

Sunday February 12th 2012
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Thirty Two

1). Heb 10:26 *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

a). In our last session on the Book of Hebrews we had studied what it would mean for us to sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth.

b). And in very simple terms it would be – to have been brought by the ministry of the Holy Spirit to a place of mature understanding with respect to the coming Kingdom of Christ and then to turn away from that truth thereby rejecting both the Kingdom and the King.

c). Within the context of the facets of the progressive warning in Hebrews which we have seen so far, sinning willfully would be continuing to drift away as a result of not giving the more earnest heed to the things we have heard – it would be continuing to harden our hearts against this truth and therefore continuing to not hear His voice – continuing to regress instead of going on to maturity – continuing to fall away – all of which would be manifest in forsaking the assembling of ourselves together. And this is something that we must keep in mind throughout all we look at today.

d). In our study of 1 + 2 Peter to sin willfully is the thing that we came to know as apostasy – a stepping away from the truth – and at its heart, both as we saw in Peter and here in Hebrews, is believing a lie – believing something other than that which God has said and then organizing our life upon this false foundation – 2Pe 2:1 ¶ *But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 ¶ By covetousness they will exploit you with*

deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

e). Now the 'heresies' that lead their followers to destruction do not of themselves necessarily have the appearance of wickedness, in fact to the natural man and to the religious spirit they may well appear as a positive virtue, as a really good thing – but anything that draws our focus away from where God's focus is; anything that fixes our sight on this present age rather than the age which is to come, no matter how much it appeals to us is a destructive heresy that blasphemes the way of truth. And remember, unless a work emanates out of the faith, unless it is in response to that which God has said within the context of the coming Kingdom, it is a dead work and is of no value outside of itself.

f). Now not giving the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, hardening our hearts against the truth, is a sure way to make us vulnerable to that which is the lie. As we remember the corruption, the leavening process that takes place with the Word of the Kingdom as shown in the Matthew 13 parables we will realize that the lie exists, in all its various forms more abundantly than the truth.

g). And so because of this our safety rests in - Ro 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

h). But this is not just hearing the scriptures as the scriptures themselves can be twisted into a lie, but it is hearing the scriptures after the fashion in which the scriptures themselves tell us they are to be understood - Isa 28:9 ¶ *"Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts? 10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little." 11 For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people, 12 To whom He said, "This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest," And, "This is the refreshing"; Yet they would not hear. 13 But the word of the LORD was to them, "Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little," That they might go and fall backward, and be broken And snared and caught.*

i). 1Co 2:13 *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

2). Now before we leave the subject of continuing to sin willfully I want to draw our attention to the OT type for this so that we may have the fullest picture possible of this thereby protecting us from any residual falsehood or any future action of the enemy of our soul in respect to this – to make sure that we are not susceptible to the lie regarding it. What we will realize is that the willful sin does not find its voice exclusively in the Book of Hebrews and nor is our understanding

of it left entirely to the context within that Book; rather that which we find in Hebrews is given its fullness by comparing scripture with scripture, by seeing how that presented in the type is fulfilled in the antitype - and needless to say to see this OT picture we go to the first generation of the nation of Israel to come out of Egypt, remembering of course what scripture tells us about them with respect to ourselves – 1Co 10:1 ¶ *Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 ¶ Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

a). And let's also remember that God brought Israel out of Egypt for one reason only, that they should enter the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to become a kingdom of priests at the head of the nations – however, although God's purpose for them is absolutely certain, their participation in His purpose was, and is conditional – Ex 19:3 *And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: 4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. 5 'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 'And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."*

b). And of course in the same way we have been delivered from the bondage of this present age with a view to being a kingdom of priests in the age to come in the heavenly portion of the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and for us it is conditional also - Heb 3:14 *For we have become partakers [companions] of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, Ro 8:17 ¶ and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

3). And so to see the willful sin within the camp of Israel we would go to the Book of Numbers - Nu 13:21 ¶ *So they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, near the entrance of Hamath. 22 And they went up through the South and came to Hebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23 Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs. 24 The place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the men of Israel cut down there. 25 And they returned from spying out the land after forty days. 26 ¶ Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.*

a). There was absolutely no doubt that God was giving the land to Israel – Ex 6:8 *'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'*

b). And He had now allowed leaders from the 12 tribes to go into this land to affirm that it was everything He said it was – and according to our scripture it was a land which truly flows with milk and honey.

c). However, as we know those who went into the land saw things with their natural eye which caused them to believe a lie - Nu 13:32 *And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. 33 "There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."*

d). But 2 of those who saw with the natural eye saw an even greater reality with the eyes of faith and chose to believe God - Nu 14:6 *But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 8 "If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' 9 "Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them."*

e). And again here, through the example of Israel, we will realize that what we choose see will have a direct bearing on how we conduct our lives in the here

and now and will consequently determine what will happen to us at the Judgment Seat.

f). This generation of Jews did not just err on the side of caution, but stood away from that which God had said – in rejecting the land they rejected the One who had given them the land – they turned their back on the very reason the Lord delivered them from the bondage of Egypt and walked away from the purpose for which the nation was brought into being in the first place. They had believed the lie that had been given to them by what they saw, rather than believing the reality of that which they could only see by faith.

g). This then is the OT picture of the willful sin and it is a very specific sin in respect to the land and the inheritance; and we will no doubt remember God's response to this sin - Nu 14:28 *"Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: 29 'The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. 30 'Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. 31 'But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. 32 'But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. 33 'And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. 34 'According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection. 35 'I the LORD have spoken this; I will surely do so to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.'"*

h). From God's perspective there is no offering to be made for this sin, just the certain fearful expectation of judgment and the reason for this should be fairly obvious; according to the scripture they 'complained [be obstinate, refuse to move] against' Him; they 'despised' the land; they 'gathered together [lit. to agree together] against' Him – and in these 3 things we would see our 3 witnesses against the nation.

4). And now if we bring this OT picture over into our own experience we will realize that God has promised us the heavenly land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and He has allowed us to spy out this land - 1Co 2:9 *But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of*

God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

a). *Heb 6:4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.*

b). And it is without doubt that if we turn away from this mature understanding and thereby despise the King and the Kingdom it will be because we have chosen to believe that which we see with our natural eye rather than that which can be seen only with the eye of faith and this would be one and the same as believing the lie.

c). And just as in the picture, so with us – there is from God's perspective no offering to be made for this willful sin - Heb 10:26 *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.*

d). And just as we saw with Israel so we would reject the One who has given us the land – we will turn our backs on the very reason the Lord delivered us from the bondage of this age and we will walk away from the purpose for which the church was brought into being in the first place – Mt 21:43 *"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*

e). But for us, in one respect, this is far worse as we would reject the death and shed blood of God on our behalf thereby demonstrating that His death and His blood are of no consequence to us - Heb 10:28 *Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?*

5). We will return to the Book of Numbers for a while as the sequencing of events that we find there is very instructive for us with respect to this. Immediately following God's pronouncement of judgment upon Israel because of their willful sin we find the nation 'changing' their minds and attempting to go into the land - Nu 14:43 *"For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you*

shall fall by the sword; because you have turned away from the LORD, the LORD will not be with you." 44 But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop;.....

a). But God will not be with them, He will not change His mind concerning His judgment – once they had reached this point of no return nothing would change, nor could it as there is no sacrifice for this willful sin. It is exactly as we saw earlier - Heb 6:4 *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened,.....6 if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.*

b). As it is laid out for us in the OT type so it must be for us in the antitype.

6). All of this brings us to the conclusion of Numbers Chapter 14 and Chapter 15 begins with some 21 verses concerning offerings that are to be made that are directed to the 2nd generation who will enter the land and what we should learn from this is that even if those close to us should draw back to that point of no return, God's forgiveness is still there and still in operation for us if we will continue to believe to the saving of our soul.

a). V22-29 of Chapter 15 then detail what the individual is to do and what will be God's response to that individual with regards to that which He calls the unintentional sin - Nu 15:28 *'So the priest shall make atonement for the person who sins unintentionally, when he sins unintentionally before the LORD, to make atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. 29 'You shall have one law for him who sins unintentionally, for him who is native-born among the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwells among them.*

b). Now in order to make sense of the unintentional sin we have to set it against that which comes next, remembering what has gone before – Nu 15:30 ¶ *'But the person who does anything presumptuously, whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on the LORD, and he shall be cut off from among his people. 31 'Because he has despised the word of the LORD, and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be upon him.'*

c). And both of these must be seen within the context of entrance into or exclusion from the land – we might recall in Numbers 14:44 that Israel 'presumed to go up to the mountain top' – they actively defied that which God had said about them and the land.

d). And here is how we should understand these two with regards to ourselves – we all sin and in this we all sin against God and in sinning against God we sin against His purpose for us, but the sins we commit are not committed with the intention of rejecting the King and the Kingdom and in this sense they are unintentional. And in respect of this we have seen numerous chapters in Hebrews concerning our High Priest - Heb 4:15 *For we do not have a High Priest who*

cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

1Jo 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 ¶ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

e). On the other hand if we sin presumptuously, if we defy that which God has said with respect to Christ's Kingdom, then God sees this as a deliberate rejection of the King and the Kingdom which can only result in being cut off – To sin presumptuously and to sin willfully are one and the same thing; continuing to drift away as a result of not giving the more earnest heed to the things we have heard – it would be continuing to harden our hearts against this truth and therefore continuing to not hear His voice – continuing to regress instead of going on to maturity – continuing to fall away –forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.

f). And then to make abundantly clear where God wants our focus to be, this is what follows in Numbers Chapter 15 - Nu 15:32 *Now while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. 33 And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation. 34 They put him under guard, because it had not been explained what should be done to him. 35 Then the LORD said to Moses, "The man must surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp." 36 So, as the LORD commanded Moses, all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died.*

g). This then is the definition of the presumptuous sin, which is the same as the willful sin, it is a sin against that which God has said concerning the Sabbath day, the 7th Day – all of which takes us to the very foundation of scripture in Genesis.

h). Let's remember what the Lord had said to Israel about this Day – Ex 31:13 *"Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 14 'You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. 15 'Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. 16 'Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual*

covenant. 17 *'It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.'*" 18 *And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.*

i). And do we realize that this commandment was given to Israel as a sign to point them to the glorious Kingdom of Christ? And was given to us as a type?

j). I would suggest that this incident of the man gathering sticks on the Sabbath is the very incident that is referenced in - Heb 10:28 *Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.*

k). For Israel the willful sin was against keeping the Sabbath which was a sign, for us the willful sin is a sin against the 7th Day, the Day to which the Sabbath points. And as in the type, so in the antitype - *Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death.*

l). Israel at Kadesh Barnea and the man gathering sticks on the Sabbath are 2 facets of the same picture and both teach the same truth – and as we see that which is presented to us in the type with regards to the willful sin so it makes abundantly clear to us how we are to understand the willful sin in the antitype.

7). Then, at the end of Hebrews Chapter 10, at the conclusion of this facet of the progressive warning concerning the willful sin, the writer admonishes his readers to remember - Heb 10:32 *But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: 33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; 34 for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*

a). But this will have to wait until next week, if the Lord is willing.