

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

HEBREWS 12:14-15, 18-29

LESSON: MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT — November 19, 2017

INTRODUCTION:

Chapter 12:4-13 The Lord does not call upon Believers to go to the Cross and shed their blood regarding the resistance of sin. Jesus has already done that for us. However, speaking to Believers as sons, they weren't to forget the exhortation which came from Proverbs: don't despise the chastening of the Lord; don't faint when you've been rebuked by Him; and endure the chastening of the Lord. It lets us know that, if a son, you will be chastised by the Father just as you were corrected by earthly fathers, for it will lead to the peaceable fruit of righteousness and share in His holiness. If you looked at the Olympics at any time, some ran the race or jumped on the bars with pain. They endured with steadfast fortitude to receive the prize. They were disciplined to keep going in spite of the pain. It would only be one shot at winning the goal. In the Christian race there is the discipline of you laying aside every weigh and sin that hinders you, and would run with patience the race set before you. Being a son, the Father will chasten those that are His and those that He loves. It may not seem great at the time, but it yields a harvest of righteousness and peace. Our best training comes from God. Therefore to endure: Lift up your hands and strengthen your buckling knees that your feet will go in a straight path, because whatever is lame will be healed.

LESSON: I. FOLLOW HOLINESS Hebrew 12:14-15

12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:— The writer of Hebrews admonishes believers to...

- follow after peace with all men. The believer is never to give up, not as long as there is hope; some degree of peace. However, remember peace is not always possible with everyone. But follow after it.
- follow after holiness. The believer is to be separated from the world and its pleasures and possessions. He is to be set apart unto God.

12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;— Believers are to be on the lookout and search diligently lest one fall into one of the dangers that threaten the believer's faith. We can look at four great dangers that threaten believers:

1. **There is the danger of falling short of the grace of God.** Grace is giving, but it is giving to people who do not deserve the gift. Do Christians need to concern themselves with falling from grace? If there were no possibility for one to "*fall short of the grace of God*", then there would be no need for us to be "*looking diligently*." So we do fall short.
2. **There is the danger of a root of bitterness.** Bitterness can be caused by any thing or any person who has failed us or brought disappointment and trouble to us in some way. It is a stumbling block in our pursuit of peace; it destroys the peace within the person who harbors it.

NOT APART OF THE LESSON VERSES 16-17

12:16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

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3. **There the danger of becoming a fornicator.** There are all kinds of sexual vice whether married or un-married. Imagining and lusting within the mind is the very same as committing the act in the eyes of God. And it will keep one out of the kingdom of heaven.
4. **There is the danger of becoming a profane person.** One does not have to be blatantly wicked. They can displease God by simply devaluing that which is important to Him! Esau lost his birthright. He was the primary person whom the great spiritual blessings of God were to come; the promised seed and the Promised Land. But he was profane (disrespected): he cared more for his body and flesh; for the desires and lusts; for the pleasures and possessions of this world than he did for the spiritual things of God. Therefore, he lost what was rightfully his, his birthright; the glorious promises of God.

12:17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. He never repented. When he cried before his father, he was crying for the blessing, not crying because he was making a commitment to follow God and to become spiritually minded. He was crying because he wanted a blessing. How many sell their birthright; their blessing for the satisfaction of their flesh, etc.? This is one of the great dangers that the believer must guard against.

BACK TO LESSON

II. FEARFUL ENCOUNTER Hebrews 12:18-21

12:18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,— The mountain described first is Mount Sinai, to which Israel came following their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. What a contrast between the people's terrified approach to God at Mount Sinai and their joyful approach at Mount Zion.

1. **Mount Sinai** was marked by fear and terror. **Mount Zion** is a place of love and forgiveness.
2. **Mount Sinai** is in the desert. **Mount Zion** is the city of the Living God.
3. **Mount Sinai** spoke of earthly things. **Mount Zion** speaks of heavenly things.
4. At **Mount Sinai**, only Moses was allowed to draw near to God. At **Mount Zion**, an innumerable company, a general assembly is invited to draw near.
5. **Mount Sinai** was characterized by guilty men in fear. **Mount Zion** features just men made perfect.
6. At **Mount Sinai**, Moses was the mediator. At **Mount Zion**, Jesus is the mediator.
7. **Mount Sinai** brings an Old Covenant, which was ratified by the blood of animals. **Mount Zion** brings a New Covenant, which is ratified by the blood of God's precious Son.
8. **Mount Sinai** was all about exclusion, keeping people away from the mountain. **Mount Zion** is all about invitation.
9. **Mount Sinai** is all about Law. **Mount Zion** is all about grace.

God gave the Law at Mount Sinai. The mountain was burning with fire. There was great darkness and a wild storm.

- **"Fire"** symbolized the holiness, righteousness, and purity of God. Man had to be careful how he approached God.
- **"Blackness and darkness"** symbolized the fact that God was hidden from man's sight. He could not be fully known because He could not be seen. Blackness and darkness also symbolized that the old covenant of the law could not give man a clear picture of God; it could only give a shadow of what God was like; a shadow that was given through types and symbols and written words which are ever so inadequate. The point is this: man just could not know God; not all that he needed

¹http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?AuthorID=2&contentID=8080&commInfo=31&topic=Hebrews&ar=Hbr_12_20
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to know about God; not by approaching God through the holy places of this earth and by law.

- **"Tempest or raging storm"** symbolized the judgment and fierce wrath and power of God. He was to be feared and revered as the Great and Almighty Judge who could exact judgment upon any who refused to obey His covenant of Law. The point is this: any person who approached God through the Old Covenant of law faced a holy, distant God of judgment.

What a difference Jesus has made! Before He came, God seemed distant and threatening. After He came, God welcomes us through Christ into His presence.

12:19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:— When God first began to give the law to Moses, there was the blast of a trumpet, and then God Himself began to speak in an audible voice. The voice of God was so strong and forceful and the Ten Commandments so convicting that terror struck the heart of the people. They cried out for God to stop speaking.

12:20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:— God had been very severe in His restrictions regarding even the slightest touching of Mount Sinai. If even the beast should touch the mountain, they were forbidden to touch the beast, but must rather immediately stone the beast or shoot it with an arrow. Remember, they cried out for God to stop speaking; they couldn't endure the manner which God commanded, for the sound brought fear.

12:21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)—²It was so terrible that the people could not endure, even Moses, who held the highest intimacy with Jehovah. God revealed His glories, the burning fire, the blackness, the darkness, the tempest, the loud-sounding trumpet, and the voice of His words. It was so terrible that Moses said, "*I exceedingly fear and tremble.*" Truly, the presence of our holy God is awesome, as Moses himself testifies. The people were afraid to hear God's voice, and even Moses feared and trembled as God, who "*spake to him as a man speaketh to his friend.*"

III. FAITHFUL MEDIATOR Hebrews 12:22-24

12:22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,— The people had to be reminded of why they came to the mountain. They have come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels where God dwells. ³Zion was originally the stronghold of the Jebusites in Jerusalem that became the "*city of David.*" ⁴**Mt. Sinai** was the earthly and physical place the people of Israel had come, but Mt. Zion is the heavenly and spiritual presence of God. The term "*Zion*" came to be used to refer to: The heavenly city we will one day experience. In coming to Christ gives us the right to a place in that city." The invisible Jerusalem is populated by throngs of festive angels and Christian citizens.

12:23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God

² <http://studylight.org/com/acc/view.cgi?book=heb&chapter=012>

³ http://executableoutlines.com/he/he_31.htm

⁴ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/hebrews/32.html>

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the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,— The writer is still reminding them that they have come to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. They are still reminded that they have come to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. When Abel was killed by his brother Cain, his blood cried out for vengeance and justice (Gen.4:10), but not the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ cried out for man to be forgiven and cleansed of sin. The blood of Christ cries out for mercy upon those who would kill, reject, deny, and curse Him who has no sin. Nothing can compare to Christ as the faithful Mediator.

IV. FUTURE JUDGMENT Hebrews 12:25-29

12:25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:— Moses is the person who spoke on earth and gave the Law of God to man, but Jesus Christ is the One who spoke and brought the Word of God down out of heaven. ⁵The writer now contrasts the way that God spoke then, with the way that He speaks now. Those who heard God speak at Sinai wanted Him to stop. The voice of God made them afraid, so they agreed that God should speak to Moses and that he should tell them what God said. They promised to obey all the law of God that He gave to them by Moses. They did not keep that promise. They refused to listen when God warned them, however, in the end, God punished them. Every person bore the guilt and punishment when he broke the Word of God. God speaks to us today, not by Moses, but by His Son Jesus, The Word; not audibly (*per say*), but He does speak by the power of the Holy Spirit within. What God says now by Jesus is greater than what He said by Moses. God punished those who did not obey what He said by Moses. How much more will He punish those who do not obey what He says by His Son Jesus who speaks from heaven! There are three reasons why a person must not refuse Jesus Christ and His message:

1. **There shall be no escape whatsoever for the closed-minded.**

12:26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. When God spoke at Sinai, the whole mountain shook (Exodus 19:18). There was a great fire and darkness. Those who saw it were very afraid. God promises that one day He will again shake the earth. He will shake not only the whole earth, but the heavens as well.

2. **God warns about a great shaking and judgment of heaven and earth in the future.**

This is exactly what the prophet Haggai declared: "*For thus said the Lord of hosts: yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land*" Hag.2:6. Both the prophet and the writer to the Hebrews are declaring that a catastrophic judgment is coming upon the heavens and earth. The whole universe, all the stars and planets of the natural world, are to undergo a cataclysmic change. All nature shall be destroyed by fire and remade into a new heaven and earth. There are many shakings going on in our lives today: earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados,

⁵ <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/hebrews-lbw.htm>
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Tsunamis, devastating fires, Wall Street, sickness, and even our faith etc., but they are no match for the voice of the endtime coming from heaven.

12:27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.⁶The shaking has begun. God is shaking the church, so that those who have a form of religion will be shaken and be removed. Those that who cannot be shaken will remain. We have an eternal destination which cannot be shaken and cannot fail.

12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:—⁷The meaning is, that the kingdom of the Redeemer is never to pass away. It is not like the Jewish dispensation, to give place to another, nor is there any power that can destroy it. We who are of God's kingdom, which cannot be shaken, are exhorted to have grace; be grateful. Why? - It pleases God! A person must serve God, in other words, worship Him; worship with reverence, and worship Him with godly fear.

3. There is an unshakeable kingdom that can be received.

12:29 For our God is a consuming fire. Why should we be thankful and worship God? Because He is the God who has all power, who made all that is in heaven and on earth. He is the God who will judge all things. He will punish all who fail to obey what He has said. God is a consuming fire. He is like a fire that burns up all the rubbish. We need to be sure that we really are true Christians.

SUMMARY:

Undoubtedly unlike their ancestors, they didn't come to Mount Sinai—all that volcanic blaze and earthshaking rumble—to hear God speak. The earsplitting words and soul-shaking message terrified them and they begged God to stop; didn't want to hear anymore. They knew that if an animal touches the Mountain, it's as good as dead and they were afraid to move. Even Moses was terrified (**12:18-21**).

However, their experience was coming to Mount Zion, the city where the living God resides; the invisible Jerusalem is populated by throngs of festive angels and Christian citizens. It is the city where God is Judge, with judgments that make us just. Yes, when we come to Jesus, He presents a New Covenant, a fresh charter from God. He is the Mediator of this Covenant. Abel's blood cried out for vengeance and justice, while the blood of Christ cried out for man to be forgiven and cleansed of sin (**12:22-24**).

We can't refuse to hear God who is speaking. Those who ignored His warnings didn't escape, so how much more for those who turn away from heavenly warnings? His voice shook the earth, and this time He'll also shake the heavens. This is talking about a future judgment. There will be a thorough housecleaning. Anything that's shakable will be removed, so that the unshakable may remain. We who are of God's kingdom, which cannot be shaken, are exhorted to have grace; be grateful. God is actively cleaning house, torching all that needs to burn, and He won't quit until it's all cleansed. God Himself is Consuming Fire! And He sustains an unshakable kingdom! (**12:25-29**).

⁶ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/hebrews/32.html>

⁷ <http://bible.cc/hebrews/12-28.htm>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>