

THE VOICE THAT SHAKES ALL THINGS

Hebrews 12:25 – See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke (or “warned”) on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven.

The book of Hebrews is all about the transition from the old to the new... encouraging people (at that time Jews) to leave behind the old covenant, with its physical outward pictures, and know the new that has come, which is the spiritual kingdom of God in Christ, known and seen with the inward, spiritual eye.

18 For you have not come to the mountain that[c] may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness[d] 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[e] or shot with an arrow.”[f] **21** And so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”[g])

Darkness, tempest, audible words heard by human ears... an untouchable mountain. Touchable in a physical sense, but a place where God dwelled that one could not draw near to, without death.

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.

Aside: In Genesis 4, when Cain killed his brother Abel, whose sacrifice was pleasing to God, the blood of Abel cried out to The Lord from the ground, and this resulted in a curse for Cain. Now we have come to the fulfillment, the once-for-all acceptable sacrifice of Christ, who did not stay in the ground, and whose blood now accomplishes a cleansing of sin by the removal of that cursed man.

Because of all this, because of what we have come to and come out of, and because of what is now true of us, being in a new covenant in which we can actually share in the Life of God:

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[h] not only the earth, but also heaven.”[i] **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[j] serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. **29** For our God *is* a consuming fire.

Before we talk more about the speaking, let's look at this shaking. The writer of Hebrews borrows this verse from the book of Haggai, where they are rebuilding the temple to the Lord, after Solomon's temple had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (and, incidentally, after they had all first built themselves some very nice paneled houses):

HAGGAI 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; 7 and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations,[b] 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."

To truly fill His house, God says that he must shake heaven and earth, and all the nations. He also says the latter temple will be more glorious than the former... Naturally speaking, this makes no sense (the new temple did not compare with the beauty and glory of Solomon's temple), but God is speaking of the fulfillment... the true temple, which is the body of Christ that we are. God shakes the earth and the heavens, that his true, unshakable kingdom may remain. He is shaking everything of the old – first man, old covenant, type and shadow relationship – that the new, spiritual, kingdom in Christ remains.

Where is His kingdom now? Not in an earthly, touchable temple or a physical mountain... his Kingdom is within the born-again soul. Within us, He shakes in order to remove everything that is NOT the true Kingdom. To reveal everything that is masquerading as something true... to shake off the residue of the earth that tries to cling to the finished work of God in Christ. To make room for the Lord to fill the true temple with His glory. This is the inward reality of the work of the Spirit of God in our soul: it is here that this shaking takes place, so that only the pure kingdom may remain, free from mixture.

To me, it seems kind of like when you pull something out of a large box of Styrofoam peanuts, and they cling on to the object. Let's say that it was a huge cookie jar. What you really want is the cookie jar... it comes complete and finished, but in order for it to be utilized, everything that is clinging to and filling the cookie jar must be shaken off. If you try to fill the jar with cookies before the Styrofoam is removed, not only will you not be able to fit in many cookies... the cookies that you do put in will be tainted by foreign substance that is trying to share that space.

Back to V. 25, in regard to this shaking. "Do not refuse Him who speaks." How does the Lord speak? The beginning of Hebrews says that, in the past, God spoke in many various ways through the prophets, and now He speaks in the Son. I don't think we can separate the Lord's voice from His spirit, His life. He speaks in the Son, where His life is known, and where our life is found. To hear the voice of the Lord is to have his spirit moving in the soul. And the true work of the spirit in us is always going to involve that shaking, that removing, by the cross. But it is also a building, and establishing, a revealing of knowledge that can only be seen by the "inward eye." Let's be careful not to divide up the work of the spirit, like we are dissecting a frog... His working is always both destruction and establishment, both death and resurrection. The one is necessary for the other.

So, God speaks in His Son. Everything that God has to communicate to the human soul is found and known in the Son, in Christ. How do we then refuse Him who speaks? I think it's clear from verse 25 that it has to do with "turning away" from Him (LITV "turning away from Heaven.") This could be an intentional turning away, or it could be just filling up His temple with the chaff of our own flesh, storing up treasures in the earth, turning back to the "former things." We don't really have to "DO" anything to refuse Him as He speaks in Christ, all we need to do is to try to live in the old man, who by nature refuses all things of God, and who is by nature unable to hear His voice.

V.29 - Our God is a consuming Fire.

Fire accomplishes many things... There's something about fire that speaks of truth. Fire reveals the truth of a substance... if something is burned, it is tested. Generally it is either destroyed or not destroyed. If not destroyed, it is often purified. What does the fire of God consume? Everything that is not Himself.

MATTHEW 3 – Destruction and Purification

10 And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **11** I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.[b] **12** His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

1 CORINTHIANS 3

11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. **12** Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, **13** each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. **14** If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. **15** If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? **17** If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.

How do we defile the temple of God? By filling it with ourselves, by filling it with flesh... the same way that we refuse His voice. By storing up mountains of chaff in the place reserved for wheat. Fire removes that which is in the place of His Life, and creates room for His increase.

In Acts 2, when they were filled with the Spirit, tongues of fire sat upon them. Fire purifies the vessel, burns up what is in the way, allows room for the spirit.

OBADIAH

18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau *shall be* stubble; They shall kindle them and devour them, And no survivor shall *remain* of the house of Esau," For the Lord has spoken.

Revelation 1 says the Lord's eyes are like a flame of fire. Matthew says that “The eyes are the lamp of the body. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.” The true sight of God... the fire purifies and cleanses everything that is seen in His view... Truth is seen, all else is consumed.

REVELATION 3

17 Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— **18** I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

What is this gold refined in the fire, that makes one truly rich? It is that which has been cleansed from all impurities... WE are not the gold, the life that is purified... it is the pure life of God that has been purified from US. We must cling to the cross, only there can we even SEE our need for this work of the Spirit. By the work of the Cross, He shakes and burns away everything except for His own life, then he covers us with that life, and anoints our eyes that we can begin to see that finished work. Only there will our hearts remain soft, and our ears remain open to hear his voice... only there can the Lord make the flesh powerless, and so begin to work His understanding in our hearts.

We are so blind, deaf, and helpless... and so deceived into thinking that we are otherwise. We so often fool ourselves into believing that we are anything but wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. By the eyes of flesh, and the standards of the world, we may have much... but the Lord does not see as man sees. Our treasures, whether physical idols, or idols of our mind (false understandings, ambitions, worthless ideas) are only good enough to be burned as chaff. That the Lord would cause our hearts to see our dependence on Him, to hunger after His truth, and flee from everything that is in opposition to it.

Psalm 42: As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. **2** My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

PENINGTON

“Oh! how doth the soul that is begotten of the divine breath, that is born of the living power and virtue, depend upon God for his continual breathings! There is nothing that hath so much from God, and yet nothing is so little able to live without him. If he withdraw from it, it presently hangs down its head: nay, if he do but so much as hide his face, it is troubled: and all the fulness, which it immediately before had from God, is not able to keep up its life one moment; but it pants, and fails, and flags, and withers, until a new supply of refreshment be administered to it.”

There is a continual need for the working of that Life in us, and the knowing and experiencing of that Life. HOW does that Life “work” in us?

“Now as you thus wait, taking up the cross, and keeping in the feeling; so the corrupt natural, the mortal, wherein Satan's throne and power hath been, will

wither, decay, and grow weak daily; and the tender plant of God, the immortal seed, will shoot up, and gather strength daily; and you will come to a will in God, and an understanding in God, and that which is of God will manifest itself; and you will come to know, and desire, and take delight in the things of God: then the soul, which is immortal, will come to hear, and receive, and feed on the immortal word, which is the bread of life, and which alone is able to preserve and nourish up to eternal life.”

This is remaining in the light, remaining sensitive to the voice of the Lord, and then as the experience of the Life increases, the allure of the earth dims, and the desire for that Life also increases. Rather than busying ourselves with useless mental exercises, let us wait on the Lord and stare at that seed, in expectation of its growth... knowing that the smallest growth of that seed in us is more glorious than all the treasures of this present life.

Psalms 119 speaks of that longing for the judgment of the Lord, recognizing our helplessness in the flesh, and loving His commandments.

18 Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law.

19 I *am* a stranger in the earth; Do not hide Your commandments from me.

20 My soul breaks with longing For Your judgments at all times.

25 My soul clings to the dust; Revive me according to Your word.

27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts; So shall I meditate on Your wonderful works. **28** My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word. **29** Remove from me the way of lying, And grant me Your law graciously. **30** I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid *before me*. **31** I cling to Your testimonies; O Lord, do not put me to shame! **32** I will run the course of Your commandments, For You shall enlarge my heart. **33** Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, And I shall keep it *to the end*. **34** Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I shall observe it with *my* whole heart. **35** Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it. **36** Incline my heart to Your testimonies, And not to covetousness. **37** Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, *And* revive me in Your way.

We have talked a little bit recently about having “lists.” Things that we find beneficial or not beneficial... I can’t tell you what “worthless things” you should turn away your eyes from... I can’t even define those things in my own mind... but it is clear that that anything that the Lord is trying to shake from his Kingdom, we had better be careful not to hold onto. And only the Lord can reveal this, as He continually opens the eyes of our hearts to share His mind, His reality.

PENINGTON

“Can I see the light of the sun, moon, or stars, or of any fire or candle, if I have not a natural eye, and if that natural eye be not open? So neither can I see the light of any dispensation of life, if I have not an eye within me open, wherewith to see it. So that that which gives me the sight of the things of God, is the eye which God hath given me.”