

Hebrews

Dr. Charles "Buddy" Parrish
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Hebrews 12:25-29



Vs. 25

- Here the preacher is contrasting what was true in the time of Moses and what is true now that Christ has come. When he says that, "...they refused him who warned them on earth", the "him" is Moses. Moses was the one who carried the Word of God back to the people, so that they heard it from a human being, not God Himself. Despite that, when they broke the Law that Moses gave them, their punishment still came from God.
- On the other hand, now we live in the time after Jesus has come. How many times and in how many ways did Jesus say, "You have heard it said, but I say to you..."? The one who was speaking was not simply carrying the Word of God, He **IS** the Word of God!
- So see to it "that you do not refuse Him who is speaking"! If those who disregarded the Word given by Moses were punished for their sin, how much more will the punishment be with those who disregard the Word given by Christ Himself? The latter warned them from earth, but now Christ warns them from heaven!

Vss. 26-27

- Here the preacher quotes the prophet Haggai 2:6, where God speaks of previously shaking the earth and now heaven as well. Both the prophet and the preacher to the Hebrews are recalling Exodus 19:18 where Mt. Sinai was wrapped in smoke as the Lord descended upon it in fire and the whole mountain shook.
- This is a reoccurring storyline in the Old Testament. Psalms 68:8, "The earth quaked...Sinai itself quaked at the presence of God...". Psalm 77:18, "The sound of Your thunder was in the whirlwind. The lightnings lit up the world. The earth trembled and shook." Psalm 114:7, "Tremble O earth, before the Lord, before the God of

Jacob". But then the prophet Haggai tells us that the Lord shook the earth once, yes, but He will yet shake it again and the heavens as well.

- The preacher reasons then that the only things that will remain will be the things that cannot be shaken, such as God's Word, our relationship to God, our hope and salvation in Christ, and God's love for us.

Vss. 28-29

- Now that we are in Christ, our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20) and that is a kingdom that cannot be shaken.
- But as citizens of heaven, our civic responsibility for which we are held accountable, is to live a life of service for God. Indeed, we show our gratitude by serving God with a joy-filled spirit.
- And here the preacher leans in to Deuteronomy 4:24 where Moses tells the people, "For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God". We must worship Him and Him alone and our service for Him is a key aspect of that worship. We think of worship wrongly if we think of worship as nothing more than a single hour on Sunday morning. No, worship is how we live our lives and the environment in which we joyfully serve God however He requires.
- So as the preacher's congregation is about to enter into a time of persecution, they need to be reminded to hold fast to their faith, for they will be strongly tempted to confess to other gods, in particular to the emperor. Says William Barclay:
"It is as if the writer to the Hebrews was saying: 'There is a choice before you. Remain steadfastly true to God, and in the day when the universe is shaken into destruction your relationship with him will stand safe and secure. Be false to him and that very God who might have been your salvation will be to you a consuming fire of destruction.' It is a grim thought; but in it there is the eternal truth that, if a man is true to God, he gains everything and, if he is untrue to God, he loses everything. In time and in eternity nothing really matters save loyalty to God".