

Hebrews Chapter 12 Third Continued

Hebrews 12:21 "And so terrible was the sight, [that] Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:"

Quoted from Deut. 9:19.

We know that Moses was to go on this mountain and meet with God.

Moses is just a man and you can easily see why he would feel fear.

He knows that anyone who approaches God, who has sin in his life, will die.

God has called him and he must go, but you can imagine the fear in his heart.

We see the voice of God speaking with Moses in the next verse.

Exodus 19:19 "And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice."

This experience of John tells just how fearful it is to come into the presence of God.

Revelation 1:17 "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead.

And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:"

No one except Jesus can stand in the presence of God.

Deuteronomy 5:26 "For who [is there of] all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we [have], and lived?"

Moses was a chosen vessel of God, and was invited of God on the mountain, or he would have died.

Hebrews 12:22 "But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,"

“Mount Zion”:

As opposed to Mt. Sinai, where God gave the Mosaic Law which was foreboding and terrifying, Mt. Zion here is not the earthly one in Jerusalem, but God’s heavenly abode, which is inviting and gracious.

No one could please God on Sinai’s terms, which was the perfect fulfillment of the law (see Galatians 3:10-12).

Zion, however, is accessible to all who come to God through Jesus Christ (see Psalm 132:13-14; Isaiah 46:13; Zech. 2:10; Gal. 4:21-31).

“Zion ... city of the living God ... Heavenly Jerusalem”:

These are synonyms for heaven itself.

For a description of the abode of God, the city of Jerusalem in heaven (see Revelations 21:1 – Revelations 22:5).

“Innumerable”:

Meaning myriads, The Greek word is often translated 10,000 (see Rev. 5:11-12).

Ranking of Angels:

The description of angels suggests that they exist in orderly arrangement, perhaps with specialized responsibilities.

Michael is the archangel (Jude 9), the highest in the order of angels.

Gabriel appears to be the messenger angel of God, usually cited when an angel gives a message from God to man.

The cherubim are portrayed as being in diligent service to God and attached to the throne of God to guard His holiness.

Seraphim is the title applied to those angels assigned to God’s altar; they, like the cherubim, are concerned with the holiness of God.

The seraphim probably relate to both sacrifice and cleansing, whereas the cherubim are dealing with judgment.

When a Christian recognized the order within the various ranks of angels, he will realize that what is done for God should be done in an orderly manner.

We see in this Scripture that this physical mount that Moses was to go on is symbolic of the city heavenly Jerusalem which comes down from heaven.

Mount Zion is spoken of throughout the Bible symbolically as the city of God.

Remember Abraham was looking for a city whose maker is God.

If we are sincere Christians, we are looking for that city as well.

This city is not made with human hands.

This is a city where God is supreme Ruler.

Revelation 21:10 "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,"

John got a view of that heavenly city, in the Scripture above.

Moses on the mount was in the presence of the builder of that city.

We will see a promise in the very words of our Lord Jesus in the next verse.

Revelation 3:12 "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, [which is] new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and [I will write upon him] my new name."

Hebrews 12:23 "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,"

"The general assembly" translates one Greek word (paneguris) which is used only here in the New Testament.

The term here means "a gathering for public festival."

It does not likely describe a distinct group as if different from the church, but describes the attitude of the innumerable angels in heaven in a festal gathering around the throne of God.

"Church of the firstborn":

The firstborn is Jesus Christ.

The "church" is comprised of believers who are fellow heirs with Christ, the preeminent One among many brethren (Rom. 8:17, 29).

Everyone who continues to believe in Jesus unto the end is His church.

"Just men made perfect":

These are the Old Testament saints in distinction from the "church of the firstborn, "who are the New Testament believers.

We find in the next Scripture that Jesus Christ purchased the church (the Christians), with His own blood.

Acts 20:28 "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

We see that the body of believers are the church in the following verse.

Colossians 1:18 "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all [things] he might have the preeminence."

To be saved, our name must be written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 20:15 "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

We see the terrible fate of those who neglect to get their name written in the book of life.

The only way to get your name into that book is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

How are just men made perfect?

We have taken on the perfection of Jesus Christ when we were washed in His precious blood.

He took our sin that we might become His righteousness.

1 Peter 2:24 "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

Acts 10:42 "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God [to be] the Judge of quick and dead."

You see Jesus will judge each person.

We will be classified as His sheep and live in heaven with Him, or He will classify us as a goat fit only for hell.

Matthew 25:32-34 "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth [his] sheep from the goats:" "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:"

Matthew 25:41 "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:"

We stand or fall on the judgment of Jesus Christ the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Hebrews 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."

Mediator, above means go between.

Jesus goes between us and God and reconciles us to the Father (see note on 7:22; compare 8:6-10; 9:15).

“Better”:

Abel’s sacrifice was pleasing to God because it was offered in faith and obedience (11:4), but it had no atoning power.

Jesus’ blood alone was sufficient to cleanse sin (1 John 1:7).

The sacrifice of Christ brought redemption (9:12), forgiveness (9:26), and complete salvation (10:10, 14).

“Than that of Abel”:

The blood of Abel’s sacrifice only provided a temporary covering, but Christ’s blood sacrifice declares eternal forgiveness (Col. 1:20).

1 Timothy 2:5 "For [there is] one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

The new covenant is the covenant of grace through belief in Jesus Christ.

The old covenant was the law, by which no man is saved.

The blood sprinkled on the mercy seat, covered the sin of the person for one year.

It did not do away with sin, it just covered it.

Jesus precious blood completely did away with sin.

Matthew 26:28 "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

1 Peter 1:2 "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

Hebrews 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:"

“Refuse”:

See note on verse 19, where the same word describes the conduct of the Israelites at Mt. Sinai.

“Much more, shall not we escape”:

The consequences for apostates is dire indeed.

The judgment to be experienced and the expected terror is far in excess of that on Mt. Sinai.

Of course, this One speaking from heaven is God.

This is the voice they heard at the mount.

When Jesus spoke here on the earth, it was actually the Voice from heaven speaking.

He and the Father were in total agreement.

John 14:10 "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

To reject the Word of God is to reject Life.

Jesus is the Life of each one who believes.

Matthew 17:5 "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

This Scripture we just gave shows that the Father and Jesus speak the same thing.

“Shaken”:

At Mt. Sinai, God shook the earth.

From Zion, He will shake the heavens, the entire universe (Isa. 13:13; 34:4; 65:17, 22; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 6:12-14; 20:11; 2:1).

Hebrews 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."

Quoted from Haggai 2:6.

The voice of God was mistaken for thunder.

When it thunders, the earth shakes.

Luke 21:26 "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

Notice from this next Scripture that God's Word never ends.

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Hebrews 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."

Everything physical ("things ... shaken"), will be destroyed; only eternal things ("which cannot be shaken"), will remain.

I believe the shaking has begun.

God is shaking the church, so that those who have a form of religion will be shaken out.

Those that remain will be those who cannot be shaken.

These next 2 Scriptures should be the condition of the true Christian.

Romans 8:38-39 "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come," "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Hebrews 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:"

"Kingdom":

God will create "a new heaven and a new earth ... the holy city, new Jerusalem" (Rev. 21:1-2), which will be eternal and immovable.

"With reverence and godly fear" (see note on 11:7; 5:7).

The second word has to do with the apprehensions felt due to being in God's presence.

This reverence and godly fear is not evident in too many churches today.

It seems most church services have gone to the frivolous.

We must take God serious.

He is God, and we are His servants.

We must pay Him the respect due Him.

Romans 12:1 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service."

The will of the Father must be our will.

We must crucify our flesh that the spirit can take control.

Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Hebrews 12:29 "For our God [is] a consuming fire."

"Consuming fire":

See Deut. 4:24.

God's law given at Mt. Sinai prescribed many severe punishments, but the punishment is far worse for those who reject His offer of salvation through His own Son, Jesus Christ (Luke 3:16-17; this verse is to be related to 10:29-31).

There are a number of Scriptures which show God as a fire, I will quote a few here.

Exodus 24:17 "And the sight of the glory of the LORD [was] like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel."

Genesis 19:24 "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;"

Exodus 13:21 "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:"

It was a bush that was burning with fire that God spoke to Moses from.

We could go on and on.

There are literally tens of times God is spoken of associated with fire.

Deuteronomy 9:3 "Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God [is] he which goeth over before thee; [as] a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down

before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee."

2 Thessalonians 1:8 "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:"

This should let us have no doubt.

I will mention one more thing and then go on.

Jesus baptizes with the Holy Ghost and fire.

Luke 3:16 "John answered, saying unto [them] all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:"

Hebrews Chapter 12 Third Continued Questions

1. The sight of God on the mountain was so terrible that Moses felt what?
2. If God called Moses to the mountain, why would he fear?
3. When the trumpet sounded long and louder, Moses spoke to God. What did God do?
4. When John went to heaven and was in the presence of the first and last, what did he do?
5. The city of the living God is what?
6. Who is there an innumerable number of in the city?
7. This physical mount that Moses was on was symbolic of what?
8. What was Abraham looking for that we Christians should be looking for too?
9. When John was carried away to a high mountain, what was he given a glimpse of?
10. Him that _____ will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.
11. What will Jesus write on each believer?
12. Who are the church of the firstborn?
13. What did Jesus purchase the believers with?
14. Who is the head of the body of believers?

15. Where must our name be written, if we are saved?
16. What happens to those who are not written in this book?
17. What must we do to have our name written in the Lamb's book of life?
18. How are just men made perfect?
19. Who is the Judge of the quick and the dead?
20. What are those on the left side classified as by Jesus?
21. What are those on the right classified as by Jesus?
22. How long has the kingdom been prepared for the believers?
23. Who was the everlasting fire prepared for?
24. Who is the mediator of the new covenant?
25. What does mediator mean here?
26. What is the new covenant?
27. What one word in Matthew 26:28 means does away with?
28. The One speaking from heaven is whom?
29. Jesus said that the words He spoke on earth actually came from where?
30. In Matthew 17:5 how do we know for sure that Jesus and the Father were in agreement?
31. What will shake heaven as well as earth?
32. What 2 unlikely things shall pass away?
33. Why is God shaking the church?
34. How are we to present our bodies to God?
35. Our God is a _____.