

Sunday January 27th 2013
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Seventy Three

1). Heb 12:25 *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.*

a). The fifth and final part of the progressive warning found in the Book of Hebrews brought us, through the experience of Esau, to the conclusion of the matter should we fail to heed the warning from its outset - 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.*

b). Esau came to the realization of the value of that which he had willingly cast aside only when in the presence of his father and only upon realizing that the blessing he expected to be his had been taken from him.

c). With this realization Esau repents, he 'changes his mind', but there is no change of mind on the part of his father although Esau sought it diligently with tears – that which Esau despised is lost to him for all time and his father will not, he cannot, change his mind about it.

d). And as we noted at the time this pictures for us the Judgment Seat of Christ and the experience of those Christians within the context of Hebrews who have failed to heed the warning and consequently find themselves as Esau, expecting a blessing, but finding only rejection - Mt 25:11 *"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*

e). With all of this in mind and with all that is given through the comparison between Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion in the verses that immediately precede it we find ourselves in Hebrews 12:25 returning to a central theme – 'See that you do not refuse Him who speaks.'

f). Right here, almost at the conclusion of our Book we find ourselves having come full circle to the place where our study of Hebrews began – Heb 1:1 ¶ *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, 4 ¶ having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"? 6 But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him."*

g). We come to that which God has said at various times and in various ways in time past by the prophets and that which He has said in these last days by His Son – all then that God has said concerning Christ and His coming Kingdom – all with respect to Israel, to the Gentiles, to the Church – all with respect to judgment, forgiveness, restoration and salvation – all concerning reward and all concerning loss – therefore ‘see that you do not refuse Him who speaks’.

h). And through His Word, by His Spirit, He continues to speak these same things continuously to those who have ears to hear –

Heb 3:15 *while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."*

Re 2:29 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

Ro 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

i). Israel however, nationally, has throughout her history refused Him who speaks, and we are familiar with the consequences that are hers because of it - Jer 6:16 *Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.' 17 Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.' 18 ¶ Therefore hear, you nations, And know, O congregation, what is among them. 19 Hear, O earth! Behold, I will certainly bring calamity on this people-The fruit of their thoughts, Because they have not heeded My words, Nor My law, but rejected it.*

j). And for ourselves we have the written word that has come through the pens of Jewish writers through which He still speaks and He has given us the Holy Spirit to take that word and guide us into all truth –
Joh 16:13 *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.*

And He has placed 'watchmen' over us to sound the trumpet that we should not be overtaken unawares – Eph 4:11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;*

And He has given us every opportunity to hear and hear again, loud and clear – Ac 2:42 ¶ *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

k). That God continues to speak is beyond dispute, but we do have a choice as to whether we will hear or turn away from Him and just so that we don't miss the full significance of refusing Him who speaks our verses take us again to Israel at Sinai - *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,*

2). Now consider that which God spoke to the nation - God had already made His intent quite clear to Abraham – Ge 26:4 *"And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;*

a). He had reaffirmed His intent for Abraham's descendants to Moses - Ex 3:17 *"and I have said I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey."*

b). He had declared His purpose for the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob to Pharaoh – Ex 4:22 *"Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is My son, My firstborn.*

c). And He then brought Israel supernaturally to the place of confirmation - Ex 19:4 *'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. 5 'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 'And you shall be to*

Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

d). He gave them the Law, the tabernacle and the Levitical Priesthood whereby Israel would be established in the Theocracy, in the land, as a firstborn son, and as a kingdom of priests would bless all the nations of the earth in fulfillment of that which God had said to Abraham, speaking to them audibly at Sinai - Ex 19:16 ¶ *Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. 19 And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.*

e). But Israel, nationally, refused Him who spoke all these things and they did not escape the consequences of their actions - Heb 3:16 *For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? 17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

f). And so the point is aptly made – if Israel did not escape having refused Him who spoke on earth, dying in the wilderness, then ‘much more’ we shall not escape if we refuse Him who speaks from heaven.

g). Now this is not to say that what God spoke on earth was inferior to that which He speaks from heaven, as He says exactly that which He spoke in time past by the prophets, but in these last days he has said these things by His Son – and again this is not just a reference to the words our Lord spoke during His earthly ministry but to the fact that Christ is the physical embodiment of that which was spoken in time past – Christ is the completion and the fulfillment of all the OT scriptures - Lu 24:25 *Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

h). And again, God speaks to us now concerning these same things from heaven by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit has this present ministry because of one thing – Joh 16:7 ¶ *"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your*

advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

i). The Holy Spirit has been sent then because Jesus 'departed' – and the method of His departure was crucifixion – the sinless sacrifice, the spotless Lamb of God.

j). In other words it is the death and shed blood of God in the person of His Son that has made it possible for us to hear Him who speaks from heaven. This is no insignificant detail - 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? 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.*

k). And in conjunction with the sending of the Holy Spirit let's remember what we saw earlier today in - Eph 4:8 *Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*

l). The very ministry of the Word within our midst then, we must conclude, the sounding of the trumpet week by week, is also ours only because of the sacrifice and resurrection and ascension of our Savior – and through this ministry of the Word he has declared to us our living hope – 1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

m). 'much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven'.

3). 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." 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.*

a). V26 begins by referencing the shaking we had seen at Mt. Sinai – *and the whole mountain quaked greatly* – but then goes on to say that God has promised to shake 'yet once more' not only the earth but also heaven.

b). Now because of this 'yet once more' we would have to see the events at Sinai foreshadowing events that still remain yet future, something that is made clear through the repeated mention of the third day - *Then it came to pass on the third day,*

c). Not only this, but we also know that God continues to speak from Heaven in the present because of the time frame that has been established with regards to Christ's positioning there - Heb 1:13 *But to which of the angels has He ever said: "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool"?*

d). And the time frame we see here is established within the context of verses that look to the very thing spoken of in the latter part Hebrews 12:26 - Heb 1:10 *And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail."*

e). And so we see then that the event foreshadowed in the shaking of the earth at Mt. Sinai is yet to come and will fulfill that which is pictured at Sinai through the shaking of not only the earth but also heaven.

f). And this future event is prophesied in Haggai sandwiched between reference to the first generation of Israel to come out of Egypt on the one hand and the promised establishment of the Millennial Kingdom on the other - Hag 2:5 *'According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!'* 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; 7 'and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 8 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the LORD of hosts. 9 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts."*

g). Here then is the promise of the event we have seen pictured through the overthrow of Babel, through the destruction of Egypt in the Red Sea, through the destruction of Haman and his sons in Esther, through the destruction of the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream recorded in Daniel. It is of course the complete overthrow of Gentile world power, accomplished through the destruction of the 4th Babylonian kingdom under Antichrist.

h). The same event is prophesied in Joel - Joe 2:10 *The earth quakes before them, The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness. 11 The LORD gives voice before His army, For His camp is very great; For strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of*

the LORD is great and very terrible; Who can endure it?.....30 "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. 32 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

i). The same event that Christ gives to His disciples in response to their question about the end of the age - Mt 24:3 *Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" 4 ¶ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.....29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

j). And what do we see here of this event? We see that it comes at the conclusion of the tribulation, but before Israel is re-gathered, 'before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord'.

k). There is one last piece to add to this picture and for that we will go to the book of the Revelation.

4). Re 6:12 *I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. 13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. 14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. 15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

a). Now we might remember that the opening of the first 4 seals on the 7 sealed scroll set out in a word picture the foundational framework for the tribulation that is then added to through the opening of seals 5, 6 and 7.

b). We might also remember that the complete panorama of the events during Daniel's 70th week, that which we know as the Tribulation, is presented through the picture of 4 horses and their rider – a panorama that begins with Antichrist achieving worldwide domination, pictured through the rider on a white horse and progresses into utter destruction as pictured through the rider on a pale horse. [For a more thorough explanation of this I would refer us back to parts 58 and 59 of this study].

c). And here in Revelation Chapter 6 as we see the events of the tribulation coming to their conclusion with the overthrow of Gentile world power given to us through the use of illustrative or figurative language. In other words that which is seen here is not to be understood literally but metaphorically – one thing picturing another.

d). And we would know to view these events this way because of what is clearly stated in the opening verse of the Revelation, placed there so that we would know how to understand that written in the Book - Re 1:1 ¶ *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants--things which must shortly take place. And He sent and **signified** it [lit. by giving 'signs' – illustrative language/numbers/metaphors] by His angel to His servant John,*

e). In fact it is the same means by which John's gospel is constructed – Joh 2:11 *This beginning of **signs** Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.*

f). And then if we take the imagery that we find in Revelation 6:12-13 – the sun, the moon and the stars then we need to also remember that which scripture states in its beginning about these celestial bodies - Ge 1:14 ¶ *Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for **signs** and seasons, and for days and years; 15 "and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. 16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.*

g). Not only then are the 'lights in the firmament' for signs, but we also see in v16 that these lights have to do with rulership, and contextually this would have to be the rulership of the earth - The very thing we see in one of Joseph's dreams foreshadowing the Day of Christ's glory - Ge 37:9 *Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."*

h). And so, knowing as we do from Daniel that ‘the heavens do rule’, and knowing contextually from the Revelation that - *Re 13:2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.*

i). That Satan gives his power, his throne and great authority to Antichrist we can only conclude that the ‘sun’ in Revelation 6:12 is a picture of the supreme authority on earth at this time – the worldwide kingdom of Antichrist, through the power of Satan, that will be brought into existence at the end of Man’s Day, beginning with the rider on the white horse who goes out conquering and to conquer.

5). Now let’s pause for a moment to say something about the word ‘earthquake’. In the original language this is the Greek word ‘seismos’, which means to shake, to stir up, to agitate.

a). In and of itself the word has no connection whatsoever with what we would understand as an ‘earthquake’, other than the English language has hijacked the word ‘seismos’ in all its forms to describe the literal ‘quaking’ of the earth as a result of colliding tectonic plates.

b). Although to be honest this is not a bad analogy as when God’s purpose collides with Man’s arrogance there will be a whole lot of shaking going on and God is not the One moving.

c). Anyway, Revelation 6:12 would be better translated –
Re 6:12 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great shaking

d). And so that which is being shaken is the power and authority of Antichrist’s kingdom.

e). Just as God shook Mt. Sinai picturing the shaking of world power in that day, seen through the destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea prior to establishing God’s firstborn son as ruler, so God will yet shake the kingdom of Antichrist prior to setting His only begotten Son on the throne - *Ps 2:1 ¶ Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "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.

f). And in that Day there will be a new sunrise as the Son rises in His glory - Mal 4:1 ¶ *"For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch. 2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.*

g). We will continue with this next time – if the Lord is willing.