

September 1, 2019 -

Hebrews 12:25- 29 -

Living with Hope not Fear

Introduction:

Like the Hebrew Christians in today's Bible reading fear was a factor with our former President and Mrs. Benjamin Harrison. They were so intimidated with fear by modern electricity installed in the White House they didn't dare touch the switches. If there were no servants around to turn off the lights when the Harrisons went to bed, they slept with the lights on. Fear is one of Satan's most effective weapons to keep us from fulfilling God's purpose. There are times in our life that we all face fear, but fear is not something that should be easily accepted in the Christian Life. Over 60 times God tells us to "Fear not". Mount Sinai symbolized fear for Jews so the author wanted them to focus on Mt. Zion.

Review:

Mount Sinai symbolized God's dealing with men under the old covenant of the law but Mount Zion symbolizes God's dealing with men under the new covenant of grace. Mount Zion represents grace, atonement and forgiveness. It represents the spiritual place where God dwells. By coming to Jesus Christ," the Holy Spirit conveys, "you're coming to Zion." And so, He's saying to these would-be believers, "Don't go to Sinai, come to Zion." Every Jew knew what He was talking about. Zion was grace; Zion was forgiveness.

The scene in verses 18-21 took us back to Mount Sinai when the Israelites were camped at the foot of the mountain (Ex 19). Under the old covenant, God's people were afraid of Him. Now every Jew knew that. No Jew in his right mind would want to go to Sinai. The writer is pointing out that living under the Law was frightening but now they could abandon their fears and could approach God joyfully as we studied in (12:22-24).

Under the new covenant, every believer can approach God joyfully, without fear and should stand without fear. This is because there is no fear in love. Therefore, John writes: **There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.** The phrase made perfect means fully developed or mature. The word "fear" is mentioned here four times. We find the word perfect mention at the end of verse 23 not only do we come to heaven and to the angel party and to the church and to God and to all the Old Testament saints but we also come to whom? To Jesus, verse 24 our mediator of the new covenant.

If we understand God's love and forgiveness, when we approach Him we are not afraid of punishment for confessing and forsaken sins --- (I John 1:9). To come to Christianity is to come to Christ there is nothing to fear. It is to come to grace, to come to peace, to come to safety, to come to worship, to come to fellowship, to come to heaven when you die. So we can all...

III. Await Judgment Fearlessly (12:25-27).

1. We must be careful and not refuse to listen to the Spirit of Christ (12:25). Jesus gave warning in Luke 13:3- *I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* When God spoke at Mount Sinai, His voice then shook the earth (12:26a).

2. Yet, God has promised, saying, **Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven** (12:26b-c, Hag. 2:6). This refers to God's judgment at the end of the world, which is called the day of the Lord (2 Pet. 3:10).

**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** (12:27). God is going to destroy His old creation-the heavens and the earth. He will replace them with a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21:1). However, some things will remain because Jesus says that even though heaven and earth will pass away, His Word will never pass away (Mk 13:31).

When God unleashes His judgment of wrath on the old heavens and earth, we can be fearless. Why- look with me according to **1 Thessalonians 1:10**. If we live with the future Mount Zion in view, we will be able to abandon fear permanently, approach God joyfully, await judgment fearlessly, and...

#### IV. Aspire to worship God acceptably (12:28-29).

1. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace* (12:28a). The word wherefore refers to what has just been written. Because we are a part of God's eternal kingdom in the future Mount Zion, our motive for worship should be gratitude. That being the case, we should serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear (12:28b).

2. Reverence refers to a holy "caution" that results in respect toward God. We must also have a sense of godly fear. The word translated godly fear means we have combined feelings of reverence and wonder because we are coming before the spectacular, holy God. We recognize we are worshipping an awesome God. --- Psalm 96:6

**Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary**

3. If you don't come to Zion and accept Jesus Christ and accept God's grace, the only alternative is Sinai and you will present your works and you will be brought before a mountain of thunder and fire and smoke, and condemned. God is a consuming fire (12:29, Deut. 4:24). That verse says God is, not was. Those who reject His Son, Jesus Christ, will never know God as a loving, heavenly Father but only as a consuming fire. Because He is a consuming fire, what God says cannot be taken lightly.

#### Conclusion:

God means what He says. It is easy to just focus on God's love and grace and forget His fierce judgment on all that is sinful and evil. Consuming fire is symbolic of judgment that, like a raging forest fire, cannot be contained and consumes everything in its path.

If we live with the future Mount Zion in view, we can enjoy these four privileges: abandon fear permanently, approach God joyfully, await judgment fearlessly, and aspire to worship God acceptably. --- Communion