

**LESSON TWENTY-FOUR
HEBREWS 12:14-29**

DAY ONE

Read Hebrews 12:14-29.

1. What are the two things that the author of Hebrews tells his audience to pursue in Heb. 12:14?

Read Romans 5:1.

2. How is peace described in this verse? What kind of peace do you think the author is asking his readers to pursue in Heb. 12:14?

3. Is this something that you do in your life? How do you, or how would you go about pursuing peace?

Read Hebrews 10:10.

4. Who is the one responsible for our sanctification? How then are we to pursue sanctification?

Read Hebrews 12:11.

5. What does submission to God's will yield in the believer's life? How would you describe this in everyday language?

6. Hebrews 12:15-17 qualifies the command to pursue peace and sanctification with three negative statements. What is the believer not to do?

7. According to Heb. 12:15, what do you think it means to come short of the grace of God? Is God's grace limited?

Read Heb. 6:7-9.

8. The author previously used the metaphor of "thorns and thistles" to represent the curse of disregarding God's covenant. With the negative example of the Israelites in the background, what kind of trouble do you think a root of bitterness could cause?

COMMENTARY

Hebrews 12:13 concludes a section of Scripture encouraging the readers to run the race, to stand firm in their commitment to Christ, and to pay attention to one's individual spiritual welfare as well as that of others in the faith community. The passage ends on a note in which the author recognizes the perils of discouragement under pressure, and he tries to motivate this group of believers (for whom he cares deeply), to keep their feet on straight paths, a theme taken from the pages of the book of Proverbs. The direct quote of Proverbs 3:11-12 earlier in Chapter Twelve, and the allusion to the wisdom themes of Proverbs provides the continued backdrop for this discussion. In Heb. 12:13, the readers are commanded to make straight paths for their feet, and in Heb. 12:14-29 the readers are presented with the goal to which their straight paths should lead.

Hebrews 12:14-29 is divided into three sections. Hebrews 12:14-17 begins with the command for the readers to pursue sanctification. The way of peace and the way of bitterness and trouble are briefly contrasted using Esau as a negative example to avoid. Hebrews 12:18-24 presents another comparison of the new order of kingdom life, which is superior to the old. Hebrews 12:18-21 describes the experience of Moses and the Israelites on Mt. Sinai in terrifying terms. God is presented as one who is untouchable, and Moses is presented as the representative of Israel who stands before God in fear and trembling. Hebrews 12:22-24 contrasts the old way of Mt. Sinai with the new covenant perspective of Mt. Zion. Under the new covenant, God is approachable. He is the living God who presides over the heavenly city of Jerusalem, and those who trust

in Jesus' sacrificial death are inhabitants of that new city. Hebrews 12:25-29 is the final warning passage in the book. In light of God's judgment that is an impending reality, the author strongly encourages his readers to hear God's voice and take part in the kingdom that cannot be shaken, a kingdom that is permanent.

Hebrews 12:14-17

Hebrews 12:14 opens with the direct command for the author's audience to "pursue" peace and sanctification. Initially, it may appear that the author is now telling his readers to get to work, but instead he is telling them to pursue these gifts. The peace that they are to seek is not that of harmony among believers, or lack of conflict, but it is the gift of peace that is bestowed upon the believer by God as a fruit of the Spirit of God's activity in the believer's life. The word peace occurs only four times in Hebrews (7:2; 11:31; 12:14; and 13:20). Although there are parallel concepts, such as rest, the finished work of Christ, and obtaining the inheritance, this is the first time that peace is specifically addressed in the life of the believer. In Hebrews 12:12, the author stresses that the result of submitting to God's instruction and training is the yield of "peaceful fruits of righteousness." Peace connotes several things in the Christian's life: peace with God (or reconciliation). Rom. 5:1 says that because of Christ's death on the cross, we are reconciled with God, and we have a restored relationship with Him. We are His children and He is our loving, perfect Father. Peace is also a fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Its presence is evidence that we are resting in our relationship with Christ. It does not mean that we will not experience turmoil, but that we will be given the ability to endure what comes our way as we trust in the kindness of God the Father. A third aspect of peace is that it is evidence of God's presence in the church. As the church, we are all members of the same family, members of the same body, and the peace that should accompany these family relationships is our witness to the world. When we treat one another in a dignified and respectful manner, when we love one another the way that Christ has loved us, peace will abound. Everything the author has been teaching to this point is meant to guide the reader in allowing the truth of Christ's atoning work to penetrate their hearts and to bring them the assurance that they stand in the presence of God, that they belong in the family of God, and that they have intrinsic worth and value based upon God's opinion of them. All of this is based upon understanding and accepting the basic fact that Christ alone makes this possible and the only response God the Father desires from us is gratitude. Peace is a gift that flows from our relationship with God the Father. Sanctification is something that must be understood in the same vein. The audience is not told to sanctify themselves, for we know that it is Jesus who is the one who sanctifies. Rather, the readers, and we ourselves, are to pursue sanctification. In other words, we are to desire the continuing progress of God working His holiness into our lives. There is nothing we can do on our own behalf to initiate the process or to further the process along, but we can cooperate with God, make ourselves aware of his sanctifying power, and long for our lives to further reflect the character of God the Son. We are told that without either of these gifts that no one will see the Lord. This statement initially sounds rather daunting, but the author is trying to underscore that in order to nurture our hearts and remain in a continual state of belief, that we need to be eager to move forward in our faith.

The primary thought in this passage is that we are to pursue peace and sanctification. What follows is a clear juxtaposition between the gifts of peace and sanctification and the way in which one can take the gifts for granted and put oneself in danger of forfeiting the blessings of the inheritance. The author presents three ways in which the readers might be putting themselves in danger. The first way is the possibility of falling short of the grace of God. Hebrews 4:1 is an encouragement to the readers to remain in a constant relationship with God so that the readers do not fall short of the promised rest. A form of the verb “to fall short” is used in Heb. 12:15, but here “it denotes a more active disregard of the grace of God made available in the gospel which issues from unbelief, carelessness, and a willful renunciation of grace.”¹ Deuteronomy 29:18 underscores the author’s argument that the readers must take care that their hearts do not turn away from God. In addition to the individual’s heart condition, the author also focuses on the communal aspect of our faith. It is our responsibility to be aware of the condition of our own hearts, to allow God to search our hearts, and to be willing to be molded, shaped, challenged, and transformed. It is also our responsibility to look out for the welfare of others. When we see others straying, when we see hurt or pain welling up in the lives of others, we need to pay attention and allow ourselves to become involved with them in their journey. There are times when we will need the attention of our friends, and times in which we need to be strong on their behalf. That is why we are adopted into the family of God, so that we might participate in the acceptance that the Trinity offers to us and share with others the marvelous work that God does in our own lives.

The second way in which we might endanger ourselves is to allow a root of bitterness to spring up, causing trouble, and possibly defiling others. We need to understand this warning in the context of the book of Hebrews. Previously, the author has used the illustration of thorns and thistles to describe the life of a person who has refused God, who responds in unbelief, and who rejects His Son. It is this attitude of disbelief and disrespect toward God that the author is addressing. Certainly bitterness and unforgiveness in relationships are harmful, but it is far more harmful to allow oneself to fall sway to the bitterness and disbelief that was exhibited by the Israelites as they stood at the entrance to Canaan. Deuteronomy 29:19 describes the heart that turns away from the Lord as a “root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood.” William Lane writes, “the citation of Dt. 29:17 shows that the metaphor refers to a stubborn disposition that expresses itself in unbelief and apostasy.”² Not only does the bitterness affect the individual heart, but it also has the power to influence and “defile” others. The theme of purity vs. defilement is paramount to understanding the effectiveness of Christ’s sacrifice. The sacrificial system underscored the fact that humanity is unclean and unable to approach God the Father. Christ’s death makes it possible for those who trust in Him to be pronounced clean. To reject His sacrifice though, is to reject the one possible source of cleansing. If a person turns their back on the sacrifice, they are ultimately stepping back into defilement.

¹ William L. Lane, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 47b, *Hebrews 9-13*, 452.

² William L. Lane, 453.

DAY TWO

Read Heb. 12:15-17, Gen. 25:19-34, and Gen. 27:1-40.

9. According to Hebrews 12:15-17, how is Esau described?

Read Numbers 15:31.

10. According to Gen. 25:34, what did Esau do that the author of Hebrews could speak so harshly about him?

Read Isaiah 54:5.

11. The Greek word for immoral is *pornos* . It is often used to refer to sexual immorality. How is Israel's relationship with God described in Isaiah 54:5, and why would the image of sexual immorality be so offensive to God?

12. In Gen. 27:34, what does Esau seek from his father? Why does he not receive what he asks for?

13. What are the consequences to Esau's actions?

Read Gen. 33:1-11.

14. How does the relationship between Esau and Jacob conclude? Does Esau receive a blessing from his brother? How do you think this relates to the way in which the author uses Esau's example in Hebrews?

COMMENTARY

Hebrews 12:14-17 cont.

The third warning against the danger of unbelief is through the negative example of Esau. Gen. 25:19-34 and Gen. 27:1-40 tells the story of Esau and Jacob's fraternal relationship as it relates to the covenant blessing of their father Isaac. When reading this narrative, it is paramount to keep in mind that although Esau, Jacob, and Isaac are individuals, they are major players in the unfolding covenantal blessings of God. Abraham received the covenant promise in which God would give to him descendants and land. Through him would come a nation that was meant to be the means of communicating God's blessing not only to Israel, but to the other nations as well. Abraham did not see this promise fulfilled in his lifetime. Its fulfillment would become more evident in the life of Isaac and his sons Esau and Jacob. The narrative of Genesis tells us that Esau and Jacob were twins and that Esau was born first, thus granting him all the privileges that would go to the firstborn. It was his right to inherit the covenant blessings promised to Abraham. Esau is described as "a skillful hunter, a man of the field" but Jacob was "a peaceful man living in tents," (Gen. 25:27). One day Esau had been out hunting and he returned home famished. Jacob had a pot of stew already prepared and when Esau asked for some Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright," (Gen. 25:30). Esau would have understood well the privileges that came with his birth order and yet he chose to sell his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew. The account of Esau's actions are depicted as very deliberate in the Hebrew text. Once he made his decision, everything was set in motion. The Hebrew text reads literally, "and he ate, and he drank, and he got up, and he went, and he despised his birthright." How could one who stood in line to receive the inheritance of the covenant blessings respond in such a manner? Esau did not simply disregard his inheritance, he overtly rejected it. In Num. 15:31, a passage that has been alluded to previously, says that the one who despises the word of the Lord and breaks his commandment, will be cut off. This strong statement is made in the context of describing the merit of the sacrifices. There were sacrifices for unintentional sins, but there were no sacrifices in the legal system of the Israelites that atoned for a deliberate, intentional breach of the covenant.

Our author uses Esau as an example to his readers. Previously we read of the Israelites who on the cusp of receiving their inheritance, acted in disbelief. Esau's example follows this same pattern. He is described as immoral and godless because in this one action, he rejected God. To despise his birthright meant that Esau wanted nothing to do with the covenantal privileges that could have been his. The way in which the author of Hebrews describes Esau may seem overly harsh, he is immoral and godless, but he is using the example of Esau to warn his readers against a dangerous attitude toward God. The word "immoral" is *pornos* in Greek, and it often refers to sexual immorality. God is described as Israel's husband (Isa. 54:5), and all throughout the Old Testament, Israel is charged with adultery because they consistently go after other gods. Esau is also guilty of adultery when he makes the decision to reject his relationship with God. God's covenant with His people was relationship. The book of

Deuteronomy is extremely clear that the only way to enter into the blessing of the covenant is to take the relationship seriously. This does not mean that a person is in danger of falling under the curse for every little misstep and failure. What it does mean though, is that if a person despises the word of the Lord and specifically rejects the blessings of the covenant, that there are consequences. The consequences for Esau are spelled out in Gen. 27:1-40. After some time, when Isaac was about to die, Rebekah (the mother of Esau and Jacob) plotted with her son Jacob to trick Isaac into bestowing his blessing upon him instead of Esau. Jacob deceived his father into thinking that he was Isaac and then he asked him for his blessing. Isaac passed on the covenantal promises (the inheritance) to his son Jacob. When Esau came to his father Isaac and asked for his blessing, both Isaac and Esau realized what Jacob had done, but by then it was too late. Gen. 27:33 says that Esau cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and begged for his father's blessing. Isaac was unable to bestow the same blessing upon Esau, and at this moment the consequences of Esau's earlier choice to despise his birthright were felt. Esau would become the father of the Edomites. He would not receive his father's inheritance. He would not prosper in the same way in which his brother did. In recalling this scenario, the author of Hebrews says that afterwards (after despising) his birthright, that Esau desired to inherit the blessing, but that although he sought it with tears, he was rejected. It is important to notice that the text says that Esau sought after the blessing and not repentance. Esau lived out the consequences of his choice to reject the covenantal inheritance, and thus it went to Jacob. The text does not say that Esau was damned however because of his choice. He would not be able to regain the status that had been given to his brother, and we know later that Jacob's name was changed to Israel, but Esau was still a candidate to receive God's blessing through Jacob. Instead of being granted the privilege of being the nation who blesses, he would be the nation who would receive the blessing. It is also necessary to note that repentance carries with it the idea of changing one's mind. Heb. 12:17 makes the point that Esau found no place for repentance, or he found no place for a change of mind to happen. Isaac could not change the course of events no matter how bitterly his son cried.

The point of Esau's story is that he made a choice to turn his back on the promised inheritance, and he suffered bitter consequences. The warning is this, "do not be like Esau." Do not reject the blessings that are ours through Christ. Throughout the book of Hebrews we have been admonished to pay attention to the state of our heart. We are told to not let unbelief creep in and begin the process of hardening our hearts. The author of Hebrews deeply desires for his audience to experience the full joy and security that is the rightful inheritance of belonging to God. There must have been reason for him to be concerned for his readers so he uses these strong examples of warning to draw them back into the arms of God. If we read the rest of Esau's story, we see that although he suffered bitterly, ultimately his life went well for him. He was reconciled to his brother Jacob, he was prosperous in the territory that was allotted to him, and Jacob says to him, "I see your face as one sees the face of God, and you have received me favorably," (Gen. 33:10). Although Esau did not have the privilege of belonging to the nation Israel, he did receive a blessing from his brother Jacob (Israel). Esau made a bad decision that had horrible consequences, but ultimately there was

reconciliation. Like any parent, the author of Hebrews seeks to steer his readers away from making the horrible decisions. His focus is not upon the graciousness of God in allowing Esau to prosper in his own right, rather it is upon the tremendous bitterness of his loss.

DAY THREE

Read Hebrews 12:18-21.

15. This passage in Hebrews describes the experience of the Israelites on Mt. Sinai at the giving of the Law. What is the overall tone of the passage?

Read Deuteronomy 4:10-19.

16. What is the importance of this scene at Mt. Sinai? What significant event happened in the life of Israel?

Read Deuteronomy 5:23-27.

17. According to this passage, why did they Israelites beg for no further word to be spoken to them?

Read Hebrews 3:14-19 and Deuteronomy 7:12.

18. What are the results of hearing or listening to the voice of God? What are the consequences?

Read Exodus 19:16-25.

19. Why would Moses have reason to be filled with fear? Is this depiction of God consistent with the way He is presented throughout the book of Hebrews?

COMMENTARY**Hebrews 12:18-21**

This next passage continues the theme of the superiority of the new covenant to the old covenant. In Heb. 12:18-21, our author depicts the scene of God giving the Law to Moses and the Israelites. The entire scenario is described in terms of God's unapproachability. The Israelites could not come to a mountain that could be touched. The penalty for touching Mt. Sinai when God was revealing the Ten Commandments to Moses was death. Ex. 19:12-13 gives the command that either man or beast should be put to death if they touch the mountain. It was not until they heard a trumpet's blast that the Israelites would be allowed to touch the mountain. The experience is described in Deuteronomy 4:10-12 as the Israelites stood near the foot of the mountain, the mountain burning with fire in the heart of the heavens. Darkness, clouds, and thick gloom accompanied the fire. In the midst of the fire, God spoke. All that could be heard was the sound of God's voice. It was here that the Ten Commandments were given to the Israelites and that the Law was instituted as the means through which Israel could approach God. Everything about the description of this event though shows God to be distant and frightening. The sound of God's voice was so terrifying to the Israelites that they begged Moses to speak with God alone (Dt. 5:26-27). Moses went up on the mountain and remained there forty days. When he came down from the mountain, he discovered the Israelites had quickly turned aside from the ways that God had commanded them and they made a golden calf for themselves to worship, (Dt. 9:12). It may well be that this was the first instance in which the Israelites chose not to listen to the voice of God, but the Old Testament narrative shows a myriad of instances in which Israel failed to listen and obey God. Eight times in the book of Hebrews the author writes of the word that was "spoken." In Heb. 1:1 we learn that Jesus is the final, ultimate word of God. The idea of the spoken word of God is very important to the author Hebrews. The corollary to the spoken word is the listening ear. God speaks, but it is up to the audience to hear the word and to act upon the word. The Israelites were too terrified even to hear the word, and as a result their behavior quickly deteriorated. Moses is also described as "filled with fear and trembling" yet it was his task to hear from God what He demanded of His people. The author of Hebrews has made numerous statements throughout his book that God is approachable. The systems of the Old Testament were set in place in order to provide momentary glimpses of God's acceptance, but ultimately God remained separate from His people. With Christ's sacrifice, we now have direct access into the very presence of God. Because of Jesus the Son, the whole terrifying experience of Mt. Sinai is a thing of the past.

DAY FOUR

Read Hebrews 12:22-24, Isaiah 8:18, and Psalm 48:1-3.

20. In Heb. 12:18 the readers are said to have come to a mountain that cannot be touched. How is Mt. Zion different?

Read Revelation 21:1-7.

21. How is the New Jerusalem described? Would you like to live there?

Read Hebrews 1:6.

22. In the Greek text of Hebrews 12:22, the angels are described as “thousands upon thousands in joyful assembly.” What part do the angels have in the heavenly city? What is the source of their joy?

Read Ephesians 1:2-8.

23. Jesus has obtained his inheritance as the firstborn and he shares that inheritance with us. According to Ephesians 1:2-8, what are some of the benefits of the inheritance?

24. How is God described in this passage? According to what we have learned in Hebrews, does this description of God instill in you a sense of fear or security? Why?

25. How is Jesus described in this passage? How do you relate to this description of Jesus?

Read Hebrews 11:4.

26. What is it about Abel that continues to speak to us?

27. What is your emotional response to this description of the heavenly Jerusalem in Heb. 12:22-24?

COMMENTARY**Hebrews 12:22-24**

The previous passage describes the mountain that could not be touched. Hebrews 12:22-24 presents the dramatic contrast not only of the mountain that can be touched, but also the God who can be accessed relationally. The depiction of the old vs. the new covenant could not be more stark. The old covenant was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the new covenant. The new covenant has been instituted through the work of Christ, but the promises of the inheritance are still yet to be obtained. Mt. Zion is symbolic of all that will belong to the believer in the future reign of God. Throughout the Old Testament, Mt. Zion was considered the place in which God dwelled. F. F. Bruce writes, "Mount Zion was the site of the Jebusite stronghold which David captured and made his royal residence in the seventh year of his reign. He made it the religious center of his kingdom by installing there 'the ark of God, which his called by the name of Yahweh of hosts, who sits enthroned on the cherubim' (2 Sam. 6:2). Thus Zion became the earthly dwelling place of God, 'the city which Yahweh had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there' (1 Kings 14:21)."³ Mt. Zion was not only historically rooted in the reign of King David, but it became representative of the perfect reign of the perfect King over all the nations. It was a promise that the Israelites held to, particularly when they went through difficult times as a nation. The book of Isaiah, which was written during the time when Israel was about to be exiled, makes numerous references to God's reign on Mt. Zion. Isaiah pronounces harsh judgments on Israel for failing to listen to His voice, and for turning to other gods. Because of their behavior, God allowed Assyria to come in and take the Israelites into slavery. Despite the judgment against Israel, there is imbedded in the book of Isaiah a promise that there will be a remnant that will return to God; that there will be a future restoration of Israel. This future restoration is described with symbolic references to Mt. Zion and its glory under God's eternal reign. Since the time of King David, Israel has been waiting for this restoration. They have endured slavery, persecution, and exile. Just prior to and during the time of Christ, Israel experienced a relatively brief bout of

³ F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 355.

military and political power, but never to the extent that they experienced under King David and King Solomon. The restoration promised by the prophet of Isaiah, is now understood as the future kingdom of God that will be instituted following His judgment. The readers of Hebrews could not help but understand God's promised reign in this manner.

This new city is described in Hebrews as the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. It is clear that it is not something that an earthly king would establish, but that it is something awaiting believers in the future. This New Jerusalem is described in the book of Revelation as God's dwelling place. There will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain and God's hand will wipe every tear from every eye. God's presence will be immediate and it will be comforting. William Lane writes that the city of God is essentially future, and "Christians have certainly come to it and received it, but only through faith, a faith which grasps the future as though it were the present."⁴ We come to the city of God, but we also come to the "myriad of angels" or to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly. In chapters one and two of Hebrews, the argument was made that the Son Jesus is superior to the angels and that although the angels accompanied the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai, they are beings that are sent to minister to humanity. Now the author makes his point that we join with the angels in a festal, joyful gathering of worship. Again, this stands in dramatic contrast to the description of the gathering at Mt. Sinai. In the heavenly Jerusalem, there will be great joy and celebration. The angels inhabit this heavenly city, as do believers who are described as "the general assembly, the church of the firstborn, and those who are enrolled in heaven." All of these terms are rich in meaning and serve to link the New Testament believers to the faithful Old Testament believers as one community of worship. Israel was called the assembly of God (Dt. 4:10), and now New Testament believers are included in that description. They are also described as the church of the firstborn, which recalls Esau's rejection of his inheritance rights, but primarily refers to Jesus who is the firstborn. As such he has already obtained His inheritance, and he now shares it with us. As those of the church of the firstborn, we receive the inheritance rights through the Son. We are also described as those who are enrolled in heaven, or who have our names inscribed in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 21:27). All of these descriptions combine together to portray the great reward that lies at the end of the race. Those who press on, who continue in faith and belief, will ultimately reside in this heavenly city of peace, joy, and righteousness.

We come to God, the judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, to Jesus, the mediator of the covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel (Heb. 12:23-24). God is depicted as a judge in 12:23, which is appropriate to the discussion. There is a time of judgment that cannot be ignored. There are those who have not trusted in Christ's work who will experience severe loss at the time of judgment. To those who have chosen not to believe in God, He will appear as terrifying. To those who have trusted however, the end result of God's judgment is eternal residence in the new, heavenly Jerusalem. The future aspect of our

⁴ William L. Lane, 461.

inheritance is stressed and continues to serve as an encouragement to press on. Although we obtain much in our earthly life as a result of Christ's sacrifice, there is so much more to come. We will share with a large community of those who walked before us, with us, and after us; a group the author calls "the righteous made perfect." Again, the goal of our journey is stressed. Those who walked in faith prior to the institution of the new covenant share the same goal as the readers who have been enlightened by the finished work of Christ (Heb. 11:40).

Lastly, we come to the mediator of the new covenant. There would be no access granted to this heavenly city were it not for Christ's obedient submission to the will of God which resulted in His perfect sacrifice. In this last verse, the detailed discussions of Chapters Nine and Ten are succinctly summarized. Christ is the mediator of the new covenant. He issues in the new era in which the law is now written on the believer's heart, the people will have an intimate knowledge of God, and God will be permanently satisfied concerning the issue of their sins (Jer. 31:33-34; Heb. 8:8-13). The heart will be sprinkled clean and free to worship God without the constraints of the sacrificial system. Jesus offers a permanent cleansing that could never be obtained under the old covenant. The author concludes this section describing the New Jerusalem with the statement that the sprinkled blood of the new covenant speaks better than the blood of Abel. We read in Heb. 11:4 that Abel offered a better sacrifice to God than his brother Cain and that as a result of Cain's jealousy he murdered Abel. The point that is made both in chapter Heb. 11:4 and Heb. 12:24 is that Abel was declared righteous by God, and it is his faith that continues to speak generations later. Although Abel is representative of one of the Old Testament saints who obtained a righteous testimony through his faith, it was only because he put his faith in the future sacrifice of Christ. With this final statement, the author puts an exclamation point to his argument that the new covenant is superior to the old covenant. William Lane writes that the writer may also have intended to evoke the whole history of redemption, from the righteous Abel to the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus, mediator of the new covenant.⁵

⁵ William L. Lane, 474.

DAY FIVE

Read Hebrews 12:25-29 and Hebrews 3:12-15.

28. The author tells his readers not to refuse the one who is speaking. What would keep a believer from listening to God?

Read Haggai 2:6-9.

29. In Heb. 12:26-27 the author further develops the theme of God's judgment, referencing this passage from Haggai. What are the two results of God "shaking the heavens and the earth"?

30. Have you had times in your life when you were "shaken" and realized that you needed to allow certain behaviors or attachments to be removed? What was the result of this experience?

Read Colossians 2:6-7.

31. Heb. 12:28 says that we receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken and our response to this should be gratitude. Why do you think the author focuses upon gratitude and not obedience as that which motivates us as believers?

Read Deuteronomy 4:26-31.

32. According to this passage, is there hope for those who have turned away from God to once again experience His compassionate love?

33. In Dt. 4:30, what is involved in returning to the Lord? What is your response to this?

COMMENTARY

Hebrews 12:25-29

Following this stark, dramatic contrast between the way God related to His people in the account at Mt. Sinai and the new way of relationship which has been made available through Christ, the author issues his final warning passage to his readers. He tells his readers “see to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking.” Every Israelite would have had Dt. 6:4 memorized, “Hear O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one.” This is called the Shema after the Hebrew word meaning “to hear” and it underscores the huge importance of hearing, listening to, and obeying God’s words. The book of Hebrews opened up with Jesus as the final word of God. There is nothing left for God to say if His Son is rejected. Our author is greatly concerned that his readers hear the words of God, the words of redemption, forgiveness, eternal Sabbath rest, and a nearness to God that is theirs to experience if only they will open their hearts to Him. In Heb. 12:25, the two events of God speaking at Sinai and God speaking in the heavenly city are recalled. God is the one who warned them on earth at Sinai, and He is the one called Judge who also warns from heaven. It is almost certain that if we had the opportunity to hear the author of Hebrews speaking directly that we would be moved by the compassion, the concern, and the loving rebuke that he issues to his readers. It is out of love for them that he wants them to make the right choices, to consider the cross of Christ and all of its benefits that far outweigh any temporary safety that a return to the temple might afford them. He has pushed his readers with all of his might to focus on the eternal benefits that are theirs, not only as a future gift, but also as a means of providing comfort in their present circumstances. In Heb. 12:25 the author uses similar language as that in Heb. 2:3, “how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” There is no escape when we neglect our salvation, but there is opportunity to turn to God and renew one’s commitment to Him. Under the harshness of these words lies the example of the Israelites who failed to trust God in the wilderness despite all of the outpouring of blessing, protection, and promise. In the book of Numbers we read that many of the Israelites lost out on the promise of the inheritance because of their stubborn refusal. It is this prideful attitude that the author of Hebrews does not want to see repeated in his congregation.

The voice of God that shook the earth at Sinai will also shake the heavens and the earth at the final judgment. The author writes of two separate categories. There will be those things that are shaken and will be removed and those things that are shaken and will remain. A passage is quoted from Haggai 2:6-7, “For thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the

sea also and the dry land. I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts." This verse occurs in relation to the rebuilding of the temple after the return of the exiles to Jerusalem. The prophet Haggai prophesies that the Lord's glory will return and that it will be greater than His former glory. He also prophesies that all creation will be shaken, including the nations, and that they will ultimately be subjected to the glory of God. In recalling this passage, the author draws the parallel between the promised judgment of the nations in Haggai, and the future judgment of all things. This calls to mind the truth that there will be those things that remain through the judgment and those things that do not. The only sure unshakeable thing we have is our trust in the sacrifice of Christ and the resultant kingdom. If this is what we anchor our hope upon, that in which our soul trusts, we will stand to inherit this unshakable kingdom that is promised to us. God is a terrifying God, and He is a consuming fire for those who have failed to trust in Him or who have turned their back on His Son. This is a frightening and scary proposition, but if our hope is in Him, we will not be placed under judgment. This truth is cause for a tremendous response of gratitude, reverence, and awe. God has made it possible through His Son for us to experience life and peace in His presence. There is no greater motivator to serve Him and to love Him than the gratitude that expresses that we understand what He has done and that we desire to joyfully participate in the life He has for us. He no longer requires sacrifices from us, but He does desire that we obey Him out of gratitude. This is what infuses our lives and our steps with joy instead of drudgery, faith instead of cynicism, and love instead of obligation. We are not His slaves; rather we are His friends (John 15:15).

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 12:14 -29

¹⁴ Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; ¹⁶ that *there be* no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a *single* meal. ¹⁷ For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears. ¹⁸ For you have not come to a *mountain* that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, ¹⁹ and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which *sound was such that* those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. ²⁰ For they could not bear the command, "IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED." ²¹ And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, "I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling." ²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge

of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.

²⁵ See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned *them* on earth, much less *will* we *escape* who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven. ²⁶ And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." ²⁷ This *expression*, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; ²⁹ for our God is a consuming fire.

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR SCRIPTURE

DAY ONE

Hebrews 12:14-17

¹⁴ Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; ¹⁶ that *there be* no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a *single* meal. ¹⁷ For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Hebrews 10:10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Hebrews 6:7-9 ⁷ For ground that drinks the rain which often falls upon it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; ⁸ but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned. ⁹ But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.

DAY TWO

Hebrews 12:15-17 ¹⁵ See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; ¹⁶ that *there be* no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a *single* meal. ¹⁷ For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

Genesis 25:19-34 ¹⁹ Now these are *the records of* the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac; ²⁰ and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. ²¹ Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived. ²² But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is so, why then am I *this way*?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. ²³ The LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb; And two peoples will be separated from your body; And one people shall be stronger than the other; And the older shall serve the younger." ²⁴ When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵ Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau. ²⁶

Afterward his brother came forth with his hand holding on to Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was sixty years old when she gave birth to them. ²⁷ When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a peaceful man, living in tents. ²⁸ Now Isaac loved Esau, because he had a taste for game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. ²⁹ When Jacob had cooked stew, Esau came in from the field and he was famished; ³⁰ and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished." Therefore his name was called Edom. ³¹ But Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." ³² Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?" ³³ And Jacob said, "First swear to me"; so he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

Genesis 27:1-40 ¹ Now it came about, when Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, that he called his older son Esau and said to him, "My son." And he said to him, "Here I am." ² Isaac said, "Behold now, I am old *and* I do not know the day of my death. ³ "Now then, please take your gear, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me; ⁴ and prepare a savory dish for me such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die." ⁵ Rebekah was listening while Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game to bring *home*, ⁶ Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "Behold, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, saying, ⁷ 'Bring me *some* game and prepare a savory dish for me, that I may eat, and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.' ⁸ "Now therefore, my son, listen to me as I command you. ⁹ "Go now to the flock and bring me two choice young goats from there, that I may prepare them as a savory dish for your father, such as he loves. ¹⁰ "Then you shall bring *it* to your father, that he may eat, so that he may bless you before his death." ¹¹ Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, "Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man and I am a smooth man. ¹² "Perhaps my father will feel me, then I will be as a deceiver in his sight, and I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing." ¹³ But his mother said to him, "Your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get *them* for me." ¹⁴ So he went and got *them*, and brought *them* to his mother; and his mother made savory food such as his father loved. ¹⁵ Then Rebekah took the best garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. ¹⁶ And she put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. ¹⁷ She also gave the savory food and the bread, which she had made, to her son Jacob. ¹⁸ Then he came to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" ¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done as you told me. Get up, please, sit and eat of my game, that you may bless me." ²⁰ Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have *it* so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the LORD your God caused *it* to happen to me." ²¹ Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come close, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not." ²² So Jacob came close to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." ²³ He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. ²⁴ And he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" And he said, "I am." ²⁵ So he said, "Bring *it* to me, and I will eat of my son's

game, that I may bless you." And he brought *it* to him, and he ate; he also brought him wine and he drank. ²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, "Please come close and kiss me, my son." ²⁷ So he came close and kissed him; and when he smelled the smell of his garments, he blessed him and said, "See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed; ²⁸ Now may God give you of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And an abundance of grain and new wine; ²⁹ May peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you; Be master of your brothers, And may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be those who curse you, And blessed be those who bless you." ³⁰ Now it came about, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had hardly gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. ³¹ Then he also made savory food, and brought it to his father; and he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me." ³² Isaac his father said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau." ³³ Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who was he then that hunted game and brought *it* to me, so that I ate of all *of it* before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed." ³⁴ When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, *even me* also, O my father!" ³⁵ And he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing." ³⁶ Then he said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" ³⁷ But Isaac replied to Esau, "Behold, I have made him your master, and all his relatives I have given to him as servants; and with grain and new wine I have sustained him. Now as for you then, what can I do, my son?" ³⁸ Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, *even me* also, O my father." So Esau lifted his voice and wept. ³⁹ Then Isaac his father answered and said to him, "Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling, And away from the dew of heaven from above. ⁴⁰ "By your sword you shall live, And your brother you shall serve; But it shall come about when you become restless, That you will break his yoke from your neck."

Numbers 15:31 'Because he has despised the word of the LORD and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt *will be* on him.'

Isaiah 54:5 "For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the LORD of hosts; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth.

Genesis 33:1-11 ¹Then Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming, and four hundred men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids. ² He put the maids and their children in front, and Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last. ³ But he himself passed on ahead of them and bowed down to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. ⁴ Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. ⁵ He lifted his eyes and saw the women and the children, and said, "Who are these with you?" So he said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." ⁶ Then the maids came near with their children, and they bowed down. ⁷

Leah likewise came near with her children, and they bowed down; and afterward Joseph came near with Rachel, and they bowed down. ⁸ And he said, "What do you mean by all this company which I have met?" And he said, "To find favor in the sight of my lord." ⁹ But Esau said, "I have plenty, my brother; let what you have be your own." ¹⁰ Jacob said, "No, please, if now I have found favor in your sight, then take my present from my hand, for I see your face as one sees the face of God, and you have received me favorably. ¹¹ "Please take my gift which has been brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me and because I have plenty." Thus he urged him and he took *it*.

DAY THREE

Hebrews 12:18-21 ¹⁸ For you have not come to a *mountain* that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, ¹⁹ and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which *sound was such that* those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. ²⁰ For they could not bear the command, "IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED." ²¹ And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, "I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling."

Deuteronomy 4:10-19 ¹⁰ "Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.' ¹¹ "You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the *very* heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud and thick gloom. ¹² "Then the LORD spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form-- only a voice. ¹³ "So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, *that is*, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. ¹⁴ "The LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might perform them in the land where you are going over to possess it.

Deuteronomy 5:23-27 ²³ "And when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. ²⁴ "You said, 'Behold, the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we have seen today that God speaks with man, yet he lives. ²⁵ 'Now then why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer, then we will die. ²⁶ 'For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived? ²⁷ 'Go near and hear all that the LORD our God says; then speak to us all that the LORD our God speaks to you, and we will hear and do *it*.'

Hebrews 3:14-19 ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, ¹⁵ while it is said, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME." ¹⁶ For who provoked *Him* when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt *led* by Moses? ¹⁷ And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with

those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? ¹⁹ So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

Deuteronomy 7:12 ¹² "Then it shall come about, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers.

Exodus 19:16-25 ¹⁶ So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. ¹⁷ And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. ¹⁹ When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. ²⁰ The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. ²¹ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go down, warn the people, so that they do not break through to the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish. ²² "Also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, or else the LORD will break out against them." ²³ Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for You warned us, saying, 'Set bounds about the mountain and consecrate it.'" ²⁴ Then the LORD said to him, "Go down and come up *again*, you and Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, or He will break forth upon them." ²⁵ So Moses went down to the people and told them.

DAY FOUR

Hebrews 12:22-24 ²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.

Isaiah 8:18 ¹⁸ Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion.

Psalms 48:1-3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, In the city of our God, His holy mountain. ² Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion *in* the far north, The city of the great King. ³ God, in her palaces, Has made Himself known as a stronghold.

Revelation 21:1-7 ¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned

for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, ⁴ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." ⁵ And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." ⁶ Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. ⁷ "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.

Hebrews 1:6 And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM."

Ephesians 1:2-8 ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight

Hebrews 11:4 ⁴ By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

DAY FIVE

Hebrews 12:25 –29 ²⁵ See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned *them* on earth, much less *will we escape* who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven. ²⁶ And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." ²⁷ This *expression*, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; ²⁹ for our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 3:12-15 ¹² Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, ¹⁵ while it is said, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME."

Haggai 2:6-9 ⁶ ⁷ 'I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. ⁸ 'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD of hosts. ⁹ 'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts, 'and in this place I will give peace,' declares the LORD of hosts."

Colossians 2:6-7 ⁶ Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and overflowing* with gratitude.

Deuteronomy 4:26-31 ²⁶ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but will be utterly destroyed. ²⁷ "The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD drives you. ²⁸ "There you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. ²⁹ "But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find *Him* if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. ³⁰ "When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice. ³¹ "For the LORD your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.