

Heb 12:1 Therefore since we also are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily besets *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Interpreters explain this cloud of witnesses as the actual persons listed in ch 11 “hall of faith” passages. Where they are right now seeing from heaven and being witnesses of our own walk with Jesus. That could be true, or a part of what is meant here. Those interpreters also talk about how the very lives those people of faith led, that are recorded in the Old Testament, become examples of faith to us. In essence their very lives become the witness to us. They become a testimony showing us who God is and how He does things, and that testimony becomes an encouragement, edification, and conviction in our own walk with Jesus.

Is it a perfect absolute sinless race that they ran? No. Rich Mullens called them goofy. Some lied, murdered, committed adultery, others were found in times of doubt, still others stole, manipulated...and on and on.

Yet

God called them faithful. He said “You are a father of many nations, a leader of My people, the apple of eye, strong, courageous, blessed beyond measure, protected, and forgiven.

How do we reconcile this with laying aside every weight and sin that easily besets us? Does that mean we have to be sinless and perfect...totally sanctified right now...in order to run the race set before us?

The Holy Spirit is depicted as a cloud in scripture. He is also a witness that we belong to God. It is His job to sanctify, change or create new, our inner man into more like Jesus so our outer man looks more like Jesus. This is the greatest cloud of witness that there is. God is doing the work inside us for His glory. We keep running the race of faith believing with patience that He will never fail in what He promises, and not even our weight or sin will keep His love from working His will in and through our lives. He sees our heart...the Spirit and the Bride cry “Even so, come Lord Jesus!”

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Ephesians 4:22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

Ephesians 4:25

Do Not Grieve the Spirit

Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.

Colossians 3:8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth

James 1:21

Doers—Not Hearers Only

Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls

1 Peter 2:2 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking

“We cannot in this life attain unto perfection in holiness, yet this is that which we are to endeavour all the days of our lives: so, though we cannot absolutely and perfectly destroy the body of death, crucify the old man in its lusts utterly by a total death, and so lay aside indwelling sin, yet it is our duty to be endeavouring of it all our days. So the apostle proposeth both these equally unto us,”

2 Cor. 7:1, Let us cleanse ourselves from all pollution of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

“We must equally watch unto both, and work for both, though in neither we can attain absolute perfection in this life. This we are always to aim at, and pray for,”

1 Thess. 5:23

Blessing and Admonition

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p231

“Believers attend unto that race alone which Christ hath designed and prepared for them; which is therefore straight and holy.”

“Patience is either a quiet, submissive suffering of evil things, or a quiet waiting for good things future with perseverance and continuance, unto the conquest of the one, or the enjoyment of the other.”

“The reward that is proposed at the end of this race is every way worthy of all the pains, diligence, and patience, that are to be taken and exercised in the attainment of it.”

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p234

His feet. Knowing Him not only intellectually but truly. Words fall short to explain this looking unto Jesus in this way.

“He by his obedience and death procured this grace for us. It is “given unto us on his account,” Phil. 1:29. And he prays that we may receive it, John 17:19, 20. And he works it in us, or bestows it on us, by his Spirit, in the beginning and all the increases of it from first to last. Hence his disciples prayed unto him, “Lord, increase our faith,” Luke 17:5. See Gal. 2:20. So he is the “author” or beginner of our faith, in the *efficacious working* of it in our hearts by his Spirit; and “the finisher” of it in all its *effects*, in liberty, peace, and joy, and all the fruits of it in obedience: for “without him we can do nothing.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p238

—This can just be platitudes or something we know intellectually. It can start there...but there is still a better way. There is the looking unto Jesus in real relationship that Owen’s words only describe or give definition to. That better way is summed up in the love of The Father pouring out into our heart creating and giving that new life to our inner man...supernaturally. Without Him I can do nothing or be nothing or become nothing or have nothing worth anything that pleases Him, or would give Him glory whatsoever.

“Father, thank you for Your mercy and grace found only in Jesus. That He alone is the author and finisher of my faith worked in an through me by Your Holy Spirit. Thank you for loving me so I may love You and others in a way that glorifies You. All because of the blood of Jesus. Amen.”

4.30.25

“For the joy set before Him endured tye cross...”

Owen talks about the joy set before Jesus as the joy of doing His Father’s will, and the joy of saving us.

Luke 10:21 In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ^b 22 All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

There will be Jesus’ greatest joy when He hands over the Kingdom to God the Father declaring Him all in all. That Jesus has revealed God so completely that His Spirit has permeated all things to the degree that His Kingdom is sanctified wholly to Him for His glory alone.

1Cor 15:22For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 23But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 24Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27For “Godc has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. 28When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.”

Jesus’ greatest joy is the joy of the Father being reconciled with His people, His children. This is why the angels rejoice over even one sinner coming into the saving grace of God through the finished work of Jesus on the cross.

Jesus could not truly know the joy of believers salvation unless He was fully human, and would not be able to comprehend the joy of the Father in His relationship restored with those who believe unless He was fully God. There is a joy in the heart of Jesus that we cannot fully comprehend ...in all that it entails or means. That joy is our strength. His joy fills us to overflowing because it is beyond us ever reaching the end of...it becomes our strength in all of life’s ebbs and flows.

Jesus’ main mission is to reveal who God is. He is the express image of God the Father. It took the sacrifice of Jesus to truly reveal who God is more and more to His children. The work of the Holy Spirit is also the joy of the Lord. Jesus rejoices over the work of the Holy Spirit in us. God the Father rejoices in the glory of His love poured out through His Son, and the Holy Spirit rejoices in the finished work of Jesus on the cross that makes possible the ongoing revelation of God in the hearts, minds and souls of His children. Showing them in the most intimate and real way possible who He is and His great love toward them.

Heb 12:3.—For consider him [*call things to account concerning him*] that endured such [*so great*] contradiction of sinners against himself, that ye be not wearied through fainting in your minds.

5.1.25

“there is such a weariness, as whereon men do not absolutely give over the work or labour wherein they are engaged, but it grows very uneasy and tedious unto them, that they are even ready so to give over. And this I judge to be the frame of mind here cautioned against by the apostle, namely, the want of life, vigour, and cheerfulness in profession, tending unto a relinquishment of it.”

“It is faith that stirs up and engageth spiritual courage, resolution, patience, perseverance, prayer, all preserving graces and duties. If it fail herein, and our minds are left to conflict with our difficulties in their own natural strength, we shall quickly grow weary of a persecuted profession.

Here lies the beginning of all spiritual declensions, namely, in the want of a due exercise of faith in all these graces and duties. Hereon our spiritual strength is dissolved, and we wax weary.”

“Such contradiction,”—so bitter, so severe, so cruel: whatever the malicious wits of men, or suggestions of Satan could invent or broach, that was venomous and evil, was cast upon him.”

“consideration hereof, namely, of the Lord Christ’s patient enduring these contradictions against himself, is proposed as the means to preserve us from being weary and fainting in our minds.”

“The constant consideration of Christ in his sufferings is the best means to keep up faith unto its due exercise in all times of trial.”

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p248

Romans 8 talks about the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the grave is the same Spirit who dwells in those who believe.

The same Spirit who enabled Jesus to endure the cross is the same Spirit who will keep us from failing when we grow weary. Jesus said all those who are weary and heavy laden come to Him and He will give rest. He was not only talking about physical rest, but a rest in the mind and soul. A peace even under the most severe persecution and suffering of mind or body. Because Jesus was kept through everything He suffered, we will be kept through everything we have to suffer.

There is a fortitude, strength, enduring power, a “true grit” from the Holy Spirit that is available to all who believe in the Son of God...who believe He came to save them. Who believe Jesus is Lord and love Him. In which my own heart cries “I know in whom I have believed. It is You I trust to keep all I have given You against that day.” Amen

I am reminded of how the Israelites were wearied with the fainting in their minds. 10 spies came back from the promised land...and 8 reported the journey would be impossible. There were giants in the land—unconquerable and would surely lead to their death. The listeners and believers of that report...fainted in their minds before declaring they would not go. Fainting in our mind leads to a weariness of going where God said to go. Thank God He speaks the encouraging word to us...if we have our ears open to hear it. He brought a better word through 2 of the 10. Only 2 had the courage to face that fear head on with the faith like the 3 boys that were thrown into Nebechednezzar’s furnace—even if God does not save us physically in that fire...still we will not bow down. We can take that word they spoke and say “We will not bow down to fear of what other’s evil report of what “may happen” or the evil report of “you will surely die there”. We can rise up in our mind by the better Word of—“live or die I will go where God sends me. For His names sake and glory...for who knows we may be called for such a time as this.”

Heb 12:4 You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Heb 12:5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons, "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked by Him;

Heb 12:6 for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and He scourges every son whom He receives."

There is benefit to the Law. When something in it reaches out and touches a place in the heart that is not living up to God's standard—that is a good thing. Good in that we now can take that violation...that sin...and not see ourselves as condemned by it, but forgiven because of Jesus' blood shed. Not only then forgiven, but will be delivered from it by the power of the Holy Spirit. The resistance is that—going to Jesus and laying it at His feet believing He paid the penalty for it, and believing the Holy Spirit is at work changing us from glory to glory. Taking it away and adding new life bit by bit. Any other striving unto blood to resist sin in our own strength fails—and will not give God the credit and glory due His name. That does not mean there is not a desire to resist evil nor the grit of speaking God's Word of rebuke toward that, but there is power in the blood of Jesus. There is extreme power in giving it all over to Him believing in His miracle working power to restrain that evil that rises up in our soul against the goodness of God. Those who are sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in this process understand how "resisting unto blood" is either not denying His name even unto physical death (martyrdom) or the only blood that is of any value to resist the devil is the blood of Jesus. Stephen's martyrdom speaks of this way of resisting unto his own blood was only possible because he was looking unto Jesus who was standing at the right hand side of His Father.

5.2.25

(Heb 12:5)

"multitudes have found by experience, that their outward pressing sufferings, between them and the world, have been personal, purifying chastisements between God and their souls. By them have they been awakened, revived, mortified unto the world, and, as the apostle expresseth it, made partakers of the holiness of God, unto their inexpressible advantage and consolation. And,—

Hereby doth God defeat the counsels and expectations of the world, having a design to accomplish by their agency which they know nothing of. For those very reproaches, imprisonments, and stripes, with the loss of goods, and danger of their lives, which the world applies unto their ruin, God at the same time makes use of for their refining, purifying, consolation, and joy.

In all these things are the divine wisdom and goodness of God, in contriving and effecting all these things unto the glory of his grace and the salvation of the church, for ever to be admired."

“A due consideration of this sacred truth, namely, that all our troubles, persecutions, and afflictions, are divine chastisements and reproofs, whereby God evidenceth unto us our adoption, and his instructing us for our advantage, is an effectual means to preserve us in patience and perseverance unto the end of our trials.—They who have no experience of it, have no knowledge of these things.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p253, 258

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=rdrOTd-bE7k&pp=ygUZVGhlIGFuY2hvcjBob2xkcyBhY291c3RpYw%3D%3D>

(Heb 12:6)

“And this rule is, that all these things are to be referred unto the sovereignty, wisdom, and goodness of God. ‘This,’ saith he, ‘is the way of God; thus it seems good to him to deal with his children; thus he may do because of his sovereign dominion over all. May not he do what he will with his own? This he doth in infinite wisdom, for their good and advantage; as also to evidence his love unto them and care of them.’

“That in all our afflictions, the resignation of ourselves unto the sovereign pleasure, infinite wisdom, and goodness of God, is the only means or way of preserving us from fainting, weariness, or neglect of duty.—After all our arguings, desires, and pleas, this is that which we must come unto: whereof we have an illustrious instance and example in Job. See chap, 33:12, 13, 34:18, 19, 23, 31–33, 42:4–6.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p260

Job 33:12, 13, Behold, *in* this you are not right; I will answer you, for God is greater than man. Why do you fight against Him? For He does not give account for *any* of His matters.

Job 34:18, 19, 23, 31–33 Who says to a king, O worthless one; and to nobles, O evil one? *How much less to Him who* does not lift up the face of rulers, nor regard the rich before the poor? For all of them *are* the work of His hands...For He does not still impose on man to go before God in judgment...For has any said to God, I have taken away; I will not pervert? Besides what I see, You teach me; if I have done iniquity, I will do it no more. Must He repay because you rejected *it*? For you must choose, and not I; therefore speak what you know.

Job 42:4–6 Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You will cause me to know. I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye has seen You. Therefore I despise *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.

We have all been in dust and ashes before wondering what on earth is happening. Why such a heavy hand of God's correction upon me? But...no matter the ways of God in dealing and showing His great love and care for our soul...we can have confidence that He knew what He was doing, knows now what He is doing, and firmly has all of our tomorrows in His wisdom and knowledge. This is a great rest for my soul. He does not correct, chastise, or discipline to cast me aside, but to bring me closer to His heart—for He loves and cares for me with a passion indescribable. Thank you Jesus.

5.5.25

Heb 12:7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons, for what son is he whom the father does not chasten?

Heb 12:8 But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons.

Heb 12:9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh who corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

Heb 12:10 For truly they chastened *us* for a few days according to their own pleasure, but He for our profit, that *we* might be partakers of His holiness.

Heb 12:11 Now chastening for the present does not seem to be joyous, but grievous. Nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who are exercised by it.

God will never let me get too far gone in my own way, in my own sin, that I lose my soul. This mighty hand and love of God does not lose even one of His children. There are convictions that come, and sometimes great struggles and sufferings on our road, but He is faithful who promises. The Holy Spirit lives in us and is working on us from glory to glory. That means His glory is overcoming everything that does not look like Jesus in us.

Unlike our natural father, He not only points out or convicts us of those sins or ways that are not glorifying Him...but proves He is the only One who can do anything about it. He covers, and then creates new in every heart—every soul—of His children. If we cannot look back from the very first place of surrender to Jesus, when His love touched that hard heart and began to soften it...and see where there are supernatural changes to our thought life, or fruit of the Spirit more on display through our own lives...then something is wrong. A deeper surrender to Him is needed. We will never live in perfection, but we can live in perfect dependence on Him. Giving over those things of conviction into His tender mercies day by day.

Hebrews has told us Jesus is better than_____. (A myriad of things and people and positions.) Here the proclamation is “Jesus is better than any human father ever born.” Where the only thing that a human or natural father can do is show us and discipline us outwardly (according to rules and the law). But our Father in heaven bids us to come to Him and He will make us into a new

creation. A new creation wholly dedicated to looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith...and the beginning and end of their salvation, justification and sanctification.

““God dealeth with you as with sons.” The word προσφέρεται is peculiar in this sense. ‘He offereth himself unto you in the σχέσις, the “habit” of a father to his children.’ ‘He proposeth himself unto you [as a father,] and acteth accordingly; not as an enemy, not as a judge, not as towards strangers; but as towards children.’ I think, “He dealeth with you,” doth scarce reach the importance of the word.”

“This way of dealing becomes the relation between God and believers, as father and children; namely, that he should chastise, and they should bear it patiently.—This makes it evident that there is such a relation between them. And this the apostle illustrates from the way and manner of men in that relation one to another.”

“That there are no sons of God, no real partakers of adoption, that are without some crosses or chastisements in this world.—They deceive themselves, who expect to live in God’s family and not to be under his chastening discipline. And this should make every one of us very well contented with our own lot and portion, whatever it be.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p263,264

(Heb 2:10)

“And this is the fundamental reason of our patient submission unto God in all our afflictions, namely, that our very souls are his, the immediate product of his divine power, and under his rule alone. May he not do what he will with his own? Shall the potsherd contend with its maker?”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7 p270

5.6.25

“The especial end of God in divine chastisements, is, “that he may make us partakers of his holiness.” The holiness of God, is either that which he hath in himself, or that which he approves of and requires in us. The first is the infinite purity of the divine nature; which is absolutely incommunicable unto us, or any creature whatever. Howbeit, we may be said to be partakers of it in a peculiar manner, by virtue of our interest in God, as our God: as also by the effects of it produced in us, which are his image and likeness, Eph. 4:24; as we are said to be made “partakers of the divine nature,” 2 Pet. 1:4. And this also is the holiness of God in the latter sense; namely, that which he requires of us and approves in us.

Whereas, therefore, this holiness consists in the *mortification of our lusts and affections*, in the gradual *renovation of our natures*, and the *sanctification of our souls*, the carrying on and

increase of these things in us is that which God designs in all his chastisements. And whereas, next unto our participation of Christ, by the imputation of his righteousness unto us, this is the greatest privilege, glory, honour, and benefit, that in this world we can be made partakers of, we have no reason to be weary of God's chastisements, which are designed unto no other end."

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p270

Heb 12:11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them which are exercised thereby.

Just like a child. After the discipline and the tears...there is peace. The whole family structure is a picture of God's relationship and functioning with us. We as parents often get it wrong. We make mistakes and sometimes frustration gets the upperhand. But God! He never makes mistakes with us. His ways are perfect in every way—even those times that are grievous especially when we know absolutely what that fear is to fall into the hands of the Living God. (Heb 10:31)

““Sorrow according unto God,” or “after a godly sort.”—It is not the wailing of the flesh upon a sense of pain; it is not the disorder of our affections upon their encounter with things grievous to our present state and ease; it is not a heartless despondency under our pressures, enfeebling us unto our duties: but it is a **filial sense of God's displeasure, accompanied with nature's aversation and declension from things evil unto it and grievous.**”

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p274

It is a pain of feeling separated and maybe forsaken of God. It is a sadness of suffering that calls out to Him even when there are no words. A cry or wale or scream or morning of the soul that is deafening. This is a sorrow unto God: an honest state of helplessness that only He can bring a soul out of. That soul can either languish and not grow through it, or can use that time to “reckon” with Him, wrestle with Him, get to know Him more, seek Him more, repent more, learn what it means to love Him more and hold His sovereignty with less futility. There is a sacredness in the process...and is it a one and done thing? No, just like children it is on going and again and again. But also like children, we mature in our spiritual growth to where the corrections become less devastating and fearful...but more like a tender mercy toward a pliable heart. Thank you Jesus

What God's chastisement does

(My thoughts notes from scripture and Owen)

3.7.25

•Yields fruit

God's chastisement yeilds fruit. It is a sure thing that it does produce the fruit He is set on it to make.

He prunes the vine of sin...or of a branch not fit to grow fruit.

Pruning those things that are not His will or way in my life produces more fruit. He gives and He takes away for His names sake and glory. He knows how to tend to and care for each branch in His Vine. He knows when each of His children are ready for the threshing floor. But, this not only deals with sin—and sometimes things happen in life that are not the cause of sin. He is not over us with a hammer every time our thoughts stray or a wrong step is taken or word spoken. There is so much more to the work and actions of God allowing suffering, hardships, uncomfortable places to happen. It is my experience that many many times He is bent on showing Who He Is through a crisis moment or season. And sometimes it is simply to move us from one place to another...or give us something we could not receive any other way. We are creatures of habit. We want comfort and stability and everything to stay the same (think of Bilbo and Frodo in LOR). But God in His own wisdom, mercy, grace, grandeur, sovereignty, and love places purposes on our life that would not come to pass unless we walked through those pressing times. Because we are not perfect—there will always be points He wants to refine—But there are also great things He wants to give us and to show us of His heart. It very well may be that perspective is what keeps a soul from fainting in their mind from fear or worry or anxiety that they have yet again failed by committing some sin or another. The place of spiritual warfare is right here. Giving Him the fear, and He giving the strength and courage to believe He has everything firmly in His control. We may go down with the ship, but we will not die. He will make a way for water to flow in the desert.

•This fruit is the fruit of righteousness

We do not grow fruit by our suffering or doing. But, when righteousness is worked in us by the Holy Spirit...that produces fruit.

Rom 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 5:2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we **rejoice** in hope of the glory of God.

Rom 5:3 **Not only that, but we rejoice** in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,

Rom 5:4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,

Rom 5:5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Rom 5:6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

Rom 5:7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—

Rom 5:8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom 5:9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Rom 5:10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Rom 5:11 **More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.**

5.8.25

Just like a house is built upon a foundation, then strong walls and finally a roof—rejoicing (or the joy of the Lord) is built upon a foundation. Paul says with excitement

rejoice in hope of the glory of God

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings...and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us

More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation

The hope of the glory of God is enough to rejoice in...it is the hope of things not seen.

The process of God showing us that our hope is not to be put to shame. The “not only that” is the rejoicing in the suffering that is used by God to show us our hope will not put us to shame because His love has been poured into our hearts through it.

The result of being reconciled with God is the ultimate (more than) reason to rejoice.

God does not **have** to convince anyone of His love for them or that He is God. He is not obligated to wrestle with the souls of men (women). **But**, His heart is set on proving Who He is and what He is like. Each step along the way, His children rejoice in and through the process. He is faithful.

Why did Paul say he was **convinced** that nothing could separate us from the love of God in Romans 8:31-39? It is because God had proven Himself faithful time and time again in his life. Sometimes we run across a young person in the faith that is an “old soul” who has been absolutely convinced. Then there are some older people in the faith that are not yet convinced totally. God still works to prove His love to each heart no matter what stage of building they are at. We rejoice in His process of producing fruit...reconciliation with His Spirit...

in our lives (from the inside out).Amen.

“Neither our doing nor our suffering is the cause of our righteousness; but they promote it in us and increase its fruit. So the apostle prays for the Corinthians, that God would “increase” in them “the fruits of their righteousness,” 2 Epist. 9:10: and for the Philippians, that they might be “filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God,” chap. 1:11. Wherefore by “righteousness” in this place, our sanctification, or the internal principle of holiness and obedience, is intended“

“the fruits of righteousness here intended, are patience, submission to the will of God, weanedness from the world, mortification of sin, heavenly-mindedness, purity of heart, readiness for the cross, and the like. See Rom. 5:3–5, with John 15:2–4; which places compared, are a full exposition of this.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p275

5.9.25

•This fruit of righteousness is peaceable

The more fruit of the Spirit that He creates in us, the more peace becomes our reality.

Peace with God:

“when these fruits are brought forth in us, they are a high evidence that God is at peace with us, and that he designs our eternal good in all these chastisements,”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p275

Peace in our own self (mind)

“Afflictions are apt to put our minds into a disorder; our affections will tumultuate, and raise great contests in our souls. But by these fruits of righteousness our hearts are quieted, our minds composed, all tumults allayed, and we are enabled to “possess our souls in patience.””

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p275

Peace with others

“Now, the way whereby we may do this, is only by abounding in these fruits of righteousness; for they alone are the way and means of attaining it, if it be possible so to do. And therefore that charge of following peace with all men, is nothing but an injunction to perform all duties of righteousness towards them.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p275

The fruit of righteousness is the same thing as the fruit of the Spirit.

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

That is the fruit God is working in us through the trials, tribulations and suffering that come by or through His hand. Those sufferings are like a scaple in the hands of a skilled physician. He knows what we need when we need it to become more like Jesus. It is not brought about by our own strength or work, but by His Spirit alone as we become willing.

5.10.25

Heb 12:11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

“Chastisements do not effectually operate unto this end until after some time of exercise. They first tend to subdue the flesh, to root up weeds, thorns and briars, to break up the stubborn fallow ground, and then to cherish the seeds of righteousness.”

“Herein lies the wisdom of faith in this matter, not to pass a judgment on chastisements, from the present sense we have of what is evil and dolorous in them, but from their end and use, which are blessed and glorious.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p276

5.11.25

Heb 12:12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

Heb 12:13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

2 Cor 12:9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

I can not lift up my hands or feeble knees. I can not make straight paths for my feet. But I do believe that the Lord is making those paths straight, and healing my inner man by being my strength in that weakness.

What sounds like law in Heb 12:12-13 I see as Jesus’ declaration over me. “I will lift up your hands and knees. The path will be made straight for your feet. I will not cast you away, but will heal you.”

5.13.25

Heb 12:14 Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

“when we have the testimony of our consciences that we have sincerely sought peace with all men, it will not only make us rest satisfied in what they unjustly do unto us, but give us a triumph over them in our minds, in that we have attained a compliance with the will of God above them herein.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p288

There is something about the prayer “Lord, I am not willing. Everything I am is kicking against what You are saying. But, just as the man who said “I believe, help my unbelief...I live in this juxtaposition of not being willing, but being willing to be made willing—which somehow really does translate into reality as truly being willing to live at peace as far as in my own heart with all men (people). Only You see my heart, Jesus. Even when the outer man can sometimes act contrary to this, You can change me. Only by Your presence can I live in this way. Only by Your blood and my testimony of Your love for me will I overcome all points of the law...all of these things I find in myself that do not live up to Your

standard—but You overcome them in me supernaturally. Amen.”

Has the Holy Spirit ever put a sock in your mouth to not say something to someone even if it is true? When the words were rising in your throat, but got hijacked by His divine hand? That is how we live at peace with others.

This happens when we are willing to be *made willing*. His grace covers us at the exact moment when that action or word is on the brink of breaking out upon someone. The Holy Spirit is our great Restrainer. He is the one that rises up in us the resistance against doing what is contrary to anything that Jesus is. The secret prayer closet is right here on the fly in the moment of action by word or deed. That split second where we are willing to be made willing to live at peace with others. And just like mist...like vapor...that thought gets blown away by His Spirit. Then if any deed or word is spoken, He is the one that fills the void.

That split second prayer can be one of “Help me Jesus! Hijack my thoughts right here Holy Spirit. Cause me to walk (do and say) only what is pleasing to the Father.” This is also the ongoing, or permanent, residing prayer or pursuit of our heart. There are so many times that in the moment I forget to turn to Him...that His grace is enough and He just does it without my present prayer. But He knows my heart's desire is to constantly do what He wants and say what He wants. He takes that desire and constantly (although not always...I fail at times) works His way in and through me toward others. This life is a journey of leaning on our Beloved.

5.16.25

Heb 12:15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

Verse 14 was just talking about following peace with all men. Then here it warns how that peace can be upended and fallen short of if we hold a bitterness that leads to a defilement. It is not easy loving others. Some have given up completely being in community in any in-depth way because of the way others have hurt them. They become disengaged from people...only wanting a surface relationship with them. Bitterness can overcome them and cause a withdrawal of heart for any meaningful interaction with people at all. Sometimes withdrawal from someone is the only way to be at peace with them, but that does not mean we should become bitter against them or the whole population of mankind! If we are living with someone like this it is very difficult to walk the line of caring for their heart, and continue to have relationships with others. What if the command of love others as yourself becomes like sandpaper against that spouse, for example? All I can say is we do the best we can to bless those around us with whatever we can. If the only thing available is prayer, then we pray. Living it out in front of our loved one in a non-nagging way. Letting the way we respond to situations become the witness of who God is. “Help us Father to walk in peace with each other, and to lay down any bitterness that would raise its ugly head. Thank you that Your presence is working miracles that are unseen. Amen”

Heb 12:16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

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.

Falling short of the grace of God when embracing bitterness of soul leads to causing trouble that defiles not only themselves, but others which then leads into fornication or profaneness—Idolatry that worships something other than God—that in God's sovereignty...some do not find

the place of repentance. Like the 5 virgins who will be turned away when face to face with Jesus..

But, we do not despair for those who may be in this place. There is always hope. Always. Or God is a liar when He said His hand is not short to save.

5.17.25

Heb 12:17

“because here is an appearance of somewhat more than ordinary severity, in the peremptory denial of a divine blessing unto one who so earnestly sought and cried for it, the manner of his seeking it must be considered.”

“But he sought the end without the means: he would have the blessing, but he used not the means for the attaining of it; namely, faith and repentance. For notwithstanding all his sorrow and trouble upon his disappointment, he entertained no thought about any repentance in himself; for he immediately fell into a resolution to follow Cain in his rejection, and to kill his brother.”

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p304

2Cor 7:10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. **11**For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter. **12**So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God. **13**Therefore we are comforted.

—To regret the consequences of sin is not the same as repenting of that sin because it was against God. To feel sorry for the fruit of sin that God chastises for is not the same as wanting to be changed into who God wants us to be. King David’s repentance was one toward God with the prayer of “Create in me a clean heart, Oh God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your Presence, take not Your Holy Spirit from me.” It seems that Esau did not have this same repentance as King David had....and so he forfeited his birthright and blessing.

“Father, our hearts are evil and no one can truly discern it but You. Please rise up a sincere repentance in Your people and all who Your Spirit is calling in this generation. Help us Lord to lay down all pretenses that we may have built in our own minds and hearts. Break by Your Holy Spirit all pride and our own glory, our own righteousness. Lead us into true repentance that leads to salvation—freedom in You. Thank You, Father, that You have promised to pour out Your Spirit upon all flesh. Do what we cannot do ourselves. Change us in ways that we cannot change ourselves. Set us apart—aside for Your glory and name’s sake. Thank You Jesus. Amen”

A Kingdom That Cannot Be Shaken

—my notes

Heb 12:18-21, Heb 12:22-25

“You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; (*But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.*) to darkness, gloom and storm; to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, (*You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven.*) because they could not bear what was commanded: (*You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect.*). “If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death.” (*to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*) The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, “I am trembling with fear.” (*If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?*)

(Heb 12:22-25)

“But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?”)

Heb 12:26-29

“At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” The words “once more” indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. **Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our “God is a consuming fire.”**

John 15:1-17

1“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. **2**Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. **3**Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. **4**Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. **5**I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. **6**If anyone does not

abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. **7**If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. **8**By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. **9**As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. **10**If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. **11**These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. (*Ne 8:10 The joy of the Lord is my strength.*)

12“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

13Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. **14**You are my friends if you do what I command you. **15***No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.* **16**You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. **17**These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

Ne 8: **9**And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law. **10**Then he said to them, “Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” **11**So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, “Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.” **12**And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, *because they had understood the words that were declared to them.*

5.18.25

Heb 12:18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched,

“concerning the mountain, that “it might be touched,” felt, or handled,—that it was a sensible, carnal thing, exposed to the outward senses, to the most earthly of them, namely, feeling,—from the prohibition given, that none should touch it: for unless it might have been touched naturally, none could have been morally prohibited to touch it. And he makes this observation for two ends: (1.) To manifest how low and inferior the giving of the law was, in comparison of the promulgation of the gospel, which was from heaven;...(2.) To intimate the bondage and fear the people were then in, who might not so much as touch the mountain where were the signs of God's presence, though it was in itself a thing exposed to the sense of all creatures.”

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p312

—my notes (my words) from the study of Owen

1. This mountain was a place of solitude. A place where there was no choice but to hear the words God was speaking to them. A place of reckoning the law of God. Where fear and terror of Him was established. In this place God showed how sinful man is and how holy He is. He showed the line between the two—and how great the chasm was. On one side the Law of God, and on the other..the inanity of man to keep that Law in an of themselves.

When God pulls us aside to show us how sinful we are, how our sin nature is incapable of anything truly righteous, it is a time of solitude. A place of despair. Hopelessness. Terror. Fear. When He sets the Law before us...

“God gave herein a type and representation of the great judgment at the last day. The terror of it consists much in this, that sinners shall be able to see nothing but God and the tokens of his wrath. Nor doth the law represent any thing else unto us.”

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p312

I have seen the effects of those who only preach law. They seem to become more and more angry as their ministry goes on year after year. Their stance is mostly rigid and their finger pointing...like a gavel of justice. And their countenance is not one of kindness or peace. It seems as if they are carrying the whole of the law on their shoulders without joy-without peace-without love-without hope. At least that is what it looks like to those sitting in the pews. It is as if they are afraid of the mercy and grace of God. Always putting a disclaimer on His lovingkindness. But let me tell you—there is absolutely nothing like the obedience of a soul who has been healed by the love of God. I do understand the need of conviction. Of calling sin, sin. Sometimes putting the Law hammer down is necessary. But to live there is just as much of a sin as falling into lasciviousness.

When God put the people of Israel in that solitary place it was as if He was saying to us today...

“Yes, there is Sinai...But wait...there is Zion!”

5.19.25

2. Barren and fruitless no water or food.

“there was nothing on Sinai but bushes and brambles: whence it had its name. These made an appearance at a distance of some fruitfulness in the place; but when it came to be tried, there was nothing but what was fit for the fire. And so is it with all that are under the law. They may seem to perform many duties of obedience, yea, such as they may trust unto, and make their boast of: but when they are brought unto the trial, they are no other but such as God speaks of, Isa. 27:4: “Who would set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.” Other fruit the law

will not bring forth. Nor was there any water in that desert of Horeb, to make it fruitful. That which the people lived on was brought out of the rock; and “that rock was Christ.” From him alone are all refreshments to them that are under the law”

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p312

God’s Judgment on the Earth

Is 24:1 Behold, the LORD lays waste the earth

and leaves it in ruins.

He will twist its surface

and scatter its inhabitants—

2 people and priest alike, servant and master,

maid and mistress, buyer and seller,

lender and borrower, creditor and debtor.

3 The earth will be utterly laid waste

and thoroughly plundered.

For the LORD has spoken this word.

4 The earth mourns and withers;

the world languishes and fades;

the exalted of the earth waste away.

5 The earth is defiled by its people;

they have transgressed the laws;

they have overstepped the decrees

and broken the everlasting covenant.

6 Therefore a curse has consumed the earth,

and its inhabitants must bear the guilt;

the earth's dwellers have been burned,
and only a few survive.

7The new wine dries up, the vine withers.

All the merry-makers now groan.

8The joyful tambourines have ceased;

the noise of revelers has stopped;

the joyful harp is silent.

9They no longer sing and drink wine;

strong drink is bitter to those who consume it.

10The city of chaos is shattered;

every house is closed to entry.

11In the streets they cry out for wine.

All joy turns to gloom;

rejoicing is exiled from the land.

12The city is left in ruins;

its gate is reduced to rubble.

13So will it be on the earth

and among the nations,

like a harvested olive tree,

like a gleaner after a grape harvest.

14They raise their voices, they shout for joy;

from the west they proclaim the majesty of the LORD.

15Therefore glorify the LORD in the east.

Extol the name of the LORD, the God of Israel
in the islands of the sea.

16 From the ends of the earth we hear singing:

“Glory to the Righteous One.”

But I said, “I am wasting away! I am wasting away!

Woe is me.”

The treacherous betray;

the treacherous deal in treachery.

17 Terror and pit and snare await you,

O dweller of the earth.

18 Whoever flees the sound of panic

will fall into the pit,

and whoever climbs from the pit

will be caught in the snare.

For the windows of heaven are open,

and the foundations of the earth are shaken.

19 The earth is utterly broken apart,

the earth is split open,

the earth is shaken violently.

20 The earth staggers like a drunkard

and sways like a shack.

Earth’s rebellion weighs it down,

and it falls, never to rise again.

21 In that day the LORD will punish
the host of heaven above
and the kings of the earth below.

22 They will be gathered together
like prisoners in a pit.
They will be confined to a dungeon
and punished after many days.

23 The moon will be confounded
and the sun will be ashamed;
for the LORD of Hosts will reign
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
and before His elders with great glory.

5.21.25

Heb 12:18b and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

“this is the second work of the law: when it hath by its convictions brought the sinner into a condition of a sense of guilt which he cannot avoid,—nor will any thing tender him relief, which way soever he looks, for he is in a desert,—it represents unto him the holiness and severity of God, with his indignation and wrath against sin; which have a resemblance of a consuming fire. This fills his heart with dread and terror, and makes him see his miserable, undone condition. Infinite holiness, inexorable justice, and fiery indignation, are all in this representation of God. Hence the cry of those who find not the way of relief will one day be, ‘Who among us shall dwell with that devouring fire? Who shall inhabit with those everlasting burnings?’”

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p315

God used fire to show Himself to this people who Moses led out of Egypt. The response to it was a fear and terror that did nothing to change their hearts or minds or souls.

The bible also shows God as a refiner's fire. That place where He burns off the chaff of our own self and makes us into something pleasing—something more like Jesus. What those Israelites did not know about God made them fearful to the point of not even wanting to hear God's voice. If we could get our hearts and minds around what exactly Jesus did for us through His sacrifice...we would be grateful, thankful, and rejoicing in the middle of our own fires. That rejoicing does not have to look like merriment—it is so much of a deeper joy than that. A heavier, substantial, security in knowing the love of God whose grace, mercy and changing power is above and beyond what we can ask, think or imagine. If we do not shy away from His desire to change us—our sin, our habits, attitudes...and perspectives—He proves His plan is not to harm us but to give us a hope and a future.

I wonder what God would have done if those Israelites would have just sat down right there and started to worship Him? Could they have turned their fear into a worship service praising God for all He had done and for Who He Is?

This is our invitation into the heart of God today because of Jesus' sacrifice. When that "fire" of the Holy Spirit shows us something He is working on in our heart or mind, He invites us to come find comfort in His lovingkindness. He supernaturally every time creates something new where there was darkness or fear or terror. Where the Israelites rejected listening to God because He was depicted as fire, we have the opportunity to embrace that same "fire" that is designed to give us life—and life more abundantly.

"Bit by bit, from glory to glory. Thank-you Jesus, Thank You Father, for Your patience with me. For changing me in ways and places where I was lost in the darkness...fearing Your judgment, bound up in terror. But now I know Your righteousness sustains me, and it is Your love that is changing me. Words fall short of giving justice to the weight of Your glory. Amen"

Heb 12:18b nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

"he (Moses) affirms sometimes, that God spake in and out of the fire; sometimes out of the thick darkness, Deut. 5:22–24. "The Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness," verse 22. "The voice out of the midst of the thick darkness," verse 23. "The voice out of the midst of the fire," verse 24. And the same is fully expressed, chap. 4:11, 12. So that it is evident there was a mixture of them all together; and so it is described by David, Ps. 18:8–13. And nothing can be conceived of greater dread and terror, than such a mixture of fire, and darkness, and tempest, which left nothing of light unto the fire but its dread and terror. For by reason of this blackness and darkness, the people had no useful light by the fire. This filled them with confusion and perplexity."

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p316

Psalm 8:8 Smoke rose from his nostrils; consuming fire came from his mouth, burning coals blazed out of it.⁹ He parted the heavens and came down; dark clouds were under his feet.¹⁰ He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind.¹¹ He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him—the dark rain clouds of the sky.¹² Out of the brightness of

his presence clouds advanced, with hailstones and bolts of lightning.13 The Lord thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded 14 He shot his arrows and scattered the enemy, with great bolts of lightning he routed them.15 The valleys of the sea were exposed and the foundations of the earth laid bare at your rebuke, Lord, at the blast of breath from your nostrils.

16 He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters.17 He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes, who were too strong for me.18 They confronted me in the day of my disaster, but the Lord was my support.19 He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me.

Job 37:19 “Teach us what we should say to Him, For we can prepare nothing because of the darkness.

“the execution of the law is called “blackness of darkness,” Jude 13”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p317

Jude 13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

5.22.24

Heb 12:18b and tempest

“As it was *without* in the giving of the law, so it is *within* in the work of the law; it fills the minds of men with a storm, accompanied with darkness and perplexity. This is the issue that the law brings things unto in the minds and consciences of sinners. Its work ends in darkness and tempest. It hath these two effects: First, it brings the soul into darkness, that it knows not what to do, nor how to take one step towards its own relief. It can see no light, either for its direction or consolation. And hereon it either tires and wearies itself with vain endeavours for relief by its own works and duties, or else sinks into heartless despondencies and complaints; as is the manner of men in darkness. And secondly, it raiseth a tempest in the mind, of disquieting, perplexing thoughts; oftentimes accompanied with dread and terror. In this state the law leaves poor sinners; it will not accompany them one step towards deliverance; it will neither reveal nor encourage them to look after any relief. Yea, it declares that here the sinner must die and perish, for any thing that the law knows or can do. This, therefore, is the place and season wherein Christ interposeth, and cries unto sinners, “Behold me! behold me!””

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p318

Signs that God’s wrath was poured out on Jesus when He was crucified:

Just like Sinai there was darkness:

Matt. 27:45 from noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over the whole land

Just like Sinai there was a tempest

Matt. 27:51 The earth quaked, and the rocks were split

Matt. 27:51 The curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom

Mat 27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

Mat 27:52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

Mat 27:53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

Mat 27:54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

Mat 27:55 And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:

Mat 27:56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.)

God showed on Mt Sinai that men could not be holy in themselves by trying to keep the law. The Law of God is good...but as fallen creation, we cannot keep it and work our way back to that state of relationship with God that Adam and Eve had in the garden.

God showed by the crucifixion of Jesus just how far He would go to save those who are lost. He poured out His wrath on Jesus right there in the darkness, and as the earth quaked...the veil separating that place of communion with Him was torn. Which means we can come to God and know Him as Father because of what Jesus did on the cross.

The Law applied means death.

The Cross applied means life.

Mat 27:52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

Repent can and does mean confessing our sins and believing Jesus paid the price for us to be forgiven. But, in my view just as important, it is the heart rendering knowledge that there is nothing I can do to change myself—to keep the law—to make myself holy as He is holy. And the repentance is that I am sorry for trying to fix myself. That empties the cross (what Jesus did) of it's power...trying in my own power to be holy instead of *leaning on* the power of God...which is Jesus my Lord who holds all the power of the Godhead.

So, when the Law of God is applied to my own life without the Spirit of God's amazing grace, it is condemnation for failing to keep it. But, when the Spirit of God is out to resurrect something dead in me...it becomes a conviction of life through Jesus. I hand Him my death, and He gives me His life. Amen.

“notwithstanding all the things that they had seen, all those signs and great miracles, “the Lord had not given them an heart to perceive, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear,” Deut. 29:2–4. In hearing they heard not, in seeing they perceived not; and did therefore “always err in their heart,” not knowing the ways of God, Heb. 3:10. For unto a right improvement of such outward privileges it is moreover required that God should “circumcise our hearts, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and all our soul,” Deut. 30:6, by the administration of efficacious grace.

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p322

5.24.25

Heb 12:19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which *voice* they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

Heb 12:20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

Heb 12:21 And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

“The mediator himself of the old covenant was not able to sustain the dread and terror of the law: how desperate then are their hopes who would yet be saved by Moses”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p327

I am thinking of Queen Esther. How she decided to approach the king even if that meant her own death. What would have happened if the people of Israel had had that same conviction towards God?

After all, Moses had somehow deterred the heavy hand of God from destroying this people and starting over with him.

Could it be that God would have shown them His lovingkindness on that mountain, in that desert?

The fact that they didn't act like Queen Esther shows the sovereignty of God. How His ways are not always discernable. He was out to show Who He Is to a people for our benefit. So that we would know and understand how merciful and gracious and loving toward us He truly is. God in all His wisdom showed what it means to live being separated from Him in relationship...but subject to His law. Like the taskmasters of Egypt required from the slaves impossible things—God required from them the impossible by the keeping of every law. But then! He proceeded to show them in symbols, signs, foreshadows how that law would be satisfied by the Messiah—only...so many did not see the Deliverer. They only saw the requirements and vowed to keep them. Looking back from this side of the cross of Jesus, we wonder why they did that. I think it is because God was only starting to unfold His story. He was out to show there is nothing we can do in ourselves to become holy and acceptable enough to ever come into His presence. But He has made the only way through Jesus.

There is always a certain point—a catalyst—that brings us to the end of ourselves. That proves we are not enough:

Not enough to sustain our own life

Not enough to be holy as He is holy

Not enough to be obedient to His commands

Not enough to love Him with all of who we are

Not enough to love others as He loves us

Not enough to hold knowledge with wisdom

Not enough...

Thank God! That He IS enough through Jesus. He brings His everything that is enough straight into our own hearts and declares us enough. Not only enough but precious and holy and cared for. He lavishly pours out His own self (His own Spirit) into a heart that cries out Abba! Where we hear "What is Your hearts desire? Just as the king told Ester..ask me for anything...even up to half of my kingdom and it will be yours." What would, what could we say? What is in the depths of our own heart that is not unrighteous or decietful beyond all measure? So then, we cry "Not my will, but Yours be done Oh God!" I have heard it said that God gives the best to those who leave the choice to Him...and scripture says I do not know what to pray for, but the Spirit

intercedes because He knows the perfect will of God. The only prayer that I can whisper is the same that Jesus prayed to His Father “Keep them faithful”. Amen

5.27.25

“All persons concerned were brought unto an utter loss and distress, by the renovation and giving of the law; from whence no relief is to be obtained, but by Him alone who is “the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believeth.””

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p328

Rom 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

We know Jesus spoke of what the law and the prophets hung on: Loving God with everything we are: heart, mind, soul and strength, and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

So then we go about doing that in hopes of doing enough to become righteous. We pray, study the Bible, praise and God with music and songs, we tithe, give our time and finances to worthy God honoring causes, serve in church or community, take care of our families and neighbors...and the list goes on until even reading it can be exhausting—IF we are doing those things with the idea that those works will grant us being righteous enough to get to heaven, or the favor of God.

So then, what are we to do? We have to live in this world, and Jesus obviously wants us to walk within the precepts of “Love God and others”. I have come to see that any of the above “works” can be done through different mindsets:

- 1) A sense of self righteousness where we take the credit for being so righteous to be doing those things for God.
- 2) Those works will get us into heaven. When all our bad acts are weighed against all our good...we hope the good wins out because God will judge everything that we say and do in this life—and rewards are based on merit.
- 3) Those works simply are an outflow of Jesus being our righteous in such a way that the Holy Spirit supernaturally (or organically) grows that fruit in our life. Where the works we do flow from a heart that is established in the love of God first...then those things come naturally because we have and are becoming a new creation. That is the difference between “keeping the law *for* righteousness” and placing our faith in Jesus to be righteous enough for a holy God...a place where sin runs deep, but His grace runs deeper still—where the love of The Father extends

and changes our very being from the inside out. Where when works are done—there is no motive to prove oneself to God or man...but to simply be about The Father's business. Amen

Paul did say run the race to win the prize. Our words, thoughts, and actions will one day be laid bare by Jesus and He will examine everything. But maybe—just maybe that is not a bad thing for those who live like Jesus IS their righteousness, and do those things out of love rather than desiring a reward at the end of the age. We desire to do what He commands because we love Him—and leave the outcome to Him.

Living with being all into the sovereignty of God can lead two ways:

Being lackadaisical with the life we live. This I call holding God's sovereignty in futility.

The other way to live in this embrace of His sovereignty is: Love Him with everything we are. This creates a zeal for life that overflows into loving others.

God has a way of working with each one of us that is uniquely designed to show us He loved us first—He chose us first—and it is through the blood of Jesus we are healed, by His Spirit we are changed, and because of the love of God we are kept.

5.27.25

Heb 12:22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,

“to know the true reason why the apostle calls the state of believers under the new testament by the name of Sion, we may consider some of the things that are spoken of Sion in the Scripture. And I shall instance in a few only, because they are multiplied throughout the whole Book of God; as,

(1.) It is the place of *God's habitation*, where he dwells for ever,

-Ps. 9:11 Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

-Ps 76:2 In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.

-Joel 3:21 For I will cleanse their blood *that* I have not cleansed: for the LORD dwelleth in Zion.

(2.) It is the seat of the throne, reign, and kingdom of Christ,

-Ps. 2:6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

-Isa. 24:23 Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

(Mic 4:6 In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; not in Owen's references)

-Mic 4:7 And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.

(3.) It is the object of divine promises innumerable,

-Ps. 69:35 For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

-Isa. 1:27; Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

-of Christ himself, Isa. 59:20.

Isa 59:19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. 20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. 21 As for me, *this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.*

(4.) Thence did the gospel proceed, and the law of Christ come forth,

Isa. 40:9; (all of Is 40—The greatness of God)

Mic. 4:2. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

(5.) It was the object of God's especial love, and the place of the birth of the elect,

Ps. 87:2-5 The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah. I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this *man* was born there. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.

(6.) The joy of the whole earth,

Ps. 48:2. (7.) (see below)

Salvation, and all blessings came forth out of Sion,

-Ps. 14:7 Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

-Ps 110:2-3 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

-Ps 128:5 The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

with sundry other things alike glorious.

Now these things were not spoken of nor accomplished towards that mount Sion which was in Jerusalem absolutely, but only as it was typical of believers under believers do come unto that state wherein they have an interest in, and a right unto, all the blessed and glorious things that are spoken in the Scriptures concerning and unto Sion. All the privileges ascribed, all the promises made unto it, are theirs. Sion is the place of God's especial gracious residence, of the throne of Christ in his reign, the subject of all graces, the object of all promises, as the Scripture abundantly testifies.

This is the first privilege of believers under the gospel. They “come unto mount Sion;” that is, they are interested in all the promises of God made unto Sion, recorded in the Scripture, in all the love and care of God expressed towards it, in all the spiritual glories assigned unto it. **The things spoken of it were never accomplished in the earthly Sion, but only typically; spiritually, and in their reality, they belong unto believers under the new testament.**

Some look on all those promises and privileges wherewith the Scripture is replenished, with respect unto Sion, to be now as things dead and useless. They esteem it a presumption for any to plead and claim an interest in them, or to expect the accomplishment of them in or towards themselves. But this is expressly to contradict the apostle in this place, who affirms that we are come unto mount Sion, then when the earthly mount Sion was utterly forsaken. All those promises, therefore, which were made of old to Sion, do belong unto the present church of believers. These, in every condition, they may plead with God. They have the grace, and shall have the comfort contained in them. There is the security and assurance of their safety, preservation, and eternal salvation. Thereon depends their final deliverance from all their oppressions.

Be their outward condition never so mean and destitute; be they afflicted, persecuted, and despised; yet all the glorious things that are spoken of Sion are theirs, and accomplished in them in the sight of God. But the excellent things whereof, under this notion of Sion, they are made partakers, are innumerable.

Let this be compared with the people's coming unto mount Sinai, as we have before declared it, and the glory of it will be conspicuous. And believers are to be admonished,

- (1.) To walk worthy of this privilege, as Ps. 15;
- (2.) To be thankful for it;
- (3.) To rejoice in it;
- (4.) To make it an effectual motive unto obedience and perseverance, as it is here done by the apostle”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p331

Psa 69:29-36 But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high. I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs. The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God. For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not *his prisoners*. Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein. For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

Zion, the City of Our God

Psa 48:1 A Song and Psalm for the sons of Korah. Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.

Psa 48:2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

Psa 48:3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

Psa 48:4 For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

Psa 48:5 They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away.

Psa 48:6 Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail.

Psa 48:7 Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.

Psa 48:8 As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

Psa 48:9 We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

Psa 48:10 According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.

Psa 48:11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.

Psa 48:12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

Psa 48:13 Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.

Psa 48:14 For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

5.28.25

(But ye are come): Heb 12:23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

“this assembly described, Rev. 5:9, 10, “Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests;” that is, one “general assembly and church of the first-born.”

This was the great and glorious mystery which was hid in the will and wisdom of God from the beginning; namely, that he would collect into one body, one assembly, one church, all his elect, in all nations, Jews and Gentiles, uniting them among themselves by faith in Christ Jesus.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p339

Jesus is the true Zion. If we are found in Him this side of eternity, we will be found in Him on the other side of eternity dwelling in the New Jerusalem. The physical place is only the proof of our spiritual identity—in Jesus forgiven and redeemed by His blood to the glory of His Father. Amen

5.29.25

“In Jesus Christ believers are delivered from all discouraging dread and terror, in the consideration of God as a judge; such, I mean, as befell the people at Sinai in the giving of the law. They now behold all his glory in the face of Jesus Christ; which makes it amiable and desirable unto them.”

“However dangerous and dreadful the outward state of the church may be at any time in the world, it may secure itself of final success; because therein God is judge alone, unto whom they have free access.

Obs. XX. The prospect of an eternal reward from God, as the righteous judge, is the greatest supportment of faith in all present distresses.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p344

There is set before us life or death. Mt Sinai (law of death, law for righteousness) or Mt Zion—the gospel working in and through a people. This mountain is Jesus Himself, Where faith in what Jesus did on the cross is enough. And it is the Holy Spirit's responsibility and work to present us holy and spotless to our Bridegroom. We desire to become what is pleasing to Him—we desire to follow the law, but in our own selves know that is impossible in our own selves to do. So, we go to Mt Zion...to Jesus in faith that as the Holy Spirit is changing those places in our heart to look more like Jesus—that His blood covering us makes us already holy to a holy God who we can enter into His presence at anytime or anywhere.

There is the question of how to evangelize: by the law or by grace? There are some preachers who bring fire and brimstone. God uses that. In the book of Joel it says (my paraphrase) saving some by fire, hating the very garment of sin, and saving some by mercy.

I see this as also a choice (or heart motive) of the preacher. Evangelist: are you bringing a heavy handed, gavel beating, law saturated message to people because that is what the Holy Spirit has laid on your heart? Are you preaching out of a place of healing or woundedness in your own soul? How did you come to Jesus...in terror and fear or by mercy and grace? Can you truly say the kindness of God lead you to repentance? Are you stuck in the law of preaching the law or are you open to walking with the Spirit and bringing a timely message...speaking what is on His heart at that specific time? Does your tone of voice and mannerisms show you truly care for those souls or are you just preaching to people? God help us know Your tender mercies more and more in our own heart and soul. Amen

Heb 12:23 and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

That is a comforting fact! To know that our loved ones who believe on Jesus that have died are with Him—in Mt Zion—dwelling in that place in spirit form waiting for the resurrection of their bodies. That they have been made perfect and are just as much apart of the Body of Christ as we are here on this side. They have finished the race and are witnesses to our own race. This not only comforts us to where they are, but to where we will be as well. It spurs us on in our faith and walk with God knowing there is a sure end of our own spirits being made perfect by Him. That one day we will all be resurrected—the dead in Christ first, then those who are still walking on this earth. That will be a glorious day!

Owen rightly stands against the Catholic church's belief in purgatory and praying to the "saints" who have died.

My thoughts:

If there is any sense of a purgatory it is that state of being which the spirits of just men made perfect are waiting for their glorified bodies. I do not know if these who have gone before pray for us who still here, I am inclined to believe so—BUT I also believe we are not to try and communicate or ask them to intercede for us BECAUSE there is only ONE intercessor between God and man and He is Jesus (and the Holy Spirit who are one). All of our prayers go through

Jesus to God. Not through those who have gone before us or through the angels. There is One higher than all of them—why not go directly to the King who knows how to order His own creation for the work He wants done on earth or in heaven? Our authority should go directly in the form of prayer to the King and He gets to order it all in His Wisdom and truth. That way we do not step beyond the lines dabbling into things we should not dabble in...in the state we are in in this life. I am not saying we do not have authority to command an evil spirit to depart, but to command the prayers or actions of spirits of men gone before us who are with Jesus, or of the angels gathered around His throne is not something anywhere in scripture or from the mouth of Jesus that we are told to do. But we are told to keep our eyes on Jesus, and He will guide our way. There are mysteries that we can get a snap shot of, giftings that the Holy Spirit gives that are absolutely supernatural...but to hold those things above seeking Jesus and keeping Him the center of who we are is a slippery slope that can lead into idolatry.

“A representation of the glory, beauty, and order, of the invisible world, of the new creation, of *the spiritual catholic church*. There was originally an excellent glory, beauty, and order, in the visible world, in the heavens and the earth, with the host of them. There is a pretence unto these things amongst men, in their empire, dominion, power, and enjoyments. But what are the one or other to the beauty and glory of this new world, which is visible only to the eyes of faith! He is blind who sees not the difference between these things. This is the state and order of this heavenly kingdom,—every thing that belongs unto it is in its proper place and station: God at the head, as the framer, erector, and sovereign disposer of it; Jesus, as the only means of all communications between God and the residue of the church; innumerable myriads of angels ministering unto God and men in this society; the spirits of just men at rest, and in the enjoyment of the reward of their obedience; all the faithful on the earth in a Sion-state of liberty in their worship, and righteousness in their persons. This is the city of the living God, wherein he dwelleth, the heavenly Jerusalem. Unto this society can no creature approach, or be admitted into it, who is not by faith united unto Christ, whatever pretences they may have to an interest in the visible church, framed as to its state and order by themselves unto their own advantage: without that qualification, they are strangers and foreigners unto this true church-state, wherein God is delighted and glorified. A view hereof is sufficient to discover the vain pretences unto beauty and glory that are amongst men. What are all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, but mortality, wasting itself in vanity and confusion, ending in endless misery. Herein is true, eternal, never-fading glory, etc.”

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p350

Heb12:25

Hear the Heavenly Voice

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.

Heb 12:26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

Heb 12:27 And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

—side note: Jesus sent 70 into the field to do Kingdom work. Here is what happened when they came back—

Luke 10:17-21

King James Version

17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. **18** And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. **19** Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. **20** Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; **but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.** **21** In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=J-Ur_7y-TGo&pp=ygUkaGUga25vd3MgbXkgbmFtZSBmcmFuY2VzY2EgYWVjY2VzZGlj

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=jc0r_i2f1dU&pp=ygURaGUga25vd3MgbXkgbmFtZSA%3D

6.2.25

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.

-my thoughts

Whenever I read this verse before, I had leanings toward Moses being the “one who spoke from earth” because Moses was on earth, and God was in heaven...although after reading Owen’s belief on the subject...God was on earth (The Son of God—the preincarnate Jesus...which means before being sent to become a baby and ultimately our Savior) speaking to Moses and the people.

“In that former refusal, or entreaty not to hear the voice of God any more, there was this good which was approved of God, namely, that it expressed that frame of fear and dread which he designed to bring them unto by giving of the law. But though their words were so good, and so well suited unto their present condition, yet it discovered a want of that faith and boldness of children which were necessary to enable them to abide with God. With respect hereunto the apostle might justly date the beginning of their departure from God and refusal of obedience, which immediately ensued on this discovery that they liked not the presence and voice of God.

But the people’s *actual refusal of obedience unto him that gave them the law began in that which fell out not long after; namely in their making the golden calf*, while Moses was in the mount, Exod. 32 from which they did not escape;—for besides that three thousand of them on that occasion were slain by the sword, God made it a record concerning that sin, “In the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them; and the Lord plagued the people,” Exod. 32:34, 35. *After this ensued sundry other rebellions of the people; in all which they “refused him who spake on earth.”*

Owen, John. 1854. [*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*](#). Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p357

It seems to me that the people’s fear of God lead them into a futile or hopeless state. It is good to respect—fear in a sense—God. To hold Him in awe of His power, might, and justice, but to hold all of this in a hopeless fear...or unapproachable fear will lead to a state of needing to fill that hopeless hole with something else. The Israelites still did not trust that God had their best interest in mind with everything He did. He had shown them His saving power, but they did not believe. They ended up crafting a god of their own imagination and resources that they could control—and would not make any demands on them or frighten them with fire, smoke and a booming voice! Nothing exists in a void. And it did not take long before they substituted the real with the imaginary.

A void can work the other way as well though. He gives: Beauty for ashes; strength for fear; gladness for mourning; peace for despair.

If we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven...we will not escape in a couple of ways:

If we are believers who refuse Him when He knocks, we will not see our ashes, fears, mourning, or despair be replaced with His goodness. We, even though saved by faith through His grace, will not have had the fullness of what He wanted to give us in this life.

If we are not believers, and refuse the salvation of Him who speaks from heaven, then we will be lost forever...never escaping that torment of searching for something to fill the void of His presence. Always searching but never finding the One who satisfies our soul. That is the compassion of an evangelist who says as Paul:

Ro 9:1-5 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

(1Cor 10)

“John 3:12, 13, “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” Add hereunto verse 31, “He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all.” See John 6:33, 38. These places treat of the same matter with that intended in the text, namely, the revelation of heavenly things, or the mysteries of the will of God by Jesus Christ. In each place it is affirmed, that to make this revelation he came from heaven; so that he was from heaven: but withal, whilst he did so, he was still in heaven,—“the Son of man who is in heaven.” He was so from heaven, in his descent to declare the will of God, as that he was in his divine person still in heaven.”

Owen, John. 1854. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Edited by W. H. Goold. Vol. 24. Works of John Owen. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. V7p358

This very fact (underlined above) has given me more comfort for reasons that I probably don't even understand fully. But just *knowing* this truth brings my soul a security that I did not know before believing it. Not that I ever doubted Jesus is/was the 2nd Person of the Godhead...but somehow the way Owen expresses and explains this verse brings me much confirmation in how I have always believed on Jesus. God is fully God. Because The Son of God stepped into the wrapping of human flesh (Jesus) does not mean He vacated His position in heaven. The Son of God has and always will be The Son of God...co-existent and co-eternal with The Father and Holy Spirit. I do not know why this has always been something pressing on me to try and be very clear about. Jesus does hold all of the power of the Godhead because He is The Son of God

incarnate. I do believe the words The Son of God incarnate are going to be extremely important to hold to in the times ahead. The Father did not die for our sins. The Holy Spirit did not die for our sins... Jesus did. And only by the ability and power only found in the Godhead...that power and communion with and by The Son of God is the only way Jesus (as fully man) was able to complete His mission of becoming the New Covenant for us. When we worship Jesus...we do not worship His humanity, but because He is The Son of God. Again, I do not know why this is such a point with me. I guess God knows and He will show me in His time and way. I can venture to say it may have something to do with “in the last days many will claim to be Christ.” There will also be those who claim to know Him but do not. Anyway...onward through Hebrews.

6.3.25

Heb 12:26 b Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

Heb 12:27 And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

At the very point that Jesus was conceived, (That The Word of God, The Son of God took on flesh), not only did the earth shake, but heaven as well. What was shaken on earth by the voice and law of God in the Old Covenant was earthly things. Things man was required to do in order to become holy to a holy God. But then, because Jesus was conceived, walked this earth with the power and authority of the Godhead...indwelt and became one with The Son of God...died on the cross for all sinners alike...this shook heaven. It reordered the heavenly realms—the order of angels and demons. All became subject to Jesus...all in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. There was a company of angels declaring Jesus’ praise at His birth, and the voice of The Father from heaven and the symbol of The Holy Spirit by a dove confirming Jesus’ place and station at His water baptism, then the earth shook and the sky grew dark at His crucifixion, and I can only imagine what went on in heaven when He ascended to the throne of God to sit at the right hand of The Father. When Jesus told His disciples that He saw Satan fall like lightning after they gave the account that even the demons obeyed them—Jesus was not talking about the physical removal of this fallen angel from heaven (which had happened prior to this—and is evident by the fall of Adam and Eve), but He was talking about Satan losing or falling from having any spiritual authority over those who are His. This shook the “heavens” and the order of the angelic and demonic realms. Placing Jesus above all—and all those who believe on Him—above angels and the kingdom of Satan. These realms had always been subject to God, but not to humans. That changed—shook heaven when Jesus came, died, and ascended. He made His Kingdom, which is unshakable, available to all who believe on Jesus as their Savior.

Heb 12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

Heb 12:29 For our God is a consuming fire.

This can all seem like abstract thinking and imagining until it is applied to our everyday lives though can't it? Yes, we have Jesus' authority to take command over the demonic realms. What is bound in heaven is bound on earth and what is loosed in heaven is loosed on earth. But what in the world does that mean practically for the everyday ordinary Christian who just loves God with their whole heart and is desiring to become more and more like Jesus in their day to day life? The most important thing that Jesus accomplished by dying on that cross and rising to the sit at the right hand of the throne of God was it was then possible for the Holy Spirit to indwell all those who believe in Jesus' Salvation. That He is Immanuel (God with us)...that became a physical reality when The Son of God came in the flesh...and a spiritual reality at Pentacost when The Holy Spirit came as tongues of fire to indwell those in the upper room. This indwelling is what we now have as Christians. This is God with us, and in us. Shaking-changing us from the inside out until only that which cannot be shaken will stand. Only that which is in the likeness of Jesus will make it through the final judgement. His righteousness is our covering that is imputed-given to us by the Holy Spirit who testifies we are the children of God. This is the free gift. The changing-shaking of our own innerman is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit...His ministry to us who are walking this Christian life from glory to glory seein Him fill all the voids in our heart and soul as we continually give Him (all of who God is: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) the glory, praise, credit, worship due unto Him. Jesus is everything to my salvation. The Father is everything to my position in Jesus, The Holy Spirit is my everything concerning walking this life to the glory of God. The Father sees me as forgiven because Jesus holds me in His righteousness. The Holy Spirit is the potter who changes me-shakes me-makes me into that new creation bit by bit and glory to glory. What God sees as already been made new—we are walking it out in the reality of our everyday life. Right here on this earth, in our own hearts and souls, the Kingdom of Heaven comes and reorders everything in our minds, hearts and souls. Thank you Jesus. Amen