



Perfecting Hope and Two Encounters • Part 2

Lesson Fifty-Six • Hebrews 12:22-24

The Fifth and Final Warning • Hebrews 12:14-29

Make every effort to pursue our future inheritance together, while making sure none of us falls short of God's final salvation!

Contrast of ENCOUNTERING God on Two Mountains

Mount Sinai and Mount Zion – Hebrews 12:18-24

Focus Is on One People with ONE Encounter that Has Already Been Secured and Is Already Being Enjoyed!

“For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest” (v. 18, ESV)

“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem...” (v. 22, ESV)

Main Idea: Our perfecting hope is not fearful **CONDEMNATION** from God but joyful **CELEBRATION** with God and all of heaven, so keep moving forward with persevering faith! (12:18-24)

You Have **NOT** Drawn Near to This Seven-Fold Encounter of Fearful Condemnation & Separation!

You Have **NOT** Drawn Near...

1. to what can be touched
2. *and* to what has been burning, fire
3. *and* to darkness
4. *and* to gloom
5. *and* to whirlwind/tornado
6. *and* to trumpet blast
7. *and* to Voice speaking words

Two Responses

1. Israel *begged to hear no more* and failed to enter God's promised inheritance for they eventually *refused* to obey what they heard (12:25).
2. Moses the Mediator was *full of fear...* when God was ready to judge them!

You **HAVE** Drawn Near to This Eight-Fold Encounter of Joyful Celebration & Perfection!

You **HAVE** Drawn Near...

1. to Mount Zion
2. *and* to City of the living God, to heavenly Jerusalem
3. *and* to myriads of angels, to festive gathering
4. *and* to called out assembly of firstborns, *who* remain enrolled in heaven
5. *and* to Judge of all, to GOD
6. *and* to spirits of the righteous *who* have been made perfect and remain perfected
7. *and* to new covenant Mediator, to JESUS
8. *and* to blood sprinkled *which* continually speaks better than the [blood of?] Abel!

Two Responses – 12:25-29!

Contrast What's Absent and What's Present

Our Perfecting Hope Is a Joyful Celebration on Mount Zion!

We have already drawn near to God in joyful **FORGIVENESS** and worshipful **ACCESS**!

The Blessings of Drawing Near to God with Jesus as Our Mediator

1. Worshipful **FREEDOM** to Enter the Very Presence of God Ruling with His People in His Place!

“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,” (v. 22a)

- Free to worship in God's **PRESENCE** on Mount Zion!

Mount Zion: God's presence dwelling with God's people in God's place through God's person for God's purpose!

- Free to worship as **CITIZENS** in the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem! *Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-16*

2. Purposeful **FULFILLMENT** of God's Sovereign Plan in Creation and Redemption for the Church and for Israel – *All Dwelling Together in Peace as One Holy People!*

and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven...and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,” (vv. 22b-23, ESV)

Three Groups of Beings Are Worshipping Together: *Each separated by the connector of “AND”!*

- Celebrate the purposeful fulfillment of what elect angels have **LONGED** to see since creation.
“and to innumerable angels in festal gathering” (vv. 22b–23a)

1 Peter 1:10-12; Luke 15:10; 12:8

- Celebrate the purposeful fulfillment of the NT **CHURCH** as the called-out assembly of firstborns.
“and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven”

Who are the called-out assembly of firstborns whose names remain enrolled in heaven?

1. They are united yet **DISTINCT** from the second group of saved human beings: *“spirits of the righteous made perfect.”*
2. They are the New Testament **CHURCH** who are united in Christ to experience the firstborn blessings of the New Covenant *before* the OT saints did in the past and *before* the nation of Israel will in the future.

- Celebrate the purposeful fulfillment of OT **SAINTS** as righteous spirits now made perfect.
“and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect” (v. 23c)

Who are these righteous spirits who have been made perfect?

1. They are united yet **DISTINCT** from the first group of saved human beings: *“assembly/church of the firstborns.”*
2. They are the Old Testament **SAINTS** who have been made perfect *after* the NT church received the New Covenant blessings as firstborns in Christ. *Revelation 21:9-14*

3. Joyful **FORGIVENESS** from the Judge of All due to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant in His Blood!

“and to God, the judge of all...and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.” (vv. 23-24)

- Celebrate the joyful forgiveness of our just Judge and heavenly **FATHER!** *(12:4-11)*
- Celebrate the joyful forgiveness of Jesus – our Priest-King and New Covenant **MEDIATOR!** *(7:1–10:18)*
- Celebrate the joyful forgiveness of the better witness of His own shed **BLOOD!** *(10:22; 11:4)*
 - Does Jesus’ sprinkled blood speak better than Abel’s **speaking** which witnessed to his *“better (animal) sacrifice”* offered up by faith than Cain’s faithless and bloodless sacrifice? *Hebrews 11:4*
 - Does Jesus’ sprinkled blood speak better than Abel’s **blood spoke** when *“the voice”* of his blood cried out to God for judgment? *Genesis 4:10*

YES! Jesus’ sprinkled blood in the sacrifice of Himself **speaks better** than **Abel’s witness** of his animal sacrifice offered up in faith for his own sins!

YES! Jesus’ sprinkled blood in the sacrifice of Himself **speaks better** than **Abel’s blood** that cried out for justice, because Jesus’ shed blood satisfied God’s judgment on sinners but also provided mercy for sinners!

God’s firstborns celebrate entering His presence using His means of grace by preserving faith in the Priest-King, Jesus, with a *now and not yet* perfecting hope of joyful forgiveness and worshipful access in peace and holiness with His people in His place!

Two Penetrating Questions

- Have you **not yet drawn near** to Mount Zion and entered into God’s holy presence by the shed blood of Jesus?
- As a believer who has **already drawn near** to Jesus are you still drawing near to God in fearful guilt and dreadful anxiety, or do you avoid drawing near to Him at all?

One Perfecting Hope

Draw near to Jesus this morning to be saved *or* to enjoy what is already yours a believer with persevering faith with perfecting hope!