Way ~ Part 1b
Messianic Jews 10:26-31
Letter to the Messianic Jews

In my last post, we were going through the topic of **Faith: The Better Way**. We started by examining an **Exhortation to Hold Firm** by looking at **Our Access to God** in **Messianic Jews 10:19-25**. In this post, we continue in our mini-series **Exhortation to Hold Firm** by examining **The Judgment for Failure to Hold Firm** in **Messianic Jews 10:26-31**.

²⁶ For if we deliberately continue to sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but only the terrifying prospect of Judgment, of raging fire that will consume the enemies. ²⁸ Someone who disregards the Torah of Moshe is put to death without mercy on the word of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ Think how much worse will be the punishment deserved by someone who has trampled underfoot the Son of God; who has treated as something common the blood of the covenant which made him holy; and who has insulted the Spirit, giver of God's grace! ³⁰ For the One we know is the One who said, "Vengeance is my responsibility; I will repay," and then said, "Adonai will judge his people." ³¹ It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" ~ Messianic Jews 10:26-31 (CJB)

Every now and again the author of **Messianic Jews** speaks with a sternness that is almost without parallel in the **Brit Hadashah**. Few authors have such a sense of the sheer horror of sin. In this passage, his thoughts are going back to the grim instruction in Deuteronomy 17:2-7. There, if any person shall be proved to have gone after strange gods and to have worshipped them, ***"you are to bring the man or woman who has done this wicked thing to your city gates, and stone that man or woman to death. The death sentence is to be carried out only if there was testimony from two or three witnesses; he may not be sentenced to death on the testimony of only one witness. The witnesses are to be the first to stone him to death; afterward, all the people are to stone him. Thus you will put an end to this wickedness among you."***

These verses recap, in even stronger language, the exhortation of Messianic Jews 6:4-8, with emphasis on fearing God. There is a tendency to modernize the "fear of God" into "reverence for God" or minimize it by exalting the love of God as a higher motivation for right behavior than fear of Him. But doing so blunts the impact which the prospect of judgment ought to make (vv. 27, 30-31). There is a right reason for fearing God; there is such a thing as "holy fear" (Messianic Jews 11:7). ***"The fear of Adonai is the beginning of wisdom"*** ~ Proverbs 9:10. And, as we will later discover: ***"Our God is a consuming fire!"*** ~ Messianic Jews 12:29.

Those who ***deliberately continue to sin*** (v. 26) are doing what the **Torah** calls sinning *"with a high hand,"* and for such sins, the Levitical system of sacrifices prescribed in the **Torah** does not atone (see Ya'akov (James) 2:10-11). ***Think how much worse*** it will be for those who highhandedly ignore **Yeshua's** atoning sacrificial death (v. 29)! This is the whole point of this passage.

However, in addition, v. 26 by its very position in the overall text emphasizes the seriousness of neglecting congregational meetings (v. 25), even though the specific sin actually referred to, as clarified by v. 29, is that of disregarding the **Messiah's** once-for-all sacrifice for sin and trusting in the Levitical system which only foreshadowed it.

Note: Since I also covered this passage in my series on **Eternal Security**, I won't be further examining this passage as to who it relates to the topic of Apostasy.

According to Barclay, the author gives three definitions of sin. ¹

¹ Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT) by William Barclay.

1. Sin is to trample **Yeshua** underfoot. It is not mere rebelliousness against the law; it is the wounding of love. Once **Yeshua** had come, the awfulness of sin lay not in its breaking of the law but its trampling of the love of **Yeshua** underfoot.
2. Sin is the failure to see the sacredness of sacred things. Nothing produces a shudder like sacrilege. The author of **Messianic Jews** says in effect: *"Look at what has been done for you; look at the shed blood and the broken body of **Yeshua**; look at what your new relationship to God cost; can you treat it as if it did not matter? Don't you see what a sacred thing it is?"* Sin is the failure to realize the sacredness of that sacrifice upon the Cross.
3. Sin is an insult to the **Ruach**. The **Ruach** speaks within us, telling us what is right and wrong, seeking to check us when we are about to sin and to urge us on when we are drifting into apathy. To disregard these voices is to insult the **Ruach** and to grieve the heart of God.

Sin is not disobedience to an impersonal law; it is the wrecking of a personal relationship and the wounding of the heart of the God whose name is **Abba**.

We have been and continue to be redeemed once for all by **His Blood**.

In my next post, we complete our mini-series dealing of **Exhortation to Hold Firm** in the topic of **Faith: The Better Way** by exploring **The Future Reward for Those Who Endure** beginning with **Messianic Jews 10:32-39**.