

## A STUDY OF HEBREWS

### *The Unshakable Kingdom - Chapter 12:18-29*

#### I. Review of Chapters 1-12

**A. Jesus Christ is the greatest and final Prophet and enthroned Son of God.**

1. Therefore we must pay closest attention to His Gospel... (1:1-2:18)

**B. Jesus Christ is infinitely greater than Moses and gives eternal, not just temporal, rest.**

1. Therefore we must persevere in faith lest we fall like those in the wilderness... (3:1-4:13)

**C. Jesus Christ is superior to Aaron and is our Great High Priest who sympathizes with us perfectly.**

1. Therefore we who have profound needs must fly to God's throne of grace... (4:14-5:10)

**D. [A short detour due to the dullness of hearers (5:11-6-20)]**

1. Warning against apostasy (6:1-12)      2. Assurance of God's promise (6:13-20)

**E. The mysterious Melchizedek, the OT priest-king, is a foreshadow, or 'type', of the coming Christ.**

1. Therefore flee to the eternal, oath-sealed, Mechizedekian sinless human sacrifice for sin (7:1-28)

**F. Jesus Christ's heavenly priestly ministry mediates a more glorious new covenant (8:1-13).**

**G. A clear conscience, access to God, and true forgiveness comes only through Christ's blood (9:9-28)**

**H. Christ's sacrifice once-for-all has secured the eternal new covenant; nor more sacrifices needed (10:1-18)**

1. Therefore let us draw near to Christ with assurance, hold onto our confession, and meet together (10:19-39)

**I. Faith in God's unseen promises is the legacy of past saints whose examples guide us today (11:1-40)**

1. Therefore run the race with endurance in holiness, adoring Christ's suffering and God's discipline (12:1-17)

#### II. Text: Hebrews 12:18-24 – Looking Back to Mount Sinai

*For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest<sup>19</sup> and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them.<sup>20</sup> For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned."<sup>21</sup> Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear."<sup>22</sup> But you have come to Mount Zion (even) to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,<sup>23</sup> and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,<sup>24</sup> and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. (Heb 12:18-24)*

<i><b>IF...</b></i>	<i><b>HOW MUCH MORE...</b></i>
...those who received the angels' message from Sinai died in the wilderness for rejecting it...	...will we fail to escape judgment if we neglect the message given directly by the Son. (Heb 2:2-4)
...Israelites died in the wilderness before reaching Canaan because of unbelief...	...will those who disbelieve the gospel fail to reach the heavenly rest in glory. (3:16-4:11)
...capital punishment was the penalty for violating Moses' law...	...will the divine punishment be for those who spurn the Son of God and rejects His grace. (Heb 10:28-29)

*"On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled.<sup>17</sup> Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain.<sup>18</sup> Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly.<sup>19</sup> And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder."<sup>20</sup> (Ex 19:16-19)*

*"Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off<sup>19</sup> and said to Moses, 'You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.'<sup>20</sup> Moses said to the people, 'Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.'<sup>21</sup> The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was."<sup>22</sup> (Ex 20:18-21)*

1. Can you imagine what Moses was feeling at Mt. Sinai? Why do you think Moses “tremble(d) with fear” even though God chose him to be the people’s mediator? How is this illustrated in the New Testament?

*“And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, ‘Peace! Be still!’ And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup> He said to them, ‘Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?’ <sup>41</sup> And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’ (Mark 4:39-41)*

2. How is Sproul’s quote below true in everyday life? What are some ways in which people either gravitate towards or attempt to suppress the idea of “the holy”, particularly God?

“We tend to have mixed feelings about the holy. There is a sense in which we are at the same time attracted to it and repulsed by it. Something draws us toward it, while at the same time we want to run away from it. We can’t seem to decide which way we want it. Part of us yearns for the holy, while part of us despises it. We can’t live with it, and we can’t live without it.” - R.C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God*, 42.

3. What are the blessings of coming to Christ through conversion (“You have come to Mount Zion...”)?

### III. Text: Hebrews 12:25-29 – Looking Forward to a New Earth

<sup>25</sup> See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. <sup>26</sup> At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” <sup>27</sup> This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. <sup>28</sup> Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, <sup>29</sup> for our God is a consuming fire. (Heb 12:25-29)

1. What was God’s encouragement to His people in Haggai’s day? How does the author of Hebrews understand this verse for New Testament Christians?

*“My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not. <sup>6</sup> For thus says the LORD of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. <sup>7</sup> And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts. (Hag 2:5-7)*

2. How does Peter confirm the cataclysmic character of the “day of the Lord”? How do you feel about that day’s arrival? Will it be a day of terror or rejoicing?

*“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. <sup>11</sup> Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! <sup>13</sup> But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” (2 Pet 3:10-13)*

3. What are the implications of that Day for us according to both Peter and the author of Hebrews?

4. What does the author mean by “acceptable worship” in v. 28? Who defines what “acceptable worship” is? How should this impact the life of the church? What is the motivation Heb 12 supplies? Implications?

But the acceptable way of worshiping the true God has been instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshiped according to the imaginations or devisings of men, or the suggestions of Satan, or under any visible representation, or any other way not commanded in Holy Scripture. (WCF 21.1)

**“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth,  
for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...” (Rev 21:1)**