

Hebrews Chapter Ten (vv.19-25)

The *will* of **God** (10.1-10) has been fulfilled by the person and *work* of **Christ** (10.11-14). Consequently, God's people have entered into the great blessings of the new covenant as *witnessed* by the **Spirit** (10.15-18). We have: boldness to enter (vv.19-20) a Great Priest (v.21), hearts sprinkled (v.22) and bodies washed (v.22). Consequently we should exercise: communion (v.22), confession (v.23), consideration (v.24) and continuance (v.25). *Privilege leads to practice.*

We Have... Access and a Great Priest (vv.19-21)

19 *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,* **20** *By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;* **21** *And having an high priest over the house of God;*

The Lord Jesus has entered into the holiest by His own blood (9.12). Now His people have equal right of entry there by means of the same blood, i.e. His accepted sacrifice which has dealt with our sins (10.17-18). On this basis we are now able to 'enter' (*eisodos*) into the holiest. The word *eisodos* is the opposite of the word *exodus*. *Luke 9.31: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease (exodus) which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. His exodus is the ground of our eisodos.* The privilege of 'entering in' belongs to every believer. We **all** share in common a heavenly priesthood (1 Peter 2.5, 9) and access into the holiest. What a blessing this is. Under the old covenant the people could only stand in the holiest in the person of their high priest once a year (representatively). We enter literally, regularly and perpetually. As we access the presence of God in prayer there is 'boldness' or 'complete liberty of speaking freely'. The *right* is ours to enter without hesitation or fear, **not** to be confused with arrogance, irreverence or undue familiarity. It is a dishonour to God and the blood if we do not use this boldness.

The 'way' or 'road' into the holiest or 'through the veil' is 'new and living'. It is **new** in the sense of newly made, fresh or recent. This way was unknown in a past dispensation and indeed did not exist until Christ opened, or 'consecrated' it (John 14.6). The word 'new' can also be translated 'freshly slain' and reminds us what it cost the Lord Jesus to provide freedom of access to the throne of God. The work of Christ is always fresh, eternally efficacious in the sight of God as if He had died yesterday (Revelation 5.6). This way is also '**living**'. Any Israelite seeking to enter the holiest in the tabernacle would have most certainly died, but we are able to enter at all times with no fear of death or condemnation.

There are **two** major interpretations of the phrase 'through the veil, that is to say, his flesh'.

- One view is that the veil is a picture or symbol of the physical body of the Lord Jesus. At Calvary His holy body was rent or broken in sacrifice and through that veil, His flesh, a way is now opened for our approach to God.
- An alternative interpretation is to see the phrase 'that is to say, his flesh' as qualifying or explaining, **not** the veil, but the new and living way. Our access to God (beyond the veil) is through the flesh, i.e. death of the Lord Jesus. The preposition 'through' thus functions both *locally* and *instrumentally*. Believers have access 'through the curtain' (locally) and this has been secured through or 'by means of' (instrumentally) His death. *NLT: By his death, Jesus opened a new and living way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place.*

Several points are to be noted which suggest the second view is more fitting. **First**, there is no rending of the veil in the epistle to the Hebrews as the first view suggests. Hebrews is concerned with the tabernacle (not the temple), so we never read of a rent veil. Far from being rent, this veil was carefully drawn aside for the high priest to enter on the Day of Atonement. **Second**, there is a parallel structure in v.19 and v.20.

v.19	v.20
A: boldness to enter	A: a new and living way
B: into the holiest	B: through the veil
C: by the blood of Jesus.	C: through his flesh (death).

Third, there are two barriers to a person's entry into the presence of God. These are my **sins** (what I've done) and my **self** (what I am). Christ has dealt with both my **sins**, through His *blood* (10.19) and my **self** through his *flesh* or death (10.20). I have been terminated and removed before God in my 'Adam standing'. Now I can enter within the veil.

Part of the reason we have boldness to enter into the holiest is because we have a 'Great Priest' (v.21) who is already there (4.14). As we present our thanksgivings and prayers, our Great Priest presents them to God (Hebrews 8.3, Revelation 8.3-4). **David Gooding:** *As Aaron (cf. Exodus 28.36-38), Christ has made Himself responsible for the imperfections of our worship and prayers. He has borne our sins and imperfections as saints and worshippers. We may therefore boldly enter in.* **AB Bruce:** *We have an open way and a friend at court.*

Let Us... Draw Near (v.22)

22 *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, **having** our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

There is yet another blessing which is ours forming a further reason why we can have every confidence in approaching the throne of God. We have once for all (perfect tense) had our 'hearts sprinkled' and 'bodies washed'. This is a reference to the consecration of the priests in Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8. Their bodies were washed by Moses (type of Christ) and they were sprinkled with blood. The blood speaks of **judicial cleansing** and is connected with **sins**. The blood of Christ has been applied to our hearts (spiritually), thus cleansing the conscience from its burden of guilt. The washing by water speaks of **moral cleansing** connected with our **sin nature**. Our bodies have been once for all washed (bathed all over, cf. John 13.10) resulting in new birth and new life. We are born of water and of the Spirit (John 3.5, Ezekiel 36.25-26). So, let us 'draw near'. Let us 'approach in worship' with a 'true heart', not in cold, legal ceremony, but with genuine and sincere affection. This is set in contrast to an **evil** and unbelieving heart which *departs* (3.12); a **true** heart *draws near*. We can also approach in 'full assurance of faith'. We must never doubt our acceptance or fitness for the divine presence; that would be to doubt the efficacy of the finished work of Christ.

Let Us... Hold Fast (v.23)

23 *Let us hold fast the ~~profession~~ (confession) of our faith (hope) without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)* Not only is there a 'going in' of *communion* (v.19, **holy** priesthood, 1 Peter 2.5), but there must be a reciprocal 'going out' in *confession* or testimony (**royal** priesthood, 1 Peter 2.9). Believers are to 'firmly hold' and 'continue' in their 'confession of hope'. The content of that hope is Christ (Romans 10.9). We have confessed or 'agreed with another' (the apostle and God) that He is both Son of God and Son of Man (3.1, 4.14). This produces a hope of glory (Colossians 1.27), salvation (1 Thessalonians 5.8) and eternal life (Titus 1.2). Now, let us hold to our confession 'without wavering', without 'leaning' or 'bending backwards' towards the old things we have left behind. Our hope is assured for God cannot lie (6.17-18) and He is faithful to fulfil that which He promises. He is the 'God of the Amen' (Isaiah 65.16).

Let Us... Consider One Another (vv.24-25)

24 *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

We are also to attentively and continuously focus our minds and energies on the needs of others. This is for the purpose of: 'stirring up' and 'encouraging' each other to show practical, self-sacrificial 'love' and demonstrating 'good' works (Ephesians 2.10, 1 Timothy 6.18, Titus 2.14, 3.8, 1 Peter 2.12). This is a delightful picture of the work of God. He considered us in our lost estate and reached out in love to meet our need. Such *agape* love has stimulated us to love and serve one another (Romans 5.5). *1 John 4.19: We love because he has first loved us. Wuest: And let us constantly be giving careful attention to one another for the purpose of stimulating one another to divine and self-sacrificial love and good works.*

It is as we assemble together that we can achieve this. Some of the Hebrews were 'forsaking' or 'abandoning' the gatherings of the believers. This may have been due to persecution (10.32-34), indifference or apathy (5.11-14) or a spiritual immaturity which may have indicated a lack of spiritual life. *The warning which follows regarding apostates (10.26-31) implies that those who deliberately and persistently abandon the fellowship of Christian believers are in danger of abandoning the Lord Himself.* Those true believers who gathered were to 'exhort', 'encourage', 'warn' and 'urge' one another to pursue the Christian pathway, especially in the light of present circumstances which signified the approach of 'the day'. Please note. The reason for attending the assembly gatherings here is not what we get **out** of them, but what we can bring to them.

'The day' has a significant meaning for believers of every age. For the **Hebrews then**, there were already signs in and around Judea of the impending destruction of the temple and Jerusalem by Titus in AD70 (see Luke 21, especially v.12, and vv.20-24 which focus on these events although they foreshadow a coming day). **Saints** reading of 'the day' in the *future tribulation* would be aware that they were already in the 'Day of the Lord' and thus looked forward to the day of Christ's return to the earth. For **believers now**, we should exhort one another in light of the soon coming return of the Lord Jesus to the air.