

Better
Hebrews 12:18-24

Intro

Transition

Sticky Statement: Our God speaks, accept His words.

Passage

25 See to it that you do not reject the one who speaks. For if they did not escape when they rejected him who warned them on earth, even less will we if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven.

Hebrews 12:25

something to note here is “the one who speaks.”

The one true God is not a silent god.

He did not spin the world into being then stop.

He has spoken through the prophets of the Old Testament, He spoke directly when He took on flesh, He speaks through our Old and New Testaments, and He speaks directly to the believer through the Holy Spirit.

He is a God who speaks!

Verse 25 starts with a warning not to reject when He speaks.

The second sentence in this verse reminds us of the passage from last week where we visited Mount Sinai.

The people of Israel after seeing God descend on the mountain with fire, smoke, thunder, lightening, and an earthquake.

He spoke to them from the cloud of smoke and still they still rejected His commands.

They did not escape consequences for their rejection.

They spent 40 years wandering the desert unable to enter the promised land because they chose sin.

Over and over through the history of Israel they reject God’s commands, they are exiled, they repent, they are restored, they reject God’s commands, they are exiled, and on and on.

We have a contrast between being warned from earth and being warned from heaven.

One place is lesser, earth.

Heaven is the greater place.

Since Christ came in bodily form we have been warned from heaven.

Therefore, it is all the more important to heed the warnings of Christ.

When we are presented with the Gospel of Christ we must make a choice.

When the Holy Spirit reveals our sin, our need for a savior, and that Christ himself is that savior we must choose.

We must choose either to reject the message of forgiveness and continue in our sin or turn to Jesus and embrace Him.

There is no in-between, no moment of indecision.

This verse makes it clear that we either accept the message of Christ or we do not.

As long as we are breathing it is never too late to accept that message.

However, we never know when we will leave this world.

We will not escape the eternal consequences of rejecting Christ.

Don't put it off, if you have not surrendered to Him do it today.

Our God speaks, accept His words.

26 His voice shook the earth at that time, but now he has promised, **Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.** 27 This expression, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what is not shaken might remain.

Hebrews 12:26-27

In verse 26 the author again quotes from the Old Testament.

He quotes from Haggai 2:6.

Haggai is a prophet from our Old Testament.

He prophesied during the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.

In Haggai 2 we read a sermon that warns of God's judgment for the world.

It is a reminder that all things are God's to judge and He will do just that when time has come.

At some point we will all face the creator for His righteous judgment.

One day all the things of man will be done away with and all that will remain will be the things of God.

God will judge this world and all our idols will be left shattered.

All the false gods we put our trust in, our jobs, human relationships, money, houses, cars, etc. will all pass away one day.

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful. By it, we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and awe, 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 12:28-29

When God's judgement is complete all that will be left will be things no longer marred by sin.

All those redeemed by Christ will remain unshaken.

The Kingdom of God will endure.

All those that are citizens of the King will find themselves standing strong in Him.

Once we surrender to Christ we are part of the unshakable Kingdom.

When God's judgement is complete all that will be left will be things no longer marred by sin.

What does it mean to serve God acceptably?

Al Mohler says this in the Exalting Christ in Hebrews Commentary:

All of life is worship and is to be a response to the One who redeemed us by the blood of the Lamb.—Al Mohler

Serving God acceptably is not doing all the right things all the time.

Serving God acceptably is surrendering our lives daily to Him.

It is serving others with hope of earning the privilege to tell them about Jesus.

David writes this in Psalms 51:

17 The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. You will not despise a broken and humbled heart, God.

Psalms 51:17

Serving God acceptably is being broken and humble before an almighty God.

As we do this we will approach Him with reverence and awe.

He is to be honored.

God is not just another friend, He is so much more.

Verse 29 ends the chapter with an awesome and terrifying image of God.

For those of us that are followers of Christ it is awesome to see the power of our God.

He is a fire that envelopes all that it touches, one that cannot be quelled.

For those that have chosen to leave this world without surrendering to Christ it is a terrifying image.

His judgment will consume all that find themselves in opposition to His words.

Application

Our God speaks, accept His words.

God speaks of mercy and forgiveness but only if you surrender to Him.

We must acknowledge our sin, that we are hopelessly broken, and in need of a savior.

If we do this, if we accept the words of Christ in Scripture we can be forgiven.

If we choose to ignore the words of Christ and choose to think we know better then we accept His judgement.

Accepting His words is to be forgiven.

Rejecting His word is to accept His eternal judgement.

The gospel does not leave room in-between.

You must choose: either accept Jesus or reject Him.

Challenge

Do you accept the Good News of Jesus or do you reject it?

Commentaries Used in Preparation

Christ Center Exposition: Exalting Christ in Hebrews

The Gospel Coalition Commentary on Hebrew by Dennis Johnson