

Anonymous Letter to the Christian Community in Rome – Part 3 (c. 63–64)

Hebrews 10:19–13:25

Hold Fast the Confession of Our Hope

10:19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,
 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,
 21 and since *we have* a great priest over the house of God,
 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;
 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,
 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Fourth Warning—The Danger of Rejecting Christ’s Sacrifice

26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,
 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.
 28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy *on the testimony of* two or three witnesses.
 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?
 30 For we know Him who said, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY.” [Deut 32:35a] And again, “THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.” [Deut 32:36a] (LXX); cf. [Ps 135:14] (LXX 134:14)
 31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
 32 But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings,
 33 partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated.
 34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.
 35 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.
 36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

37 FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, [Isa 26:20] (LXX)
 HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.
 38 BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH;
 AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM. [Hab 2:3–4]

39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

Old Testament Examples of People Who Lived “By Faith”

11:1 Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
 2 For by it the men of old gained approval.
 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.
 4 By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.
 5 By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.
 6 And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.
 7 By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.
 8 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.
 9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;
 10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.
 11 By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.
 12 Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, *as many descendants* AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN

NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE. [cf. [Gen 22:17](#)] (LXX)

13 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

14 For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.

15 And indeed if they had been thinking of that *country* from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.

16 But as it is, they desire a better *country*, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;

18 *it was he* to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." [[Gen 21:12](#)] (LXX)

19 He considered that God is able to raise *people* even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come.

21 By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff. [[Gen 47:31](#)] (LXX)

22 By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them.

29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though *they were passing* through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.

31 By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

32 And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets,

33 who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed *acts of righteousness*, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,

34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

35 Women received *back* their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection;

36 and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment.

37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated

38 (*men* of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

39 And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,

40 because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

Running to Win

12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

The Lord's Discipline/Training

4 You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;

5 and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons,

"MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD,
NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;

6 FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES,
AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." [[Prov 3:11-12](#)] (LXX^A)

7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline?

8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, so that we may share His holiness.

11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

12 Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, [[Isa 35:3](#)]

13 and make straight paths for your feet, [[Prov 4:26](#)] (LXX) so that *the limb* which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

Dos and Don'ts of the Race

14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;

16 that *there be* no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a *single* meal.

17 For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

Fifth Warning—Do Not Refuse God's Son

18 For you have not come to a *mountain* that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, 19 and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which *sound was such that* those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.

20 For they could not bear the command, "IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED." [[Exod 19:12-13](#)]

21 And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, "I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling." [cf. [Deut 9:19a](#)] (LXX)

22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect,

24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.

25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned *them* on earth, much less *will we escape* who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven.

26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." [[Hag 2:6](#)] (LXX)

27 This *expression*, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

29 for our God is a consuming fire. [[Deut 9:3](#)] (LXX)

Well-pleasing Service to God

13:1 Let love of the brethren continue.

2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

3 Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, *and* those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.

4 Marriage *is to be held* in honor among all, and the *marriage* bed *is to be* undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

5 *Make sure that* your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," [cf. [Gen 28:15](#); [Deut 31:6](#), 8; [Josh 1:5](#)]

6 so that we confidently say,

"THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID.

WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?" [[Ps 118:6](#)] (LXX 117:6)

Shepherds and Sheep

7 Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

8 Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday and today and forever.

9 Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.

10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.

11 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest *as an offering* for sin, are burned outside the camp.

12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.
13 So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.
14 For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking *the city* which is to come.
15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.
16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.
17 Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

Closing

18 Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.
19 And I urge *you* all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you the sooner.
20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord,
21 equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.
22 But I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.
23 Take notice that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you.
24 Greet all of your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.
25 Grace be with you all.

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