

7/7/24

Hebrews 12:14-29

The believer is never to confuse his hope in Christ which expresses certainty, with the hope of the world which waits with uncertainty.

The author has made the transition from the life of faith in Chapter eleven, to the life of hope in chapter twelve.

* Perseverance and patience being the underlying theme through chapters 11-13 by way of exhortation.

The life of practice of a Christian as they are told what they already knew, but needed to be reminded and exhorted to be doers.

We might look at the first section, as the process of hope. Heb. 12:1-13

1. The source of the believer's hope. Heb. 12:1-3
2. The hope of the believer is one of sonship. Heb. 12:4-11
3. The strength of the believer from hope. Heb. 12:12-13

The second section, as the product of hope. Heb. 12:14-29

1. The pursuit of the believer in hope. Heb. 12:14-17
2. The proper perspective of the believer's hope. Heb. 12:18-24

3. The plight of the believer in rejecting the hope. Heb. 12:25-29

* The basis for this section is verse thirteen, having made their path straight for their feet, in order that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather healed, then and only then can the following exhortation be fulfilled!

12:14-17 The pursuit of the believer in Hope.

12:14 The command to pursue peace and holiness.

- 1) The command is an imperative, the believer is to do all to be at peace with all men, continuing to run the race, "Pursue peace with all people." vs. 14a; Ps. 34:14
 - a) The word pursue "dioko", means to run swiftly, to catch a person or thing and is emphatic.
 - b) It is used of one running in a race swiftly to reach the goal, describing the method of earnest diligence.
 - * The word peace "eirene" comes from the verb to join, peace is joining together what has been separated or broken!
 - c) It is translated in New Testament by persecuted, follow, and press.
 - d) The objective and goal of every Christian is to be at peace, the pursuit of peace with all men, believer and unbeliever, but

the context is dealing with the community of faith.

- 1)) If it be possible, as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men.

Rom. 12:18; 14:19

* The life of the community of God's redeemed is affected by one single person.

- 2)) Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Matt. 5:9

- 3)) God has called us to peace. 1Cor. 7:15

- 4)) We are to be of one mind and live in peace. 2Cor. 13:11

- e) This is not always easy and it may never come to pass because the other person refuses, but I am to pursue it as far as I can.

- 1)) To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Rom. 8:6

- 2)) There was a lack of harmony between those who embraced Christ and those who were considering leaving Christ.

- f) Peace is never to be pursued at the expense of our faith and hope in Christ Jesus! 2Tim. 2:24-26

- 2) The believer is commanded, "and pursue holiness." vs. 14b

- a) The word pursue "dioko", is indicated, again means to run swiftly, to catch a person or thing and is emphatic.

- b) The word for holiness "hagiasmos" means a sanctified and pure life.

- 1)) This speaks of our personal process of sanctification, "Be you holy; for I am holy." 1Pet. 1:16; Lev. 11:44

* The author has already stated, this is one of the purposes of chastening. vs. 10

- 2)) Our positional sanctification is by the Holy Spirit of God, when we are saved, not our own goodness. 2Thess. 2:13; 1Pet. 1:2

* The same root word is used for "saint" and "Holy Spirit". Heb. 3:1; 10:10, 14,

- 3)) If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. 1Jn. 1:6

* Holiness is one of God's attributes.

- 3) Holiness must be cultivated and evil must be resisted, "without which no man will see the Lord." vs. 14c

- a) Notice that without the personal pursuit of peace and holiness, no man shall see the Lord.

* Unless man is in Christ, he is sinful and can not approach a holy God, when

the believer has sin, he must confess it to fellowship with God!

- b) Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God. Matt. 5:9
- c) Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God. Matt. 5:8

12:15 The danger of not pursuing peace and holiness.

- 1) The author states how we are to pursue peace and holiness, “looking carefully.” vs. 15a
 - a) Looking diligently “episkopeo” means to look over or oversee, continuously.
 - b) The phrase is found two times in the New Testament, here and in First Peter by the phrase, “taking the oversight”. 1Pet. 5:2
 - c) The idea is of responsibility and accountability of each believer to oversee their own life, due to living in community, a little leaven, leavens the entire lump.
- 2) Three reasons are given. vs. 15
 - a) First, “Lest any man fall short of the grace of God.” vs. 15a
 - 1)) The word short “hestereo” mean to lack, be devoid of, fall behind the potential of the grace of God, which is all sufficient. Heb. 4:1
 - 2)) The tense is the present participle describing an active disregard by a

continuous state, not a single defection. Heb. 6:4-8; 10:29

* Chrystostom said, “The image is taken from a company of travelers, one of whom lags behind, and so never reaches the end of the long laborious journey. (Newell:413)

- b) Second, “Lest any root of bitterness spring up and cause trouble and many become defiled.” vs. 15b-c
 - 1)) Bitterness “pikria” is the result of not forgiving, resenting and holding a grudge, having ill will and hidden agendas.
 - 2)) The reference to trouble is the person themselves, “trouble you” “enokleo” means to excite or annoy, appearing this one time, which can result by failure to except the chastening of God or resolving issues with people will result in bitterness destroying the person who is bitter, physically, emotionally and spiritually.
 - * Bitterness is a poison!
- c) Third, “and many become defiled.” vs. 15b-c
 - 1)) The outcome is the defiling of many, due to the inter-relationship and ties with one another.
 - * The preventative is for the care and character of the community!

- 2)) The word defiled “miaino” means to dye with another color, to stain, the idea is that of polluting something pure by contamination.
- 3)) The quote is from Deut. 29:18, context is worship of other gods and departing from the living God and corrupting the community.

12:16 The warning against being like Esau by not obeying the command.

- 1) The caution, “Lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau.” vs. 16a
 - a) The word fornicator “ pornos” is in a spiritual sense not literal, but ruled by his flesh.
 - b) The word profane “bebelos” comes from “belos”, meaning a threshold which is walked on by people to go in and out, used as a mere instrument of convenience, to trodden under foot. Heb. 10:29
 - c) The idea being of people who use God and His Word for their convenience in an unholy manner, Esau being the opposite of holiness and peace, godless, secular and irreverent.
 - d) Without coming to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, we will seriously fall short

and succumb to sinful desires. Heb. 4:16; 1Cor. 10:13

* Let him that thinks... 1Cor. 10:12

- 2) The unholy act of Esau, “who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.” vs. 16b
 - a) He was more interested in material things than spiritual things, his birthright.
 - b) He did not value the things of God as he should of and used them to obtain what he needed at the time.
 - c) He was not starving, he was only hungry and too lazy to get something for himself. Gen. 25:30-34
 - d) He was a warning to these Hebrew Christians who would sell out their inheritance to escape persecution and abandon Christ for the Law and be like Esau.

12:17 The tragic end of Esau.

- 1) Esau was rejected, “For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected.” vs. 17a-c
 - a) After he satisfied his physical hunger, he regretted what he did.
 - b) At the time of the blessing by Isaac, he attempted to still claim it.
 - c) Esau was rejected “apodokimazo” meaning disapproved or disqualified by God and confirmed by his father Isaac, even as he rejected his birthright.

* The word is used of Greek orators for officials being disqualified.

- 2) Esau was not seeking repentance, but the blessing, the statement, “For he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears”, regarding Isaac. vs. 17d-e (Robertson, Lenski)
 - a) Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, “Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?” Gen. 27:37
 - b) The reference to, found no repentance “metanaia” a change of mind, is in view of the statement of his father Isaac, though he sought it, the blessing with tears, Isaac did not change his mind, “I blessed him and indeed he will be blessed”. Gen. 27:33
 - * If anything, Esau had remorse over the consequence of losing the blessing!
 - c) Esau is a type of the “flesh”, “the Old Man”, who cares only about himself, the here and now, seeking to use God and the things of God at his own convenience.
 - d) The example of Esau is of one who had turned away from God losing the blessing beyond recovery and therefore it is one of the strongest warnings to these Hebrew-Christians to not be like Esau

and depart from their inheritance and blessing in Christ. Heb. 6:4; 10:26

- e) Paul tells us of the person who does not manifest godly repentance that leads to salvation, but the repentance of the world that brings forth death. 2Cor. 7:10
- f) Jesus is the heir of all things and we in Christ. Heb. 1:2, 4
 - * So our pursuit in hope is of peace and holiness in order not to fail or come short of the grace of God, this is the practical section, “in Christ”!

12:18-24 The proper perspective of the believer’s hope.

12:18-21 The Old Testament giving of the law. The negative.

- * Now to pursue diligently one must have proper perspective of hope so the author contrasts the Old Testament hope and the New Testament hope, the earthly and the heavenly.
- 1) These Hebrew-Christians had not come to Mt. Sinai, “For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest.” vs. 18
 - a) The implication being God’s holiness and something physical, earthly and intimidating. Ex. 19-20; Deut. 4

- b) These Hebrew -Christians were walking by faith not by sight. 2Cor. 5:7
- 2) These Hebrews Christians were not hearing what the people heard, “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.” vs. 19
 - a) 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.
 - b) The people asked Moses to hear God and speak to them for God, lest they die, the people were distant from God. Ex. 20:19; Deut. 5:23-27
 - c) These Hebrew-Christians had heard the voice of Jesus through that gospel of grace through faith, not law and had access to the throne of grace. Jn 1:17; Heb. 4:16
 - d) They were warned at the beginning having heard the voice of Jesus and they were not to harden their hearts. Heb. 3:8, 15; 4:7
- 3) These Hebrew-Christians were not like the Hebrews at Mt. Sinai, “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.” vs. 20

- a) God instructed Moses to set bounds so the people would not touch the Mountain and be put to death, fearing both God and the commands. Ex. 19:12
- b) These Hebrew-Christians were enabled through faith and grace to endure and obey, being able to come near to God, therefore they were warned about having an evil heart of unbelief and depart from the living God. Heb. 3:12
- 4) These Hebrew Christians were not experiencing what the Hebrews did at Sinai, “And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.” vs. 21
 - a) The quote is from Deuteronomy, when Moses was descending, knowing about the golden calf. Deut. 9:19
* Moses did not dare look on the burning bush. Ex. 3:6; Acts 7:32
 - b) Not everyone could approach God in the Old Testament, only Moses! And when he did, it was on a temporal and earthly locality.
 - c) These Hebrews had approached God through Jesus the heavenly High Priest, in the heavenly sanctuary. Heb. 4:14; 8:1

12.22-24 The New Testament giving of grace at the throne of God in heaven. The positive.

- 1) The higher privilege, “But you have come to Mount Zion.” vs. 22a
 - a) The word “But” mark a sharp contrast of nearness to God to what precedes, the spiritual Mt. Zion!
 - * The two testament are in contrasting parallels, the inferior contrast of Law and Moses to the superiority of grace and Jesus, it is inescapable!
 - b) Mount Zion on Calvary is where Jesus became sin for man for justification of life in contrast to Mount Sinai, Law and death. 2Cor. 3:4-18
- 2) The better hope, “You have come to the city of the living God.” vs. 22a
 - a) To the spiritual city, but a literal city of the Living God, which descends out of heaven from God. Heb. 11:10, 16; Rev. 21:2, 10
 - b) The glorified saints will live there, but now by faith sit with Christ in the heavenlies. Eph. 2:5-6
- 3) You have come to, “the heavenly Jerusalem.” vs. 22b
 - a) The true and ultimate dwelling of the saints. Rev. 21:2
 - b) Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Gal. 4:26
 - c) Some teach that the holy and heavenly Jerusalem will be suspended over the Millennial earth, but in Revelation it

- comes after the Millennial age. Rev. 21:1-2
- 4) You have come, “to an innumerable company of angels.” vs. 22c
 - a) Thousands of thousands and ten thousand times ten thousands. Deut, 33:2; Dan. 7:10
 - b) Created creature not to be worshipped. but rather to celebrate and worship. Col. 2:18
 - 5) You have come, “to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven.” vs. 23a
 - a) The word assembly “paneguris” speaks of a joyful festival gathering, a sharp contrast to the dark terror and fear at Sinai, appearing this one time only.
 - * The term is found only this time in the New Testament.
 - b) The church “ekkleia” those called out literally, the redeemed in Christ, the body and bride of Jesus, both dead and living, the universal church, the family of God.
 - c) The firstborn are all the heirs with Christ on equal grounds of the double portion due.
 - d) The New Testament saints which are written in heaven in the Book of Life. Ex. 32:33; Ps. 69:28; Lk. 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27; 22:19

- 6) You have come, “to God the judge of all.” vs. 23b
- a) Jesus is the judge of all the earth but approachable by grace. Gen. 18:25; Heb. 4:14-16; 10:30
 - b) Jesus judged sin on the cross, so those trusting Him for the judgment of their sins are made the righteousness of God in Him. 2Cor. 5:21
 - c) Judging all who trample under foot the Son of God and insult the Spirit of grace. Heb. 10:26-29
- 7) You have come, “to the spirits of just men made perfect.” vs. 23c
- a) These are the Old Testament saints who died in faith with a living hope, Jesus transferred them from the bosom of the Father in Hades to the third heaven after He descended and ascended. 2Cor. 12:1-4; Eph. 4:8-10; 1Pet. 3:18-20
 - b) God having provided something better things that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Heb 11:39-40
 * Trusting in the righteousness of faith in the Messiah to come!
- 8) You have come, “to Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant.” vs. 24a
- a) A mediator better than Moses, superior to all the prophets. Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; Heb. 2:9; 3:1; 6:20; 7:22; 10:19; 12:2; 13:20; 2Tim. 2:5

- b) Jesus is High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, the surety of a better covenant. Heb. 5:5-6; 7:21, 22; 8:1; 13:20
- 9) You have come, “to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks of better things than that of Abel.” vs. 24b
- a) The blood of Abel cried out for vengeance. Gen. 4:10
 - b) The blood of Jesus cries out for forgiveness and redemption, the standard for the forgiveness of sins. Lev. 17:11; Heb. 7:19; 9:14
 * The warning of counting the blood of Jesus as some common things is the strongest in the book! Heb. 10:29
 - c) Thirteen times the word “better” has been used!
 * The contrast is as clear as between an I.O.U. and the cash payment, which would be sheer folly to desire the I.O.U. more than the cash payment.

12:25-29 The plight of the believer in rejecting the hope.

12:25 The stern warning.

- * Having a proper perspective of hope, the author gives the final warning against defying what they had heard.
- 1) The caution, “See that you do not refuse Him who speaks.” vs. 25a

- * Argument is similar to those previously stated. Heb. 2:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:28-31
- a) The word see “blepo” means see to it, present imperative, continual action and marks urgency.
 - b) The word refuse “parateomai” means to deprecate, to decline, the same word is used for the Israelites, who did refuse.
 - c) The person is “He who speaks” Jesus, the One through and by whom the Father is speaking to men in these last days. Heb. 1:1-2; 2:1-4
 - 1)) This is the key phrase “He who speaks”, for Jesus is the One who warns, just as the Father warned them.
 - 2)) The entire argument goes back to the opening five chapters, Jesus is better than the prophets, the angels, First Adam, Moses, Aaron, etc.
 - 2) The real danger, “For if they did not 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.” vs. 25b-c
 - a) The comparison is from the lesser to the greater, making it a sharp contrast.
 - b) The Father is He who spoke on earth in a theophany, at Mount Sinai. Heb. 8:5
 - c) Jesus the God-Man who speaks from heaven. Heb. 1:2

- * The greater privilege holds these Hebrew-Christians to a greater accountability.
- d) The phrase turn away “apostrepho” means to turn away from allegiance, desert or depart, using the personal pronoun “we” the Christian. Tit. 1:14
 - e) If they did not escape judgment what made these Hebrew Christians think they would?
 - f) This is the fifth passionate warning to warn them from going back to the Law and animal sacrifices.
 - 1)) Don’t drift from what you have heard. Heb. 2:1
 - 2)) Don’t disbelieve or depart from the living God. Heb. 3:12
 - 3) Don’t degenerate in your spiritual growth and go back to Judaism, crucifying again for yourselves the Son of God and putting Him to an open shame. Heb. 5:12
 - 4) Don’t fall away having tasted the word of God and the power of the age to come, crucifying again the Son of God and put Him to open shame. Heb. 6:4-8

* Some divide this one into two.
 - 5)) Don’t despise the Spirit of Grace, Heb. 10:29

- 6)) Don't defy what you have heard,
Heb. 12:25

12:26 The solemn promise.

- 1) As Yahweh's voice then shook the earth; at the giving of the Law, in the **past**, "whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised." vs. 26a-b
 - a) The shaking was localized, at Sinai.
 - b) The Hebrews were the only witnesses.
- 2) But now He has promised, saying, "saying, Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." vs. 26c-e
 - a) The comparison is between the shaking of Sinai and the shaking at the return of Jesus to set up His Kingdom and all nations come to worship in the Millennial temple, quoting Haggai. Hag. 2:6-7
 - b) The comparison is between the localized shaking of Sinai in the **past**, to all the earth and heaven that will be shaken, a universal event in the **future**, presented in the present perfect tense as already taken place.
 - c) The comparison again is from the lesser to the greater.
 - * Through the Great-Tribulation and after the Millennium the first heaven and earth will pass away. 2Pet. 3:7, 10, 3; Rev. 21:1

12:27 The effect of the Lord's return to earth.

- 1) All that is in rebellion to Jesus will be removed, "Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made". vs. 27a-d
 - a) This is an allusion to the prophet Haggai, if not a quote. Hag. 2:6
 - b) The phrase "Yet once more" marks urgency! Heb. 10:37
 - c) Things that are being shaken in the **present** were the Law, the Temple and sacrifices.
 - * Removed "metatithemi" means to transfer and change.
 - d) Jesus is the Creator of man and all things. Heb. 1:2
- 2) All that is in submission to Jesus will remain, "that the things which cannot be shaken may remain." vs. 27e
 - * "That the things which cannot be shaken may remain."
 - a) Only what is in Christ will stand
 - b) The doer is built on the rock, not the hearer. Matt. 7:24
 - c) Once again, you can not escape the ongoing urgency and real danger of apostatizing from the faith, it is the topic from the beginning, it is not fictitious! 1Tim. 4:1

12:28-29 The sensible wisdom.

- * The concluding exhortation of the argument of hope to avoid the plight to come.
- 1) The word “Therefore” means in view of all that has been said. vs. 28a
- 2) The sure hope, “Since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken.” vs. 28b
 - a) It is the Kingdom that can not be shaken, not the one who receives the unshakable kingdom through the proclamation of the gospel.
 - * The present tense of the participle emphasizes that Christians are now only in process of receiving this gift and that this process will continue into the future. (World Biblical Comentary:484)
 - b) It is received by grace, through faith and live out in persevering faith. Heb. 11:1, 6
 - c) The kingdom of God is present and yet to come.
 - d) The thousand years reign will come to an end.
 - e) The Eternal state will follow. Rev. 21-22
- 3) The enabling grace, “let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. vs. 28b-c
 - a) The command is an imperative, “keep on holding on is the meaning of the word “have” “echo” and drawing from God’s grace”.

- b) The result and purpose being, in order to serve God acceptable with reverence and godly fear, persevering in the race, being thankful and seeing oneself as privileged, headed for the finish line.
 - 1)) Reverence “aidos” means having a sense of respect and honor of one.
 - 2)) Godly fear “eulabeia” describes discrete and reasonable anxiousness in veneration
 - 3)) The word serve “leatreuo” means to serve God as a priest in sacred and acceptable worship. Heb. 8:5; 9:9, 14; 10:2; 13:10
- 4) The reason for this culminating exhortation is simple one, “For our God is a consuming fire.” vs. 29
 - a) Our God is a consuming fire, quoting Deuteronomy. Deut. 4:24
 - * The context is the second giving of the Law the generation that was going to possess the land.
 - b) God will consume man’s sins by repentance or consume man in his sins!
 - c) It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Heb. 10:31
 - d) Three times these Hebrew-Christians have been told to not harden their heart, “Today, if you will hear’. Heb. 3:8, 15; 4:7

e) The majority of the quotes in chapter one and two deal with judgment.

* It would be like rejecting a cure for cancer and choosing pain and death!