

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: 3/13-14/2023 *Hebrews 12:12-29*

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!

MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763?pwd=b25tUzhkaTE0UzIrSnpkVmZEWGJVQT09>

Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763 - Passcode: 087484

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,87858644763# US (San Jose) +13462487799,,87858644763# US (Houston)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose); +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston); +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma); +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C); +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago); +1 929 436 2866 US (New York);

Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763>

TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).

THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE CCCM FAMILY ROOM

MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85309150746?pwd=Tk5oVjN0TzdpWjE3UC9Oam05a21uQT09>

Meeting ID: 853 0915 0746 - Passcode: 715340

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,85309150746# US (San Jose) +12532158782,,85309150746# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose); +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma); +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston); +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C); +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago); +1 929 436 2866 US (New York);

Meeting ID: 853 0915 0746

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85309150746>

HAVING TROUBLE LOGGING INTO Zoom? <https://www.technipages.com/troubleshooting-zoom-login-errors>

Phil Twente ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221 www.ptwente.com - For Audio & notes from previous studies -

OPENING PRAYER

Review - (*Heb 1:1-3*) *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, [2] has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; [3] who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*

(Heb 12:11) *Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

Chapter 12 Renew Your Spiritual Vitality – vs. 12-17; The Glorious Company - vs. 18-24; Hear the Heavenly Voice – vs. 25-29.

Renew Your Spiritual Vitality – vs. 12-17;

[12] Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, [13] and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. [14] Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: [15] looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; [16] lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. [17] For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

Heb 12:12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,

- **This is now referring to the chastening processes.** *Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.* You know, sometimes, we feel sort of beaten down. We think, oh, God doesn't love me, but no, He does! It is a proof of His love. Lift up, your hands and strengthen the feeble knees. *(Isa 35:3) Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees.*

Heb 12:13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

- **Let the purposes of God be accomplished!** Let the healing of God's Spirit put you in line, get you in that right path—the straight path. That is God's purpose. To keep us in that straight path, lest we stray away into dangerous territory. Make straight paths for your feet. Get back into the race, keep running with the same commitment as we had at the beginning of the race! We should also help one another by making their paths straight and smooth! *(Isa 40:3) The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God.*

Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

- **In Romans, Paul said, (Rom 12:18) *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*** This is key to finishing the race! Recognizing that there are some people, well, it is just impossible to be at peace with them. They are so antagonistic. But let the cause for division, be on their part and not on yours. As much as depends on you, live peaceably. Follow peace with all men. Pursue peace, all the way up to the point of compromise!
- ***And holiness. God wants us to live holy lives!*** We thank God, though we are not holy, He can make us holy. He accounts us holy through our faith in Jesus Christ.
- ***Pursue ... holiness, explained in this epistle as drawing near to God with full faith and a cleansed conscience.*** Also, holiness is a genuine acceptance of Christ as the Savior and sacrifice for sin, bringing the sinner into fellowship with God. Unbelievers will not be drawn to accept Christ if believers' lives do not demonstrate the qualities, God desires, including peace and holiness. Who or how many can you think of that with whom you need to pursue peace? Grace received becomes grace bestowed, realizing what the Lord has done for you?
- ***Without which no one will see the Lord: To see God, in the context, is to enjoy Him; and without holiness of heart and life this is impossible. No soul can be fit for heaven that does not want to go there!***

Sixth Danger Signal: Peril of Denying

Heb 12:15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

- **Paul wrote, (Gal 5:4) You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.** So, *looking carefully* or being very diligent, lest any man should fail of the grace of God; lest we allow any root of bitterness to spring up within us. *Looking carefully* has in it the thought of direction. What is that direction? (**Heb 12:2**) *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*
- **Lest anyone fall short of the grace of God. The word here for fall short is not apostasy**—this is not speaking of the danger of apostatizing. It means simply to fall back. In other words, a believer must keep his eyes on the Lord Jesus, not on men. If he doesn't keep his eyes on Him, he is apt to get to the place where he does not avail himself of the grace of God.
- **God has a tremendous reservoir of grace**, and He wants to lavish it upon His children. He is prepared and able to do that. Christ paid the penalty for our sins! God is rich in mercy, rich in grace, and He wants to expend it upon us. The problem is that many of us do not avail ourselves of His grace! We are talking here about reality—something that you can go to God for and lay hold of it. That is the glory of it all, and that is the message of this epistle. Have you and I gone to Him today? Have you talked to Him—yes, reverently, but really talked to Him like He is your Father? Tell Him about yourself. Tell Him you need grace. We all need grace and it is available, but we've got to apply for it. We need to ask Him for it. Do not fail of the grace of God.
- **Lest any root of bitterness can defile so many people.** We have to be careful about *bitterness!* One bitter person in the church can spread around so much *bitterness*. Many people can be defiled because of one bitter person. So, watch out for this, he says, looking carefully and diligently lest you fall short of the grace of God, coming too late and be left out. We are to show grace. We are to show kindness and forgiveness. We are to watch out for this bitterness, this root of bitterness that can trouble us and many others. Peter said to Simon in Samaria, (**Act 8:23**) *For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity."*

Heb 12:16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

- **Esau is the example here of any fornicator or profane person.** One who is worshipping other gods, setting aside the devotion that we should have for God, alone, loving the Lord, your God with all your heart, with all your soul, mind, and strength! But allowing other things to come in and separate us from God. (**Jud 1:18**) *how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.*
- **Like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.** We remember the story. Esau had come in from hunting. He was wearied and weak. Jacob was, well, we would probably call him a mother's boy. He was great around the kitchen. Esau hunted and fished. He was more of a man's man. He had been out hunting. He came in. He was tired. Jacob has been in the kitchen, cooking some lentils, spicing them up with some onions and garlic. Oh, it smells good! Hey brother, give me some of those lentils. Jacob always willing to take advantage of another person, said, I will tell you what. I will trade you a bowl of lentils for your birthright.
- **Esau said, sure why not? He sold his birthright for a bowl of lentils.** He did not care about it. He was not spiritually minded. He was a worldly person. His interest was in material things. Therefore, he was willing to sell the birthright for a mess of pottage. Until later, he discovered that with the birthright, went twice the inheritance! Then, he realized, wow, Jacob is going to get twice as much from the old man as I am, because he has the birthright. That was the thing that upset him! He did not really have any spiritual longings and spiritual desires.
- **Esau desired God's blessings, but he did not want God.** He regretted what he had done, but he did not repent. Esau is an example of those who willfully sin against God and who are given no second chance because of their exposure to the truth and their advanced state of hardness. Esau was an example of the *profane* person.

Heb 12:17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

- **This Scripture is often misunderstood. He sold the birthright.** Then, afterward, he realized that he lost the inheritance as a result, the blessing of the inheritance, because he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance. Now that is a sentence by itself. He did not repent.
- **Though he sought it diligently with tears.** He did not seek repentance carefully. What he sought was the inheritance. He was weeping over the loss of inheritance. Though he sought the inheritance with tears, he did not seek the repentance with tears. He was unrepentant and repented not. Do not think, oh, poor fellow, here he cried and wept, you know, trying to find repentance. No, he was not trying to find repentance. He was not crying because of the sin. He was just crying because he had lost the blessing of the double inheritance.
- **The birthright consisted of two things – the material blessings** of receiving twice as much as the other sons, and the responsibility over the family, including the privilege and responsibility of the spiritual side of being in the lineage of the coming Messiah. Esau was totally upset with losing the material blessing, but he had no concern regarding the spiritual side! Remember Esau, he esteemed the material blessing as more important than the birthright (spiritual blessing) and he sold the birthright! He is the picture of regret, in the Bible! Do not make the same mistake. You will live to regret it!

A Kingdom That Cannot Be Shaken A Kingdom That Cannot Be Shaken - The Glorious Company - vs. 18-24;

[18] For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness, darkness, and tempest, [19] and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. [20] (For they could not endure what was commanded: "AND IF SO MUCH AS A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT SHALL BE STONED OR SHOT WITH AN ARROW." [21] And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I AM EXCEEDINGLY AFRAID AND TREMBLING.") [22] But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, [23] to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, [24] to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

Heb 12:18 For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest,

Heb 12:19 and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.

Heb 12:20 (For they could not endure what was commanded: "AND IF SO MUCH AS A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT SHALL BE STONED OR SHOT WITH AN ARROW (fear and insecurity, and separation)."

- **The writer proceeds to give an exposition based on Israel's encounter with God** at Mt. Sinai.
- **(Exo 19:12-13) You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. [13] Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot with an arrow; whether man or beast, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain."**
- **(Deu 4:11) "Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness,**

- *(Deu 5:22) "These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly, in the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and He added no more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.*
- **He is talking about when the children of Israel came to Mt. Sinai**, the mountain burned with fire. There was this loud blast that sounded like a trumpet blast that grew louder and louder. *(Exo 19:19) And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.* There were thunderings. There were lightnings. There was fire shooting across the ground. The presence of the Lord, so the people were terrified at this awesome sight! They said to Moses, you go up and talk to God! You come down and tell us what God said, and we'll obey it. But we do not want to go near that! We will die!
- **So, you have not come to this mountain, which could be touched**, where you heard the voice of God, where you saw the demonstration of God's presence in the fire, in the lightning, in the thunder, the sound of the trumpet.

Heb 12:21 And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I AM EXCEEDINGLY AFRAID AND TREMBLING."

- **We have not come to the law, to that mountain.** If that fear of the mountain caused even Moses to be exceedingly afraid and trembling. Is that where you want to be? Do not even consider going back to that! *(Deu 9:19) For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which the LORD was angry with you, to destroy you. But the LORD listened to me at that time also.*

Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion (representing the freedom under grace with 100% confidence!) ***and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,***

- **It speaks of Abraham (Hebrews 11:10), who by faith, journeyed, leaving his home, not knowing** where he was going. He testified that he was just a stranger and a pilgrim, here. He was searching for a city, which has foundation, whose maker and builder is God.
- **You have come to Mt Zion, the city of the living God.** We believers are in a different place! Our relationship with God is not modeled after Israel's experience on Mount Sinai. We come to God's other mountain: Mount Zion, the name of the hill upon which Jerusalem sits, the one that they were looking for, to the heavenly Jerusalem and to an innumerable company of angels. Now he is going to tell you of those who are inhabiting the new Jerusalem, this heavenly Jerusalem, and an innumerable company of angels.
- **He shows how much the gospel church represents the church triumphant in heaven**, what communication there is between the one and the other. The gospel church is called *Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, which is free*, in opposition to Mount Sinai, which tends to bondage, *(Gal 4:24) which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar.* This was the hill on which God set His King, the Messiah. In coming to Mount Zion, believers come into heavenly places, and into a heavenly society.
- **Mount Zion. As opposed to Mt. Sinai**, where God gave the Mosaic Law which was foreboding and terrifying. Mt. Zion here is not the earthly one in Jerusalem, but God's heavenly abode, which is inviting and gracious. No one could please God on Sinai's terms, which was perfect fulfillment of the law.
- *(Psa 2:6-8) "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." [7] "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. [8] Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.*
- *(Gal 3:10-12) For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT CONTINUE IN ALL THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO DO THEM. [11] But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH. [12] Yet the law is not of faith, but "THE MAN WHO DOES THEM SHALL LIVE BY THEM. Zion, however, is accessible to all who come to God through Jesus Christ.*

- **(Psa 132:13) For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place.**
- **(Isa 46:13) I bring My righteousness near; it shall not be far off; My salvation shall not linger. And I will place salvation in Zion, For Israel My glory.**
- **(Zec 2:10) "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says the LORD.**
- **To Mount Zion ... city of the living God... heavenly Jerusalem.** These are synonyms for heaven itself. For a description of the abode of God, the city of Jerusalem in heaven. God has taken up His gracious residence in the gospel church, which on that account is an emblem of heaven. There His people may find Him ruling, guiding, sanctifying, and comforting them. There He speaks to them by the gospel ministry; there they speak to Him by prayer. He hears them. There He trains them up for heaven, giving them the earnest of their inheritance.
- **To the heavenly Jerusalem** as born and bred there, as free occupants there. Here, believers have a clearer views of heaven, plainer evidences for heaven, and a greater advantage and more heavenly temper of soul.
- **To an innumerable company of angels,** who are of the same family with the saints, under the same head, and in a great measure employed in the same work, ministering to believers for their good, keeping them in all their ways, and pitching their tents about them. These for number are innumerable, and for order and union are a company, and a glorious one. And those who by faith are joined to the gospel church, are joined to the angels, and shall at length, be like them, and more than equal with them.
- **In the Book of Revelation, chapter five,** we read that ten thousand times ten thousand angels, lifted their voice in praise and worship unto God. That is a hundred million angels!
- **We remember in the Old Testament (2 Kings 19:35), when Sennacherib** had attacked Jerusalem. The prophet had said to the king, look, you just stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. God's going to deliver them into your hands. You will not have to fight in this battle. When the children of Israel woke up in the morning and looked over the walls at the camp of the Assyrians, they saw the whole army, a hundred and eighty-five thousand of them, lying dead in the field. One angel!
- **You remember when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane** and the officers came to arrest Him, how that Peter pulled out his sword and begin to swing? Jesus said to Peter, put away your sword. Don't you realize that I could call for twelve legions of angels to deliver Me? Now if one angel could do that much against the Assyrians, imagine what the twelve legions could do! A hundred million!

Heb 12:23 to the general assembly (festive gathering - Old Testament saints) and church (New Testament saints) of the firstborn (*ekklesiai prototokos* – church firstborn) who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,

- **To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, who are registered in heaven.** That is the body of Jesus Christ! We are the church of the first born. We have been born again by the power of the Holy Spirit into the family of God. There are no fornicators or profane persons like Esau! Only *firstborn*, highly valuing their spiritual inheritance!
- **Then also and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.** That is a reference to the Old Testament saints that are there also in this new Jerusalem.
- **Just men made perfect. (Heb 11:40) God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.** These are the OT saints in distinction from the *church of the firstborn*, who are the NT believers.
- **In the eleventh chapter, it said (Heb 11:13,16) These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. [16] But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.** God having reserved some better thing for us, that they without us, could not be *made perfect*. They could not come into the heavenly scene until Jesus had put away the sin, by His death on the cross. The Old Testament sacrifices never put away sin. They covered sin, but it was impossible that the blood of bulls or goats could actually put away sin. They only pointed to the sacrifice that would be

made by Jesus Christ, by which sins were put away. They, without us could not come into the perfected state. But now they are there!

Heb 12:24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood (love, grace, forgiveness) ***of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel*** (vengeance).

- ***Jesus the Mediator.*** (*Heb 9:15*) *And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*
- ***Jesus, when He took the bread and broke it, He said, this is My body, broken for you.*** Then He took the cup. He said, this cup is a New Covenant in My blood, which is shed for the remission of sins.
- ***Consider what we believers have! We have the church. We have the Father, the Judge of all.*** We have the Spirit, the Old Testament saints, and we have Jesus, who was the Mediator of the New Covenant, *and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaks better things than that of Abel.* The perfect sacrifice -- Jesus Christ, Himself!

Hear the Heavenly Voice – vs. 25-29

[25] See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, [26] whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO HEAVEN." [27] Now this, "YET ONCE MORE," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. [28] Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. [29] For our God is a consuming fire.

Heb 12:25 See (present imperative – you must always do it; take heed) ***that you do not refuse Him who speaks.*** ***For if they did not escape who refused*** (*paraiteomai* – make less of) ***Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven,***

- ***So, we have come to, sort of the epicenter of this epistle.*** ***See that you do not refuse*** (*paraiteomai* – deprecate, decline, shun) ***Him who speaks.*** The Lord is wanting to speak to us right now. The Lord is wanting to speak to us about righteousness and about holiness, about serving Him and His will. Be sure and *not refuse Him who speaks!* In the previous verses, God shows us the glory and goodness of Mount Zion. It is the perfect, finished work of Jesus and the New Covenant through Him! If we choose to ***refuse*** this from God, we cannot ignore the consequences, which are dreadful to apostates now, for Zion has greater terrors than Sinai, great as those were!
- ***(Rev 2:7) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*** Just think that such a little particle of dust of this creation, as I am, has been given the ability to accept or refuse the Creator God!
- ***For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven.*** He that despised Moses' law was put to death in the mouth of two or three witnesses. (*Heb 10:29*) ***Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?*** How much more shall we not escape, if we refuse Him, turn away from Him, who speaks to us from heaven?

Heb 12:26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO HEAVEN."

- ***Whose voice then shook the earth!*** At Mt. Sinai, when God spoke, there was this great earthquake, and this manifestation of fire and all. Whose voice then shook the earth.

- ***But now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO HEAVEN."*** We talk about a St. Andreas quake. That is going to be just a local, little shaking, localized along the St. Andreas fault line. The recent big earthquake in Turkey and Syria, was indeed devastating, but also was localized. That will be nothing compared with the shaking that is going to come! The Book of Revelation describes the great earthquake that God says He is going to shake the earth! (**Rev 16:18**) *And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth!* Imagine when the whole earth begins to shake! Not just in local fault areas, but the whole earth! Imagine the terror that that is going to bring into the hearts of people, **when God shakes the earth, the whole earth!** (**Hag 2:6**) *"For thus says the LORD of hosts: Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land.*
- **He speaks now more powerfully and effectually. Then indeed His voice shook the earth, but now,** by introducing the gospel, saying, ***YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO HEAVEN,*** not only shaken the hills and mountains, or the spirits of men, or the civil state of the land of Canaan, to make room for His people. He will not only shake the world, as He then did, but He has shaken the church, that is, the Jewish nation, in their church-state. It is by the gospel from heaven, that God shook to pieces the civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jewish nation, introducing a new state of the church, that cannot be removed, shall never be changed for any other on earth, but shall remain till it be made perfect in heaven!

Heb 12:27 Now this, "YET ONCE MORE," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

- **Here in this verse is the answer to the preceding verse!** The material world in which we put such great value, effort and energy, God is going to shake that until everything that can be shaken, shall be shaken! We must be very careful that we build our lives on the right foundation. Are we building on sinking sand? Or are we building upon the Rock which is Christ? I see these tall buildings in Los Angeles and in other cities. When God shakes the earth and the heavens, to realize, these things are going to be flattened! I cannot imagine the horror and the devastation when God brings this promise to pass!
- **Only that which cannot be shaken will remain!** That is, your faith, unshakeable faith! Your trust in God! Only the things of the Son, those things will last! Those things will survive! Do not move away from the Son!
- **That the things which cannot be shaken may remain.** God will remain. His word will remain, and the eternal kingdom to which believers belong will remain. (**Mat 24:35**) *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.*

Heb 12:28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken (moved), let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear (not phobia, but awe!)

- **Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken.** The kingdom of God, it cannot be moved! It cannot be shaken! It cannot be destroyed!
- **Let us have grace.** Literally, "let us hold fast the grace or favor which we have received in being admitted to the privileges of that kingdom." **The object is, to keep ourselves in the reverent fear and service of God. This kingdom is permanent! There is no danger of its being overthrown. It is to continue on earth to the end of time. It is to be established in heaven forever.** If it were temporary, changeable, liable to be overthrown at any moment, there would be much less encouragement to persevere!
- **Only by His grace!** – (**Luk 18:10-14**) *"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. [11] The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. [12] I fast*

twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' [13] And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' [14] I tell you; this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

- **By which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.** As believers we are moving toward a heavenly kingdom, but as we move toward the heavenly kingdom we need to recognize that we should be serving God down here. But how are we to serve Him? We are to serve Him *acceptably*. How do we serve Him acceptably? *With reverence and godly fear*. Christianity is not playing church. It is not assuming a pious attitude. It is a living, vital, and real relationship with Jesus Christ that transforms your life and anchors you in the Word of God. (Heb 5:7b) when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death and was heard because of His godly fear.

Heb 12:29 For our God is a consuming fire.

- **In several places in the Scriptures, God is likened unto fire.** Fire is an interesting thing. It has the power to destroy or refine. It depends on the substance being subjected to the fire. The same fire can transmit a piece of iron into steel and make it more permanent.
- **We remember the Assyrian army being destroyed—one hundred eighty-five thousand,** in one night, who were encamped against, besieging Jerusalem. When God wiped out that Assyrian army, it said fear ripped the hearts of the sinners in Zion, saying, **(Isa 33:14) The sinners in Zion are afraid; Fearfulness has seized the hypocrites: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell (approach) with everlasting burnings?"** They saw what God could do to their enemies. Those who were sinners, their hearts were gripped with fear, saying who among us can dwell with this devouring fire? Who among us can approach the devouring fire?
- **Now it declares, our God is a consuming fire.** But that all depends on the material that is in it. The question is, as we are in the fire, what is it doing to us? You see, the fire has the capacity of burning out the dross, or refining the gold. It is refined by fire--and thus, the refining fire. To the child of God, God is a refining fire! To the sinner, He is a consuming fire!
- **You cannot escape the fire. It is in nature.** It is everywhere in nature; you can escape it! I am in the fire! What is it doing to me? Is it refining me, purifying my life? It all depends on my, on your relationship with Jesus Christ.
- **Is a consuming fire. (Deu 4:24) For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.** God's law given at Sinai prescribed many severe punishments, but the punishment is far worse for those who reject His offer of salvation through His own Son, Jesus Christ. **(Heb 10:29-31) Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? [30] For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." [31] It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**
- **God is the same just and righteous God under the gospel** that He appeared to be under the law. Though He be our God in Christ, and now deals with us in a more kind and gracious way, yet He is in Himself a *consuming fire*; that is, a God of strict justice, who will avenge Himself on all the despisers of His grace, and upon all apostates. Under the gospel, the justice of God is displayed in a more awful manner, though not in so sensible a manner as under the law; for here we behold divine justice seizing upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and making Him a propitiatory sacrifice, His soul and body an offering for sin, which is a display of justice far beyond what was seen and heard on Mount Sinai when the law was given.
- **Oh, what grace! Mount Zion, all about grace! (Heb 12:15,28) looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; [28] Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.**

- **Are you listening? He is speaking! Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken.** The kingdom of God, it cannot be moved! It cannot be shaken! It cannot be destroyed!
 - ✓ **What are you holding on to?**
 - ✓ **Are you refusing** (depreciating, denying) **the word of God?**
 - ✓ **Are you neglecting the gathering together as is the manner of some? (Heb 10:25) not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**
 - ✓ **Are you departing from the narrow way to the broad way? (Mat 7:13) "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.**
 - ✓ **Are you close minded or open minded? – Closed to all the unholy, ever changing, worldly things!** Open to the never changing Word of God, which is unshakable, enduring forever, which is all truth? Holding to the Rock of Ages?
 - ✓ **Do you have the Son? (1Jn 5:11-13) And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. [12] He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. [13] These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.**
- **Let us have His grace! God's riches at Christ's expense!** Literally, "let us hold fast the grace or favor which we have received in being admitted to the privileges of that kingdom." The object is, to keep ourselves in the reverent fear and service of God.
- **Grace, greater than our sin!**

CLOSING SONG:

GRACE GREATER THAN OUR SIN – Julia Johnson – sung Bob Kauflin (3:08/3:11)

1. *Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt! Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured, there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.*

Refrain:

Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within; grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all our sin!

2. *Dark is the stain that we cannot hide. What can avail to wash it away? Look! There is flowing a crimson tide, brighter than snow you may be today. (Refrain)*

3. *Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, freely bestowed on all who believe! All who are longing to see His face, will you this moment His grace receive? (Refrain)*

CLOSING PRAYER:

Read and meditate over Hebrews Chapter 13!