

Hebrews 12:18-29  
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Revision 01

### A Kingdom That Cannot be Shaken

The pericope of Hebrews 12:18-29 begins with a theophany or the glimpses of God's attributes to His children. We should understand that in our limitation as sinners, we will not be able to grasp the entirety of God's infinite glory. In verses 18-21, Paul writes of the thundering encounter that Moses had with God which highlighted one character of God: His holiness. In having such an encounter, one should give praise and glory to God with joyfulness. However, although the Israelites witnessed the greatness of God in the form of the ten plagues (Exodus 7-11), they grumbled, distrusted and even rebelled against God in their ungratefulness.

Their anger and disobedience is in contradiction to the expectations of a covenantal relationship which God wanted to have with His people. To be in a covenantal relationship with God is to follow Him with full obedience and dependence. In this relationship, God rewards his children with abundant grace and kindness. To help the Israelites live in obedience, God gave them rituals and laws, guiding them to live a life that pleases God. By having these instructions, the Israelites were able to remember who God is and to remain in their relationship with God. God desires his children to follow these commandments out of a genuine love and not out of a slavish fear that only follows with fear of punishment. However, in the new covenant, Christ has become our mediator who fulfills the law and sacrifices once and for all. Therefore, we are no longer bound by fear and can now come before the presence of God with full confidence as Christ has restored our relationship through the cross. We have now been invited to the real temple of God and to live without fear. Moreover, we should remember that Christ, being the "only way, truth, and life" (John 14:6 ESV), assures us of a salvation and life that will be pleasing to God as we are now united with Him. Let us then not live in despair when we sin as Christians, but instead live with a comforting truth that through the death of Christ we have received a grace that should drive us to offer Him worship. Since he has given such a special gift, may we live with reverence and thankfulness that drives us to obey God with joy.

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