



Knowing what the Hebrews knew

Old Testament background for Hebrews 10:26-39



Unintentional v deliberate

The Law of Moses distinguished between unintentional sin and deliberate, premeditated sin.



Read Numbers 15:22-31 for the Mosaic Law instructions about unintentional sin (community and individual) and deliberate individual sin. *The idea of deliberate sin is referred to in Hebrews 10:26.*

Consuming fire

Amongst the prophecies of Isaiah is a song that celebrates future victory and deliverance for Israel. As part of this, Isaiah contrasts the destiny of those who trust in the LORD and that of His enemies.



Read Isaiah 26 for this song. *The fire reference in verse 11 is very similar to, and perhaps inspired the language of Hebrews 10:27.*

Witnesses required

In the Law of Moses, some offences were punishable by death. Such offences required a certain number of witnesses before guilt could be established.



Read Deuteronomy 17:2-7 for the Mosaic Law instructions about the death penalty, including the number of witnesses required. *Refusing to obey the Law of Moses is compared to rejecting Jesus in Hebrews 10:28-29.*



The one who can be trusted to bring justice

Shortly before Moses died, the LORD spoke to him about what would happen to the people of Israel in the future. The LORD told Moses to write down a song that foretold these things, and to have the people learn it. Although grim, the song included a message of hope for Israel: those who brought disaster on Israel would one day be brought to justice themselves.



Read Deuteronomy 31:14-32:47 for the full story, including the words of the song (32:1-43). *32:35a and 32:35b are quoted in Hebrews 10:30. Note that verse 32:43a was quoted in Hebrews 1:6.*



Living by faith

Habakkuk was a prophet who lived in Judah in the years leading up to the Babylonian invasion and overthrow of Jerusalem. Troubled by the violence and social injustice in Judah, as well as the prospect of the Babylonians gaining victory over the LORD's people, Habakkuk called out to the LORD. The answers he received from the LORD fuelled his faith for the dark days ahead.



Read the book of Habakkuk (only 56 verses in total!). *2:3b-4 is quoted in Hebrews 10:37-38*



Engaging with the message

Questions & answers for Hebrews 10:26-39



Hot spots

- 1) What's alive for you in this passage? (Things that stand out, "aha" moments, questions you have, etc)



Digging into the passage

- 2) List as many similarities as you can find between this passage and Hebrews 6:4-12.
- 3) The author wrote this passage to believers. According to the author, why is turning your back on Jesus – after putting your faith in Him – such a terrible thing to do?
- 4) Make a list of the ways the Hebrews suffered at the start of their faith journey – and their response.
- 5) Apart from the warnings, what specific reason(s) does the author give in this passage to encourage the Hebrews to persevere with their faith?



Connecting life and faith

- 6) The author of Hebrews hoped to warn the Hebrews by referring to God's judgment. What part - if any - should fear play in faith? You might like to consider other passages also (eg 1 John 4:7-21)
- 7) What are some things that you currently need to "patiently endure"?
- 8) What are you looking forward to about Jesus' return?