

**Gen 27:30-38**

**READ**

**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** And Isaac his father said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your first-born, 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 answered and said 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** And 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.

This is probably one of the more familiar stories of the Old Testament. How that Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew. Then when Esau goes into his father to get his blessing and he is told that Jacob has already received it. It is interesting to note Esau's reaction to this news, when he then seeks any blessing from Isaac, begging for one, even to the point of tears. In...

**Heb 12:14-17**

**I**

**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.

The writer in Hebrews talks about Esau as being immoral and profane. The idea of immoral, translated as fornicator in the KJV, is a topic of debate amongst the commentaries. Some look at this and say it may very well have to do with the number of wives that Esau had taken, or that it meant that he was one who had turned from a proper relationship with God to the ways of the world.

Esau tried desperately to get Jacob to change His mind, begging him to give a blessing, any blessing. That is what the passage in Hebrews is saying. Esau had come to Jacob and was rejected, he tried to get Jacob to repent, to change his mind, and could not. Jacob was bound by the law of his custom and could not change it, would not change it for the immoral and godless Esau. The writer uses Esau as the example of all those who will come to God begging Him to change His will so that they can receive the blessing of eternal life.

Then the Hebrew writer then begins his

**2**

## ***Tale of Two Mountains***

In **Heb 12:18-29**, which is going to be our text for this lesson, a comparison is being made between Mount Sinai and Mount Zion, the two symbols of God's Laws, the law given to Moses on Mount Sinai and the Law given through the Spirit, sent by Christ, and embodied at the throne of God in Heaven and manifested in the Church, the New Jerusalem, Mount Zion.

The basic contrast is that Mt. Sinai is synonymous with the Law of works, which caused fear because of the inability to keep it perfectly, while Mt. Zion is synonymous with grace and mercy, which bring fulfillment and salvation in our relationship with God.

As we look at Mount Sinai we see...

**Ex 19:12-19**

**READ**

**12** And you shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. **13** 'No hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the ram's horn sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain." **14** So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people, and they washed their garments. **15** And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman." **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.

This is what the Hebrew writer is illustrating...

**Heb 12:18**

**3**

**18** For you have not come to a mountain that may be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,

- A. It burned with fire and was surrounded by blackness
- B. A severe storm enveloped it
- C. A trumpet preceded pronouncements so difficult that the people begged that no more be given

**Heb 12:19**

**4**

**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 should be spoken to them.

I can't imagine the terror the Israelites felt being in the presence of what was going on at Mount Sinai. If the unnatural things that were happening on the mountain itself weren't enough, they had to assemble when they heard the trumpets and then witness they interaction between Moses and God. Moses would speak and God would answer in thunder.

Here was the manifestation of the God that had brought the Israelites out of their bondage and the Israelites were not allowed to even come near to the foot of the mountain.

**Heb 12:20**

**5**

**20** For they could not bear the command, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned."

**Heb 12:21**

**6**

**21** And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I am full of fear and trembling."

Mount Sinai, where Moses had led the Israelites to receive the instructions of God, to establish the covenant between them and God that would govern their lives and their future. Mount Sinai, that was so overwhelming and frightening that the people wanted nothing to do with it, this same Sinai that came to represent the Old Law and through that Law the covenant between them and God.

Mt. Sinai (the Law) was not God's goal for man, that is the point of the writer in verse 18 when he says...

✘ ***"For ye are not come unto the mount [Sinai]"***

Hebrews tells Christians that they don't come to Sinai, they don't come to terror and fear, and they don't come to a Law that cannot be kept.

**Rom 3:19-20**

7

19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

The Law brought condemnation, not salvation. It was merely a stepping stone described as, "our schoolmaster to bring us into Christ"

**Gal 3:25**

8

24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.

That is what Hebrews is telling us, that God's plan for all of mankind to have opportunity to be saved is epitomized in Mt. Zion. Whether we view Mt. Zion as the Church or the ultimate eternal home in heaven isn't the point. The point is that to achieve what God would have for man, salvation, man must come to Mount Zion in faithful obedience to obtain the gift of grace and mercy that God offers there.

**Heb 12:22-24**

9

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 first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men 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.

Hebrews is very clear, the purpose of the Old Law was to lead man to Christ, the mediator and author of the New Covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, referring to His blood sprinkled on the altar before God to pay the price for man's sin.

That is what Paul is saying in...

**Gal 3:13**

10

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"

The contrast is that the path to God is no longer a thing to fear or be dreaded, but is now a blessed path to be trod by all who would come to God. Sinai, the Old Law, was intended to lead man to Zion, the New Law, and to Christ, the foundation of the New Law. We now come to the real impact of the contrast between Sinai and Zion. The Old Law was given to the Jews as a people. All who were born a Jew were born into that Law without choice. Therein is the real contrast, Zion stands as the manifestation of God's love to all men through Christ who make the conscious choice to follow faithfully the new Law.

**Heb 12:25** 11

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 shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven..

If the Israelites did not escape when they refused to hear Moses, how can any one escape that refuses to hear Christ?

**Heb 12:26-27** 12

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 And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain

The fearsome thundering of the voice of God brought terror to the Israelites when His voice shook the Earth, but now He has promised. No longer does the Earth tremble when God speaks, but now it has the perfect Law of Liberty that brings joy and peace to all that come to God through Christ and are added to His kingdom that will stand forever.

**Heb 12:28** 13

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;

**Heb 13:14** 14

14 For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.

Only those whose names are written in the book of life will be on Mt. Zion in the heavenly Jerusalem.

**Rev 20:15** 15

15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

There every individual will be judged according to their deeds.

**2 Cor 5:10** 16

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

That is the goal of both God and all who seek a home eternal. Left to our own resources, we will fail.

**Jer 10:23** 17

23 O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

It is only by becoming a part of the kingdom of God, the Church, that we can put ourselves into a position to partake of the grace and mercy offered by God. All the spirits of the righteous will be made perfect there, as we saw in Heb 12:23, and they shall dwell with God forever.

*Rev 21:3-4*

18

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.

Jesus Christ through His life, death, and resurrection, determines the difference between those that will gain a home eternal in heaven and those that will be cast into the lake that burns with fire.

Mount Zion represents the new covenant of grace which He mediates. It is through this covenant that the transition from lost to saved is made possible through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Brethren the whole of this lesson is summed up in the dialogue between Jacob and Esau, where Esau is begging Jacob to repent, change his mind, concerning the blessing. As much as he may have wanted to, Jacob could not. Neither can God. God wants all of us to be saved, but is restricted by the law manifested in Mount Zion, His Law.

Just as with the Israelites, we must make a choice, a choice to come to God at the foot of that Mount, or to flee as they did, and face the wrath of God...

*Heb 12:29*

19

29 for our God is a consuming fire.