

## Book of Hebrews Part 54: 12:18-29; Heavenly Jerusalem; Grace and Fear; Consuming Fire; Jealous God (4/16/2020)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/ctvmgz6/book-of-hebrews-part-54>

**\*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to**

Shabbat shalom everyone. We are in the 12th chapter of the Book of Hebrews, and we are going to finish this chapter today.

The writer continues talking about Esau and how we are not to be like him. The writer of Hebrews warned against being profane like Esau and selling your soul for a bowl of stew. Now he is going to take us into history yet once more. He is going to take us back to the Mount Sinai experience. What he is going to do is convey to us how awesome this experience really was.

So, picking up the story in Hebrews 12:18-19—**For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest,<sup>19</sup> and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged (They begged!) that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.**

The writer reminds his audience, his brethren, of their forefathers and what they experienced. They experienced something that was terrifying. They were so overwhelmed they didn't want to experience it again. In fact, they basically came out and asked for God to stop speaking to them audibly. Then they asked Moses to speak to them instead, but they didn't want God to speak to them audibly anymore, "Lest we die". The writer is capturing the intensity right here reminding them what their forefathers went through.

Now to put this into further context, I want to take you to some rabbinical commentary in Sabbot Rabbah, which is to say Exodus Rabbis. It is a group of works, if you will, midrashing, or commenting on the Torah and the experiences of their forefathers. In this, they record something fascinating. I included this because we have a very special festival coming up. It is the Feast of Shavuot. Some would identify it as Pentecost. I want to share this with you because this all ties into what the writer is really conveying, and this is commentary only on a selected portion of which the writer just drew from.

This is talking about the Israelites at Mount Sinai—**The Torah says, "And all the people saw the voices." Note that it does not say the "the voice," but "the voices" ...** What is that supposed to mean? As we continue, they tell us—**wherefore Rabbis Yochanan said that God's voice, as it was uttered, split up into seventy voices, in seventy languages, so that all the nations should understand.** (Exodus Rabbah 5:9, Quoting Exodus 20:18).

Think about this for a second; how amazing is this recordation, this insight, of the actual Mount Sinai experience? Number one, the fact the *Aseret Hadevarim*, these Ten Commandments, spoken by God were spoken not just in one language, not only in the Hebrew language, but spoken in every language of the then known world. It was signifying prophetically what God intended to do with the gospel long before it ever happened.

But I find it interesting it happened first to Israel, and it was first revealed to Israel; they experienced it. That makes sense because everything begins with Israel. The covenant began with Israel. But it is so amazing to me how we are given this prophecy of the entire world being able to hear the truth of God's Commandments. That is an incredible thought.

And as the rabbis allude to here, God's voice split up into seventy languages. Seventy was considered all the languages of the world at that time as Genesis 10 recorded. There is this table of nations, which are the descendants of Noah, because Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth populated the entire globe after the flood. As you look at Genesis 10, it talks about these seventy nations.

We could take this further because Israel went down as a whole into Egypt with seventy people. There is some much commentary on the number seventy to study. We could talk about how Israel being seventy in number was marked out to represent the whole of the world. I am not going to go down that path right now, but it is all fascinating stuff. So, this event the writer of Hebrews is describing is beyond awesome!

Now to peel this back a little bit further, I want to take you to the Mount Sinai experience and show you what the rabbis are talking about regarding these voices. Let's go to Exodus 20:18—**Now all the people witnessed the thundering, the lightning flashes.** In the English this does not sound like much considering what we just read in the rabbinical commentary, but when you go to the Hebrew, it completely transforms the verse. Let me read it to you in the Hebrew—**ואת הלקולת ואת הלפידים** (Emphasis added).

What it says is—Now all the people witnessed the voices, the torches. Translators oftentimes translate the Hebrew word *hakalote* as thundering, which is what we read in the Exodus text. But the Hebrew is **קֹלֶה** (*qôl*). It is the singular for voice.

So naturally, as the rabbis are reading and studying the Torah in its original language, they come across **הקולת** (*hakalot*), it is **קֹלֶה** (*qôl*) in the plural. So, it would literally read—now all the people witnessed the voices.

But it gets better as it continues. It goes on in the Exodus verse and says—**lightning flashes.** In the Hebrew, it is torches. That is how it is translated in other places in Scripture. For example, when you go to the story of Gideon, we find the term **לפידים** (*lapîd*), which is torch, or *lapidim*, which is the plural. It is literally a torch, it is a flame of fire. So how it should read if we want to be literal is as follows—Now all the people witness the voices and the torches.

Think about that for a second. The Mount Sinai experience in the rabbis record is when the voices went out, and the people saw the voices and heard them in all the languages of the world. What does that

sound like? It sounds exactly like Acts chapter 2 where these torches of fire came down and were resting on people because the Holy Spirit had descended. And they were speaking in all the languages of the then known world of the first century.

This is interesting because it happened at Shavuot, Pentecost, which is the very time the rabbis tell us the Mount Sinai experience happened. It is traditionally said Israel received the Torah, received the *Aseret Hadevarim*, the Ten Commandments, at Shavuot. Talk about an awesome event! I don't know how else to articulate this except it is incredible!

Let's go to Psalm 29:7 and build on this even further. **The voice of the LORD divides the flames of fire.** So, when the voice speaks, it divides the flame of fire. We have all these torches of fire going forth.

Psalm 29:8-9—**The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; The LORD shakes the Wilderness of Kadesh.** <sup>9</sup>**The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth,** (This is in the context of premature birth. They were not ready to give birth but when they heard the LORD, they couldn't contain it) **And strips the forests bare; And in His Temple everyone says, "Glory!"**

This is the experience Israel had at Mount Sinai. It was absolutely debilitating! Again, it was so terrifying they didn't ever want to experience it again. They didn't want to see the fire; they didn't want to hear His voice. It was too much. He is so holy they couldn't handle it, so they told Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear you." And thus, they asked for a mediator. They asked for Moshe, Moses, and they got him. You can read in the Torah where the LORD says what they have asked for is good because had they heard it anymore, it would have killed them. So, this is an insanely awesome event.

Now with that kind of context, let's continue on in Hebrews 12:20-21—**(For they could not endure what was commanded: "And if so much as a beast touches the mountain [This was the commands they were given before they were to hear it. They were to put a fence all the way around the mountain so that no beast would go to the mountain.], it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow."** [Talk about the holy mountain of God!]) <sup>21</sup>**And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling."**). The mediator of the covenant himself, who had experiences with the LORD, was terrified.

Now if you put this in its larger context, it is even more impressive in the sense of thinking about everything Israel went through. They saw the awesome and mighty hand of God as He rained down judgments on Egypt. They went through the Red Sea with walls of waters on the left and right of them. Think about what they saw. They saw their enemies defeated. They didn't lift the sword; they didn't do anything. At the same time, they entirely plundered the Egyptians and took their wealth with them. Think about all of that. It all pales in comparison to what they experienced at the mountain when the LORD revealed His glory. I just can't paint a more awesome and intimidating picture!

We read on to Hebrews 12:22—**But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels.** He says—**but you**—meaning in his day, the first centuries, his Jewish brethren, guess what? You have come to a different mountain. You have come to the actual Mount Zion. You have come to a heavenly Jerusalem. What you now possess, your experience now, is greater than what our forefathers experienced at Mount Sinai.

Now wrap your head around that. This is what the writer is conveying: that they/we have access to the heavenly Jerusalem through faith in the Messiah Yeshua. Isn't that an awesome thought? So, what we have today as Jew and Gentile is beyond compare.

This is something the Apostle Paul communicated to the Galatians, and it is worth going back there and looking at it because both of them are saying the same thing. Paul is speaking to Gentiles, while the writer of the Hebrews is speaking to Jews. Again I tell you, and this is significant, they didn't deliver a different message; it is the same message.

Galatians 4:22-23—**For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman (Hagar), the other by a freewoman (Sarah).<sup>23</sup> But he (Ishmael) who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he (Isaac) of the freewoman through promise.**

We have Hagar giving birth to Ishmael, and we have Sarah giving birth to Isaac. There is a massive difference between the two. Ishmael was a product of flesh, but Isaac was a product of God's promise; he was a product of God's word. He was a miracle because Sarah had passed the ability to conceive; therefore, she couldn't have children. Yet she did because God spoke it into existence. This is so vastly different!

The Apostle Paul goes on in Galatians 4:24—**which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar....** this whole experience the writer of Hebrews just laid out is reminding his brothers that what their forefathers experienced is the same thing Paul is talking about. Yet he articulates in a sense, "Yeah, but that gave birth to bondage, and this is representative of the maidservant the slave; this is representative of Hagar."

Galatians 4:25—**for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia....** Paul uses this example of Hagar and says, "The one who gives birth to bondage is what our forefathers experienced back in Mount Sinai. This gets even crazier as we go on **...and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.**

Paul takes Mount Sinai, the Mount Horeb situation, and says, "This is the same as the Jerusalem we now have." Keep in mind they had a functioning Temple, the sacrifices were happening, people were going to the Temple for the feasts, and everything was moving as it should according to the Temple services. And Paul was saying, "It is all in bondage; this is all comparable to Hagar."

How many times have you heard me say this: as a Jew in the first century, saying something like this could get you in a lot of trouble with the Jewish leaders? They would take you for another Jeremiah; speaking evil against their people and against their city.

But then we have Galatians 4:26—**but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.** (Emphasis added). Sarah is representative of this Jerusalem above, which is the very Jerusalem the writer of Hebrews is actually talking about. This is the Jerusalem we have today; we have access to this. It is so much greater; it is built upon greater promises.

Now I want to further put this in perspective for you. I want to take you to the pseudepigrapha book of 2 Baruch. It is important to know this particular book was actually written in the same time period as

Paul was writing to the Galatians, and as the writer of Hebrews was writing to his Jewish brethren. They were all written around the same time with Baruch being a little later. 2 Baruch was written after 70 AD, right after the destruction of the Temple, and you will catch a whiff of that as we read this. What I want you to recognize is there is a common thread between Hebrews, Galatians, and 2 Baruch. There is a common thread amongst these first-century Jews and what they understood regarding Jerusalem. This is powerful!

I want to take you to 2 Baruch 3:1-2—[And I said: ‘O LORD, my LORD, have I come into the world for this purpose that I might see the evils of my mother? Not \(so\) my LORD. <sup>2</sup> If I have found grace in thy sight, first take my spirit that I may go to my fathers and not behold the destruction of my mother.](#)

What did Paul just call the New Jerusalem? He called it: the mother of us all. And here you have another, first-century Jew calling Jerusalem his mother. He does not want to see his mother like this because she has been destroyed. Rome had come in and lay waste to her, and he wants to die. He can't handle the sight of what he is seeing.

Jumping to 2 Baruch 4:1-2 where we find the LORD responding to Baruch—[And the LORD said unto me: ‘This city shall be delivered up for a time, and the people shall be chastened during a time, and the world will not be given over to oblivion. <sup>2</sup> ‘Dost thou think that this is that city of which I said: “On the palms of My hands have I graven thee”?’](#)

First of all, this comes out of Isaiah 49:16— [I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands.](#) For believers in Yeshua today, you can read the Book of Isaiah in a very different manner than many of the first-century Jews prior to Yeshua revealing Himself would have. In other words, hindsight is 20/20. We understand exactly what it meant when He says—[On the palms of my hands have I graven thee?](#) If you go back to Isaiah 49:16, and you look at the passage, you find that statement was made in regard to Jerusalem. So here you had the Lord saying—[I have inscribed you, Jerusalem, on the palms of My hands.](#) You need to understand that Jerusalem is a synecdoche for the totality of the elect; for the totality of those who are going to be inheriting eternal life.

Now with that said, let's go back to 2 Baruch 4:2—[‘Dost thou think that this is that city of which I said: “On the palms of My hands have I graven thee”?’](#) In other words, Baruch is looking at a destroyed Jerusalem, and the LORD says, “Do you really believe this Jerusalem, (the physical Jerusalem) which is laid waste, is the Jerusalem I talked about in Isaiah 49 when I said, ‘I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands?’ ”

Then the LORD continues to show Baruch it is not. 2 Baruch 4:3—[This building now built in your midst is not that which is revealed with Me, that which was prepared beforehand here from the time when I took counsel to make Paradise \(The Garden of Eden\), and showed it \(In other words, the New Jerusalem\) to Adam before he sinned, but when he transgressed the commandment it was removed from him, as also Paradise.](#) Obviously, we know Adam was taken out of the garden.

Continuing 2 Baruch 4:4—[And after these things I showed it to My servant Abraham by night among the portions of the victims.](#) In other words, He is referring back to Exodus 15 where Abraham falls asleep and has this terrifying dream that his descendants are going to go into captivity and be afflicted. And the LORD is stating here that He revealed the eternal Jerusalem to Abraham on that night. What a

mind-blowing concept. And we know from the New Testament that God revealed amazing things to Abraham. We know this because Yeshua stated in John 8:56—**"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."**

Continuing in 2 Baruch 4:5—**And again also I showed it to Moses on Mount Sinai when I showed to him the likeness of the tabernacle and all its vessels.** What the LORD is saying is, "I revealed it to Adam, I revealed it to Abraham, and I revealed this Jerusalem to Moshe. They were all in the know regarding this.

Moving on to 2 Baruch 4:6-7—**And now, behold, it is preserved with Me, as also Paradise. <sup>7</sup> Go, therefore, and do as I command thee.'** In other words, it is with Me; He is in the New Jerusalem, and there is going to be a day when He will bring it down here upon earth. We know this because we can read about it in the Book of Revelation. There is even rabbinic commentary in Exodus 15 regarding this event.

This is one thing we know for certain. But be that as it may, even though it hasn't happened, we have access to this New Jerusalem by having access to Yeshua Who is all in all the King of Jerusalem.

Getting back to Hebrews 12:22-23—**But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, <sup>23</sup>to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven** (Emphasis added).

The author is really building this up to say: "Do you understand what an awesome thing you have? Do you even know what you have been called into?" One thing I think we fail at, and myself included, is expressing the greatness of what we have been called into. A lot of people don't realize this. And a great way to testify and confirm this is to simply look at how people are living their lives. When you see people living their lives being completely consumed and distracted by things of the world, then you know they have no clue what they have been called into. They have no clue what Yeshua went through. They do not understand the kind of sacrifice, the pain, and the suffering He went through to save them.

This is just the reality; there is a severe blindness, and this is why I am so impressed with this writer. I know he speaks according to the Holy Spirit; he is inspired by the Holy Spirit. He is doing everything right. He is a profound teacher. He is laying all these building blocks that are essential for you to be successful in your faith. This is amazing!

Now looking at Hebrews 12:23 where it says—**to the general assembly and church of the firstborn.** Ecclesia is the term there: the ecclesia of the firstborn. This is πρωτοτόκων (*prōtotokos*) in the Greek. What we discovered in chapter one is this term is familiar to the writer. He already used it in chapter one in reference to Yeshua. So, when it says, the ecclesia or the church of the firstborn, it is referring to the church of Christ. This is what he is talking about.

Continuing in Hebrews 12:23—**who are registered in heaven.** Obviously, whose names have been written in the Lamb's Book of Life. This should make you think about what Yeshua says in Luke 10, where He conveys the exact same message when His apostles come back to Him and tell Him, "Even the demons are subject to us in Your name." Yeshua's response was, **"...I saw Satan fall like lightning. Behold, I give you authority to trample upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy."** (Luke 10:18-19) Then Yeshua says—**Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are**

subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. (Luke 10:20) Or as the writer says here, “registered in heaven.”

That is where we are to derive all joy knowing through faith in Yeshua, our names are in heaven. We are absolutely guaranteed eternal life. That is an awesome thought! You derive your joy knowing even if somebody kills you in the flesh, it is not the end of it for you because you are waiting for the most glorious habitation that could ever be described in the history of the universe. That is the New Jerusalem. But every time we wake up, there we go looking with eyes of flesh repeatedly. That is all we see, and we do not walk by faith; we walk by sight, and it is a killer. I am telling you; it is so deadly.

Moving on in Hebrews 12:23-24 we find out what we have come to—...to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,<sup>24</sup> to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

The writer is saying, “You have been given everything. Do you understand this New Covenant you have been brought into through faith in Yeshua, through His sacrifice and resurrection? Do you have a clue what you have come to?” Thank the Lord He is reminding us, because this is something we need to be reminded of daily. We need to be reminded of who we are in Yeshua, and what He has done for us. We need to be reminded of what He has given us, and what is going to be ours according to His authority and His power. In other words, I am referring to our inheritance that is to come.

Now I want to clarify this statement—the blood of sprinkling. This is clearly going back to the Torah when the first covenant was ratified through blood. I don't think we need to go too deep on this. He talks about the blood of sprinkling, but then he says—that speaks better things than that of Abel.

Now this is a question I have had: what does it mean when it says—speaks better things than that of Abel? If you go back to Hebrews chapter 11, you will discover exactly what that is because he had talked about how Abel's sacrifice was more excellent than that of Cain's. It was an excellent sacrifice. But when we start talking about the New Covenant and start talking about having Yeshua revealed, who is the Lamb of God, that sacrifice blows the blood of sprinkling out of the water. There is nothing in the Old Covenant that does not pale in comparison to Yeshua.

This is what we have today, and this is something you must believe. If you want this to have any value to it, this is where you must have faith. We must believe this. And when you believe it, it starts to cultivate something in your heart you didn't know was possible. It cultivates this hope. It intensifies; it only grows your faith. Faith will build upon more faith. It will grow, and you will ponder things. The Holy Spirit will come on you, and you will start pondering things you never thought of before. You will think with such clarity, Godliness, and righteousness that is totally foreign to your flesh. Trust me on this: it is an awesome thing.

Hebrews 12:25—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. So, what does he mean here? As we continue, we get perfect clarity.

Hebrews 12:26-27—whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.”<sup>27</sup> 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.

Now I want you to understand something. Where does the shaking come from? First and foremost, when we are talking about shaking heaven and earth, I am telling you right now, we are talking about the mouth of Yeshua. When He opens His mouth, we are told in Revelation 19, a sword will come out, and it is going to go out and destroy the adversaries of the Living God. It is going to destroy the sinners from the earth.

I love how Paul talks about it in 2 Thessalonians that Yeshua will come and destroy the Lawless One by the breath of His mouth. His mouth! Then you can look at the seventh trumpet. There is going to be a massive earthquake that the world, in all its history, has never experienced before. Why? Because Yeshua is going to open His mouth. And here is what is fascinating: it is not just going to be the earth shaking, it will be heaven as well.

We can take this a step further to understand this in its proper context. When this is happening, the earth, we are told in 2 Peter chapter 3, and the works that are in it, including the heavens, are going to be lit on fire by the word of the Lord: by Yeshua Himself. Because the reality is He is going to destroy. Anything which can't survive the shaking, which can't survive the fire, is going down. It is going to vanish; it is going to be destroyed.

We could do a whole other study on this. You can go through the Hell of Torah study and read about how there is going to be nothing left. There is going to be no remnants; there is going to be no evidence. It will leave them neither root nor branch. Go read about it in Malachi. It will leave them nothing. There will be no evidence of the wicked. Everything is going to burn.

I love what Paul says to the 1 Corinthians 3:13-14—each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. <sup>14</sup> If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.

What does fire do? The only things that survive fire are things like gold and silver. And it is interesting that in the process anything impure within the gold and silver comes to the surface. It is what we call dross. The dross is discarded. Only those precious things, precious deeds of righteousness, done from a true Godly motivation of wanting to please the Lord and out of the love that we really love our brother, will survive. That needs to be the motive. Those works of righteousness will survive.

You know, when you are doing works of righteousness to be seen by men, or to be accepted by men, do not expect those works are going to receive award. They will not. They are going to burn up because you were seeking the approval of men and not the Lord. You were not doing it out of a pure heart. This is why the Lord says, "When you fast, do it in secret. Don't go out boasting about it. Those who do so will have their reward at that time, but they are not going to have anything later. When you pray, go into your closet. Don't go to the corner street thinking men should be looking up to you."

Continuing on as the writer comes to his closing statement in Hebrews 12:28—Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken,.. (It cannot be; it is pure. It is holy. It is going to survive



what is coming when the universe itself is literally being destroyed by fire. The kingdom of heaven is not going to be moved; Jerusalem is not going to be moved.) **..let us have grace....** (Emphasis added).

In other words, accept this beautiful free gift of the truth of Who Yeshua is. The truth that He died for you, and He rose again. The truth that He can be your intercessor; the truth that you can go to Him when you are in need, hurting, or sorrowful. You can pray to Him. We are to possess this grace; we are to cling to it.

Continuing in Hebrews 12:28—**...by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.** (Emphasis added). Notice the structure of the faith here? The structure of the faith includes faith without works is dead. The whole concept is true faith will bear righteousness. If I am going to receive grace, the response is that I am going to go out and serve God; I am to serve Him acceptably with reverence and Godly fear. There is to be a radical change in my behavior, the patterns of my thoughts, my deeds, my speech, the things I look at, and the things I listen to will all change if in fact I have truly received grace.

Think about Titus 2:11 where Paul tells Titus—**For the grace of God (Yeshua) that brings salvation has appeared to all men.** What it does is it basically testifies to us and teaches us, that we are to deny ungodliness and worldly lust and instead live soberly, righteously, and Godly in this present evil age.

If we really say, “I am under grace,” that is a statement which should mean: I am being taught by grace, and it has thrust me into righteousness and humility. It has thrust me into a desire for His word and the realm of prayer. It has thrust me into the realm of prayer, petition, and spending time with Him. It has thrust me into the arena of praise and worship. This is what true grace does, and this is what is being explained here.

One of my favorite Psalms is 119:88—**Revive me according to Your lovingkindness, So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.**

The writer is saying, “Revive me and give me life according to Your grace because I need it so I can keep Your Ten Commandments.” The psalmist recognizes this is the point of grace; it is so we can walk in righteousness. This is so we do not walk away from it or denounce it by stating the law has been done away with; therefore, God’s commandments don’t mean anything. That is not grace; that is called the devil’s grace. It is a very wicked and perverse grace which knows rebellion and disobedience. That is not the grace of the Living God.

Again, we could go back to the Torah and see this is exactly what the writer is expressing. You can go to Deuteronomy 6 where it specifically says, “When your son comes to you and asks you, “Hey dad and mom, why do we have to keep the Sabbath and the commandments? Why do I have to honor you? Why do I have to do any of these things?” The response is, “Well son, the Lord our God, the King of the Universe, sent His son to die for us. He brought us out of Egypt, and therefore He delivered us. He has shown us grace, and He has commanded us to keep His commandments.” What is conveyed in Deuteronomy 6 is virtually this reality.

This is the understanding the writer has. They were to possess this grace and to move on into righteousness. Paul says in Romans we were once slaves of sin, but now we are called to be slaves of

righteousness and holiness. The writer ends with this statement in Hebrews 12:29; this is awesome—**For our God is a consuming fire.**

So, why should I serve God acceptably with reverence and with Godly fear as the writer just told us? Why should I do that? Well, the writer quickly reminds you. Because God is a consuming fire. This is why we do it.

With that being said, we need to dig into this statement a little bit because I am going to tell you right now it has some serious depth to it. There is absolutely no question about it: when the audience in the first century heard these words, they would have identified with them right off the bat. They would have understood the depth of the statement, and it would have hit them hard in a relational way.

Let me lay it out this way: If I was to say, “Let's sing the little children song “Jesus loves me this I know””. If I only started out with, “Jesus loves me,” virtually every person who is reading this right now would know the next line: “this I know.” Then I would ask, “Well, what comes after that? They would answer, “for the Bible tells me so.” In other words, my point is this: when the writer says—**our God is a consuming fire**— they knew the broader context of what this statement meant, and it is so powerful!

I want to dig into this because this is one of those precious pearl moments, if you will. And to do this, we must go back to the Torah where the writer is drawing from. We are going to go to Deuteronomy 4:23—**Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you.**

Now obviously, he is going to the top of the list, if you will, of the Ten Commandments. The first thing he says here is, “Don't you dare forget the covenant; don't you dare forget our covenant that we have made with each other.”

Going to Deuteronomy 4:24—**For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.** In the Hebrew, jealous God is אֱלֹהֵי קַנְיָא ('*ēl qannā*'). You need to remember that. He is a jealous God and He is a consuming fire. This is the part you need to see as it really brings into a totality of understanding what it means for God to be this consuming fire. It is not just this inferno of wrath. That is a very decrepit interpretation and understanding. It is not just this inferno of wrath in such that God is this crazy fireball of wrath always ready to burst forth and kill everyone on the earth as some people want to paint Him. They describe Him as this Old Testament, fireball, this God of wrath.

This is not Who He is. And this is not what this verse is saying at all. When you understand what it means for God to be a consuming fire, an אֱלֹהֵי קַנְיָא ('*ēl qannā*'), a jealous God, that is when you step back and say, “Wow, this is powerful.”

So looking at אֱלֹהֵי קַנְיָא ('*ēl qannā*'), this is a term which is explicitly used of God in the context of covenantal marriage. We are talking about a marriage contract here. We are talking about husband and wife.

Think about Ephesians chapter five and the Apostle Paul. One of the things he does is shares this great mystery of how the church is the bride of Christ, and he calls it a great mystery. But what he does is he plays off the idea that a wife is to submit to her husband. He banters back and forth between the mystery of this relationship between the church and Christ, and this relationship that exists between a

husband and a wife. And ultimately, what you realize scripturally as you go through these verses is that God, in giving marriage, gives the man a helper comparable to him. The first thing God did with Adam, in essence, was to give him a helper comparable to him. He gave him Eve; God brought Adam into marriage. God created covenantal marriage. This was all the way back at the very beginning.

This is so beautiful because that was a prophetic template of the church's covenantal marriage to Yeshua. Physical marriage would exist throughout the generations to give us a greater understanding of our relationship between us and the LORD and to make it tangible so we could know His feelings and we could feel those feelings.

Even for those who haven't been married, they most likely grew up in a house with a mom and dad; therefore, they have seen a covenantal marriage. I have known people who were orphans who grew up to be psychologists or doing some counseling. Even someone like that, who does not fit into the normal box as we call it, understands the power of emotion and connection of marriage simply through having counseled married people.

So then looking at this statement that God is אֱלֹהֵינוּ ('ēl qannā'), that He is a jealous God, is explicitly in regard to His love for us. This is what consumes and is the fire which burns. It is His love for us.

I want to take you to Hosea 2:19—I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me In righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy. We are talking about Yeshua here. The relationship between God and His people is one of covenantal marriage. That is what we are dealing with here. So, when the writer of Hebrews starts saying, "You better be careful. You better serve God with reverence and Godly fear," you need to understand this is in the context of covenantal marriage. God will not tolerate adultery. He will not tolerate a wife who is unfaithful; a wife whose heart has gone astray and turned her to distractions, idols, and to the things of the world that she exalts higher than her husband. He can't handle it. Do you understand what it does to Him? It rips Him to shreds.

Jeremiah 3:20—Surely, as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel," says the LORD. I am going to tell you when Israel sinned against God, when Judah sins against Him, it is likened to adultery. There is a reason for the comparison because this is what it is. You need to understand this is something tangible in that each of us can relate to knowing the pain and the suffering a spouse can cause another spouse.

I have said this before, but I have talked to women who 20 to 30 years after they have been divorced, because their husband had cheated on them, are still feeling the pain. It is so awful; it changes your life. We are talking in the tangible realm; this physical realm of this gift we have been given to help us understand this great spiritual concept of the relationship between us and Yeshua.

I have held men weeping and bawling so much so they don't have the strength to get up. Some turn to alcohol or something to kill the pain. They can't handle it. I had friends growing up who went through this kind of thing and absolutely lost it. It took years upon years to recover, and even then, they are still wounded.

When we see those types of things, you need to recall that every time you want to drift off and kind of forget about Yeshua, forget about your husband, forget about the reality of what He has done for you, and the horrific pain you are causing, then remember He is אֱלֹהֵינוּ ('ēl qannā'). He is a jealous God. He

cannot handle it. He can't sit there and watch you fornicate with the world. He can't do it because it tears Him up. So, when you look at this passage, it is frightening.

Look at Proverbs 27:4—**Wrath is cruel and anger a torrent, but who is able to stand before jealousy?**

This is a rhetorical question. Wrath is one thing and wrath is horrible; but when you think of wrath, it is nothing compared to the jealousy experienced when a wife drifts off and commits adultery. Nothing compares to that jealousy our husband Yeshua has. There is nothing greater. Hence this all-consuming fire.

Proverbs 6:34—**For jealousy is a husband's fury; Therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.** I

am going to say it again: you cannot go off into the world and fornicate and commit adultery against the Lord and expect to walk away from that okay. That is a terrifying thought when we know our God is **קָנָן** לַאֵל ('*ēl qannā*').

It is interesting if you go to Exodus 34:14; this **קָנָן** (*qannā*') is such a part of who God is. It says this is one of His names. It literally says His name is Jealous. One of the names ascribed to the Most High God is **קָנָן** (*qannā*): Jealous. This is how important it is, so this is not what we want to do.

Let's go to Song of Songs 8:6 where we read this beautiful love story—**The Shulamite to Her Beloved** <sup>6</sup>**set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm.** (Emphasis added). The reality is this is a picture of the elect of Israel crying out to her husband, her beloved Yeshua, and saying—**set me as a seal in your heart**— write us in your heart; put us in your heart; we want you to be consumed in your thoughts. We want your every waking moment to be about us. This is what is being conveyed here.

Keep in mind this is a highly prophetic book about the relationship between Yeshua and His bride. When you understand what is being alluded to here is that He has written those of you who call upon the name of Yeshua as a seal upon His heart.

I am going to tell you the one thing Satan wants to blind you of is that God cares about you at all. That is one of the things that just angers me because when you buy into that lie, you will drift off into total rebellion and sin, walking away from God, and your faith will just get ripped apart. The truth is you are in His every thought; His eyes never come off you. That is an awesome thought, and it is the truth!

Back to Song of Songs 8:6—**...set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; For love is as strong as death....** (Emphasis added). So we are talking about **קָנָן** (*qannā*'), which is crazier than wrath, and the fact our God is a jealous God. He is jealous for His bride. Guess what? He is not willing to share you with the world. He can't sit there and watch you fornicate. It rips Him up inside.

You can look at biblical history regarding this. He destroyed people, an entire generation of His people in the wilderness, because they fornicated; they did not believe in Him. He laid them waste. Only Joshua and Caleb survived of the ones slated to die.

But let's say you drifted off foolishly, and then you recognize Yeshua is **קָנָן** (*qannā*): He is a jealous God. This is where the beauty of forgiveness comes in. We deserve death, but this says—**love is as strong as death.** Do you remember the verse— **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,**

that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life? (John 3:16). Love is as strong as death. It is stronger than death.

I love what Yeshua says to Martha in John 11:26— **And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.** The reason is because love is as strong as death. God's love is the only thing that is stronger than death. The only thing stronger than that is Yeshua.

There is forgiveness for you if you turn back. We have already covered this in so much depth in this series regarding God's plan of redemption, and the beauty of repentance available for you. Understand it will conquer death, and know that Yeshua is **קַנְיָן** (*qannā*'), He is a jealous God, but when you return to Him as a faithful wife, watch out because it will be awesome!

Continuing in Song of Songs 8:6—**Jealousy as cruel as the grave.** Isn't this interesting? We are talking about this amazing love story; we are talking about **קַנְיָן** (*qannā*'), this jealous God, and here it comes—**Jealousy as cruel as the grave.** This is a nice little warning!

Reading on in Song of Songs 8:6—**Its flames are flames of fire, A most vehement flame.** We are talking about Gehenna; we are talking about hell, which is the absence of us embracing our husband, Yeshua. This is what the church needs to remember.

This is a very terrifying warning. It is the exact warning the writer in Hebrews is giving to us by telling us: You better remember God is a consuming fire. That means mind your peas and cues; get your heart straight with the Lord and prepare your feet to walk on the narrow path.

Jumping ahead here to Song of Songs 8:7— **Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it.** You can't quench love. God is a consuming fire; Yeshua is a consuming fire. You can't quench it. You can't put it out.

Continuing in Song of Songs 8:7—**If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, It would be utterly despised.** This is exactly what is meant by stating God is an all-consuming fire.

Going to Numbers 5:12,14,15—**"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'If any man's wife goes astray and behaves unfaithfully toward him... <sup>14</sup> if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, who has defiled herself; or if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, although she has not defiled herself—<sup>15</sup> 'then the man shall bring his wife to the priest.** (Emphasis added).

Here you see the situation of when the spirit of jealousy comes upon him; he does not know if his wife has been faithful or not, so he takes her to the priest, and he is going to offer what is known as the grain offering of jealousy. You don't put any oil on it; and this is the only time you will find where the grain offering is being used as a sin offering. Sin offerings are always blood, but this is one of the rare exceptions where you find this grain offering of jealousy.

So, he brings this offering to the priests, and we pick up in Numbers 5:19-23—**And the priest shall put her under oath, and say to the woman, "If no man has lain with you, and if you have not gone astray to**

uncleanness while under your husband's authority, be free from this bitter water that brings a curse.  
<sup>20</sup>But if you have gone astray while under your husband's authority, and if you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has lain with you"—<sup>21</sup> then the priest shall put the woman under the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman—"the LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people, when the LORD makes your thigh rot and your belly swell;<sup>22</sup> and may this water that causes the curse go into your stomach, and make your belly swell and your thigh rot." Then the woman shall say, "Amen, so be it."<sup>23</sup> Then the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall scrape them off into the bitter water.<sup>24</sup> And he shall make the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse. . . .

I am showing you this because you must understand this was a practical application Israel could utilize regarding the spirit of jealousy coming upon them and wanting to vindicate or condemn their wife, one or the other, because there was no witness involved here. Normally, adultery typically called for the person to be stoned; you are to be killed. But if there is no witness, and the spirit of jealousy comes upon the husband, this is what was to happen.

It is interesting how many stories come to my mind regarding how the spirit of jealousy and knowledge of the issue comes upon a spouse when the other spouse cheats. I can't tell you how many times this has happened. There are many stories that come back to me; it is incredible!

But what you need to see is there is a spiritual reality here regarding Yeshua being the husband. And this is such a bizarre thing. Numbers 5 is unique in the sense that here we find something you would expect to read in a book that talks about spells because you have words, literally the curse and the oath of the LORD, being written down, and you would scrape these words off into the holy water. Then you would make her drink it mixed with dust from the floor of the Temple. But here is the thing: if she had been faithful, the water that brings a curse cannot harm her. The spirit of jealousy is there, but no harm comes upon her. However, if she has been unfaithful, then she is going to receive the curse of God.

Now I am telling you, when you come into covenant, this is the cup you drink. When you come into covenant with Yeshua, beware because we need to be reminded that Satan wants to keep blinding you. Satan will tell you: "It does not matter if you sin. It does not matter that you do this because everybody's doing it."

Trust me; you don't want to go there. When you look at Matthew 7:21-23, we find those who claim Yeshua as Lord. They are professing Him: Lord, Lord! They have dedicated their lives to Him, and yet they are turned away; He does not know them. This happens because they committed adultery—**you who practice lawlessness**. As a result, the curse of God comes upon them.

This is not what we need to have happen to us. I cannot warn you enough; judgment is coming soon. You do not want this holy water to find you out and to have the spirit of jealousy bring that curse. That is a terrifying thing.

So it is important you remember אֵל קַנָּא ('ēl qannā'). God is a jealous God. He is an all-consuming fire!