

"The Chastening of God"

Hebrews 12:5-24

Part 11

Introduction: Last week in our study of Hebrews we were in chapter 12 and we were looking at verses 18-24. It is in these verses that the writer of Hebrews presents his last contrast between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. He presents this contrast as 2 mountains.

Notice Hebrews 12:18-21

First of all, the writer pointed to the dreadful sight at Mount Sinai where the Law was given to the people of Israel. The words recorded here are briefly describing what Israel witnessed in Exodus 19 when God gave the Law. Mount Sinai was a MOUNTAIN of separation, a MOUNTAIN of fear, a MOUNTAIN of judgment, a MOUNTAIN of death, and it was a MOUNTAIN which demonstrated the Holiness of God. The bottom line was, it was and is a MOUNTAIN that was and is IMPOSSIBLE for ANYONE to scale.

The Law was never given for the purpose of saving ANYONE.

Romans 3:19-20

¹⁹ *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

²⁰ *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

For the Hebrews to turn back to the Old Covenant would be to go back to Sinai and try to scale the dreadful mountain.

The writer now goes on and he points them to the contrast.

Notice Hebrews 12:22

In contrast to Mount Sinai is Mount Zion. Mount Zion is pictured here as the New Covenant. This is a MOUNTAIN of grace, a MOUNTAIN of peace, a MOUNTAIN of fellowship, and a MOUNTAIN of forgiveness.

I. The Incentive

Part 2

A. Mount Zion

Part 2

As we come back to this text tonight it is my desire to help us to see the blessings which are given to each and every person who has accepted Christ as their Savior. Let me first of all show you what the Psalmist recorded in Psalm 87.

Psalm 87:5-7

⁵ *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. [in whose heart are the highways to Zion]*

⁶ *Who passing through the valley of Baca [weeping] make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.*

⁷ *They go from strength to strength, [they increase in victorious power] every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.*

The brackets in these verses are mine to help us to see what the writer is saying. He tells us that everyone whose heart is fixed upon the highway to Zion is blessed and increases with strength from victory to victory.

We are to live with our eyes focused upon the Heavenly City of Zion. It is the City which John described in Revelation.

Revelation 21:1-4

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

² *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

³ *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

⁴ *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

Now let us look at the blessings.

1. Security

Zion was the strength of Jerusalem in David's day. Zion was the place of the Temple and it was in the Temple where God's presence was. Then in 2 Samuel we read about the stronghold of Zion.

2 Samuel 5:7

⁷ Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.

In the City of Zion we are forever secure.

Revelation 21:10-12, 22-27

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,

¹¹ Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal:

¹² And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

²² And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

²³ And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

²⁴ And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

²⁵ And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

²⁶ And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

²⁷ And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Now someone may look at this passage and reply by saying, "Yes, there is security there but we are not there yet!" My reply to that would be, "In the mind of God we are already there."

Notice Hebrews 12:22 again.

The writer tells his readers they "are come". This is present tense and therefore according to God we are already there right now.

Ephesians 2:4-7

⁴ *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,*

⁵ *Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved:)*

⁶ *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

⁷ *That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

2. Freedom

Galatians 4:21-26

²¹ *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?*

²² *For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.*

²³ *But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.*

²⁴ *Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.*

²⁵ *For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.*

²⁶ *But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*

Jerusalem is Zion and as residents of Zion we are free. We are not under the bondage of the Law so therefore we are free from:

- a. Sin's power
- b. Sin's penalty
- c. And eventually sin's presence

We are not under the ceremonies and the rituals of the Law. We have liberty in Jesus Christ to be the people whom God made us to be.

3. Help

Notice Hebrews 12:22 again.

When we come to Zion we come to "AN INNUMERABLE COMPANY OF ANGELS". There are many ideas as to why angels are here in this list of blessings. My thought is they speak of the HELP which God provides for us in our journey here on this earth.

Hebrews 1:13-14

¹³ But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Remember Jesus' battle in the Garden the night before He was crucified?

Luke 22:41-43

⁴¹ And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

⁴² Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

⁴³ And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

Jesus was strengthened by an angel that night in the Garden. The angels are also ministering spirits to us who know Christ and so we too are strengthened by angels and they are innumerable so our help is endless.

4. Inheritance

Notice Hebrews 12:23

The words "general assembly" refers to a "festival gathering". Some believe the term should be connected with the previous mentioned angels and others believe it should be connected with the church here in this verse. It is located between the two groups so it may refer to both. We know for sure that the angels gather to rejoice in heaven and we know that believers gather to rejoice so it fits well with both. But what I want you to see here is that when we come to Christ we come to the church of the FIRSTBORN. What does this mean?

In the Bible the FIRSTBORN speaks of the position of inheritance.

Romans 8:16-17

¹⁶ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

¹⁷ And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

1 Peter 1:3-4

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.

There is an inheritance waiting for us in heaven that no man can ruin or steal away. You may have very little on this earth but in heaven you will have everything. We are children of the King and what belongs to Him belongs to us.

Let me show you just how secure our inheritance is.

Notice Hebrews 12:23 again.

Our names are written in heaven as joint heirs with Christ. That to me is amazing!!

5. Privilege

Notice Hebrews 12:23 again.

When we come to Christ we also come to God, the Judge of all. On Mount Sinai there was not one person except for Moses who could enter into the presence of God. For the Hebrews to consider entering into God's courtroom it was impossible. In a courtroom setting the lawyer is the one who approaches the judge not the criminal. But when a sinner comes to Christ they are then given the privilege of coming into the presence of God.

Hebrews 10:19-22

¹⁹ Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

²⁰ By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

²¹ And having an high priest over the house of God;

²² Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

6. Position

Notice Hebrews 12:23 again.

We come into the presence of the "spirits of just men made perfect". This is a reference to Old Testament believers. We are of the same company with Daniel, Moses, Isaac, Isaiah, Elijah and the list goes on and on. The point is we are of the same family of the giants of the faith. We are not inferior or superior to the Old Testament saints. We too have a position in the family of God.

7. Perfection

Notice Hebrews 12:24

The blood of Abel's sacrifice spoke of COVERING sin. The blood of Christ's sacrifice speaks of WASHING AWAY ALL SIN.

Conclusion:

We are TRULY blessed!!!