

"For Ye Are Not Come To A Mount ..."

"... that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that no word more should be spoken unto them, for they could not endure that which was enjoined, If even a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned; and so fearful was the appearance that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake ..." (Heb. 12:18-21).

The writer had urged the Hebrews to look carefully lest any man should fall short of the grace of God, lest haply there be a root of bitterness springing up among them and they be defiled. This followed his appeal that the Hebrews take courage, that they lift up the hands which hung down and the palsied knee. The scenes and events he had written of, which caused even Moses to quake and tremble, were different things which had been written of the days at Sinai when Moses had been given the law. Those days were gone and now the Hebrews were come unto *"Mt. Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, 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 just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel"* (Heb. 12:22-24).

Mt. Zion in the scriptures is a reference to a higher, spiritual realm. It was out of Zion that the law was to go forth (Isa. 2:2-4). The heavenly Jerusalem is mentioned in Galatians for Paul, in his allegory of Hagar and Sarah, likened Sarah to the *"Jerusalem which is above"* and which John saw when he wrote to the seven Asian churches: *"I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God"* (Gal. 4:21ff; Rev. 21:1). Again, this latter reference to the *"new Jerusalem"* is followed by the words, *"made ready as a bride adorned for her husband,"* which calls to mind Paul's words of the glorious church which Christ will present to Himself, without spot or wrinkle and of which he further mentions to the Corinthians when he wrote them: *"I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ"* (Eph. 5:27; 2 Cor. 11:2). All these things only serves to teach that *"Mount Zion," "city of the living God,"* and *"heavenly Jerusalem"* all are references to the church both as it now is and what it will become. Indeed he adds further to these when he says, *"to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven."* Just as Israel of old stood at the Mount of God and had come *"unto God,"* so today in Mt. Zion, men may draw nigh unto God. These had come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel.

All these expressions are designed to show a contrast between the law and system revealed at Sinai and the law and system revealed in Mt. Zion. Obviously Mt. Zion was not that which caused one to be afraid, but that which inspired and produced courage, confidence, and joy. Then they are commanded, "*See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.*" They, and we, must listen to Christ. We must not turn again to the beggarly rudiments by which we would again be placed in bondage; we must listen to God's Son! The book began with the declaration that in "*these last days*" God has spoken to us in His Son (1:1f). We are warned to give heed to His words (Heb. 2:1ff). Now, once more, the writer urges that we not refuse Him who speaks.

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