

FALL QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2017

THEME – COVENANT WITH GOD

UNIT III – AN EVERLASTING COVENANT

“VICTORIOUS FAITH IN THE UNCHANGING GOD”



Sunday School Lesson No. XII - November 19, 2017
Presented by Rev. Frank A. Davis, III, Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: Hebrews 12:18-29 (NLT)
Required Reading: Hebrews 12:1-29 (NLT)
Memory Text: Hebrews 12:28-29 (NLT), *“Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe. For our God is a devouring fire.”*

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Precepts for Living (UMI), Word Search 10 Electronic Library; MacArthur Study Bible; Epistle of Hebrews by John Owen; Life Application Bible Commentary (Hebrews); Hebrews: 26 Simple Studies in God’s Pattern For Victorious Living by M. R. DeHaan

INTRODUCTION

As the writer of Hebrews continues his exhortation to the saints, he maintains the importance of their need to continue running the race of life with fortitude! Let there be no let down, and let there be no deviation. He requires that they run with holiness (vs. 14), always taking personal inventory (vs. 15). And for God’s sake, that they would not follow the example of Esau, who took his God-given rights for granted (vss. 16-17), and traded it for a bowl of food. How careless he was with such a great gift from God (Gen. 25:29-34)!

He turns his attention to the vast differences of the Old Covenant versus the New Covenant, under which they now live. Using the analogy of two mountains, he causes the early readers and even the contemporary readers of today to consider what Jesus Christ has purchased for the saints is far better and superior to anything the old system of Judaism could offer at any cost! Even through persecution and trials, it is better to stay the course of the Christian race than to detour back to a failed system that was only meant to be a schoolmaster, leading its children to God’s Amazing Grace! (Read Galatians 3:24-25). Thank God for this grace.

Anticipated Power Points: Victorious Faith in the Unchanging God Offers the Payoff ...

- **Of a Better Position.** Hebrews 12:18-21 (NLT)
- **Of a Better Blessing.** Hebrews 12:22-23 (NLT)
- **Of a Better Mediator.** Hebrews 12:24 (NLT)
- **Of Better Access and More Responsibility.** Hebrews 12:25-29 (NLT)

LESSON OUTLINE

I. Victorious Faith in the Unchanging God Offers the Payoff of a Better Position. Hebrews 12:18-21 (NLT)

Here the writer challenges the Jewish Christians not to become complacent and find themselves looking back to Judaism as a means to avoid the struggles of running a good race. (Read Hebrews 12:12-13). He refers to Exodus 19, 20 and Deuteronomy 4:10-24. When they met God at Mt. Sinai after being delivered from Egyptian bondage, all had been born under this bondage and only knew of the teachings of their forefathers concerning Jehovah. Now, when they were delivered out of Egypt, they wanted to really hear His voice and not His mediator, Moses. God, through Moses, prepares them to meet Him. Mt. Sinai was a better place than Egyptian bondage, but it was a place of terror, for Israel found out that the awesome holiness and power of Jehovah was not to be reckoned with. Their years of bondage were no preparation for the awakening of who their God really was! He made them know that He could not be approached lightly, but reverently, in holiness and by His own standard and set of rules. God’s presence at Sinai was nothing short of “shock and awe!”

Now in Hebrews 12, we learn that Mt. Sinai was better than Egyptian bondage, but there is an even better Mediator (Mountain) that the Christian Jews of the New Testament have met and are in a race to see Him one day at the heavenly Mt. Zion! This leads us to them maintaining victorious faith in the unchanging God, who pays off with a better blessing (at Mt. Zion).

II. Victorious Faith in the Unchanging God Offers the Payoff of Mt. Zion, a Better Blessing. Hebrews 12:22-23 (NLT)

This better blessing is described by Thomas R. Chmura as follows: “In contrast to the austere demands of the old covenant, the new covenant brings believers into a close, personal relationship with the covenant’s Mediator, Jesus Christ. The focus, or abiding purpose, of this relationship is on the spiritual excellence, or perfection, of those who are invited to partake of it.

The new covenant relationship with Jesus Christ brings a confident stability to people of faith. When believers move toward the Judge of all mankind, they do not have to approach with cringing terror. Mt. Zion, representing the new covenant, is a mountain of grace that invites all to come near through the blood of Jesus Christ.”

Hebrews 4:16 tells us, *“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”* Now note also the specific names and characters who will appear at Mt. Zion, in verses 22-23:

- *“Innumerable angels”* (without number). vs. 22 (In festive assembly. Please note, stop and read Revelation 5:11-12).
- *“Glorious general assembling of the firstborn.”* (In the Old Testament, this represented that which was special to God. Exodus 13:2 – As a son who received a double portion of an inheritance, believers are special to God, for we have the blessings of Christ.) Ephesians 1:3
- Those who have been pre-reserved in Heaven. (Read Revelation 21:27)
- A place where God’s rule is totally unchallenged.
- A place for the Saints of all ages (Old and New Testament). Hebrews 10:11-14 (NLT), *“Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God’s right hand. There he waits until his enemies are humbled and made a footstool under his feet. For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy.”*

III. Victorious Faith in the Unchanging God Offers the Payoff of Jesus Christ, the Better Mediator. Hebrews 12:24 (NLT)

This of course, is the highlight of it all. In contrast to Mt. Sinai, where Moses stood between God and the people, Mt. Zion has the true Mediator, Jesus Christ. (Read I Timothy 2:5-6; Colossians 2:8-17). Jesus’ blood sacrifice is far superior to that of Abel, which was even recognized by God (11:4). But Jesus’ blood is the sign of the everlasting covenant that ever stares God in the face and opens the door to Heaven for us! (Read Hebrews 13:20-21).

IV. Victorious Faith in the Unchanging God Offers the Payoff of Better Access and More Responsibility. Hebrews 12:25-29 (NLT)

A solemn warning lies before the people of Mt. Zion vs. Mt. Sinai: **Don’t take lightly the voice of God from Mt. Zion.** Grace is no license to disregard the holy, awesome Person of the God of Heaven! His salvation is permanent, so the saints should show the ultimate thanksgiving and thanks-living because of His *“unspeakable Gift.”* He shook the earth at Sinai but one day, according to Haggai 2:6, He will shake everything that is not of Him in the heavens and the earth! Our God is due the ultimate reverence, respect, and responsibility from His people!

CLOSING

Remember Deuteronomy 4:23-24, *“Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee. For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.”* We have a better payoff as we remain steadfast and finish the race with victorious faith! Note I Corinthians 9:26-27, *“I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”* In the words of my Pastor, Dr. Joseph Martin... “How careful art I to live, with such a Godly fear... A strict account I have to give, for my behavior here!”

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TV Broadcast: WHNO TV-20, Sunday, 6:30 a.m.

LOOKING AHEAD:

November 26, 2017

I Corinthians 11:23-34

Please join us each Wednesday noon at Bibleway where Pastor Davis teaches the Sunday School lesson.