

**10:1 - "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect."**

The law or the Levitical system was a rough representation of the future blessings which would be enjoyed by man. The 'good things to come' have already been defined as the fulfillment of the promises of freedom from sin and true access to God.

(Heb. 8:10-12)

The old system pointed to Christ, presenting a dim outline of how the promises would come about through him, who is the very image of the good things to come. Those of the old system could go to God, but only through the priesthood. They could be reconciled with God, but only temporarily. They could be cleansed, but only outwardly. Again, the Levitical system was a shadow of true forgiveness and full access to God.

The old system spoke of a Messiah and called Him an eternal high priest. It pointed to his death and the sufficiency of his blood. It showed by its very design that it was temporary. It was a system of types and shadows which pointed to Christ.

Speaking specifically of the sacrifices of the old system, the author stresses the point that being types and shadows they could not deal with sin effectively in themselves. (Heb. 7:11, 9:9)

**10:2-4 - "For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sin. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."**

The very fact that these sacrifices were repeated proved that they could temporarily cover but not effect true forgiveness. If a sacrifice was ever offered under this system that broke the bondage of sin, that effected peace of mind and heart, that wiped away the guilt and uncertainty that the next sin committed would condemn him to hell, or that would deal with the disease instead of treating the symptoms, than the sacrifices would have stopped.

But the sacrifices continued year after year and even the symbolism was

lost. They put faith in a system which could never forgive sin or was even meant to forgive sin. The symbols became reality to them even though repeatedly warned by their own scriptures.

*"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to harken than the fat of rams."*  
I Sam. 15:22

*"For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."*  
Psalms 51:16-17

*"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."*  
Hosea 6:6

*"I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will nor accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts."*  
Amos 5:21-22

Those who practiced a theology which evolved into the Roman Catholic church fell into the same trap of looking upon symbols as reality. They put their faith in bread and wine which can never take away sin. The ceremony and ritual temporarily appease the conscience, but can never clear it. They can seem outwardly cleansed but their hearts are never free from sins quilt and bondage. Their sacrifice can never cease, for they can never be sure of their pardon. Just as the old system was a shadow of Christ, so the Catholic system puts Christ in the shadow. He can never in this system be seen clearly.

The supposed Christian who takes a perverted comfort in the gospel, believing he can continue in sin because he is saved, falls into a similar trap. He looks upon belief as a work or as an end in itself. His faith is not in God but in his belief.

*"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."*  
Rom. 10:10

**10:5-6 - "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure."**

Because what the author has said about the Levitical system was the exact

opposite of the prevailing Jewish thought, it is necessary to prove his argument by the scriptures. (The Hebrew Christians must learn and acquire the same skill in defending their beliefs) The author expounds on Psalm 40:6, presenting the Christ as the speaker. Sacrifices and offerings could not fulfill the plan of God, so Christ came into the world as man. This shows that the system was not an end in itself and was temporary. Furthermore, God was not pleased with burnt offerings and sacrifices. As their scriptures stated, God was interested in obedience, the Levitical system being a symbol of their faith. God was not fooled by their hypocrisy. (Isaiah 1:10-18)

**10:7 - "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."**

The Messiah continues to speak in Psalm 40 stating that it is he of whom the scriptures speak.

*"Then he said, I, Lo, come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."*  
Psalm 40:7-8

Christ took up a body to do God's will, to accomplish what sacrifices and offerings could not do, and all according to what had been written. God states he cannot accomplish what he desires through sacrifices and offerings. He states he has no pleasure in these sacrifices and offerings (vv. 5-6). Then Christ says, 'I go to do your will, O God', in accordance with what has been written (v 7).

*"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."*  
Phil. 2:6-8

Christ came to do God's will. To do everything required to accomplish salvation. He lived a life of perfect obedience, suffered, died by the shedding of his blood, and rose to defeat death itself. Obedience is what God takes pleasure in. (Heb. 5:8-9)

*"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."*  
John 17:4

**10:8-9 - "Above when he said, sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings**

**and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."**

The author emphasizes the truth that the Messiah came to do the will of God, to abolish the old system in which God had no pleasure, and to establish the new system. It is clearly shown that the whole system is abolished. By mentioning sacrifice, offering, burnt offering, and offering for sin, it is shown that all sacrifices which men could offer were not capable of dealing with sin.

The Messiah, after saying that no sacrifice offered by man could accomplish the will of God, says that he will come himself, for in him would the will of God be accomplished. The readers were dealing with those who wanted to hold on to this system. The truth of the scriptures however was that it would be abolished and replaced by a more excellent system. The author is telling the readers that they can't be under both systems at the same time. God has replaced the old with the new. As sure and as suddenly as the veil of the holy of holies was torn in two, so they must sever their ties to the old system.

The old system was ordained by God and yet the author instructed the readers to sever all ties with it. With the coming of Christ, God no longer recognized the system. The priesthood and sacrifices were finished. Contrary to the commands of scripture the Catholic church resurrected the system of priests and sacrifices. A saved individual today cannot be a part of that system any more than the Hebrew could be under both systems.

**10:10 - "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."**

The salvation of the believer is the will of God. The Christ came to do God's will, and so through his obedience is the believer sanctified. Salvation is totally of God. He is the author of salvation. The will of man is contrary to that of God. (Rom. 3:10-18) Christ came as a man and was totally obedient to the will of God. It is through his obedience that we are saved. It was also the will of God that this be a once for all sacrifice, securing eternal salvation for all who would believe. (Heb. 9:12)

*"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Fathers will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again on the last day. And this is the will of him that*

*sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."* John 6:38-40

**10:11-12 - "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;"**

By contrasting the sacrifice of Christ with the sacrifice of the old system, the author emphasizes the all sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ. Under the old system the priests offered sacrifices every day. They constantly ministered to God for the people. The sacrifices were the same as prescribed by Moses centuries earlier. The author once again stresses the fact that the sacrifices of this system could not forgive sin. But Jesus, the Christ (v. 10), offered one sacrifice for sin. The fact that he sat down forever shows his work was complete and never to be repeated. It was all sufficient. (Heb. 9:28)

Notice the contrasts contained in the two verses. 'Every priest' vs 'this man', 'standeth' vs 'sit down', 'daily ministering and offering' vs 'had offered one sacrifice' and 'never take away sins' vs 'for sins for ever'.

**10:13 - "From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."**

Christ the high priest resides in heaven in the presence of God waiting for that time when the remaining promises will be fulfilled, according to God's plan. In the fullness of time all things will be put under the authority of Christ. Some will be drawn to him submitting to his Lordship, while the rest will be crushed by his power.

*"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."* Matt. 21:44

*"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* Phil. 2:9-14

It was the custom for conquerors to put their feet on the necks of their enemies after defeating them. This symbolized complete submission. The enemies of Christ are Satan, the world, unbelievers, evil, and death. All will be put under his feet.

*"And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, and put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them."*  
Joshua 10:24

*"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."*  
Psalm 110:1

*"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."*

I Cor. 15:25-28

**10:14 - "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."**

The sacrifice of Christ eternally secured all who are sanctified or set apart. Those that are his cannot be lost because of his all sufficient sacrifice.

*"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it again at the last day."*  
John 6:39

*"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*  
Phil. 1:6

This is why the defeat of his enemies is inevitable. They cannot gain anything or anyone that is his. He waits, in complete control until that day.

**10:15-17 - "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will my put laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."**

The author appeals to the scriptures to prove his position that the sacrifice of Christ is all sufficient, and that it secures forever those that are set apart. The author repeatedly refers to the scriptures as the words of the Holy Ghost. The author states that he has quoted these verses before. They are taken from the prophet Jeremiah and were quoted in Heb. 8:10-12. The verses speak of a new system in which those set apart would be inwardly holy. That is, holy in heart and mind. Those set apart would have true forgiveness. God would remember their sins no more.

**10:18 - "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin."**

The author has presented the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the means by which these prophecies are fulfilled. If fulfilled, true forgiveness is available, and if all sufficient, all other sacrifices, which were only symbolic, are useless.

**10:19 - "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,"**

The focus of the letter changes with verse 19 of this chapter. Up to this point many truths have been presented and discussed. The 'founders' of the two systems, Moses and Jesus, were compared and contrasted. Jesus was presented as a high priest, and again compared and contrasted to the Jewish high priest. Finally, the sacrifices of the old and new systems were compared and contrasted. In every instance the new system was superior and presented as the fulfillment of the old system, always in accordance with the scriptures. The rest of the letter addresses the consequences of the great truths presented.

Through the sacrifice of Christ, according to the plan of God, as written in the scriptures, believers now had full access to Christ. The holiest, or holy of holies, was symbolic of where God dwelt. The high priest could enter in once a year and only with blood. The believers can now dare to come before the throne of God having complete access to him by the blood of Christ.

*"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."*  
Rom. 5:1-2

Under the new system every believer is a priest offering himself to God through Jesus Christ.

*"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."*  
I Peter 2:5

**10:20-21 - "By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God;"**

Just as the holy of holies was entered by passing through the vail, so access to God can only be gained through Jesus Christ. True access to God could only

be made available through his flesh. He is the high priest, forever, over all believers, for he has prepared the way. (Heb. 9:7-8)

*"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church."*  
Eph. 1:22

The phrase 'new and living way' refers specifically to the sacrifice of Christ. The word 'new' means newly killed or freshly slaughtered. 'Living way' adds perpetuity to the sacrifice. The sacrifice of Christ will always be 'fresh or recent'. The terminology again alludes to the old system. The blood had to be offered when it was fresh, it could not be cold and dried. The sacrifice of Christ is all sufficient, it will be new and living for all eternity.

**10:22 - "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."**

Considering the great truths explained and having proved that Jesus Christ is the eternal high priest through whom the believer has access to God, the author's first exhortation is to draw near or to exercise boldness and to enter into a relationship with God.

Remember these new Christians were neglecting their new relationship with God. (Heb. 2:3) Because of their neglect and laziness their growth in the faith was hindered to where they were actually slipping back. (Heb. 5:12-14, 6:12)

The exhortation is to put away the hypocrisy of their fathers which they themselves had practiced. They were to come to God with a true heart and in true belief, which is what God had always commanded and desired. Alluding to familiar old testament ritual the author describes the believers new condition. Their hearts had been sprinkled and their consciences freed, meaning they had true forgiveness. Their bodies had been washed, meaning they were free to live holy lives.

*"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."*  
John 4:23-24

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*  
I John 1:9

*"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;"*  
Titus 3:5-6

Not only with a true heart demonstrated by a clear conscience and a holy life, but also in full assurance. They have known the fullness of the gospel message, they can understand the scriptures and have understanding of things which those of the old system could not clearly see. Paul calls it 'the full assurance of understanding'.

*"That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;"*  
Col. 2:2

**10:23 - "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)"**

This exhortation best illustrates the probable reason this letter was written. They were to hold their beliefs and grow in them. Just as the Christians of every generation since, they were in danger of compromising their beliefs. They must hold fast to their faith amid the trials they faced and the challenges to their faith presented by the Jews and others. To continue in the faith and to contend for that faith is a common new testament exhortation.

*"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;"*  
Col. 1:21-23

*"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;"*  
I Tim. 3:14

*"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."*  
Jude 1:3

To continue or persevere in the faith is the greatest proof of ones salvation.

*"Then Jesus said to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then ye are my disciples indeed;"*  
John 8:31

*"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:"*  
I Peter 1:10

The fact that God is faithful is the believers strength. The believer can be sure that the grace needed to persevere is always available.

*"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."*  
I Thes. 5:24

**10:24 - "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:"**

Having exhorted the believers to faith (Heb. 2:2) and to hope (Heb. 2:3), the author now exhorts them to have love. Having addressed their relationship to God, he now addresses their relationship to each other. Christians need each other. They are to draw strength from each other. This is how God chose to design his church. (I Cor. 12) The believers are to take a genuine interest in each other, arousing each other to live the Christian life, giving each other of themselves and their gifts. God works through the body of believers providing the strength to persevere and hold fast to the truth.

*"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."*  
Phil. 2:4

The relationship existing between Christians should be such that it is a witness to the world and proof of salvation.

*"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."*  
John 13:34-35

*"But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."*  
I Thes. 4:9

*"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us his commandment."*  
I John 3:23

*"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."*  
Gal. 6:10

Christians should see things in the lives of other believers that provoke them, something that convicts them to initiate change and growth in their lives.

Every believer needs love, encouragement, exhortation, and even rebuke. Hopefully this verse is self explanatory. Did you ever hear a sermon, attend a bible study, receive a card or attend some function which provoked you unto love and to good works? The exhortation here is to draw near to God and use this relationship for the good of others. Both giving as well as receiving, growing and being strengthened to hold fast the profession of our faith.

**10:25 - "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."**

Based on the above exhortation and the design of the church itself, it is important to fellowship with other believers. Some were purposely avoiding fellowship. The specific reasons are not given, but this practice is a cause of concern to the author. The probable cause is persecution which is mentioned later in this chapter. Some probably thought they could be 'closet Christians', hiding their true beliefs so as not to lose acceptance within the community.

What is meant by 'the day approaching' again is not specified. It is probably referring to the predicted destruction of the temple. (Heb. 8:13)

*"And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."*  
Matt. 24:1-2

This would be a time of unbelievable tribulation for the Jew. It would be a time of judgment, death, and dispersion. The believers needed to exhort their brethren to hold fast to their profession as that day of judgment approached.

*"We can see the importance and urgency in believers exhorting each other to draw near to God and to hold fast to their belief. When the day came these people had to know where they stood." Great Prophecies of the Bible R. Woodrow pp. 64*

It must be assumed that this letter was written to those of Palestine and specifically Jerusalem. This is not spelled out in the text of the letter. Within the text, however, we have seen that the priesthood and temple seemed to be a part of everyday life to those addressed.

Albert Barnes comments, "The most common and the almost universally

received opinion is that the epistle was addressed to the Hebrew Christians in Palestine. The ancients in general supposed it was addressed to the church in Jerusalem." (For other specific arguments see Barnes Notes, Hebrews to Jude pp. iv-vii)

**10:26 - "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,"**

The author states that the sacrifice of Christ is the only means of salvation. This statement adds weight to the exhortations given in the previous verses. They are to draw near to God, to persevere, to exhort on another, for if any reject the truth of the gospel there is no other means of salvation.

The readers who were under persecution had fallen back to some degree. They were being challenged by those around them. Many were being tempted to return to Judaism or at least to compromise their Christian beliefs. There were probably those who thought it didn't make any difference, that both Christians and Jews worshipped the same God and both systems were acceptable. (Those who professed Christ but did not assemble with the others?)

Those who are truly saved are perfected forever (v 14). Those who might leave were not true Christians or would eventually come back.

*"They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."*

I John 2:19

This verse in no way forever closes the door on those who would reject the gospel, but states that they have turned their backs on the only way, and if they would continue in this state would then be condemned upon their death.

**10:27 - "But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."**

The sacrifice of Christ being the only means of salvation, anyone who has professed this truth but falls away has no hope. If continuing in such a state, judgment and destruction are inevitable. The author wants to impress upon those who may be wavering that the answer lies in Christianity, for outside of the truths of the gospel lies only the wrath of God.

**10:28 - "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:"**

For those who might take his warning lightly, the author appeals to the old testament example of those who disregarded the old system. Under the old system if anyone left to follow another 'faith' or compromised the Jewish beliefs with another system they were supposed to be killed. Thus the persecution of the Christians by the Jews.

*"If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thy own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; thou shalt not consent unto him, nor harken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die: because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any wickedness as this is among you."*

Deut. 13:6-11

In cases involving capital punishment, two or three witnesses were needed to protect the rights of the accused.

**10:29 - "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?"**

If the old system demanded death for those who rejected it, how much greater the punishment be for those who reject the fulfillment of that system? It has been shown that Christ is infinitely superior to the old system, so there can be no hope for those who reject him. The author relates to his readers the seriousness of rejecting the doctrines of Christianity and going back or compromising. He does this with the intent to keep them from doing so, to make them think, re-evaluate, and examine what they would be doing.

Professing to be a Christian and joining in fellowship set one apart (sanctified) from the rest of the world. To then reject the truth of the gospel is to count Jesus Christ as a mere man, to discount his claims, and to consider his shed blood of no greater value than that of the sacrifices of the old system.

They reject God's grace and mercy, thus insulting the Holy Spirit. They are in effect telling the author of salvation that his great work is wrong. The creature instructs the creator!

**10:30-31 - "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. It is a fearful thing to fall into hands of the living God."**

The author proceeds to show them from the scriptures that such wickedness will most certainly fall under the judgment of God.

*"To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left."*  
Deut. 32:35-36

They are reminded of the fearful prospect of having God deal with their disobedience and rejection. The Jews were very familiar with the judgments of God from his dealings with the world around them as well as the past judgments inflicted upon Israel.

These verses take on added meaning if written to the Jerusalem church just prior to the city's destruction. Seeing the judgment of God upon that system at hand as predicted by Christ in Matthew 24, this would represent the authors final plea for all to totally commit themselves to the truth of the gospel. History tells us the destruction of Jerusalem was of unimaginable brutality. (see Great Prophecies of the Bible pp 71-79)

Whether these were the specific judgments the author warned of or not is not known. If not, the fate of the Jews in Jerusalem serve as another example of the judgment of God upon those who reject the all sufficient blood of his Anointed One, Jesus Christ.

**10:32 - "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;"**

The author appeals to the readers past, hoping their recollection of former struggles will strengthen them in their present situation. Just as they have been throughout this letter, the readers are addressed as Christians (enlightened to the truth). When this particular church was started its members were faced with great struggles and hardships.

This would again be especially true if this letter was written to the Jerusalem church. There was much prosecution of the Christians by the Jews and later the Romans. In the book of Acts we get a glimpse of the early church in Jerusalem. Stephen is stoned, Peter imprisoned, and Saul (Paul) relentlessly leading the persecution.

*"Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with on accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."* Acts 7:57-58

*"And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews."* Acts 12:11

*"And Saul yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they be men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."* Acts 9:1-2

The author reminds them that they endured these trials. They were sustained by God's grace through their faith and came through. Whatever their situation now, it is a similar struggle. They must hold fast to the profession of their faith. (v 23)

Many in the church probably remember those times and their faith was proven by their endurance. They probably also remember those who fell away at that time, and this should also now strengthen them. There were probably those who were added to their numbers since that time, and also those who were too young to remember. These can be strengthened and encouraged to hold fast by learning from those who actually endured.

**10:33 - "Partly, whilst ye were made a grazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used."**

The author elaborates on the afflictions endured by these Christians in those days. They were held up to public ridicule suffering both insult and persecution, all because of their faith. They were probably treated as foreigners in their own lands and by their own people.

*"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."*  
 Matt. 5:10-11

*"These have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me."*  
 John 16:1-3

*"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony."*  
 Luke 21:12-13

In the midst of these persecutions, these Christians demonstrated the love which they were now once again being exhorted to exercise. (v 24) They identified themselves with each other in Christian love.

**10:34 - "For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."**

The author himself was in prison during these times and they identified with him, probably at the risk of their own reputation. Their trials also involved the confiscation of their goods and property. This they endured joyfully, not offering resistance, but focusing on Christ.

*"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;"*  
 Rom. 5:3

*"For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:"*  
 I Peter 2:20-21

They could endure these trials joyfully for they were convinced that they were partakers in an eternal inheritance which was better and permanent.

*"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*  
 Matt. 6:19-21

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"*

1 Peter 1:3-7

*"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."*

John 14:2-4

The church had been through trials before and witnessed God's grace and deliverance. The death of Stephen and James, as well as Peter's imprisonment, took place between 32-44 A.D. A persecution initiated by Rome took place around 49 A.D. These were probably the 'former days'. Nero instigated a persecution with the burning of Rome in 64 A.D., and the zealots were becoming more fanatical culminating with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. This is the probable time period of this letter, representing the latest trials to befall this church.

**10:35 - "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward."**

The author's exhortation is not to throw away the confidence and assurance which they once exhibited. They were once bold in their faith, not ashamed to be identified with Christ or the gospel.

*"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."*

Matt. 10:32-33

*"If we suffer, we also shall reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."*

II Tim. 2:12-13

They must once again exhibit confidence, holding onto their faith and focusing upon the promise of a greater reward as they once did.

**10:36 - "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."**

They must be patient, knowing God is accomplishing his purposes through their trials. God knows of their situation and calls on them to hold fast. Patience is foreign to the human nature but can be found if they draw near to God and consider each other. Holding fast to the faith and enduring in the midst of trials is the mark of a true Christian and a true fellowship.

(Heb. 3:6, 14)

Christians will receive the promise in due time, but God's will must first be accomplished. The Christian must first fulfill his purpose on earth. This seems to allude to the earlier part of the chapter where it is shown that Christ came to accomplish the will of God and it is by his will that we have salvation.

(Heb, 10:7-10)

**10:37 - "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."**

The author comforts them by speaking of their deliverance. There is an appointed time for all things, and at that time there is never a delay. This verse could be referring to their deliverance from the present situation with the destruction of Jerusalem at hand. It also could be speaking of their personal deliverance in death.

*"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away."* I Peter 1:24

The verse could also be referring to the final deliverance and the fullness of salvation with the coming of Christ at the end of the world.

This verse is taken from Habakkuk 2:3-4.

**10:38 - "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."**

Those that live by faith are the righteous of God. The believer is saved by grace through faith. Faith is the believers link to God by which he can have continuing confidence. He who would turn away is suspect at best. God has no pleasure in an unbeliever. (Heb. 11:6)

**10:39 - "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."**

The author encourages the readers by expressing confidence that they will heed his exhortations and persevere in faith. He believes they are true Christians, will hold fast to the faith, and receive the promise of their full reward. (v 35-36) The author knew that this letter would be the means by which the believers would be strengthened. By this letter the author is himself putting verse 24 into practice.

Rejecting the gospel leads to inevitable destruction while continuing under all circumstances is a sign to true salvation and eternal life.