

30. Understanding Why We Come to Jesus Our Mediator

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that there are people who profess to be Christians but have drawn back from true faith. The writer of Hebrews warned that there are many who have made that choice because they lack true faith. Such individuals have chosen to continue in their bitterness, their immorality or their godless lifestyles. In our topic today, we are going to see how to help our children learn to explain to such individuals the need to come to Jesus who is our mediator of a new covenant.

In Hebrews 12:18-21, we read, “For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. (For they could not endure what was commanded: ‘And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.’ And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, ‘I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.’)” Here, we see that the writer of Hebrews again reminded the Jews of the contrast between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. The Old Covenant was the law given to Moses at Mount Sinai.

In Deuteronomy, Moses reminded the people of the way God had spoken to them at Mount Sinai. Deuteronomy 4:11-12 says, “Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness. And the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; you only heard a voice.” The people had heard the voice of God but they had not seen Him. They had seen the thick darkness, but they had not even seen the form of God.

That day is described in Exodus 19:16, where we read, “Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.” The people were filled with fear when they saw the way that God had come to speak to them. We see what they told Moses after God had spoken the Ten Commandments to the people from the mountain. Exodus 20:18-19 says, “Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.’” The people became so fearful they were afraid they were going to die. As a result, they told Moses to let God speak to him, and then, he could come and tell them what God had said. They did not want to be in the presence of God.

God also told them not to touch the mountain or they would be judged by the Lord. If an animal touched the mountain that animal was to be stoned or shot with an arrow. The Old Covenant reminded the people that the Law separated them from God because of their sin. Even Moses was filled with fear as he heard the words of God after the people had made the golden calf while Moses was on the mountain. As Moses remembered that time he said in Deuteronomy 9:19, “For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which the Lord was angry with you, to destroy you. But the Lord listened to me at that time also.” His fear caused him to pray that the Lord

would spare the people of Israel.

In contrast to the fear produced by the Old Covenant, the New Covenant gives us life and hope. Hebrews 12:22-24 says, “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.” The writer of Hebrews told the Jews that, in Christ, they came to Mount Zion which is the city of God because it is the heavenly Jerusalem. The blood offered, throughout the Old Testament, was the blood of animals offered as a covering for sin. Even the blood that Abel offered was still only the blood of an animal even though it showed his faith.

In contrast, Christ took His own blood and presented it to the Father in heaven. When we come to God through Christ, Hebrews 4:15-16 tells us, “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Here, we see that we are now able to come with boldness to the Father, because the Father was satisfied with the payment Christ made for our sins, and He can deal with us in mercy.

As Christians, we are the church of the firstborn. Our names have been written in heaven. The word that is translated “firstborn” speaks of Christ. Colossians 1:18 says, “And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.” Here, we see that Christ is called the firstborn from the dead because of the fact that He was the first to conquer death. The just men made perfect are the Old Testament saints because they could not enter into the presence of the Father until their sins were paid for by Christ. Both we, and the Old Testament saints, can rejoice because of the fact that Christ is the Mediator of a New Covenant. He is the One who has made it possible for each of us to enter into the presence of the Father with boldness.

Hebrews 12:25-27 goes onto say, “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, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, ‘Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.’ Now this, ‘Yet once more,’ indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.” The writer of the book of Hebrews reminded the Jews not to refuse Him who speaks. Some Jews were tempted to draw back. The writer warned those Jews not to refuse Him who speaks. These Jews were trying to decide whether to place their faith in Christ or to depend on their own efforts to try and keep the law.

The writer reminded the Jews that those Jews who had refused to listen to God when He spoke to Israel in the wilderness did not escape judgment. At the time God spoke from heaven to the Jews in the wilderness, His voice shook the earth. The writer reminded the Jews who were still wavering that they would certainly not escape judgment if they refused to listen to Christ who now speaks

from heaven. He also reminded them that the Lord will shake both the earth and the heavens one more time. 2 Peter 3:10 says, “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.” At the time that God cleanses the heavens and the earth with fire, the whole universe will be shaken. At that time, the things that remain will not be shaken, but the heavens and the earth will both be shaken.

The things that remain will be the things that are eternal. That is why Hebrews 12:28-29 says, “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.” Peter went on to write about the things are eternal. 2 Peter 3:13 says, “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” Here, we see that we are going to receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

Since we can look forward to this eternal kingdom, we are given the power to serve the Lord acceptably on this earth with reverence and godly fear. The word translated “acceptably” means *in a manner that is well pleasing to God*. Here, we see that because Jesus is our Mediator, we are able to serve Him in a way that is well pleasing to Him. Hebrews 13:15-16 says, “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” Here, we see that the Lord has said that we are able to serve Him in a way that is pleasing to Him. This service includes both our words and our actions. We offer a sacrifice of praise as we give thanks to Him for what He has done. We are also able to offer sacrifices by our works as we learn to do good to others and as we learn to share with others. The Lord is pleased by both types of sacrifices.

As we serve the Lord, we are able to serve Him with both reverence and godly fear. The word translated “reverence” means *a sense of respect or with reverence*. The word that is translated “godly fear” means *with reverence toward God*. Here, we see the reason why we want to serve the Lord. We want to show our reverence to God. The people at Mount Sinai did not show reverence to God but made a golden calf to worship while Moses was on the mountain. As a result, they experienced the judgment of God. In contrast, we are able to show our physical and spiritual children how to serve the Lord in a way that is well pleasing to Him and with an attitude of reverence toward God. Matthew 5:16 says, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children how to bring glory to God by their words and works.