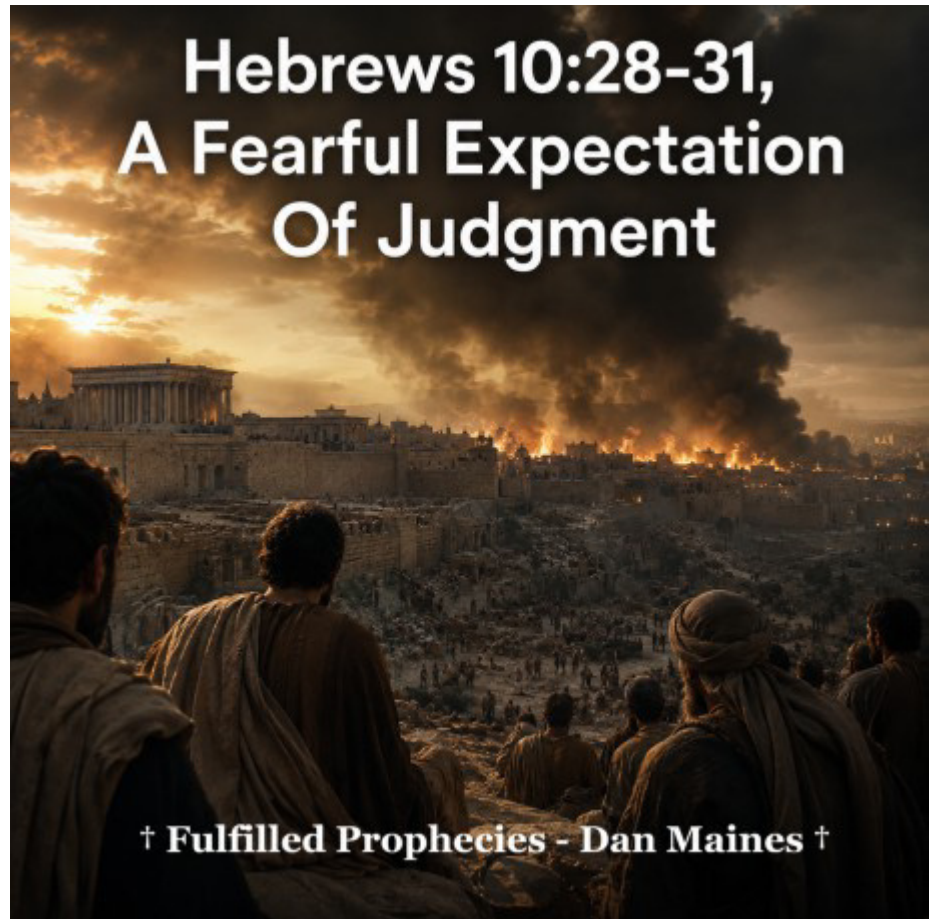


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**Hebrews 10:28-31,
A Fearful
Expectation Of
Judgment**



By Dan Maines

Hebrews 10:28-31, A Fearful Expectation Of Judgment

Introduction

† Hebrews 10:28-31 is often read as a warning about an endless future judgment, but the context places the warning squarely upon the generation that stood on the brink of the destruction of Jerusalem.

† The writer of Hebrews was warning covenant breakers who were turning away from Christ and returning to the old covenant

system that was about to vanish away.

† The judgment in view was not thousands of years away. It was near, just as the entire book of Hebrews repeatedly declares.

† Hebrews was written while the old covenant was still standing but ready to disappear, placing the letter before the destruction of Jerusalem. (Hebrews 8:13)

Hebrews 10:28-29

Anyone who has ignored the Law of Moses is put to death without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severe punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot 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?

† Under the Law of Moses, covenant violators could be put to death based upon the testimony of witnesses. The writer argues that rejecting Christ carried a far greater consequence. (Deuteronomy 17:2-6)

† These Hebrews were being tempted to return to the temple system, sacrifices, and priesthood that Christ had already fulfilled. (Hebrews 8:13)

† To reject Christ after receiving knowledge of Him was to treat His covenant blood as worthless and to insult the Spirit who testified concerning Him. (John 15:26)

† The punishment was greater because Christ is greater than Moses, His covenant is greater than the old covenant, and His sacrifice is greater than animal sacrifices. (Hebrews 3:1-6;

Hebrews 9:11-14)

Hebrews 10:30

For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE."

† The judgment mentioned here is directed toward God's covenant people, not pagan nations.

† Moses had already warned Israel that covenant unfaithfulness would bring divine vengeance upon the nation. (Deuteronomy 32:35-36)

† Jesus repeated the same warning when He declared judgment upon that generation for rejecting Him. (Matthew 23:35-36)

† The judgment warned of here agrees with Jesus' declaration that all these things would come upon that generation. (Matthew 23:36; Matthew 24:34)

† The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 became the historical demonstration that God would indeed judge His people when they rejected His Son.

Hebrews 10:31

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

† This statement was not empty rhetoric. The readers were living in the final days of the old covenant age. (Hebrews 1:2)

† The same book repeatedly says the end was drawing near and that the old covenant was ready to disappear. (Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 10:25; Hebrews 10:37)

† Just a few verses earlier, the readers were told they would see the Day drawing near, showing the judgment was approaching in their lifetime. (Hebrews 10:25)

† The writer soon states that Christ's coming was only a very little while away, proving the warning was imminent for the original audience. (Hebrews 10:37)

† For those abandoning Christ and trusting again in the temple system, it truly was a fearful thing because that entire system was about to be judged and removed.

† The warning was real, imminent, and directed to the first-century audience who first received this letter.

Historical References

† Josephus recorded the horrors of Jerusalem's destruction, including famine, internal civil war, and massive loss of life during the Roman siege, demonstrating the severity of the judgment that fell upon the nation.

† Josephus described unprecedented suffering during the siege of Jerusalem, matching the covenant curses and warnings given throughout Scripture.

† Eusebius recorded that Christians remembered Jesus' warnings and fled Jerusalem before its destruction, preserving their lives while judgment came upon the city.

† The historical record confirms that a devastating covenant judgment occurred exactly within the generation Jesus

identified. (Matthew 24:34)

How It Applies To Us Today

† We can trust Christ's time statements because history confirms that He fulfilled what He promised.

† We don't need to live in fear of a coming covenant judgment because the old covenant age has already ended.

† We should remain thankful for the finished work of Christ and the kingdom that cannot be shaken. (Hebrews 12:28)

† This passage reminds us that rejecting God's provision always brings consequences, while trusting Christ brings confidence and peace.

Q Was Hebrews warning people living thousands of years in the future?

A No. Hebrews was written to first-century believers and repeatedly says the fulfillment was near. (Hebrews 10:25; Hebrews 10:37)

Q What judgment was approaching?

A The judgment connected with the end of the old covenant system and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. (Matthew 23:35-38; Luke 21:20-22)

Q Why was returning to the Law such a serious matter?

A Because returning to the Law meant rejecting the completed sacrifice of Christ and trusting again in a covenant that was passing away. (Hebrews 8:13; Galatians 5:4)

Q Why does Hebrews compare Christ to Moses in this warning?

A Because the argument is from lesser to greater. If rejecting Moses brought judgment, rejecting Christ brought an even greater covenant judgment. (Hebrews 3:1-6; Hebrews 10:28-29)

Q How do we know the judgment was near?

A Hebrews repeatedly says the Day was drawing near and that Christ's coming would occur in a very little while. (Hebrews 10:25; Hebrews 10:37)

Q Does Hebrews 10:31 teach eternal conscious torment?

A No. The passage warns of God's judgment upon covenant breakers. The context is the approaching judgment upon Israel and the end of the old covenant age. (Hebrews 10:25-31)

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Hebrews 10:28-31

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 5-6; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3

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