

(18) For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.”

(22) But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God --- the heavenly Jerusalem --- and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God --- the Judge of all --- and to spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus --- the Mediator of a new covenant --- and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

(25) See to it that 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. 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.” 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.

(28) 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 --- for our God is a consuming fire!

Think on these things:

- 1) Let’s start with the bottom line to this lesson. With all that we will learn, what two responses are we to have as believers to what we are taught in this passage? See v.28. Let us:
 - a) **Be grateful --- for God’s Kingdom that cannot be shaken (it is lasting and eternal)!**
 - b) **Worship God acceptably, with deep reverence and awe! Let God be BIG to you and in your life!**
- 2) Vs.18-21 speak to an Old Testament covenant. Take a few moments to browse Exodus 19 & 20. Chapter 19 is the 3-day preparation period, and chapter 20 records the actual giving of the 10 commandments. Pay close attention to 19:16-25 and 20:18-21. Imagine the impact this day would have had on you, had you been personally present!! What sights and sounds were they exposed to at the mountain (Ex. 19:16-18)? When assembled at the base of the mountain, what did the people observe between Moses and God (Ex. 19:19)? What did the people demand from Moses immediately afterward (Ex. 20:19)? --- This event helps us to better understand the statement from Hebrews 10:31!

Sights and sounds? **The day began with thunder and lightning (v.16), a very thick cloud covering the mountain, and then a startling trumpet blast. This terrified the people. Responding to the blast, Moses led them to the mountain base (v.17). God descended upon the mountain in a fire, causing an earthquake, and smoke billowed above it into the air (v.18). The trumpet blast(s) continued, and God’s speaking to Moses came across as thunder to the people (v.19).**

Moses and God’s exchange? **The people observed Moses and God speaking together right in front of them (v.19).**

People’s demands afterward? **We don’t want to do this again. YOU speak to God, and then tell us what He said. We thought we were going to die!**
- 3) You don’t have to answer this in class. Do you have this overwhelming sense of awe regarding God? We often think more of Him as our Creator (O.T.) and Father (N.T.), but imagine being outside one day and the God of our universe begins booming out a conversation with you? Now wouldn’t that be unsettling?!! “What is man that You are mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:1-8 and Psalm 144:3-4)

- 4) It's clear from Hebrews 10:19-29 that the greatness of the New Covenant exceeds that of the Old Covenant. From Hebrews 12:22, what is the City of the Living God? Who will be present there?

City? **The heavenly Jerusalem on (heavenly) Mount Zion**

Present (22-24)? **Innumerable "angels" gathered in celebratory activities, the assembly of the "firstborn" (believers) who have been 'enrolled' in heaven, God the Judge, the spirits of perfected saints, and Jesus.**

NOTES: Jerusalem in Israel also has a Mount Zion; it was the Jewish name given to Mount Moriah, where Abraham was sent to offer Isaac as a sacrifice (Genesis 22) and where Solomon built the first Temple (1 Chronicles 21:18-30 and 2 Chronicles 3:1). The heavenly city is described in Revelation 21:1-22:5.

The term "firstborn" is frequently a title for Jesus as THE Firstborn (e.g., Colossians 1:15, 18 and Hebrews 1:6). Here in v.23 the term is in the plural in Greek, modified by "who are enrolled in heaven." The common understanding is that these are the followers --- we, us --- granted an inheritance through the Judgment process (see Daniel 7:9-10 and Revelation 20:12-15, enrollment meaning names found in the Book of Life).

- 5) From v.24, what is the title given to Jesus as the world's Savior? See 1 Timothy 2:5 and Hebrews 9:15. Do we humans have an alternative way to get to heaven? Consider John 14:6.

Jesus is the "Mediator" between God and man. There is no other, and there is no other way to get to heaven except through Him (John 14:6).

- 6) What is the warning from v.25? Why should we worry about this (see Hebrews 3:7-19 --- remember these are the same people discussed in question 2 above)?

The warning is "not to refuse Him who is speaking." Even with the astonishing and fear-inducing experience observed between Moses and God at Mount Sinai, the Israelites were quick to turn on both of them. It is no different for us today, despite whatever "real" encounter we've had with God in the past, we can always lapse into unbelief and rebellion if we're not careful.

- 7) What concept about permanent and temporary is introduced in vs. 26-27? The writer also identifies what is temporary in v.27; what is it?

God plans to "shake" both heaven and earth once more. The goal of this shaking is to identify and remove things that are shaken. Anything shaken will be deemed temporary --- and removed.

- 9) What should we be grateful for, and how should it shape our response to God (v.28) --- who is here described as a "consuming fire"!

Grateful for? **Inheriting a Kingdom that cannot be shaken (it is permanent).**

Acceptable response? **Worship God acceptably with reverence and awe --- for our God is a consuming fire! He may be our heavenly Father, but He's also the majestic, all-powerful Creator of all things! In Him will be life or death for everyone.**

People and situations I want to pray for this week: