

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Hebrews 12: 25-29

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank God, it's time to read the Bible again. Let's continue to read Hebrews chapter 12. We will read verses 25-29 today.

We must thank God. In the Bible, there is a book called Hebrews, which describes God's salvation from another perspective, as well as the ultimate fulfillment of our hope.

We know that the revelation of the New Testament is primarily conveyed through the ministries of three apostles: Paul is known as the apostle of "faith," Peter as the apostle of "hope," and John as the apostle of "love." These three apostles wrote a total of 20 books. If we include Mark and Luke, who were influenced by them, the total becomes 23 books, while the entire New Testament consists of only 27 books. From the writings of these three apostles, we can outline God's plan of redemption and the blueprint for the fulfillment of salvation. Any areas that remain unclear are precisely supplemented by the book of Hebrews.

Especially regarding the composition and construction of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, it serves as the finishing touch, bringing everything into full clarity. We must also thank the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who led the author to narrate in a straightforward manner the eight things we will encounter in the age to come. These eight things are layered upon one another, filled with light and revelation.

First is Mount Zion. Zion is the City of David, the place where David dwelt. God did not allow David to build the temple, yet David prepared all the materials for its construction. This indicates that today, the church is the house of God and also the place where God prepares the materials. However, the true building is in the heavenly Jerusalem—that is God's construction, and we are all materials in His building. Today, in each of our local churches, which are God's house, we must grow

into gold, silver, and precious stones, becoming vessels of honor so that we may be useful building materials in God's hands.

Second is the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem. This is designed by God and is also being built by Him. Third is the gathering of myriads of angels. They are sent by God to minister to us, not only to protect and help us but also to fulfill God's commission in perfecting us, laboring for the glorious gathering to come.

Fourth is the gathering of the firstborn. They are the overcomers from both the Old and New Testaments, and their names are recorded in God's book of remembrance. The saints of the Old Testament are the twelve gates of the city, the saints of the New Testament are the city wall, and the twelve apostles are the foundations of the wall.

Fifth is God, the righteous Judge. The saved but not yet victorious saints must meet God's righteous requirements before they can be included in the city. Sixth is the spirits of the righteous made perfect. Those who have believed and have been justified by God possess objective righteousness, but they still need to be perfected. They will go through a period of weeping and gnashing of teeth in darkness, and after being perfected, they will fully meet God's righteous requirements and be incorporated into the building of the Holy City.

Seventh is Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant. He will surely save to the uttermost. For those who are saved but have not yet overcome, this is exceedingly good news. Eighth is the blood of Jesus that was shed. Through His once-for-all shedding of blood, He accomplished eternal redemption. This blood not only grants the saints the position to come before God but also cleanses the conscience, making a person holy and fit to be incorporated into the building of the Holy City. Verses 25–29 then bring forth the final words of warning.

Verse 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, “

The author continues the writing style of the previous passage, using contrasts to compare the Old and New Testaments while bringing forth a warning to the New Testament saints: You must be cautious, careful, and examine closely, not rejecting the One who speaks to you. Hebrews 1:1-2 points out that in the Old Testament, God spoke to the Israelites many times and in various ways through the prophets, and among them, the one who spoke the most and was the most significant in the Old Testament was Moses. In the New Testament, however, God speaks through His Son, Jesus Christ: do not reject the One who speaks to us. For they speak forth God's will; this was true in the Old Testament, and even more so in the New Testament.

For if those who rejected the one who warned them on earth did not escape punishment. When God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, He commanded him to warn the Israelites not to approach the mountain, and even if a beast touched it, it had to be stoned to death. Violating God's command could not go unpunished. If the warning given on earth was already so severe, how much more serious is it now that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is warning us from heaven? If we do not listen to the words of the Son of God, how can we escape judgment?

The warning given here by the author is the same as the first warning in Hebrews 2:2-3, "For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?"

Verse 26: "whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."

At that time, His voice shook the earth—this refers to the scene when God first spoke to the Israelites at Mount Sinai. In Exodus 19:17-19, "And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and

became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice." God's voice shook the earth, His words were filled with authority and majesty, and as soon as His voice was uttered, the earth trembled greatly. This was the scene in the Old Testament when God gave the Law.

The Law was merely a testimony for God, yet it already brought such severe consequences. This is because after Adam sinned, sin entered the world through one man, and Satan became the ruler of this world, occupying the earth that God had created. When God gave the Law and revealed His testimony, the earth was greatly shaken. But now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." This refers to what Jesus Himself said about the scene of His return. In Matthew 24:29-30, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

The same declaration is found in Mark 13:24-26, and in Luke 21:25-27, it is written: "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

For the world occupied by Satan, the return of Christ is a terrifying event, causing people to be "men's hearts failing them from fear" (Luke 21:26). However, Luke 21:28 encourages the saints: "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." This means that for believers, Christ's return is not a cause for fear but for rejoicing, as it signifies the completion of our salvation and the redemption of our bodies. When Christ returns, He will not only shake the earth but also the heaven.

The earth, where mankind dwells, has been occupied by Satan. Whenever God's testimony is manifested, the earth is shaken. The heavens are divided into three layers: the first heaven is the sky that we can see, and the second heaven is where the stars are. Both of these have been occupied by Satan. Ephesians 6:12 states that our struggle is against "spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." In Daniel 10:14, Daniel's prayer was hindered for 21 days because the messenger angel was blocked by Satan's forces until Michael the archangel came to help, allowing the messenger to finally reach Daniel. This shows that spiritual warfare is constantly taking place in the heavenly realms. God dwells in the third heaven, which is also where He is building the heavenly Jerusalem. When Christ returns, He will set forth from the third heaven, passing through the second and first heaven, causing even the angelic hosts to tremble.

Verse 27: "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."

This phrase, "once more," refers to Christ's return, when not only the earth but also the heavens will be shaken. The purpose is to reveal that everything which can be shaken will be removed, just as created things are meant to pass away. Only that which cannot be shaken will remain. When Christ returns, He will establish His Millennial Kingdom on earth. The heavens and the earth that He will shake are created things, but they have been defiled by Satan's occupation. At the end of the Millennium, these created things will be removed.

As Hebrews 1:11-12 says, "The heavens and the earth will grow old like a garment; You will fold them up like a cloak, and they will be changed." This corresponds to 2 Peter 3:10, "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 that time, the old heavens and old earth will be removed and replaced with a new heaven

and new earth. Everything that can be shaken will be taken away, making it even more evident how precious and unshakable the eternal things truly are.

Verse 28: “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.”

So, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken—both the NIV and KJV use the present continuous tense, indicating that we are in the process of receiving this unshakable kingdom. Today, we are still in the church age, and the church is a foretaste of the kingdom of heaven. The spiritual experiences and life growth we gain in the church are unshakable and will remain into the kingdom age. In contrast, earthly wealth, power, status, and the nations under Satan’s system will all be shaken and removed. Only Christ’s kingdom is unshakable and will remain forever.

Dear brothers and sisters, John 3:6 says that when we are born again, we can enter the kingdom of God. Colossians 1:13 also tells us that when we are saved, we are transferred into the kingdom of the Son of His love. This speaks of the beginning of our entrance into the kingdom—we receive the identity and position to be in Christ’s kingdom. However, we still need to grow, learning to submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit and yield to Christ’s sovereignty. The full manifestation of the kingdom will only be revealed when Christ returns. At that time, the overcomers whose lives have matured will reign with Christ, sharing in the authority and glory of His kingdom.

Therefore, the author says that we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Then, he encourages us to be thankful and to serve God with reverence and godly fear, as is pleasing to Him. Christians are those who have been redeemed at the highest cost—the precious blood of Christ. The mark of a Christian is gratitude. Gratitude is an inner attitude, and its outward expression is to rise up and serve God.

Serving God is not only the responsibility of every saint but also their privilege. For it is only through serving that we come to know God more deeply and understand ourselves better. It is only through serving that we can discern God's will for us and the commission He has entrusted to us. Serving is also the process by which we learn to work with God, which is preparation for reigning with Christ in the future. The requirement for service is that we serve God in a way that pleases Him, with reverence and godly fear.

Verse 29: "For our God is a consuming fire."

When we come before God, our hearts must be reverent, and our attitude must be filled with godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire, and He must not be taken lightly.

To His enemies, He is a consuming fire, executing judgment with fiery wrath. To those who serve Him, He is still a consuming fire, refining His servants by burning away self-pity, inferior motives, selfish desires, ambition, and anything incompatible with His holy nature. This is the fire of testing and the fire of perfection, ensuring that all who serve Him do so with clean hands and a pure heart, according to what pleases Him.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You for giving us such a wonderful promise that what we inherit is a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Thank You for not only redeeming us at a great price but also preparing the church for us, so that today we can learn to serve God. Help us to serve in the church with a heart of gratitude and an attitude of reverence and godly fear in every aspect of our service. And in the process of learning to serve, may we truly understand God's will for us and the specific commission He has entrusted to us, so that today we may serve the church with clean hands and a pure heart according to God's will. May our experiences and spiritual growth be preserved in that unshakable kingdom. Bless the church where I belong. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.