

## Q1 L12 - Receiving an Unshakable Kingdom - 2022-03-19

Doug Batchelor: Good morning, friends, and happy Sabbath. I want to welcome you to the Granite Bay Hilltop Seventh-day Adventist Church and a special welcome to any that may be visiting with us this morning. Also, always want to remember to welcome those who are joining us on Facebook, Amazing Facts Television, YouTube, or one of the other channels, and we also have a number of online members. For several years now, the Granite Bay church has had members, sort of a digital church. Around the world, people that have no local church, they can attend, and we want to welcome you as well.

We're continuing today with lesson number 12 in our study on Hebrews, and the lesson today is a very important one. It's going to be dealing with the subject of "Receiving an Unshakeable Kingdom," and in a moment Pastor Brummund will come out and be sharing with you in that lesson, but we have a free offer as always. And the offer today is designed to help enhance your study of this subject. It's called "The Final Verdict." "The Final Verdict." It's a very important book that talks about the culmination of the judgment subject. And if you'd like to receive that, simply dial 866-788-3966. That amounts to 866-Study-More. Ask for offer number 162. Now, if you're in North America you can download this by texting "SH078" and you text that to "40544." And so, of course, you can also go to [aftv.org](http://aftv.org), and that's [study.aftv.org](http://study.aftv.org). Sometimes the lesson presenters also will post their notes there, I know I do, if you're interested in any of the notes related to the lesson.

Well, we're going to get into our study so let's have a word of prayer. Father in heaven, thank You so much for the Word of truth that changes lives and sets us free. We pray that Your Spirit will be present. Be in a special way with Pastor Brummund as he shares, and we pray we can gather insights to help us be more like our Savior. We pray this in His name, amen.

Shawn Brummund: You know, I want to start our lesson, as we look at lesson number 12 today, by sharing with you a bit of a--couple of different experiences. And the first one is when I was just moved to Toronto. Some of you know that I was born and raised in Canada, and so I'm an import here in Sacramento in the US and so I was just a-- I think was, let me see now, grade 5 it would be. And so it was grade 5. My family had just moved from the West in British Columbia, from our home town of Kelowna, all the way over to the big city of Toronto towards the East. And when we arrived in the big city of Toronto, I started going to this new school right in more of the heart of the city, and it was a very large school. I was very intimidated. I was always the smallest guy in every class, going through grade school. I was always the shortest.

Up until my later years in grade school, I was always the smallest, the skinniest, and so I was an easy target. I was a natural target for the bullies. And so, not only was I intimidated by this large school and this large city life that I'd never been exposed to because I was living in the country before that, there was a couple of twins. They were--I think they were Chinese and so there was these two boys, these twins, that were in my class. Maybe they were a grade before me. This was grade 5. And so, anyway, they were quite proud of the fact that they were experts, in their mind at least, in judo or some kind of martial arts, and they made it very clear to me that they intended on beating me up on a regular basis. And so I have to say, you know, when you combine all those things together, I was, you know, I was shaking in my boots. It was a very traumatic experience for a young boy.

But speaking of shaking in your boots, I want to share with you another even more traumatic experience than that. I had a friend of mine and he was a church member in my home city, again in British Columbia, Canada, and this goes back about 20 years or so, but he was in one of those ATM rooms, you know the ones that extend at the front of the bank? Yeah, even when the bank is closed, you can approach that first room late at night and make your withdrawal or do your banking business and so on. And so he was doing that at one of those ATM or automatic teller machines and, when he was doing that late one night, doing his withdrawal, whatever it was, another man came in and joined him. And the worst happened that night. Fortunately--unfortunately, the man drew a gun and, to my friend's horror, he put it to his

head and he said, "You're going to withdraw the maximum amount of cash that you can from all your accounts and you're going to give it to me here tonight."

Well, as you can imagine, he didn't hesitate. He went ahead and just did exactly that. And fortunately, that was all that the man was looking for. Because he cooperated, the man with the gun disappeared into the dark and, of course, my friend was shaking in his boots during the whole experience, and throughout the rest of the night he was very shaken up at the same time. In fact, it took him several days, maybe even weeks, to be able to shake that off because it was so traumatic. And, in fact, I remember him sharing that he said it was more traumatic than he would have guessed before it actually took place. And so, he definitely experienced something very traumatic that shook him up, that caused him to shake in his boots, and it took him long to shake it off.

You know, today we're talking about shaking. Speaking about shaking, I want to talk a little bit about a physical shaking, and I went and reviewed something that I knew and studied in the past, but was relevant to our key verse today in Hebrews chapter 12. And so I'm going to read with you a couple different excerpts from one of my favorite books. It's entitled, "The Great Controversy," and it's written by Ellen White, and I'm on page 304. I forget what chapter. It's called "Heralds of the Morning." And so, this particular chapter was covering the different signs that precedes just before, in the bigger picture, just before Jesus comes again. And so the first sentence I'm reading from says that the Revelator, that is John who wrote the book of Revelation, thus describes the first signs--the first of the signs to precede the Second Advent.

Jesus, during His ministry, it said that you will see signs in the sun and the moon and the stars just before you see the Coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven. And so there's going to be different kinds of signs that both Jesus taught as well as Jesus added in the book of Revelation that I just read, different physical signs on the earth that would be harbingers, that would be flags to be able to get the attention of as many people as possible to study the Scriptures and understand that Jesus is coming soon.

And then she quotes from Revelation, chapter 6 and verse 12, and says, "There was a great earthquake and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." And so, of these physical harbingers that we are to look for, God says the first one would be this massive earthquake that would get the attention of a great part of the world. And thus it did. It says, "In fulfillment," she goes on, "of this prophecy, there occurred in the year 1755 the most terrible earthquake that has ever been recorded."

Now, friends, this date, 1755, is no small date. The reason being is that it is only 43 years before the conclusion of one of the longest, most important time prophecies that God revealed in prophecy, both in Daniel as well as in the book of Revelation, the 1260 symbolic days that represent 1260 literal years, that were to find a conclusion in 1798. And, sadly, that time period was to represent, and God made it clear represented, the reign and the influence and the power that would be exercised in a very negative way towards God's people by the papacy, represented by the little horn of Daniel chapter 7, as well as the first beast, symbolic beast, of Revelation chapter 13.

So coming back to that statement, she says, "In fulfillment of the prophecy, there occurred in the year 1755 the most terrible earthquake that has ever been recorded. The conclusion of the 1260 years in 1798." And then we find ourselves just 46 more years into the future and the last time prophecy of Daniel chapter 8 and verse 14 comes to its conclusion in 20--the 2300-year prophecy that declares that the cleansing of the sanctuary has begun, which symbolizes a--and points us to a judgment scene and process that would take place in heaven as the final phase of God's work in heaven before He comes back to earth in judgment. And so again, this is a instrumental time in history in which this greatest earthquake ever took place. "Though commonly known as the earthquake of Lisbon, it is extended to the greater part of Europe, Africa," now, we have to remember that Lisbon is the largest city and it is a port city on the Atlantic coastline of Portugal. Portugal and Spain, which is the neighbor of Portugal, wraps around Portugal, is just a stone's throw north of the northern tip of Africa.

So she goes on and says, "Though it's commonly known as the earthquake of Lisbon, it is extended to the greater part of Europe, Africa, and America. It was felt in Greenland, in the West Indies, in the island of Madeira, in Norway, Sweden, Great Britain, Ireland." Later, we're going to read about the great tsunami, massive tsunami, that swept across the Atlantic Ocean and actually hit the shores of Ireland, hit the shores of Great Britain, among other places, the Caribbean islands. Finland is also reported to have felt the effects of it. The Caribbean islands, the Portuguese colony of Brazil also has reports that came out of a tsunami and minor shocks and so on from this massive earthquake. It goes on and says, "It pervaded to an extent of not less than 4 million square miles. In Africa the shock was almost as severe as in Europe. A great part of Algiers was destroyed, and a short distance from Morocco, a village containing 8,000 or 10,000 inhabitants was swallowed up.

A vast wave swept over the coast of Spain and Africa, engulfing cities, and causing great destruction." Now, today we call that wave a tsunami, don't we? Okay, back in Ellen White's day and when she wrote this book in the late 1800s, this was not a word that they used. "It was in Spain and Portugal that the shock manifested its extreme violence." So the most extreme violence was found in Spain and Portugal. The actual spot of the earthquake, most earthquake engineers and geologists and so on all agree that it was about 120 miles southeast or southwest of--yeah, I should say southwest of Portugal. Yeah, so that's where the most extreme violence took place.

"At Cadiz," the Spanish city, "the inflowing wave," the tsunami, "was said to be 60 feet high. Mountains, 'some of the largest,'" and now she's quoting from Sir Charles Lyell from his book, "Principles of Geology," and he says, "Some of the largest in Portugal," some of the largest mountains in Portugal, "were impetuously shaken," and again, this is a key word for our study today. "Impetuously shaken as it were, from their very foundations," and some of them opened up at their summits, at the very peaks of those mountains. There were split--they were split and rent in a wonderful manner, huge masses of them being thrown down into the adjacent valleys." So, big chunks, massive chunks of these summits and large parts of the top of these mountains in Portugal were breaking off and rolling and falling down into the valleys. Flames are related to have issued from these mountains.

And now we're quoting from the same author. He says that "Lisbon, a sound of thunder was heard underground and immediately afterwards, a violent shock threw down the greater part of that city. In the course of about six minutes, 60,000 persons perished. The sea first retired and laid the bar dry." Now, "and then it rolled in."

Now, friends, if you've seen any of the footage, the descriptions, the remakes that different films and documentaries have made concerning the more modern recent tsunami, the one that hit Indonesia, the worst amongst-- of their nations in that part of the world, there was this uncanny kind of rapid, unexpected tide that kind of--as they first interpreted it, the residents, the tourists, this tide that just-- kind of this unexpected tide and rapid tide that just kind of sucked the ocean way out further and faster than it normally did. And this is exactly what happened just before the tsunami then came back in full force against the Portugal seaside.

It is said that there was a number of--I've read different sources and it talked about this uncanny kind of--this uncovering of these different shipwrecks that were exposed on the ocean bottom as the ocean kind of sucked back out into the ocean, and exposed these shipwrecks that had never been seen since they sunk and then there was all this cargo that had fallen off ships by mistakes over the years that was exposed on the sea bottom, on this dry land. And so it says, "The sea first retired and laid the bar dry, it then rolled in, rising 50 feet or more above its ordinary level.

Among other extraordinary events related to having occurred at Lisbon during the catastrophe was the subsidence of a new quay, built entirely of marble at an immense expense, a great concourse of people had collected there for safety as a spot where they might be beyond the reach of falling ruins, but suddenly the quay sank down with all the people on it and not one of the dead bodies ever floated to the surface."

And then she quotes from another source, the "Encyclopedia Americana," the edition of 1831. So this source is not very far removed from the actual event, and goes on and says, "The shock of the earthquake was instantly followed by the fall of every church and convent, almost all the large public buildings and more than one-fourth of the houses. In about two hours after the shock, fires broke out in different quarters and raged with such violence for the space of nearly three days that the city was completely desolated. The earthquake happened on a holy day, when the churches and convents were full of people, very few of whom escaped."

Now, as it turns out, that holy day was called "All Saints Day" by the Catholics which was the predominant population of the people there. And, because it was All Saints Day, in honor of the saints, many of the homes and all the convents, the churches, and so on, were full of different worshipers and so on, and they had lit candles and so, when the earthquake came, it was the worst scenario that you can imagine because all those candles went flying while they were still lit and they started to light all these buildings on fire, and so what the earthquake didn't get, what the tsunami didn't destroy, the fires had destroyed during that same period. And so it was catastrophic. And it is by far, one of the largest shaking.

Now, they didn't have instruments that was able to measure the size of it, you know? And of course, the million-dollar question is, "What was the Richter scale rating of that earthquake?" And we don't know. Now, the seismologists tell us that they estimate--the estimates range anywhere from 7.7 to 9.

Now, the largest earthquakes that have ever been recorded since we've been able to record on the Richter scale with our instruments is 9.1 and so, seeing it in the light of prophecy, when you look at the actual original sources, including the great controversy that quotes some of those as well as give some inspired information on this, we find that I would estimate that 9 is probably the minimum. It could be more like a 9.2, 9.3 or something to that effect. Just reading the effects and the reports from all over the world and almost every continent in the world that was affected by that earthquake. Massive prophetic harbinger of Jesus's soon coming. Massive shaking, the most far-reaching shaking in history.

Well, the bottom line is that life involves a lot of different kinds of shaking. That comes from living in a broken world, doesn't it? You know, these are just some examples that I'm shared and I'm sure if we open the floor, you could share some different ways in which we can think about negative shaking that takes place in this planet, in this world, and this life. The memory text for this week's study of the book of Hebrews brings us to something that we can look forward to, which is a shake-free world.

One day, Jesus says, we can live in a day where we will never be shaking in our boots, we will never be shaken up, we will never have to shake something negative off, we will never experience the earth shaking beneath our feet. All these different negative shakings will disappear.

Let's go to our lesson number 12 and it's Hebrews chapter 12 and verse 28. In Hebrews 12, verse 28, it says, "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be--cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." So in response of this good news, in response of the promise, in response of this life of peace and shake-free existence that God has for us, God says that we should approach God with great reverence and with godly fear. And we should remember that God is the God that can shake the heavens and the earth. He is the one that made it, He is the one that lifts up kings and brings down kings. He is the one that gives life, He is the one that takes away life. And we are to worship Him even as He is our King and our Lord and our Savior.

Well, as it turns out, the memory verse is at the end of our passage that we're studying this week in Hebrews 12--chapter 12. And so let's go back to the beginning of that passage and read, starting with verse 12. So we're going to read the first seven verses of the passage and so we're going to Hebrews, the 12th chapter. And in Hebrews the chapter--the 12th chapter, we're going to pick it up with verse 18.

Okay, Hebrews, the 12th chapter, picking it up at verse 18, it says, "For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, into the tempest--and to the blackness and the darkness and the tempest, 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. (For they could not endure what was commanded."

And then quoting from the book of Exodus, is--and is, "'And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot through with an arrow.' And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, 'I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.')" In verse 22, it goes on and says, "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of the sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel."

And so as we look at the first seven verses of our passage of study this week, we want to ask ourselves what is Paul trying to say? I have to confess that the first time that I read this, years ago, and even coming back to it, you know, it's one of those ones where you have to stop and think a little bit carefully, a little bit more carefully. You have to kind of ask yourself, "What in the world is God and Paul trying to tell us here in this particular book?"

Well, as it turns out, these first few verses is actually doing what the rest of Hebrews has been doing all along, as a pattern, and that is that God is comparing the Old Testament and the functions and the elements that are found in the Old Testament to that of the newer, fuller, and more superior New Testament that Jesus Himself is the mediator and the initiator of. And so we have in the New Testament and the New Covenant, it tells us of a person of Jesus that is a new and better mediator and He is a new and better sacrifice at the same time. And that's why we find in verse 24 that God here is, again, pointing us to the better part of the New Testament, which is in the person of Jesus Christ.

Yes, the Old Testament holy priesthood, the descendants of Aaron, was holy, was sacred. It was God-given, it was important. But there is something that is so much better, and that is in the person of Jesus, the priesthood, the ultimate priesthood, in the ultimate place which is the headquarters of the universe called heaven. And He does this, as he compares the Old Testament and the elements of the Old Testament to that of the New Testament. In that comparison, he's using two symbolic mountains. Did you pick that up? The first symbolic mountain is? Now, they're literal mountains but they symbolize something very deep, and what is that? It's Mount Sinai.

So the first mountain that Paul here is speaking about is Mount Sinai. The second mountain is Mount Zion. Okay, now they're in two different places, aren't they? Okay, so the Old Testament was cut. God cut the Old Testament. He had sealed it with the symbolic blood of the sacrifices through the leadership of Moses and Aaron at a place at the foot of Mount Sinai. And in the midst of cutting that New--that Old Testament with the Israelites, with that generation of Moses and the Jews, Israelites, and generations that were to follow, He was doing that through some very dramatic exhibitions of His power. He wanted to be able to demonstrate to the Israelites not only He was real. He already gave them more than abundant evidence to be able to see that, but He just wanted to really impact with them that He was the one that can shake heaven and earth. He is the King of kings. He is the Lord of lords. And they would do well to be able to give their worship to Him and that He is the only true God in which they can believe in and trust.

So let's go back to verse 18 and we'll just carefully unpack that just a little bit more. In verse 18 it says, "For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to the blackness and darkness and tempests, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard and begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore."

And again, this is reflecting what we're going to look at in Exodus in just a moment, the events that surrounded Mount Sinai on that very powerful morning on a very powerful day when God spoke with His own voice the Ten Commandments of God, when God demonstrated His power with lightnings and thunder and smoke and fire. And not only that, but as we're going to discover in Exodus, there was also a great shaking that took place that morning as well. And so, all of nature, God was demonstrating that He

is the God of nature, He is the God of all things, and that He was there to make His presence known in a very dramatic way. And so, because of that, He had instructed the Israelites. He said, "Do not touch the mountain. This is a holy consecrated place, the very presence and glory of God is going to be exposing Himself in a very powerful way. For your own benefit and for your self-preservation, make sure that no one touches the mountain." And so there was very specific instruction.

Now that can almost seem confusing, at least it was for me when I came to verse 18, says, "For you have not come to a mountain that may be touched." And I said, "Well, wait a minute. Didn't God say not to touch the mountain?" But then it dawned on me, "Wait a minute. God is talking about in the--when He said 'A mountain that can be touched,' He's talking about earthly, present, physical, you know, a mountain that you can actually physically see and touch on a day-to-day basis, outside that one day where God consecrated it for demonstrating His power and giving the testimony of His law and His government that day through the Ten Commandments."

And so the Bible's not contradicting himself when he later on, Paul here, quotes in verse 20 that God did instruct the Israelites, "Don't touch the mountain," on that particular one very special powerful day. And by the way, it says in verse 20 that "they could not endure what was commanded." And again, we can take away, if we don't know the larger context, and this is why the context of the original scene that Paul here is talking about and quoting from, is important to see in its full--in its full picture.

Now Paul, of course, can't take the time and the words to describe and re-write the entire record of Exodus but he's assuming that you know that very well because, of course, Paul knows and he assumes that you know, that God not only commanded them not to touch the mountain, lest they be killed, but He also had told them that you shall not kill. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not bow down and worship idols, nor make anything of the likeness of heaven or earth. You shall not use My name in vain. You shall remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. You shall honor your father and your mother. You shall not kill. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not lie. You shall not covet. And so these were the things that intimidated and revealed the hearts of the Israelites and which they said, "Tell Him not to speak to us directly anymore, lest we die." In verse 21, it says, "And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, 'I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.'"

Now, some scholars, and even the marginal references here, try to point us to Deuteronomy where Moses was afraid of the anger of the Lord that was to burst out against the Israelites after they had failed God so miserably when they had made this golden calf and began to worship it and engage in all these immoral, sexually immoral, idolatrous practices around that calf, and so on. But it just doesn't even come close in Deuteronomy in some of the attempts to be able to quote Moses here as if Paul is quoting from Moses as some words that Moses spoke and were recorded in the books of Moses in the beginning of the Bible.

The fact of the matter, it's not. But just like we find in a classic example is in Hebrews chapter 11 that we reviewed last week, where we find here that there's some very important information that is given to us concerning the thought process of Abraham when God had told him to take his son, his only begotten son, and take him to the top of Mount Moriah and take his life as a sacrifice before the Lord.

Now Genesis' record doesn't record the thought process that went through Adam--Abraham's mind. Doesn't record all the words that Abraham certainly would have shared with his wife and his household as he was wrestling with this command from the Lord. And so it records in Hebrews chapter 11 that, indeed, Abraham in thought process thought, "Okay, wait a minute, God has always promised that through my promised miraculous son, my only begotten son, I will have as many descendants as the sand of the sea. If God indeed has called me to sacrifice him, He will inevitably bring him back to life and, indeed, Isaac will not only live, he will be married, he will have children, and his children will have children, and the promises of God will be fulfilled."

And again, that information is not found in Genesis. Is it true? Yes. Was it orally passed on through the centuries of the Israelite generations? Almost for certain. And then when we come back to our passage

here in Hebrews chapter 12, where it says in verse 21, "And so terrifying was the sight that Moses himself even said, 'I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.'" It tells us that this demonstration of God's power was so overwhelming that even the very friend of God, the one that was the only one that spoke to God face to face, even Moses himself, was exceedingly terrified and afraid of this great grand exhibition that was taking place before him. This is why when we come back to verse 28 in the same passage, it says, "Therefore, since we have received a kingdom which cannot be shaken," our memory text, "let us have grace, which we may serve God acceptably," with? "With reverence and with godly fear."

You see, that demonstration that God gave both to the Israelites and to Moses, and we're going to talk a little bit if we have time here, about why Moses also needed to be found--find himself overwhelmed by this demonstration of God and as we go to Exodus, it will reveal to us why God did this in this manner, and why even Moses needed it. And all of it was to point the Israelites and now also to the Jew--no, to the Christian generations including you and me, as it says in verse 28 at the end, "Serve God acceptably with reverence and with godly fear."

And so let's go back to Exodus. Before we go on to the second mountain in verse 22 of Mount Zion, and which is being contrasted here, let's go back to Exodus. Exodus chapter 19 and verse 16. Exodus chapter 19 and verse 16, and we're just going to quickly read through four verses there. So, Exodus 19 and verse 16, it says, "And then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of a trumpet that was very loud, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. 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," it was engulfed in this great cloud of smoke, "because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked," it shook. There was a shaking that took place, "and it shook greatly. And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder," it kept blasting long, long blasts, and the volume kept increasing, "Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice." And then of course, this is leading to the climax of that encounter that God had with the Israelites including Moses, and revealing the Ten Commandments.

And then we come to chapter 20 and verse 18, and so as we come to the next chapter, in verse 18 it says, "Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar. And then they said to Moses, 'You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.' And Moses said to the people, 'Do not fear.'"

Now, Moses, it says in Hebrews we just read, he was overwhelmed and he was afraid exceedingly, but he was not afraid of God. He was just afraid of the overwhelming exhibition of nature and its powerful way around him. But Moses, unlike the Israelites, was not afraid of God Himself. The Israelites, on the other hand, were afraid both of the exhibition and of God, and so Moses here is giving them advice, giving them counsel. He says, "Don't--do not fear." Don't fear God, don't be afraid of God. "For God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin." And so God is doing this for their character sanctification. God is doing this to be able to impact upon him that He is the true God, He is the all-powerful God, He is the one that can shake heaven and earth. And you would do well, it would be to your benefit, to be able to give your heart and your life to Jesus. And not only that, but then this would also be a great motivation that we may not sin.

You see, to fear God is to do the opposite of sinning. To fear God is to reverence Him and to submit to Him and to worship Him and to make Him the King and the Master of your life, your Lord and your Savior. And so, in so doing that, of course, you want to avoid sin. You do not want to displease and you do not want to disappoint our Maker. And so the question is did Moses even need this? Is it important that day for Moses also to be overcome as it says in Hebrews. Hebrews is confirming that even Moses had a moment in which he was shaking in his boots. He also experienced a shaking. He also was

traumatized in a very helpful and beneficial way.

Did Moses need this? Was Moses a sinner? Sure, he was. Did Moses have a battle with his carnal nature in the same way that you and I have? Sure, he did. Now, he was the most humble man that ever lived. He was one that was able to speak--he had a tremendous privileged experience and position in history and in God's plan and with God's people. But he was still a sinner. He still had that battle, didn't he? He still also needed to be reminded how important it was for Moses to fear God and to give Him godly fear and reverence. And we see that demonstrated in Numbers chapter 20.

We have that sad moment in Moses. He was at his wit's end. He had it up to here with the Israelites. He'd been dealing with them for 40 years now, their whining, their complaining, their mumbling, their slandering, their false accusations. He had it up to here. And when he and his brother stood before the Israelites that were complaining again and said, "Why is it that you brought us out here?" And "You promised all these presents and goodies and everything else, and here we are, 40 years later, and still nothing."

So Moses had it up to here, and so God said, "Go and give them water. Go and speak reverently before the rock. In the name of Jesus Christ, tell the rock to produce water." Moses let them have it. He ripped into the Israelites. He said, "You bunch of shysters. You're nothing but a bunch of stiff-necked rebels," and then he took his rod, and he didn't do it reverently. He lost his temper, and he took that rod and he just smack, whack, whack. He hit the rock. He'd lost his temper.

Did Moses sin against the Lord that day? Sure, he did. He had done the opposite of what he had just told--40 years later at Mount Sinai, he had done the opposite of what God had told him to tell the Israelites, "Do not fear for God has done these things that you might fear and reverence Him, that you may not sin." And so, did Moses need to be impacted in a powerful way at Mount Sinai? Yes, yes, Moses was a sinner as well. He also had that battle. And he also sometimes had to come before the Lord, as you and I did, and say, "Lord, please forgive me for the irreverent way in which I acted or way I've disappointed. I've sinned against heaven and earth in this manner or this way." And just like Moses, we also can have that assurance that God knows the heart and He forgives us and cleanses us by the blood of Jesus Christ.

So let's go to mountain number two before we run out of time. We're just wrapping up. Hebrews chapter 12, verse 22. So we're coming back to the key passage of Hebrews chapter 12, and we come to verse 22. We come to the second mountain. The second mountain represents the New Testament. The Old Testament mountain is Mount Sinai that we looked at in some detail. Now we come to verse 22. In verse 22 it says, "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," we want to underline "heavenly." "The heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels."

And so when we come to Mount Zion, the location, of course, of the original Mount Zion was the Jerusalem that we think of in the Middle East that exists even today. But this is not the Jerusalem that is being spoken of here, is it? The Jerusalem that we are being pointed to here is not the one that's in the Middle East, but it's in heaven, isn't it? It's the heavenly Jerusalem. It is the ultimate eternal capital that God has built for you and I. This is the Holy City in which Jesus, in John chapter 14 in those first verses, where He gives the promise that--to His disciples and says, "Listen, I am going to My Father but where I'm going, I am going to prepare a place for you. In My Father's house are many mansions."

Those mansions were already built, by the way. Sometimes we think Jesus went to heaven after He ascended, after He resurrected and ascended to His Father, then He went and began to build those mansions. No, He says, "In My Father's house already are mansions-- are many mansions. And I am going to prepare a place in those mansions for you as your High Priest." This is the heavenly Jerusalem that we are pointed to and that Paul is pointing to his generation of believers and Christians as well. "But you have come to Mount Zion." Mount Zion was a very special hill.

Now we have to remember, in North American terms, a mountain here is much different in the mind of a



mountain when you use the word "mountain" in Israel. And I discovered that very quickly when I did a tour in Israel about 15 years ago, 10 years ago. And they said, "Well, we're going to go--" Now, they do have some bigger mountains in the North, you know, and so on. So they do have some larger mountains, what we would call a mountain. But what they call a mountain in most places of Israel, we would call a little hill.

And so when you get to Israel and you get to Jerusalem and you say, "Well, where are these mountains? Where's Mount Zion?" And they say, "Well, that's that tiny little hill over there." "That's a mountain?" You know, Mount Moriah where Abraham brought, you know, his son for the sacrifice and so on. Mount Moriah where the temple of God and the Jews were built, again it's just a small hill in our perspective compared to the Rockies and some of these other mountains.

But Mount Zion originally was the city that King David and the Israelites took over from the Jebusites. Now we call it the City of David. Once the Jews had built a permanent temple on top of Mount Moriah, then that became recognized and was called Mount Zion. And so there's a little bit of shifting that took place concerning which hill in which--there is a number of hills in which Jerusalem is built on, but you have just to the south of what is now called Mount Zion.

Well, no, now they call Mount Zion back at the City of David, so it started as Mount Zion at the City of David, then it was shifted later and the New--Old Testament prophets called Mount Moriah where the temple was now existing as Mount Zion because it was the ultimate of Zionism and the Judaic religion. And then it shifted back in modern times, back to the ancient tel, or archeological site of King David, the City of David.

But the Mount Zion that is being pointed to here is symbolized by the temple in Jerusalem, the City of God's ancient earthly kingdom, but is representing now the ultimate kingdom in which all believers enter, including the Hebrews of Paul's generation that accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior, and that is Mount Moriah, or Mount Zion I should say, the City of the Living God. And then he points us to angels. The general assembly of the church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven. All of you are firstborn in the eyes of God. We are all equal in the eyes of God, whether you're male or female, as Paul said. Whether you're a Greek or Jewish. Whether you're rich or poor. All of us are equal, and so all of us in God's eyes are firstborn in our registration in the books of heaven. And Jesus is our mediator as we looked at as well.

Well, friends, this is a very powerful passage that God has given to us. Of course, we could spend a whole lot more time looking at that. There's a few other verses there that, if we had time, we'd be able to look at, but I trust that you looked at the Quarterly over the week and, if you haven't, go back and spend some time going through the rest of that chapter. It's a powerful chapter. It's one that will continue to build your understanding of the hope that God gives to us, that we have received a kingdom that will not be shaken. And so all these negative shakings that we experience in different measures today, will not take place any longer.

I want to invite you again to take advantage of our free gift offer. For those of you who are watching, we have a little booklet and it's entitled, "The Final Verdict." And so please take advantage of that. All you have to do is call into 1-866-788-3966 and ask for free offer number 162, and we'll be happy to send that out to you if you're in the United States or any of the US territories, and also in Canada and North America. If you want a digital copy of that, all you have to do is text the code "SH078" and you want to dial that to 40544. And that will hook you up to a link that will give you a free digital download. Again, if you're in North America, the US territories, that's available. And then as you see on the screen, there's also a website there for anybody anywhere in the world can get a free download on the Amazing Facts website and you can continue to study in the Word of God.

So until we come together the next week, I want to wish you a blessing throughout the rest of your day, your week, and we look forward to having you join us again in our next Sabbath School.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing free resource. Not only can you receive this free

gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544 or visit the web address shown on your screen and be sure to select the digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with Amazing Facts wherever and whenever you want. And most important, to share it with others.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" Changed Lives.

Roy: I grew up here in New York City, I guess, dealing with all the temptations that you would have in a big city. Everything that you could imagine that you could run into, drugs, crime, was always here. When I was at a young age, I actually got into trouble with the law and my only out was to join the military at the time in order to not do time. So I left New York and traveled the world a little bit while I was in the military. Eventually, I came back. Having grown up as a hip hop kid, I eventually found myself working in the music business actually. I worked at a couple of major radio stations, hip hop, reggae. I was in all the big reggae shows, working them. No matter what I did to try and satisfy myself, nothing really worked.

I remember I used to play at this one club in Manhattan. We used to play there every Friday night. So I came home one Saturday morning after leaving the club and I turned on the video channel like I usually do. So there was this guy in the video channel talking and he was definitely out of place, but the things that he was saying just totally amazed me. I had never heard anyone speak about the Bible like this before. So I started coming home early on Saturday mornings just to catch this show. I found the things that he was saying absolutely amazing, to the point where it literally made me stop and start to think about how I was living my life.

So I found that all of these things that I had been doing to try and find happiness were actually not making me happy at all. But were really just leaving me empty inside. When I started reading the Bible and it started to make sense, I started to make changes. I even tried to keep the Sabbath which I failed at miserably.

So I was actually invited by Amazing Facts to go to see a live series at one of the local churches but after going the first night, I ended up going another night and another night. I stayed for the entire series. That was the day I made a decision that changed the rest of my life forever. I gave my life to Christ and everything was different after that. I made a decision to give up the music business, stop hanging out at all of the clubs. I made a decision that was eternal for me and for my family. I started going to church. I got a position in church where I was actually in charge of the personal ministries department. And the same Amazing Facts studies that changed my life, I actually got to share them with people and sit down with them and tell them about Jesus.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" Changed Lives.

Reuben: You know, we grew up in a neighborhood up in the Mid West that was a pretty bad neighborhood. And when I became a teenager, I started using drugs. I was on--I started using meth when I was, like, I think 16, 15, something like that. I was having some problems in my life I really didn't know how to deal with. The only thing I really knew was violence. So, this night here I was going to inflict violence on myself. I was really high and really depressed, so I took, you know, I had this .40 caliber so I remember, I put one in the chamber and I stuck it to the side of my head like this. And that gun had a hair trigger, you know? I remember I was tapping it, because a part of me said, "No, I don't want to do this." But there was something very evil present there saying, "Do it." I just said to myself, I said, "God, if You're real, show Yourself to me."

My mother took me to church when I was a little kid and we used to sing, "Jesus loves me," and I remembered that song. It started playing in my mind. And I almost had, like, a vision of me as a little kid, you know, and in Sabbath School we used to bang those sticks together and sing, "Jesus loves me." And I heard that in my mind. So I said, "Wow." So I just kind of like, put the gun down and I kind of fell on my bedside there and I said, "Lord." I just basically, just prayed this crazy prayer. I says, you know, I told Him everything that was wrong with me.

And I remember one day I was driving around, I kind of felt lost and I drove by this church. And I seen Tom out there. Tom was just out there, watering the flowers, you know?

Tom: So I caught a vision out of the side of my eye, this big husky guy with a tattoo, walking up and he's saying, "Hello," and I said--so I asked him if I can help him. He told me that he drives by the church on occasion and every time he goes by, he's thinking if he should stop in.

Reuben: After he showed me around the church, you know, I was like, "Okay, man, it's nice meeting you," and this and that. So I jumped in my car and I started heading down the driveway and the next thing you know in, like, my peripheral vision, I see him coming around the corner like Jerry Rice running a football. No, not that fast but, you know, he was taking off after me, and he says, "Hey, hey, hey, hold on, hold on."

Tom: I asked if he would like to have some Bible studies and he said, "Yeah."

Reuben: He would come by the house. We'd all start--we'd start hiding the beer cans and trying to air out the weed smell and there was a presence that came with Tom that was comforting, you know what I mean? Even though I wasn't taking the Bible studies as serious as I should have, looking back, there was just a presence about him being there in the house that was comforting. I told Tom, I said, "Tom, you know you can't win everybody."

Tom: I looked at him and I knew. I said to him, "Reuben, I never get anybody." I says, "The Holy Spirit will do that," and I kind of, in my heart knew that the Holy Spirit was going to work on Reuben.

Reuben: So then Tom kind of left the picture for a while and then I think one day at my mother's house they were watching "The Final Events of Bible Prophecy." So I watched that and I remember the scene where they had the hellfire and stuff, you know, they're outside the city and it showed the hellfire coming down and burning people and stuff and I remember saying to myself, "That's where I would be, right there." After the hellfire scene, I saw the saints in the city, in the New Jerusalem and Jesus recreating the earth. And I said, "I want that to be my--me and my family."

There was something about the way Doug preached and things that I felt that touched me because he's kind of like myself, you know? He's--he didn't grow up like that, you know? He done drugs and things, so I kind of found these common grounds that I had with him and I liked how he just kind of like kept it real with his preaching and then Pastor Rodney came to the church and I got to know him very well and we started doing some finishing studies. He wanted to make sure I understand what I was doing and things. And he baptized me, my wife, my brother.

No matter what you've done, where you come from, where you've been. No matter how bad of a sinner you think you are, the Lord Jesus loves you no matter what you've done.

Doug Batchelor: Friends, it's because of God's blessing and your support, thousands of others, just like Reuben, have found Jesus and eternal life.

Heather Shurtliff: We can do nothing without God, and sometimes He lets you get to that place where you realize there is nothing left and you're just wondering if you even want to live because it hurts and life is dark. When He lets you get to that place and that's when He can break through to you and let you know He's there. And then He can work with you to bring beauty out of ashes, and hope out of darkness.

My mom, when she was pregnant with me, was diagnosed with bipolar and the times when my mom would be struggling, they might be trying her on different medications to help her with the mood swings. I kind of had a savior complex and had like a guilt complex that somehow that my family's problems were my own fault or I'm the one that was supposed to try to help her fix it, which is impossible for any human to do. Only Jesus can do that.

But I believe stuffing all of those emotions and for so long, my world had started to crumble around me. I started having a nervous breakdown. I could not stuff any longer everything that I'd grown up with. I just slowly but surely, just started to withdraw completely. And it got to the extent where I was like a

prisoner of my own house, of my own affairs, and if it wasn't for my mom making me come out of the basement, and sometimes, you know, making me eat, I would just stay down in my room in the basement.

And I remember how awful the darkness was and how terrible it is to live without hope. I can still feel that in my throat, in my heart. I remember what that feels like. I had been still contemplating suicide on and off for several months and I knew it was getting worse and I was going to be successful unless something happened. And, you know, just trying to talk to yourself out of it every day but still just--it just always being there, haunting me. And I just went to bed feeling really, really sick and just told myself, in counseling they'll tell you, you know, it always--don't do it, make any impulsive decisions. It'll always be brighter in the morning. You know, just see it through the night.

Sometimes the night are the longest, darkest hours. And I just went to sleep, telling myself that. And when I woke up in the morning, there was no relief. It was worse than it was. I--it was just like I knew it was waiting for me when I woke up in the morning. And so then I went to class and as soon as the class was getting going, I asked the teacher if I could go get a drink of water, and I went into the kitchen and I started drinking some of the different cleaners. And as I was there drinking the cleaners, choking on the cleaners, just such an awful place to be in, the chaplain--we have a very kind chaplain. He flipped on the kitchen lights and he comes in with his bright smile and he's like, "Heather." He's like, "How are you doing today?" And I'm like, you know, I'm killing myself.

And I look at his face and I can't lie to him, such a kind man. I just look at him and I just start sobbing. And he just--he doesn't make a big deal. He just kindly and sweetly helps pick me up off the floor and walks me to his office and so he just--he talked to me. I told him what I drank, and he called the ambulance. After that hospital stay, you know, everybody was so scared for me because it was not expected at all.

But after that, somehow I knew that suicide was not an option anymore, that I had closed that door. Even though I still had that same pain and fear and I had no idea how God's going to pick up the pieces, and I still had to be honest with God. I was like, "Okay, God, obviously You care, obviously. I know that You spared my life. And I don't have any idea how You're going to help me fix this mess in my life." But it was the beginning of me trusting Him again and just shutting that door to suicide. It's not ever been an option again.

God used Amazing Facts and Pastor Doug in a powerful way to make His love for me, His soon Coming for me, and that He was calling me to share that with others, real. And it was making it personal, God's love for me, and that was--really, that's a seed that I will--I'll never forget and that I'm so grateful that my family didn't have to go through the pain and the tragedy of me taking my life and that I have the joy of being able to encourage other people that there's always hope. Amazing Facts just changed my life. I am so grateful for their ministry. It's a precious blessing.